

Call for focused symposia

Submission deadline: 25 April 2024

Submission guidelines

Please read this information carefully before proceeding to the online submission form

Submission process:

Apply on the congress website: <https://wp2025.world.physio/call-for-focused-symposia>

Important dates:

Submission opens **26 February 2024**

Submission closes **25 April 2024**

Notification of outcome **mid-June 2024**

Focused symposium format

The chair, a recognised expert in the field, has the responsibility to invite and lead a group of international speakers through a series of evidence-based and critically reflective linked presentations, drawing out the relevance, applicability, take-home message, and potential challenges for the audience. **It is important to deliver a coherent session with speakers working together thoughtfully.** The aim of the session should be to create an insightful and engaging learning experience for clinicians, managers, educators, researchers, and/or policy makers (depending on the topic) that ultimately informs, inspires, involves, and empowers congress participants and allows time for discussion.

Each symposium will last **60 minutes** and consist of:

- an introduction by the chair
- a maximum of three presentations, in addition to the chair
- 5-10 minutes of questions and answers with the audience spread across the session
- a 5-minute summary by the chair highlighting the implications, applicability, and relevant messages to take away.

Call open to any topic

The call for focused symposia is **open to any topic** that is relevant to the physiotherapy profession. The congress programme committee (CPC) is particularly interested in seeing proposals that address the following cutting-edge topics, based on recent market research:

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- how physiotherapy needs to change to address **global health issues**, such as the demands of an ageing population, physical activity, health literacy, health systems funding, and topics identified in the Rehabilitation 2030 Agenda and the [Sustainable Development Goals](#)
 - **professional challenges** across all areas, such as diversity and inclusion, quality assurance, knowledge translation, implicit bias, mental health, and wellbeing
 - the role of **innovative technology** in physiotherapy such as big data management, artificial intelligence, robotics, and virtual reality

Requirements

The chair must have secured the agreement of all speakers before submitting on their behalf.

World Physiotherapy and the CPC advocate for diversity and international perspectives across all congress sessions. This can be achieved through a range of aspects: a balance of gender, nationalities, perspectives from low, middle, high income countries/territories, including experiences from service users and under-represented groups or ethnicities. Submissions should include speakers from different countries/territories.

Where applicable to the topic, priority will be given to symposia that include perspectives from low-income countries/territories. Symposium speakers can apply for a bursary to support the travel and registration needs of no more than one speaker per session from a World Physiotherapy member organisation in a low or lower-middle income country/territory (see <https://bit.ly/487e6pi> for details).

A chair or a speaker may **only appear in one symposium**.

The online submission form offers a fixed word count.

You will be asked to provide the following:

1. title of suggested symposium [max 150 characters]
2. names of the chair and up to three speakers
3. email address and contact mobile phone number for all speakers
4. relevance to physiotherapy globally [max 75 words]
5. target audience [max 25 words]
6. summary of the session focus and structure, including plans for audience interaction [max 100 words]
7. completed abstract for the symposium

One abstract, jointly authored by the chair and all the speakers, should provide a comprehensive overview of the symposium and linked presentations. This will be included in the congress proceedings and should be structured using the following headings:

- title [max 150 characters]
- authors (chair first, followed by all speakers)
- learning objectives (up to three) [max 30 words each]
- abstract [max 500 words]
- funding acknowledgements [max 30 words]
- supporting references (up to 10) [max 300 words]

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8. short biography for the chair and each speaker. This should outline academic qualifications, positions/appointments, most recent publication and presentation track record (last five years), research information (interests, grants), and professional practice background. [max 200 words for each biography]
 9. details of how diversity has been considered in preparing the submission [max 75 words]
 10. the number of countries your proposal represents perspectives from
 11. information on language support needs
 12. details of any presentations or publications of the work made prior to the World Physiotherapy Congress 2025 [max 50 words]
 13. request for any speakers to be considered for the bursary assistance [separate application process see additional information <https://bit.ly/487e6pi>]

Selection principles

Submissions will be reviewed against the following principles:

Explore: the most recent ideas, evidence, methods and areas of controversy in the literature related to outcomes for people and populations

Inspire: with a clear purpose and applicable outcomes for participants

Connect: participants by reflecting the diversity of the global profession and draw in audiences from different fields

Include: speakers with international experience and standing¹ in the topic area, representing a range of global, possibly service user, perspectives and speakers from under-represented groups

Impact: practice, education, research and/or policy by making clear the implications arising from the presentations including considerations on the international diversity of the profession

General information

1. The congress language is English and all proposals and presentations must be made in English. Translation may be provided.
2. A symposium chair or speaker may only appear in one symposium proposal submission. This does not affect any abstract submissions.
3. Symposium chairs and all speakers must register and present in-person.
4. In keeping with World Physiotherapy policy, honorarium, fee, waiving of registration fees or payment of expenses will not be provided for chairs or symposium speakers, except where a bursary is applied for and awarded to support a symposium speaker from a World Physiotherapy member organisation in a low or lower-middle-income country/territory.
5. Proposals should address the current evidence, areas of controversy in the literature, implications for practice and the need for further research.

¹ Consideration will be given to symposia that support inclusion, as appropriate, of less experienced with established speakers.

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6. All research and studies that involve human participants and animal subjects reported in submitted proposals must comply with general ethical principles. To check that your research complies with ethical principles, please visit <https://bit.ly/49r5Mly>². See also the global standards³.
 7. All proposals and presentations must adhere to the use of “people-first” language. A person must not be referred to by disability or condition, and terms that could be considered biased or discriminatory in any way should be removed (eg use “person with a stroke” instead of “stroke patients”).
 8. Any source of funding or support for the work being presented should be acknowledged.
 9. The CPC may invite symposium chairs and speakers to contribute to other congress programme sessions, such as chairing or moderating sessions.
 10. The author(s) retain the right, after presentation at the World Physiotherapy Congress 2025, to subsequently include the work in articles, books, or derivative works that they author or edit, provided said use does not imply the endorsement of World Physiotherapy.
 11. Standard lecture room layout will be provided with PowerPoint presentation in all focused symposium rooms.
 12. Successful chairs and speakers will be expected to use their social media channels to promote their involvement in the World Physiotherapy Congress 2025 and will be supported by World Physiotherapy in these efforts.
 13. Focused symposia are not to be used as marketing opportunities for new products, equipment or organisations, nor to refute or denigrate competitors’ products.
 14. Descriptions and objectives for each focused symposium will be published in the preliminary and final programmes, on World Physiotherapy’s website, and in other promotional material.
 15. Congress programme placement will be determined by the CPC to ensure best fit with the overall congress programme. Any requests for specific dates and times cannot be guaranteed but will be considered if submitted at the time of proposal submission.
 16. Any changes to an accepted focused symposium must be submitted to the CPC for review and approval.
 17. On request, a teleconference to support the collaboration between the relevant focused symposium speakers can be facilitated by World Physiotherapy staff and this is actively encouraged.
 18. All decisions of the CPC are final.

Consent and permissions

In submitting a focused symposium you must confirm that:

- you accept responsibility for the accuracy of the submitted abstract and understand that the content cannot be modified or corrected after the abstract submission deadline and that it will be published exactly as submitted
- all co-authors are aware of and agree to the content of the abstract and support the data presented

² With thanks to Julius Sim, University of Keele, UK, for permission to use this document.

³ [Declaration of Helsinki](#) of the World Medical Association and the Council for International Organizations of Medical Sciences’ (CIOMS) [International Ethical Guidelines for Biomedical Research Involving Human Subjects](#) published in collaboration with the World Health Organization. CIOMS and International Council for Laboratory Animal Science (2012) [International Guiding Principles for Biomedical Research Involving Animals](#).

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- all speakers have agreed to participate in this session at congress, should the proposal be accepted for presentation, and take responsibility for their own travel, accommodation and registration costs
 - you accept responsibility as the contact person for all correspondence about the abstract and to share information with co-authors about its status
 - you have secured any copyright/permissions clearance required relating to any previous presentations, equipment or other material for inclusion in the World Physiotherapy Congress 2025, its recordings/proceedings or other congress publications
 - you consent to the session being recorded and made available by World Physiotherapy
 - for all studies involving human participants or animal subjects, permission has been obtained from the relevant ethics committee and properly informed consent given where appropriate
 - anyone who is identifiable in the abstract and presentation has given their consent to be included
 - the work is original, except for extracts from copyrighted works used with permission from the copyright holders, and that it does not infringe upon any copyright, proprietary, or personal right of any third party
 - you have identified any potential conflicts of interest eg financial interest in products or processes described in the abstract, stock ownership, membership on an advisory board or board of directors, or other substantive relationships

Copyright

On behalf of any and all co-authors, the submitter will confirm the:

- consent to have authors' names, affiliations and biographical materials used in connection with the publication of your work.
- content belongs to the author(s). However, if the abstract is accepted the submitter agrees, on behalf of all co-authors, to transfer and assign to World Physiotherapy free of charge, on a non-exclusive basis, the rights to edit, publish, reproduce, reformat, distribute in whole or in part the abstract and prepare all type of derivative works. These works may include press releases, recordings, and/or educational products, using all communication tools and means, now known or hereinafter developed, including any and all analogue and digital means and any and all supports or forms of media, now known or hereinafter developed. This includes use in indexes or search databases in print, electronic, or other media.
- author(s) retain the right, after presentation, to subsequently include the work in articles, books, or derivative works that they author or edit, provided said use does not imply the endorsement of World Physiotherapy.
- the author(s) will retain copyright of their abstract. However, the author shall only reuse, reproduce or post the abstract with acknowledgment to the initial and first publication or presentation at a World Physiotherapy event, and therefore reference the name of the World Physiotherapy event and the date.

When completing the online submission process, you will be asked to confirm that you have read and understood the general information and the requirements you are expected to fulfil.