

The Title, Abstract, Session Description, and Citations

An Important Note Before You Start

Each year, some proposals are disqualified because they violate the guidelines below.

A proposal will be disqualified if

- it is submitted after the deadline;
- it is not submitted electronically through the abstract management system;
- it is incomplete or completed without following the guidelines in the call for proposals;
- it includes the presenter(s) or organizer(s) name(s) or institution(s) in the title, abstract, or description;
- it contains plagiarized content;
- it or a similar proposal is submitted to multiple strands; or
- it promotes a commercial interest.

Please take time to review the information in this section as well as the [Checklist for Proposal Writers](#) carefully. You may find it helpful to use the Proposal Worksheet or to type in a word processing program for easier proofreading.

Editing: TESOL staff reserve the right to edit titles and abstracts for length and clarity.

A Note About Language: TESOL acknowledges a range of Englishes as a part of “professional quality” writing. Please ensure that your writing follows the standards and convention of the professional community, as raters use writing quality as one indication of the probable quality of the presentation.

Title

Your title appears in the convention program. As such, it should be clear to the intended audience and accurately reflect the content of the presentation. Titles should:

- include a maximum of 10 words;
- **not use** hyphens to reduce word count;
- use only [approved acronyms](#)—all other terms should be spelled out;
- **not use** exclamation marks;
- use question marks judiciously.

Capitalization Rules

Capitalize the first letter of all major words; all words after a hyphen, slash, or colon; and all words four letters or more (including prepositions).

Proper Title Example

An Examination of Self-Identification:
Identity With Reflection

Abstract

The abstract is a concise description of your proposal. It appears in the convention program for attendees to find sessions of interest. It is also scored by reviewers in the rating process. Consider including keywords your audience may search for. Abstracts should:

- include a maximum of 50 words;
- not use hyphens to reduce word count;
- use only [approved acronyms](#)—all other terms should be spelled out;
- **not include** presenter name(s), institution(s), or publications(s);
- **not include** citations—they will be removed.

Style

Use third-person present tense, active voice:

This session encourages...

The presenters explore...

The panelists discuss...

Session Description

This portion of the proposal describes the presentation concisely and demonstrates the expertise of the presenter(s). See the Proposal Worksheet for suggestions on writing effective proposals. Descriptions should adhere to the following:

- Include a maximum of 300 words.
- **Do not include presenter name(s) or institution(s)**
- Spell out all acronyms on first use other than those on the [approved acronyms](#) list.

Citations

You may include citations for sources referenced in the summary in this separate field. This allows citations to be provided without substantially reducing the word count in the summary. Citations may be given in APA or any other format that allows the original work to be located.

Approved Acronyms for 2025

Acronyms on this list need not be written out in the proposal. All other acronyms should be written out on first use.

CALL.....	computer-assisted language learning
CBI	content-based instruction
CLIL	content and language integrated learning
CMS	content management system
EAL.....	English as an additional language
EAP	English for academic purposes
EFL.....	English as a foreign language
EL.....	English learner
ELT	English language teaching
EMI	English-medium instruction
ESL.....	English as a second language
ESOL	English for speakers of other languages
ESP.....	English for specific purposes
IEP	Intensive English program
ITA	International teaching assistants
L1.....	first language
L2.....	second language
MLE	multilingual learner of English
LMS.....	learning management system
NNEST.....	nonnative English-speaking teacher
PD	professional development
SLA.....	second language acquisition
STEM	science, technology, engineering, math
TESOL	TESOL International Association
TEFL/TESL	teaching English as a foreign/second language