**MCLS Conference Information, Guidelines, and Location Nomination Form**

**General Conference Information**

The annual Mathematical Cognition and Learning Society conference is typically a 3-day conference during the week in June that can also include one additional day for pre-conference workshops. Based on previous conferences, the number of attendees has ranged from 250-350 people from all over the world, with a trend toward increasing numbers of attendees.

The goal is to have the conference location rotate between different continents to allow as many researchers as possible to attend. Ideally, the timing of the conference should alternate between the first and second half of June and avoid conflicts with major other conferences such as those of the International Mind Brain and Education Society (IMBES). Conference locations and dates have so far included:

April 8-9, 2018: Oxford, UK

June 16-18, 2019: Ottawa, Canada (Carleton University)

2020-2021: Virtual conference

June 1-3, 2022: Antwerp, Belgium (Sanderus Campus)

June 6-8, 2023: Loughborough, UK

2024: Washington, DC, USA (Gallaudet University)

**Typical Conference Submission and Registration Timeline**

* Call for submissions goes out in early November the year before the conference
* Submission portal opens in early December the year before the conference
* Submission deadline in mid-January
* Notification of acceptance in early February
* Registration opens around the time of acceptance notification
* Early Bird Registration ends around two months before the conference
* Registration closes around one month before the conference

**Typical Conference Format and Standards**

The MCLS conference typically includes the following types of sessions though there is some flexibility:

* Opening session: Welcoming remarks by the conference organizers. Note that this requires a location large enough to accommodate all attendees. If necessary, streaming the session in a second room could be considered.
* Symposia, which are sets of 4 papers (or 3 papers plus discussant remarks) on a specific topic that are submitted as a group. Depending on the location, the organizers may want to accommodate 40-50 symposia with ~4 parallel sessions. Ideally, each room where symposia will be held should accommodate at least 80 attendees.
* Poster sessions: Individual submissions presented in poster form. Poster sessions should not be concurrent with symposia, talks, or lunch. The organizers should be prepared to offer ~3 poster sessions with ~50 posters each.
* MCLS business meeting: MCLS governing board will provide overview of on-going activities, answer any member questions, and discuss future activities. Meeting should be ~45 minutes and not concurrent with other activities. Note that this may require a location large enough to accommodate all attendees. If necessary, streaming the session in a second room could be considered.
* Lunches and coffee breaks: Light lunch each day of the conference, two coffee breaks a day, and water stations throughout the day should be provided. Lunch breaks should last ~1 hr (longer if combined with poster sessions), coffee breaks should last ~30 minutes (longer if combined with poster sessions).

Note that the MCLS conference purposefully does not include keynote presentations or invited symposia to give everyone equal chances of being able to present at the conference though exceptions can be made if needed (e.g., to obtain conference funding).

Other types of events that conference organizers may want to consider:

* Lightning talks (5-10 min presentations)
* Pre-registration posters
* Collaboration pitches
* Round tables or panel discussions
* Social hour
* Pre- / post-conference workshops: Conference organizers may decide if they invite applications for pre-conference workshops or organize some themselves. They can also reach out to the trainee board to see whether trainees may be interested in organizing workshops.

The MCLS annual conference is a peer-reviewed conference. As such, all submissions must be reviewed. The conference organizers along with the MCLS conference liaison will establish a scientific review committee consisting of members of the conference organizing team, the MCLS governing board, and the larger MCLS community. The scientific review committee should be finalized before the submission deadline. The scientific review committee should:

* Review submissions and make recommendations about acceptance / rejection. The conference organizers make the final decisions based on logistic constraints (e.g., how many symposia can be accommodated) and whether submissions can be converted from one format to another.
* Provide reviews of submissions that are anonymized (i.e., reviewers do not know the identities of the authors / submitters and authors / submitters do not know who reviewed their submission)
* Not be expected to provide feedback or explanation regarding the decision to the authors / submitters but should be able to, in the case of a rejection, provide explanation to all other members of the review committee if called upon to do so by another member of the review committee.

**Budgetary Considerations and Financial Procedures**

Detailed information regarding budgetary considerations and procedures can be found in the attached MCLS Conference Financial Policy and Procedures document. Conference organizers must be willing to coordinate registration and accept payment through the MCLS website, offer a reduced fee for trainees, a reduced fee for MCLS members, and include accessibility costs in their planning.

**Organizational Tools**

MCLS will provide support to create a conference website as part of the main MCLS website. The website will include logistical information about the conference as well as a portal for receiving and reviewing conference submissions, communicating with conference attendees, purchasing memberships, and registering for the conference.

**Accessibility Standards**

The MCLS conference should meet the following accessibility standards. As the society grows, we expect to advance the accessibility of the MCLS conference and look to the organizers to help support added accessibility opportunities.

* The conference registration form must include a place for participants to indicate accessibility needs. The conference organizers should ask attendees with special needs to request accommodation as early as possible and need to provide the requested accommodation.
* Accessibility information must be provided on the conference website, in an “Accessibility FAQ”.
* The conference venue must be wheelchair accessible (including restrooms).
* There must be microphones for speakers and attendees for question asking in all rooms.
* Sign language interpreting / captioning for sessions must be made available, if requested.
* The conference venue must include a quiet room for attendees in need of a low stimulation environment.
* The conference venue must include a room for attendees needing a breastfeeding / pumping space. More generally, conference organizers should keep in mind that attendees may bring children to the conference.

**Evaluation procedures for bids to host the MCLS conference**

Bids to host a future MCLS conference will be solicited in April two years prior to the year the conference will be held (e.g., April 2023 for the MCLS conference in 2025). Bids are due May 31 and decisions about the conference location will be made by the time of the current year’s conference (June 2023 for conference in 2025). The conference location will be announced at the end of the current year’s conference to allow attendees to consider attendance at the upcoming two conferences. This timeline will also provide the organizers with almost two years to organize their conference. In the event of competing bids, the MCLS governing board will make a decision based on the following essential and weighted criteria:

**Essential Criteria**

Conference organizers must be willing to coordinate registration and accept payment through the MCLS website, offer a reduced fee for trainees, and a reduced fee for MCLS members. They must also be able to meet all accessibility standards described above. Exceptions to these essential criteria can only be made under special circumstances and require approval by the executive board.

**Weighted Criteria**

The following will be considered as weighted criteria during the evaluation:

* Costs for attendees
* Location considering previous conference locations to avoid repeated conferences in the same country and the same continent
* Travel considerations (e.g., airports, visa requirements)
* Suitability of meeting venue to accommodate conference
* Timing of the conference
* Sufficient local support to organize and effectively manage the conference
* Availability of appropriate accommodation for attendees and other amenities to ensure a positive experience outside of the conference

To nominate a location, please complete this survey: <https://pitt.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6tEthNhucOAklLM>

A preview of all survey questions can be found below!

**Survey Questions**

Please complete the information below about your proposed conference location. Note that questions 10-17 request information about essential criteria for MCLS. If the answer to any of these questions is “No”, please reach out to the MCLS executive board prior to submitting your bid to discuss whether an exception to an essential criterion seems possible.

1. Suggested location (country, city)
2. Potential timing of the conference if held in the suggested location (select time frame or fill in preferred dates under “other”):
   1. Any time in June
   2. First half of June
   3. Second half of June
   4. Other: \_\_\_ (please provide explanation)
3. Reasons for nominating this location
4. Facilities
   1. Name of university or conference venue
   2. Number of people largest room can hold
   3. Number of parallel sessions that can be accommodated
   4. Number of people that can be accommodated in rooms for parallel sessions (i.e., symposia, talks)
   5. Number of poster presentations that can be accommodated during one poster session
5. Accommodation of various costs within walking distance of the conference location Please indicate whether there are “plenty”, “a moderate amount of”, or “few”:
   1. Number of 4- and 5-star hotels
   2. Number of budget hotels
   3. Number of hostels or dormitories
   4. Number of AirBnBs or other private accommodations
6. Restaurants and other amenities within walking distance. Please indicate whether there are “plenty”, “a moderate amount of”, or “few”:
   1. Sit-down restaurants
   2. Options for grab-n-go meals
   3. Coffee shops
   4. Bars
   5. Shopping
   6. Museums
   7. Other tourist attractions
7. National and international travel considerations (airports, trains and other public transport, visa requirements)
   1. List the nearest airport(s) and distance from proposed location of conference
   2. List nearby train stations or other means of long-distance transportation available (e.g., long-distance buses)
   3. Do the following countries require visas to enter the proposed country
      1. Australia
      2. Brazil
      3. Canada
      4. Chile
      5. China
      6. Colombia
      7. European Union
      8. Hong Kong
      9. Israel
      10. Malaysia
      11. Mexico
      12. Russia
      13. South Africa
      14. Switzerland
      15. Turkey
      16. United Kingdom
      17. United States of America
      18. Uruguay
8. Names of potential organizers and their affiliations (We recommend at least some local organizers and a minimum of 3 committed.):
9. Will this conference be co-hosted by a national or regional society? Y/N
   1. If yes, please list co-hosting organization(s):
10. Will the conference organizers be willing to coordinate registration and accept payment through the MCLS website? Y/N/maybe
11. Will the conference organizers offer a reduced fee for trainees? Y/N/maybe
12. Will the conference organizers offer a reduced fee for MCLS members? Y/N/maybe
13. Will the proposed conference venue be wheelchair accessible? Y/N/maybe
14. Will there be microphones for speakers and attendees for Q&A in all rooms? Y/N/maybe
15. Will the conference organizers be able to make sign language interpreting / captioning for sessions available, if requested? Y/N/maybe
16. Will the conference venue include a quiet room for attendees in need of a low stimulation environment? Y/N/maybe
17. Will the conference venue include a room for attendees needing a breastfeeding / pumping space? Y/N/maybe