



GUIDE FOR DEVELOPING AND SUBMITTING AN ABSTRACT

This guide is designed to help you through the abstract submission process for Harm Reduction 2011 in Beirut, Lebanon – from identifying and developing your initial ideas through to writing the abstract itself. Please note that this guide is for the main conference programme only, and not for satellite events or the film festival.

All abstracts must be submitted by November 5th 2010
All abstracts must be submitted online
All abstracts must be shorter than 300 words in English

What Can You Present?

Each year, IHRA is committed to showcasing presentations from around the world and creating a balance of harm reduction research, practice, advocacy and policy. We want the conference to inspire delegates and introduce them to new ideas and ways of thinking or working. As such, we welcome you to submit an abstract if you:

- are involved in delivering innovative harm reduction services
- have some new and ground-breaking research to report on
- have an example of an effective or successful advocacy campaign
- wish to discuss or debate a particular area of harm reduction policy

The conference theme for 2011 (although not yet finalised) will be based around 'Harm Reduction; and Marginalised/Neglected Communities'. This has been carefully chosen to embody some key issues for this conference, and we particularly welcome abstracts which focus on these areas:

- Highlighting the challenges to harm reduction (especially within the Middle East and North Africa region).
- How adequate are the models of harm reduction that have been developed?
- How can harm reduction better engage and serve young people?
- Harm reduction funding.
- Harm reduction, immigration and mobile populations.
- Religion and harm reduction.
- Tuberculosis and harm reduction.
- Gender and harm reduction.
- Punitive laws and harm reduction.
- Violence and harm reduction.
- Tobacco and alcohol harm reduction.
- How can harm reduction better address new populations and regions?
- Sex work and harm reduction.
- Peer involvement and advocacy.
- Innovative research.
- How does harm reduction intersect with, and change, drug control systems?
- What new opportunities are there for harm reduction in terms of human rights, security, development and other sectors?
- Strengthening healthcare systems.
- Workshops and capacity building sessions.

However, this list is far from exhaustive and, naturally, abstracts can also be submitted on a wide range of issues that are already well covered in the conference – such as HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, needle exchange, criminal justice, prisons, drug use prevalence research, risk environments, risk behaviours, and medically assisted (or ‘substitution’) treatments.

Writing the Abstract

When writing an abstract, try to include as much information as possible. Be concise and avoid statements such as “work in progress” or “results will be discussed” wherever possible. If the results are unknown at this stage, give some indication of what they are expected to be and what the implications are.

Crucially, try to ensure that the abstract is easy to read and understand for the reviewer. He or she is your key audience for this process and may not be familiar with your exact field of work and/or may not have English as a first language. Try to make your abstract as easy as possible to comprehend – both in terms of the layout and the language that you use (avoiding acronyms and slang where possible).

Format Guide

Although there is no set format for an abstract, you may wish to follow one of the following layouts in order to help structure and communicate your ideas effectively:

Research Abstracts:

1. Background – including the research objectives and the problem being studied
2. Methodology – described in detail, but also in an accessible way
3. Results – provide a summary of your main findings
4. Conclusion – describe the relevance and implications of your results, and discuss the lessons that the audience would take away with them

Practice Abstracts:

1. Issue – describe the aims of this service or intervention, and how the need was identified
2. Setting – provide some details such as geographical location, target population, or patterns / prevalence of local drug use
3. Project – describe your service or intervention: What did you do? How did you do it? What made you decide to do it this way?
4. Outcomes – describe the impact or results of your intervention: How many people did you reach or help? What barriers did you face? What would you do differently if you could start again? What lessons did you learn?

Advocacy and Policy Abstracts:

1. Issue – describe your aims and the problem or need that is being tackled
2. Setting – provide some details such as geographical location, target population, or patterns / prevalence of local drug use
3. Key Arguments – outline your key points. What did you do? How did you do it? What made you decide to do it this way?
4. Outcomes – describe the impact or results of your work. What barriers did you face?
5. Implications – outline what lessons your audience could learn from your work, and how it might impact on them.

**All abstracts are reviewed and given a score based on:
Content, Significance, Originality, Relevance and Presentation**

Choosing a Title

If your abstract is selected (see below), the title will eventually appear in the conference programme, the conference booklet and the conference website. It is crucial, therefore, that it is as descriptive – but short – as possible! A good title provides a one-line summary of exactly what your abstract is about – enough to inform reviewers and delegates about what they can expect.

Seek Feedback

Once you have written your abstract, show it to some of your colleagues, and also to some family or friends outside of the field to see if they can understand it easily. Correcting mistakes at this stage gives your abstract a better chance of being accepted. If you require support with your abstract in terms of language and translation, please contact info@ihraconferences.com and we may be able to connect you to someone who can help.

Submit Your Abstract

Once you have written and checked your abstract, you can submit it online through the Harm Reduction 2011 registration system. Go to www.ihraconferences.com/2011 and follow the links to registration. You will need to create a 'User Account' if you have not already done so. Once logged in, select the 'Your Submissions' option and you will be asked to select an abstract type – research, practice or advocacy and policy. This is to assist IHRA in sending your abstract to the most relevant reviewers, so please select the category that best fits your work. You will then be asked to enter details of the abstract and the abstract itself.

As part of this process, you will be asked to select one abstract topic. This list is not exhaustive, and there is an 'Other Topic' option, but please try and select the one topic that best fits your work. Think about which session you would like to present your work in – where would it best fit? This is an important stage in the abstract submission as it helps IHRA to create the conference programme.

The deadline for abstract submissions is November 5th 2010, but we strongly urge you to submit your work well before this deadline and not to leave it until the last moments. The deadline cannot be extended.

What Happens Next?

You will receive an email to confirm that your abstract has been received. In November, the abstracts are sent off for anonymous peer-review by an International Programme Committee. Each abstract is reviewed two or three times and is given a score based on content, significance, originality, relevance and overall presentation. In December, the Executive Programme Committee meets to finalise the programme – creating sessions based on the abstract reviews. Please note that, in order to make the conference as inclusive as possible, only one oral presentation per person will be accepted. You will be notified by January 2011 whether your abstract has been accepted for an oral presentation, accepted for a poster presentation, or not accepted.

For further information, please visit www.ihra.net/conference or contact the conference team on info@ihraconferences.com.