AMERICAN CHEMICAL SOCIETY

Division of Polymer Chemistry

**National Graduate Research Polymer Conference Proposal Template**

**Submission Instructions:**All proposal submissions and reviews are handled electronically. The following application form includes all the details required for this initial review. The completed application form should be e-mailed to the ACS Division of Polymer Chemistry (POLY) Business Office: [lesiar@vt.edu](mailto:lesiar@vt.edu) with cc: to the POLY Workshop Committee Chair (Currently: Prof. Marc Hillmyer [hillmyer@umn.edu](mailto:hillmyer@umn.edu).) For additional questions call: 540-231-3029.

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| * **Commitment to Diversity** | ​POLY believes in the strength of diversity in all its forms because the inclusion of and respect for diverse people, experiences, and ideas lead to superior solutions to world challenges and advances polymer chemistry as a global, multidisciplinary science. It requires this to be demonstrated within the conference experience. **By checking the “Commitment to Diversity” box, you affirm your commitment to reflect this within your organizing team and programming.** |

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| **Lead Conference Chair [a single point of contact]:**  (Name, Affiliation, E-mail, and Address) |
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| **Conference Co-Chair (s) [one to three co-chairs]:**  (Name, Affiliation, E-mail, and Address) |
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| **Faculty Advisor (s) [if none is included in the above Chair/Co-Chair list]:**  (Name, Affiliation, E-mail, and Address) |
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| **Conference Overview and Vision:** Give a brief overview to the National Graduate Research Polymer Conference which you plan to organize. Discuss the focus of the conference, a brief history and current state of the field, and why this event will be of interest to graduate students in the field and the broader polymer chemistry community [500-word maximum]. |
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| **Topics/Speakers Proposed:** |
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| **Proposed Location:** Described your location. Why do you feel it would be desirable for your target audience and discuss why? |
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| **Proposed Dates:** Propose the time of year would be optimal and why. If approved, you will work with the Workshop Committee and POLY Business Office to minimize overlap with related workshops and symposia, and other logistical restraints. |
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| **Budget**: Described your proposed financial model and method for setting registration fees. Communicate with your university who you plan to rely on for financial planning. You may also wish to speak with the POLY Business Office (Lesia Pristas, lesiar@vt.edu) if you would like general guidance on how budgets are developed through POLY. |
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| **Prospective Sponsors:** Discuss what funding sources you anticipate securing to aid in funding the workshop. Typical external funding is through industry sponsorship. The additional funds raised can be used to cover items not included in a standard budget. |
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| **Any other information you feel the reviewers might want to know:** |
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Use the below guide to aid in the development of the conference and the proposal. Provide as much detail as you find necessary to adequately cover the planning of the conference. The National Graduate Research Polymer Conference is a rewarding experience for both organizers and attendees. Once you have completed the above sections, submit the proposal to Lesia Linkous Pristas ([lesiar@vt.edu](mailto:lesiar@vt.edu), phone: 540-231-3029).

**Guide to Successful POLY Conferences \* ACS Division of Polymer Chemistry**

**Best Practices for Organizing and Running a POLY Conference:**

1. Choose a timely topic. The timeliness of the topic is essential.
2. Whereas it is useful to consider a field that is up-and-coming, even a traditional field can be successful if it is attractive and in demand.
3. Consider a conference chair (or Co-Chair) who is not only well-known in the field but also a good organizer, a fund-raiser, and capable of working with people.
4. Work closely with your faculty advisors and university conference planning services.

**Mechanics of Organizing a Conference:**

1. Decide on the topic, the members of the organizing committee, and key speakers way ahead of time. Ideally 1½ years ahead of time.
2. Enlist and confirm speakers early if possible. Recruit invited speakers and make up a preliminary program (including a list of speakers and titles).
3. Submit the proposal: Once you have completed the proposal, submit it. The proposal then undergoes a formal review by the Workshop Committee, which can move it forward to the Executive Committee for final approval or work with the organizer(s) to revise and strengthen the proposal. Reviews are typically completed in the Spring and Fall during the time of the ACS Meetings.
4. Work closely with your university. Once a decision is made to offer the conference, the organizer needs to work closely with its university staff or venue to plan on the location, logistics, and cost of the conference. It is important to have a technical & business plan that will be successful with respect to scientific content and financial return. Once your venue is secure, use the contract obligations to establish a budget.
5. Promote like crazy! Once the proposal is approved, including the location, date, title, and list of speakers (confirmed speakers, preferably), and contract signed, then it is a matter of getting the word out. The organizer should work with the Business Office to coordinate an advertising campaign. Use multiple communication media. Two common ways are the POLY list server and the brochures and personal contacts at the ACS national meetings.
6. Remind people! People need time to plan their meeting schedules and ask for permission to travel. They need to be reminded. Provide regular reminders on the e-list and other modes of communication.
7. Run a good conference. Work closely with the university event staff. They have the experience to make things successful, e.g., location, lodging, food, networking events, and meeting materials. As for the conference itself, keep it lively, keep it on time, and encourage discussion. Make it enjoyable and informative for the participants to come back!

**Previous National Graduate Research Polymer Conference Locations**

1. Penn State, 1994
2. VA Tech, 1996
3. University of Akron, 1998
4. Southern Mississippi Univ., 2000
5. Lehigh, 2003
6. UMASS, 2005
7. UT Knoxville, 2007
8. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2010.
9. Case Western Reserve University, 2012.
10. Louisiana State Univ., 2014
11. University of Akron, 2016
12. University of Minnesota, 2018
13. Virginia Tech (virtual), 2021