

Board Paper 2011.6

Changes to paper selection procedure for 2012 joint conference

The next conference in Mauritius will be jointly organized by CPRAfrica and CPRsouth, with CPRAfrica in the lead. In discussions, Alison Gillwald indicated a preference for a change in procedure that would reflect current CPRAfrica procedures. Each entity will publish its own CFP and run separate selection processes until the selection of complete papers and the selected papers will be given to Alison to structure into a coherent program. This is a change in the paper selection procedure that requires your approval.

The present paper selection procedures are given as Annex 1. The amended procedures are given in Annex 2.

1. The key difference is that the sessions will be scheduled only after the completed papers have been selected. This is being done at the request of CPRAfrica.
2. The short-listing of abstracts will remain double-blind. An additional five days to resolve significant differences, if any, among reviewers has been added.
3. Completed papers will be evaluated by two reviewers in a single-blind process.
4. The ranked papers will be sent to CPRAfrica to schedule into sessions. It is expected that there will be a mix of African and Asian papers organized by theme.

Proposal: Approve the amended procedure set out in Annex 2 for CPRsouth7 in 2012.

Annex 1: Present paper selection procedures

- 1.0 Getting selected to present a paper at CPRsouth is valuable in several senses: it is the result of a rigorous competitive process; it provides useful feedback that can help the researcher develop him/herself; it comes with significant financial assistance to participate. Therefore, CPRsouth makes best efforts to ensure that the selection process is fair and that no one has undue advantages.
- 2.0 The first screen is double-blind. Abstracts received by the closing date are sent to three judges (members of the CPRsouth Board + other senior scholars attending CPRsouth) after removing identifying information. The administrative partner, LIRNEasia, makes best efforts to ensure that abstracts from a person directly connected to a judge do not get assigned to such a judge (e.g., a LIRNEasia researcher's abstracts are not given to Rohan Samarajiva). In the rare case that we miss such a conflict and a judge notices the conflict, the abstract is returned without a score and alternative arrangements are made. The scores given by the judges are averaged to arrive at the shortlist.
- 3.0 The shortlisted abstracts are grouped into sessions by the administrative partner who also assigns senior scholars as Chair and Discussant based on their expertise and wishes. Best efforts are made to avoid conflicts in this non-blinded review phase, i.e., Samarajiva does not normally serve as Chair/Discussant in sessions with a LIRNEasia researchers. In the event such a conflict arises, especially because of adjustments made because of cancellations, an external judge will be substituted for assessing the affected paper.
- 4.0 The scores given by the second-round judges (the Chair and Discussant of the session) on a common template are averaged to select the three or fewer papers that will be funded per session. Judges are encouraged to give feedback to all papers, and in particular to the selected papers, if necessary on multiple drafts, so that their quality can be improved prior to the conference.
- 5.0 The top paper in each session is then shortlisted (total of seven) for the best-paper competition. The judges for this competition are appointed by the Board and do not participate in the selection process that leads up to the shortlisting. They read the papers and policy briefs and listen to the presentations. Here, too precautions are taken to avoid conflict of interest. The selection of the winner is based on the scores given by the judges and also the evaluations by the audience.
- 6.0 The above procedures for selecting papers have been followed in all CPRsouth conferences except the first, where not all papers came through competition.

The best-paper competition which started in CPRsouth3 in Beijing has followed the procedures set out under 5.0 throughout.

Annex 2: Proposed revised paper selection procedures for 2012

1. Getting selected to present a paper at CPRsouth is valuable in several senses: it is the result of a rigorous competitive process; it provides useful feedback that can help the researcher develop him/herself; it comes with significant financial assistance to participate. Therefore, CPRsouth makes best efforts to ensure that the selection process is fair and that no one has undue advantages.
2. The first screen is double-blind. Abstracts received by the closing date are sent to three judges (members of the CPRsouth Board) after removing identifying information. The administrative partner, LIRNEasia, makes best efforts to ensure that abstracts from a person directly connected to a judge do not get assigned to such a judge (e.g., a LIRNEasia researcher's abstracts are not given to Rohan Samarajiva). In the rare case that we miss such a conflict and a judge notices the conflict, the abstract is returned without a score and alternative arrangements will be made.
3. In the event there is a significant difference between reviewer scores on a paper, the administrative partner will so inform the reviewers who will then have a period of five days to resolve differences.
4. The final scores given by the reviewers are averaged to arrive at a shortlist of approximately 30.
5. The papers that are received by the deadline will be sent to two reviewers from the Board and other senior scholars assisting with CPRsouth. This review will be single-blind and usual precautions to avoid conflicts of interest will be taken.
6. The scores given by the second-round judges on a common template are averaged to prepare a ranked list of papers. Judges are encouraged to give feedback to all papers, and in particular to the selected papers, if necessary on multiple drafts, so that their quality can be improved prior to the conference.
7. The ranked papers will be sent to CPRAfrica who will be responsible for scheduling them, along with papers from Africa.
8. The above procedures will apply to CPRsouth7 to be held jointly with CPRAfrica in the Mauritius.