

Conference Paper

Conference Proceedings in Academia

In academia, proceedings are the collection of academic papers published in the context of an academic conference. They are usually distributed as printed volumes or in electronic form either before the conference opens or after it has closed. Proceedings contain the contributions made by researchers at the conference. They are the written record of the work that is presented to fellow researchers. The collection of papers is organized by one or more persons, who form the editorial team. The quality of the papers is typically ensured by having external people read the papers before they are accepted in the proceedings. This process is called reviewing. Depending on the level of the conference, this process including making revisions can take up to a year. The editors decide about the composition of the proceedings, the order of the papers, and produce the preface and possibly other pieces of text. Although most changes in papers occur on basis of consensus between editors and authors, editors can also single-handedly make changes in papers.

Different types of conferences

Conferences can include a variety of events such as roundtables, workshops, lectures, etc. Depending on what you want to achieve with your conference, you might find it useful to familiarize yourself with the different types of conferences:

Table: An illustration of different types of conference

Type	Definition	Examples
Conference	The most general term to indicate a meeting for discussion - most commonly adopted by associations and organizations for their regular meetings. It is usually associated with the most traditional type of presentation, that is, papers followed by questions.	Annual Conference Biennial Conference
Symposium	This describes a meeting to discuss a particular subject, but its original meaning defines it as a drinking party devoted to conversation and following a banquet. A symposium thus has a slightly more informal character than a conference.	Postgraduate Symposium
Seminar	The first meaning of this term refers to a group of students studying under a professor with each doing research and all exchanging results through reports and discussions. Its second definition: 'debating special issues' preserves the conversational character of the term 'seminar'.	From Textual to Visual Departmental Research Seminar
Colloquium	This term indicates both a traditional conference and a conversational seminar. Colloquia tend to privilege the aspect of debate.	Colloquium for Police History
Workshop	Taken from the language of manufacturing, the term workshop indicates a brief intensive educational program for a small group of people that focuses on techniques and skills in a particular field. In academia, it is adopted to describe meetings reserved for small groups of specialists who come together for concerted activities or discussion.	Mutual Perceptions in Travel Literature
Roundtable	The roundness of the table clearly symbolizes the equality of all participants. Each of them will have the same right to take the floor. Roundtables commonly bring together academics who usually are invited as key-note speakers. Discussion nevertheless plays the leading role in this kind of meeting.	Berkeley Germanic Linguistics Roundtable Urban Environmental History

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Figure: A Group of attendance in a conference meeting in Hong Kong. Over 3,000 attend AsianInvestor and FinanceAsia conferences in 2010

Source: Asia Pacific Debt Forum, July 2010, Hong Kong.