

Program Committee Co-Chair Position Description

Position Title

Activate Conference Program Committee Co-Chair

Purpose

In addition to contributing professional expertise, the Co-Chairs provide strategic leadership to the Program Committee. They facilitate committee discussions, guide program development, support timely decision-making, and act as the primary liaison between the Program Committee and ESSA's Event Manager to ensure the scientific program aligns with the conference objectives and strategic priorities.

Key Responsibilities

Committee Leadership

- Co-chair Program Committee meetings in partnership with the other Co-Chair.
- Foster a collaborative and inclusive committee environment.
- Guide discussions to achieve timely recommendations and consensus.
- Support committee members to contribute effectively throughout the planning process.

Program Development

- Provide strategic oversight of the conference program across all streams.
- Identify emerging issues and future trends.
- Recommend select keynote speakers and invited presenters.
- Assist in selecting topics within set predetermined speciality areas
- Ensure the program reflects the breadth of the profession.
- Review and select Workshop/Symposium EOIs
- Work with ESSA to ensure the program aligns with organisational strategy, delegate needs and available resources.

Abstract Review

- Review submitted abstracts using agreed assessment criteria.
- Provide constructive and objective feedback.
- Recommend acceptance, revision or rejection.
- Provide final decision on abstract outcome
- Provide guidance on accepted abstracts inclusion in the program. ie session allocations.
- Maintain confidentiality throughout the review process.

Speaker Identification

- Recommend potential presenters.
- Assist ESSA in identifying diverse voices.
- Support recruitment of high-quality speakers.

Strategic Advice

Provide advice on:

- Delegate needs
- Emerging professional issues
- Educational priorities
- Industry trends
- Program innovation

Advocacy

Committee members are expected to:

- Promote the conference within their networks.
- Encourage abstract submissions.
- Encourage delegate attendance.
- Act as ambassadors for ESSA.

Governance

Members will:

- Declare conflicts of interest.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- Act in accordance with ESSA's Code of Conduct.
- Support committee decisions once made.

The Co-Chairs are accountable for:

- Leading the committee in accordance with its Terms of Reference.
- Ensuring recommendations are evidence-informed, balanced and aligned with the conference objectives.
- Supporting transparent and timely decision-making.
- Working collaboratively with ESSA while recognising ESSA's responsibility for final decisions relating to budget, operations, governance and organisational strategy.

Time Commitment

Approximately 40–60 hours over the planning period, including:

- Monthly meetings (increasing in frequency closer to the conference)
- Additional planning meetings with ESSA's Events Manager.
- Independent abstract review
- Email consultation between meetings
- Speaker recommendations and feedback
- Availability to support timely decisions between meetings.

Requirements

Members should demonstrate:

- Recognised leadership within the exercise and sports science profession.
- Previous experience presenting at or contributing to conferences.
- Experience chairing committees, working groups or advisory groups.
- Strategic thinking
- Strong communication skills



- Collaborative approach
- Professional credibility
- Ability to meet deadlines
- Commitment to quality education
- Identify one or more of the below areas as an area of speciality:
 - Biomechanics
 - Cardiometabolic
 - Chronic Pain
 - Falls Prevention
 - Health Services
 - Mental Health
 - Metabolic (Diabetes or Overweight/Obesity/GLP-1)
 - Musculoskeletal
 - Neurological
 - Skill Acquisition and/or Technology
 - Strength & Conditioning
- Current ESSA accreditation
- Hold one of the following:
 - minimum of Level D academic title and/or
 - completed a PhD study and/or
 - strong practitioner background with a proven ability to translate research into practice

Desirable

- Previous experience serving on the Activate Program Committee.
- Experience developing conference or education programs.
- Knowledge of contemporary trends in adult learning and conference design.

ESSA Responsibilities

ESSA will:

- Provide project management and administrative support.
- Manage all speaker communications and logistics.
- Coordinate abstract submissions and review systems.
- Finalise program scheduling.
- Manage sponsorship alignment and commercial considerations.
- Make final decisions on program content where required to meet organisational strategy, budget, operational requirements or risk considerations.

Decision-Making Authority

To avoid ambiguity, responsibilities should be clearly defined:

Program Committee Co-Chair	ESSA
Recommend select keynote and invited speakers	Select themes and streams based on workforce data
Review abstracts	Approve final conference direction
Recommend program structure	Select draw card & special guest keynotes to align with Conference objectives
Recommend educational content	Select Conference Charity Partner
Review Workshop & Symposium EOIs	Approve speaker invitations
Provide professional advice	Final acceptance decisions
Promote conference	Final scheduling
Promote conference	Budget approval



Prioritise committee work throughout the planning cycle.	Commercial and sponsorship decisions
	Event delivery and logistics

The Program Committee Co-Chairs provide leadership of the scientific program development. ESSA retains final authority for all decisions relating to conference strategy, budget, contracts, operational delivery, sponsorship and organisational risk.

Entitlements

In return ESSA will provide committee members with:

- One direct return economy class airfare from the presenters' normal place of residence to Brisbane or car parking at the Conference venue, if local to Brisbane
- 4x nights' accommodation at the Conference host hotel (including breakfast daily), if not local to Brisbane
- Full Conference registration with all standard inclusions
- Discounted ticket to the ESSA Awards night

It is expected that the full Conference Program Committee (including co-chairs) attend the conference in full, including the welcome reception.

