

Guide for preparation and review of EPIET and EPIET associated programmes [EAPs] abstracts for scientific conferences

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Introduction

EPIET, EAP and EUPHEM fellows prepare their abstracts under guidance of the local supervisors. The role of EPIET/EUPHEM/EAP coordinators is to provide additional advice and support to maximise quality and ensure public health angle and direction to the audience is addressed. Coordinators also can identify relevant experts from European networks who might agree to provide input.

There are two distinct parts of the review processes:

- a) Improving the quality, ensuring public health angle and direction to the audience of the abstract;
- b) Receiving EPIET/EAP technical green light for abstract submission to the conference.

Deciding what to submit and providing a key message (or Single Over-riding Communication Objective [SOCO])

When starting the work on a projects, fellows, supervisors and coordinators must discuss early on which work will be suitable for presentation on a scientific conference. Early consultations as part of the life cycle of the projects in the context of the overall planning of the fellowship may facilitate the process. At this stage it may be clear that there will be an output to communicate, but not necessarily what the message will be.

When deciding to submit a conference abstract, EPIET/EUPHEM and EAPs request fellows to formulate a key message, or Single Over-riding Communication Objective (SOCO). The proposed

presentation conveys this key message, with information on study design and the main conclusion. This key message is usually one or two sentences long (three at the maximum). Writing it down will help preparing a good abstract. The lack of a clear key message may suggest that the investigation is not yet ready for a conference presentation (e.g., no clear conclusion or public health implications).

Deadlines and workflows

The best way to determine the time at which various tasks need to be planned is to identify the conference application deadline (latest submission date) and work backwards (countdown). For ESCAIDE, the table below summarizes the desired deadlines that will enable efficient review of 80+ abstracts by the EPIET/EUPHEM /EAP coordination team with emphasis on highest quality of abstracts. For other conferences, the lower number of abstracts can lead to more flexibility in timelines.

The frontline coordinator and a second coordinator review abstracts. Second reviewers, drawn from the wider coordination team, must be involved from the 1st draft. In specific situations, the second reviewer can be drawn from among the supervisors of current fellows, but should not be involved in the supervision of the fellow that is the author of the abstract. The second reviewer complements the input of the first reviewer (for example to work on language vs technical aspects) and checks with the frontline coordinator before making major suggestions that could have impact on major aspects of the work (i.e., if a key methodological issue is raised). The fellow manages the review process between frontline coordinator and the second reviewer and communicates to ensure that the correct version is being reviewed. If the fellow receives discordant advice from the two reviewers (a natural occurrence in an open scientific world), the fellow as a first author seeks clarification and works to resolve the situation in the next draft.

Time before ESCAIDE deadline	Deliverable	To whom
8 weeks	Title and key message	EPIET/EUPHEM /EAP frontline coordinator
6 weeks	1 st draft	EPIET/EUPHEM /EAP frontline coordinator Second reviewer
6-1 weeks	Revision of consecutive drafts	EPIET/EUPHEM /EAP frontline coordinator Second reviewer
1 week	Final draft for green light	EPIET/EUPHEM /EAP frontline coordinator Second reviewer

The fellow can expect comments from coordinators in maximum 5 working days. Within the last week before submission, the maximum standard turnaround time is 48 working hours. Where there are no comments, the fellow may send the next version for review.

Abstracts sent after the deadline will be considered for submission only when justified by urgent and recent investigations that could not be planned in advance, such as new outbreak results or matters of exceptional public health importance.

Clearance for submission

Submission to the conference organisers can only happen after two conditions have been met:

a. Institutional clearance of the Training Site

The fellow is responsible for the institutional clearance of the Training Site, each guided by different rules. This should include review and approval by the co-authors, the site supervisor and the project supervisors.

b. EPIET/EUPHEM/ EAP technical green light

Both the frontline coordinator and the second reviewer sign off abstracts considered of acceptable quality.

The ultimate responsibility for the abstract content and message always lies with its authors. **The fellow and his/her training site supervisor are responsible for familiarizing co-authors with EPIET/EUPHEM /EAP abstract review procedures.** Review of the abstract by co-authors needs to be done in parallel. In the unlikely event of a major disagreement, abstracts can be submitted without the EPIET/EUPHEM affiliation. However, in that case, the abstract will not be considered as fellow's output of the fellowship.

Affiliations

The EPIET/EUPHEM affiliation **must** be included and standardised as below:

EPIET: European Programme for Intervention Epidemiology Training (EPIET), European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, (ECDC), Stockholm, Sweden

EUPHEM: European Public Health Microbiology training Programme (EUPHEM), European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, (ECDC), Stockholm, Sweden

Local (national) meetings

Fellows may wish to submit abstracts to conferences in their host country, which may have a more national or local focus.

These communications can count towards the scientific communication objectives, and are therefore still subject to a focusing and improvement process including an initial key message, and at least two abstract reviews involving the frontline coordinator.

Where the language is not English, the abstract will be drafted in English then translated once the content has been agreed by the supervisor and frontline coordinator. This can be circumvented if the frontline coordinator is able to work in the host site language or can obtain assistance from a suitable coordinator mastering the language.