



**Submissions Open June 1, 2026 – July 15, 2026**

The International Society for the Study of Trauma and Dissociation (ISSTD) is excited to welcome you to the 43rd Annual Conference in **Boston, Massachusetts, USA, March 4-7, 2027!**

ISSTD has been welcoming professionals working with complex trauma and dissociation for four decades. The ISSTD Annual Conference offers a time and place to connect with fellow clinicians and researchers in the field from around the world in addition to offering valuable educational content. In 2026, the conference theme is **Beacons of Hope: Lighting the Way to Connection and Courage.**

**Join us** in co-creating this conference!

We invite creative, innovative, and exciting presentations that represent all aspects of understanding, researching, and treating complex trauma and dissociation in addition to the conference theme. We encourage solid scientific and clinically grounded presentations. **Call for Proposals** for the conference is open **June 1 – July 15, 2026.**

Please note that there have been updates to the submission requirements, which are reflected in the Submission Guidelines below. The Call for Proposals will not be extended beyond July 15, 2026, so make sure to get your submissions in early! *All presenters who submit before August 1 will be entered into a drawing for a free year of membership with ISSTD!*

This conference will not be live streamed and all presenters must present live in-person at the conference venue. No presenters will be streamed into the conference. If you are not able to present in-person your submission will not be accepted.

**Proposal decisions will be made in September and all submitters will be notified by email once decisions are made.** The conference schedule and registration will open by early October We look forward to seeing you at the conference!

## Table of Contents

<b>Frequently Asked Questions</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Information about Abstract Submissions</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>General Guidelines and Policies</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Presentation Types</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Required Materials by Presentation Type</b> .....	<b>6</b>
Single Paper or Case Study .....	6
Symposium.....	7
Panel Presentation .....	8
Forum Discussion .....	9
Workshop.....	9
Poster .....	10
Media.....	11
<b>Content Level</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>Abstracts</b> .....	<b>13</b>
Advice from ISSTD Scientific Committee Members .....	13
Common Mistakes to Avoid .....	14
Examples .....	15
Example 1: Clinical Abstract (3hr Workshop, Intermediate).....	15
Example 2: Research Abstract (1.5hr Symposium, Overview Abstract, Beginner/Introductory) .....	16
<b>Learning Objectives</b> .....	<b>17</b>
Strong Examples .....	17
Weak Examples .....	17
<b>Presenter Biographies</b> .....	<b>17</b>
Example 1 (Professional): .....	18
Example 2 (Student): .....	18
<b>Criteria for Review</b> .....	<b>18</b>
<b>Potential to Distress</b> .....	<b>19</b>
<b>Statement of Ethical Standards</b> .....	<b>19</b>

## Frequently Asked Questions

- **What information do I need to have in order to submit a proposal?**
  - See [Required Materials by Presentation Type](#) for a comprehensive list of information required for your submission.
- **What should I include in my abstract?**
  - The content that should be included in the abstract depends on whether it is a clinical or research/scientific presentation.
  - See [Abstracts](#) for a detailed outline of what should be included in an abstract, to see examples successful and unsuccessful abstracts, and to read specific advice and feedback offered by reviewers of the ISSTD Scientific Committee.
- **What is the word limit for abstracts?**
  - Abstracts should be between 300 and 500 words.
- **When will I find out if my proposal has been accepted?**
  - Proposal decisions will be made by early October and all submitters will be notified by email once decisions are made.

## Information about Abstract Submissions

- **Please read the guidelines and policies below carefully** before submitting your proposal as there are some guidelines that have changed this year to comply with updated CE/CME guidelines. Failure to comply with guidelines could result in your presentation being declined.
- **The number of presentation slots available has decreased in recent years**, as the conference schedule will now feature four concurrent sessions during the Main Conference days compared to 10 concurrent sessions in previous years. Due to this change, the submission process will be more competitive. We recommend tailoring your presentation to the conference theme when applicable to increase the likelihood of a successful submission.
- Please **consider submitting** a presentation at the **beginning/introductory** or **advanced level** as we typically receive fewer submissions at these levels, but they are highly requested by conference attendees.
- The most common reasons a proposal is rejected are for an incomplete, poorly written, or unclear abstract, and other failures to follow submission guidelines. **Your submitted abstract must be complete, clear, concise, and grammatically correct** in order to be considered by the program committee.
- Those for whom **English is a second language or who have expressive language difficulties may request help from someone on the Annual Conference Committee** in editing their abstracts to meet acceptable grammatical standards. Such requests should be made BEFORE the proposal is submitted. You may contact ISSTD Staff at [cfas@isst-d.org](mailto:cfas@isst-d.org) to receive support.

- If you have **difficulties with the online submission process**, please contact the ISSTD office at [cfas@isstd.org](mailto:cfas@isstd.org).

## General Guidelines and Policies

- *All* presenters, including invited plenary and pre-conference workshop speakers **must submit proposals online**.
- All presenters except for plenary speakers will be required to **register for at least the day of their presentation during the conference**.
- All presenters **must be able to participate in the conference live** and will not be able to present remotely.
- Each individual is limited to **no more than two (2) submissions**. These submissions include any presentation where you are in the role of presenter or co-presenter. Poster sessions and invited presentations are not included. Presentations are limited to four (4) participants except paper sessions and symposiums where each presentation within these sessions is limited to four (4) participants.
- **One individual must gather all the required information from all individuals** (presenters, co-presenters, authors, etc.) ahead of time **and be responsible for making the submission**. We strongly suggest that you prepare a document that contains all of your submission information from each individual involved in your submission in advance (i.e. presenters, co-presenters, authors, etc.). This will save time online and ensure that you have a backup copy of all of your information.
- Abstracts **must be relevant to and mention complex trauma and/or dissociation**.
- Therapists **may not present with their own clients** at this conference.
- We **do not accept first-person accounts of trauma**.
- We request that **details of clients' traumatic experiences not be discussed during presentations**, since explicit details of trauma may be distressing to the audience and do not enhance learning.
- Presentations should be **original contributions** (i.e., they have not been published prior to the date that you submitted the abstract).
- **Abstracts will be published in their original form**, with edits where needed, in the conference app and online schedule.
- **Case material and biographical information must be disguised** so that the client's identity is concealed.
- The submission site **will not allow you to submit your proposal until you have provided all required items**.

## Presentation Types

- There are 7 types of presentations that can be submitted: (1) Single Paper or Case Studies, (2) Symposiums, (3) Panel Presentations, (4) Forum Discussions, (5) Workshops, (6) Posters, and (7) Media.

Type	Details	Abstract Word Count	# of Presenters	Discussant Required?
<b>Single Paper or Case Study</b> Paper Sessions are 90 minutes in length and contain four (4) 20-minute papers	Present a research, theoretical, or clinical paper OR case study. Authors of unaccepted submissions may be offered the opportunity to present their paper as a Poster (see Posters below).	300-500 words	1 or more presenters per paper/case study	N/A
<b>Symposium</b> Session Length: 90 minutes	A collection of several presentations on a specific theme, issue, or question.	Overview: 300-500 words  Each presentation abstract: 300-500 words	2-4 presenters, including discussant	Discussant Optional
<b>Panel Presentation</b> Session Length: 90 Minutes	A panel of experts conduct an organized discussion of a specific theme, issue, or question.  Note: Audience interaction is limited with the panelists discussing answers to audience questions.	300-500 words	2-4 presenters, including discussant	Discussant Optional
<b>Forum Discussion</b> Session Length: 90 Minutes	A 30-45 minute presentation followed by 45-60 minutes of discussion with the audience.  Note: Audience interaction and discussion is encouraged.	300-500 words	1-3 presenters, not including the moderator	Discussant Optional
<b>Workshops</b> 90 Minutes or 3 Hours	A presentation meant to help participants increase their understanding and skill in a particular area of interest, or use case material to illustrate clinical, theoretical, or	300-500 words	1-4 presenters	N/A

	policy issues. Workshops should include both didactic and practical or experiential components.			
<b>Poster</b>	Paper presentation in poster form. <a href="#">Details for Poster Submissions</a>	300-500 words	1-4 presenters	N/A
<b>Media</b> Session Length: 90 minutes	Film, videotape, music, artwork, or other forms of media	300-500 words	1-2 presenters, including discussant	Discussant Optional

## Required Materials by Presentation Type

- The information required for submission varies based on the presentation type. See below for a list of required information based on the presentation type you're interested in submitting.

### Single Paper or Case Study

- Proposal title**
- Proposal abstract (500 words)**
- Content level:** Beginning/Introductory, Intermediate, or Advanced (see Content Level for information)
- Presenter(s) names, degrees, designations, unique email address, complete mailing address, phone number**
  - Note: This information is required for each presenter.
- Presenter(s) biography (200-300 words)**
  - Note: This information is required for each presenter.
- Presenter(s) Curriculum Vitae (CV)**
  - Note: This information is required for each presenter.
- Five learning objectives that use acceptable verbs** to complete the sentence, "Participants will be able to..."
  - Note: We recommend that you view [APA's Guidance for Writing Behavioral Learning Objectives](#), which includes a list of acceptable and unacceptable verbs.
- Five citations from peer-reviewed sources.** You must include five complete citations that are relevant to your presentation's objectives. Citations must be within 10 years from the conference date from peer-reviewed journals. At least two must have a publication date after March 2020. Books, conference presentations and other non-peer reviewed materials are not acceptable citations. Citations should be from a variety of authors and the presenter cannot be the sole author on any citations submitted. All citations included in the original submission must be used in the final presentation. Additional citations beyond these five can be used in addition to the original citations and do not need to meet these criteria. All accepted presentations will be required to submit a full bibliography in advance of the conference. These will be submitted as part of the bibliography task for accepted speakers before the conference.

- **Respond to questions about your presentation’s fit with the conference.** Most of these questions can be answered in approximately 2-5 sentences. These questions include:
  - The theme of this year’s conference is “Past Perspectives, Future Horizons: Navigating Changing Currents of Complex Trauma and Dissociation.” Does your presentation address this topic? If so, please explain how it is addressed.
  - Does your presentation address complex trauma? If so, please explain how it is addressed.
  - Does your presentation address dissociative disorders and processes? If so, please explain how it is addressed.
  - ISSTD is committed to developing programs that respects cultural, individual, and role differences, including those based on age, gender, gender identity, race, ethnicity, culture, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language, and socioeconomic status. Please advise how your proposed presentation addresses sociocultural determinants.

## Symposium

- **Proposal title**
- **Content level:** Beginning/Introductory, Intermediate, or Advanced (see Content Level for information)
- **Presenter(s) names, degrees, designations, unique email address, complete mailing address, phone number**
  - Note: This information is required for each presenter.
- **Presenter(s) biography (200-300 words)**
  - Note: This information is required for each presenter.
- **Presenter(s) Curriculum Vitae (CV)**
  - Note: This information is required for each presenter.
- **Overview abstract (500 words):** The Overview abstract should be a summary of your entire symposium, which is different from the abstracts required for each individual presentations within the symposium.
- **Sub-presentation abstracts (500 words/each):** Each presentation included within the symposium is required to have its own abstract.
- **Five learning objectives that use acceptable verbs (for each presentation)** to complete the sentence, “Participants will be able to...” Please note that five learning objectives are required for *each* presentation within the symposium, NOT five learning objectives in total.
  - Note: We recommend that you view [APA’s Guidance for Writing Behavioral Learning Objectives](#), which includes a list of acceptable and unacceptable verbs.
- **Five citations from peer-reviewed sources.** You must include five complete citations that are relevant to your presentation’s objectives. Citations must be within 10 years from the conference date from peer-reviewed journals. At least two must have a publication date after March 2020. Books, conference presentations and other non-peer reviewed materials are not acceptable citations. Citations should be from a variety of authors and the presenter cannot be the sole author on any citations submitted. All citations included in the original submission must be used in the final presentation. Additional citations beyond these five can be used in addition to the original citations and do not need to meet these criteria. All accepted presentations will be required to submit a full bibliography in advance of the conference. These will be submitted as part of the bibliography task for accepted speakers before the conference.
- **Respond to questions about your presentation’s fit with the conference.** Most of these questions can be answered in approximately 2-5 sentences. These questions include:

- The theme of this year’s conference is “Beacons of Hope: Light the Way to Connection and Courage.” Does your presentation address this topic? If so, please explain how it is addressed.
- Does your presentation address complex trauma? If so, please explain how it is addressed.
- Does your presentation address dissociative disorders and processes? If so, please explain how it is addressed.
- ISSTD is committed to developing programs that respects cultural, individual, and role differences, including those based on age, gender, gender identity, race, ethnicity, culture, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language, and socioeconomic status. Please advise how your proposed presentation addresses sociocultural determinants.

## Panel Presentation

- **Proposal title**
- **Proposal abstract (500 words)**
- **Content level:** Beginning/Introductory, Intermediate, or Advanced (see Content Level for information)
- **Presenter(s) names, degrees, designations, unique email address, complete mailing address, phone number**
  - Note: This information is required for each presenter.
- **Presenter(s) biography (200-300 words)**
  - Note: This information is required for each presenter.
- **Presenter(s) Curriculum Vitae (CV)**
  - Note: This information is required for each presenter.
- **Five learning objectives that use acceptable verbs** to complete the sentence, “Participants will be able to...”
  - Note: We recommend that you view [APA’s Guidance for Writing Behavioral Learning Objectives](#), which includes a list of acceptable and unacceptable verbs.
- **Five citations from peer-reviewed sources.** You must include five complete citations that are relevant to your presentation’s objectives. Citations must be within 10 years from the conference date from peer-reviewed journals. At least two must have a publication date after March 2020. Books, conference presentations and other non-peer reviewed materials are not acceptable citations. Citations should be from a variety of authors and the presenter cannot be the sole author on any citations submitted. All citations included in the original submission must be used in the final presentation. Additional citations beyond these five can be used in addition to the original citations and do not need to meet these criteria. All accepted presentations will be required to submit a full bibliography in advance of the conference. These will be submitted as part of the bibliography task for accepted speakers before the conference.
- **Respond to questions about your presentation’s fit with the conference.** Most of these questions can be answered in approximately 2-5 sentences. These questions include:
  - The theme of this year’s conference is “Past Perspectives, Future Horizons: Navigating Changing Currents of Complex Trauma and Dissociation.” Does your presentation address this topic? If so, please explain how it is addressed.
  - Does your presentation address complex trauma? If so, please explain how it is addressed.
  - Does your presentation address dissociative disorders and processes? If so, please explain how it is addressed.
  - ISSTD is committed to developing programs that respects cultural, individual, and role differences, including those based on age, gender, gender identity, race, ethnicity, culture, national origin,

religion, sexual orientation, disability, language, and socioeconomic status. Please advise how your proposed presentation addresses sociocultural determinants.

## Forum Discussion

- **Proposal title**
- **Proposal abstract** (500 words)
- **Content level:** Beginning/Introductory, Intermediate, or Advanced (see Content Level for information)
- **Presenter(s) names, degrees, designations, unique email address, complete mailing address, phone number**
  - Note: This information is required for each presenter.
- **Presenter(s) biography (200-300 words)**
  - Note: This information is required for each presenter.
- **Presenter(s) Curriculum Vitae (CV)**
  - Note: This information is required for each presenter.
- **Five learning objectives that use acceptable verbs** to complete the sentence, “Participants will be able to...”
  - Note: We recommend that you view [APA’s Guidance for Writing Behavioral Learning Objectives](#), which includes a list of acceptable and unacceptable verbs.
- **Five citations from peer-reviewed sources.** You must include five complete citations that are relevant to your presentation’s objectives. Citations must be within 10 years from the conference date from peer-reviewed journals. At least two must have a publication date after March 2020. Books, conference presentations and other non-peer reviewed materials are not acceptable citations. Citations should be from a variety of authors and the presenter cannot be the sole author on any citations submitted. All citations included in the original submission must be used in the final presentation. Additional citations beyond these five can be used in addition to the original citations and do not need to meet these criteria. All accepted presentations will be required to submit a full bibliography in advance of the conference. These will be submitted as part of the bibliography task for accepted speakers before the conference.
- **Respond to questions about your presentation’s fit with the conference.** Most of these questions can be answered in approximately 2-5 sentences. These questions include:
  - The theme of this year’s conference is “Past Perspectives, Future Horizons: Navigating Changing Currents of Complex Trauma and Dissociation.” Does your presentation address this topic? If so, please explain how it is addressed.
  - Does your presentation address complex trauma? If so, please explain how it is addressed.
  - Does your presentation address dissociative disorders and processes? If so, please explain how it is addressed.
  - ISSTD is committed to developing programs that respects cultural, individual, and role differences, including those based on age, gender, gender identity, race, ethnicity, culture, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language, and socioeconomic status. Please advise how your proposed presentation addresses sociocultural determinants.

## Workshop

- **Proposal title**
- **Proposal abstract** (500 words)

- **Content level:** Beginning/Introductory, Intermediate, or Advanced (see Content Level for information)
- **Presenter(s) names, degrees, designations, unique email address, complete mailing address, phone number**
  - Note: This information is required for each presenter.
- **Presenter(s) biography (200-300 words)**
  - Note: This information is required for each presenter.
- **Presenter(s) Curriculum Vitae (CV)**
  - Note: This information is required for each presenter.
- **Five learning objectives that use acceptable verbs** to complete the sentence, “Participants will be able to...”
  - Note: We recommend that you view [APA’s Guidance for Writing Behavioral Learning Objectives](#), which includes a list of acceptable and unacceptable verbs.
- **Five citations from peer-reviewed sources.** You must include five complete citations that are relevant to your presentation’s objectives. Citations must be within 10 years from the conference date from peer-reviewed journals. At least two must have a publication date after March 2020. Books, conference presentations and other non-peer reviewed materials are not acceptable citations. Citations should be from a variety of authors and the presenter cannot be the sole author on any citations submitted. All citations included in the original submission must be used in the final presentation. Additional citations beyond these five can be used in addition to the original citations and do not need to meet these criteria. All accepted presentations will be required to submit a full bibliography in advance of the conference. These will be submitted as part of the bibliography task for accepted speakers before the conference.
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  - The theme of this year’s conference is “Past Perspectives, Future Horizons: Navigating Changing Currents of Complex Trauma and Dissociation.” Does your presentation address this topic? If so, please explain how it is addressed.
  - Does your presentation address complex trauma? If so, please explain how it is addressed.
  - Does your presentation address dissociative disorders and processes? If so, please explain how it is addressed.
  - ISSTD is committed to developing programs that respects cultural, individual, and role differences, including those based on age, gender, gender identity, race, ethnicity, culture, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language, and socioeconomic status. Please advise how your proposed presentation addresses sociocultural determinants.

## Poster

- **Proposal title**
- **Proposal abstract (500 words)**
- **Content level:** Beginning/Introductory, Intermediate, or Advanced (see Content Level for information)
- **Presenter(s) names, degrees, designations, unique email address, complete mailing address, phone number**
  - Note: This information is required for each presenter.
- **Presenter(s) biography (200-300 words)**
  - Note: This information is required for each presenter.

- **Presenter(s) Curriculum Vitae (CV)**
  - Note: This information is required for each presenter.
- **Five learning objectives that use acceptable verbs** to complete the sentence, “Participants will be able to...”
  - Note: We recommend that you view [APA’s Guidance for Writing Behavioral Learning Objectives](#), which includes a list of acceptable and unacceptable verbs.
- **Five citations from peer-reviewed sources.** You must include five complete citations that are relevant to your presentation’s objectives. Citations must be within 10 years from the conference date from peer-reviewed journals. At least two must have a publication date after March 2020. Books, conference presentations and other non-peer reviewed materials are not acceptable citations. Citations should be from a variety of authors and the presenter cannot be the sole author on any citations submitted. All citations included in the original submission must be used in the final presentation. Additional citations beyond these five can be used in addition to the original citations and do not need to meet these criteria. All accepted presentations will be required to submit a full bibliography in advance of the conference. These will be submitted as part of the bibliography task for accepted speakers before the conference.
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  - Does your presentation address complex trauma? If so, please explain how it is addressed.
  - Does your presentation address dissociative disorders and processes? If so, please explain how it is addressed.
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## Media

- **Proposal title**
- **Proposal abstract** (500 words)
- **Content level:** Beginning/Introductory, Intermediate, or Advanced (see Content Level for information)
- **Presenter(s) names, degrees, designations, unique email address, complete mailing address, phone number**
  - Note: This information is required for each presenter.
- **Presenter(s) biography (200-300 words)**
  - Note: This information is required for each presenter.
- **Presenter(s) Curriculum Vitae (CV)**
  - Note: This information is required for each presenter.
- **Five learning objectives that use acceptable verbs** to complete the sentence, “Participants will be able to...”
  - Note: We recommend that you view [APA’s Guidance for Writing Behavioral Learning Objectives](#), which includes a list of acceptable and unacceptable verbs.

- **Five citations from peer-reviewed sources.** You must include five complete citations that are relevant to your presentation's objectives. Citations must be within 10 years from the conference date from peer-reviewed journals. At least two must have a publication date after March 2020. Books, conference presentations and other non-peer reviewed materials are not acceptable citations. Citations should be from a variety of authors and the presenter cannot be the sole author on any citations submitted. All citations included in the original submission must be used in the final presentation. Additional citations beyond these five can be used in addition to the original citations and do not need to meet these criteria. All accepted presentations will be required to submit a full bibliography in advance of the conference. These will be submitted as part of the bibliography task for accepted speakers before the conference.
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  - The theme of this year's conference is "Past Perspectives, Future Horizons: Navigating Changing Currents of Complex Trauma and Dissociation." Does your presentation address this topic? If so, please explain how it is addressed.
  - Does your presentation address complex trauma? If so, please explain how it is addressed.
  - Does your presentation address dissociative disorders and processes? If so, please explain how it is addressed.
  - ISSTD is committed to developing programs that respects cultural, individual, and role differences, including those based on age, gender, gender identity, race, ethnicity, culture, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language, and socioeconomic status. Please advise how your proposed presentation addresses sociocultural determinants.

## Content Level

Presentations must designate the knowledge/skill level required of the participant (i.e., Beginning/Introductory, Intermediate, or Advanced). Although these are only general guides, they are required in order to comply with continuing education regulations. ISSTD is committed to offering presentations at all levels.

*Note:* Please consider submitting a presentation at the beginning/introductory or advanced level as we typically receive fewer submissions at these levels but they are highly requested by conference attendees.

- **Beginning/Introductory:** Suitable for all professional participants (including students). Introduces learners to a content area; includes information about a condition, treatment method, or issue; and involve learning and comprehending content.
- **Intermediate:** Provides information that builds on knowledge practitioners with some experience already have. Focus on skill-building or adding knowledge, possibly following a brief overview of basic information, and involve using information in concrete situations and understanding the underlying structure of the material.
- **Advanced:** Provides content for participants who have been working in the content area and have a clear understanding of the issues. These cover and address the complexities involved in the work and involve synthesizing material to create new patterns or structures or evaluating material for a specific purpose.

# Abstracts

Abstracts are the primary information used by our reviewers and Annual Conference Committee to evaluate your presentation and the primary information attendees use to determine which presentations they will attend.

- Abstracts should **clearly convey the main information** that will be presented.
- Abstracts should be at **least 300 words and are limited to 500 words**.
- **Research/scientific presentation** abstracts should include:
  - Purpose / Introduction
    - Here, summarize existing literature on the topic, provide a rationale for the importance of the study, and provide justification for your study aims and hypotheses.
  - Methods
    - Who were your participants? What measures / tools did you use to study your variables? What was your study design? What were the study procedures? What was your analytic approach?
  - Results
    - What were the study results?
  - Conclusions
    - Here, summarize the results in language that is easy for every reader to understand. Discuss how your findings do or do not align with past research, emphasize how the research findings further our understanding trauma and dissociation, highlight how these findings are relevant for clinical practice, and/or discuss future directions for research that builds upon your study.
- **Clinical presentation abstracts** should include (but not limited to):
  - Brief description of the clinical problem to be addressed
  - Background on why the presentation is needed in the field
  - Discussion of the content (e.g., technique, approach, theory) being taught that is in response to the need in the field
  - Method(s) to be used in presentation (e.g., lecture, case presentation, discussion, role-plays, videos)
  - How information conveyed can be used in attendee's clinical practice

## Advice from ISSTD Scientific Committee Members

- An abstract should be **concise and organized**. The abstract should tell a story that flows from beginning to end. An unorganized and difficult-to-follow abstract is one of the most common reasons we cannot adequately evaluate the quality of the abstract, making it less likely to be accepted!
- Be clear about the **theories or research that underscore your presentation**. We need to understand what led you to the knowledge and ideas that you intend to share with our conference attendees. Are you sharing the work of others? Have you used past clinical approaches to develop your own intervention tool? Tell us the theories (e.g., EMDR, internal family systems, psychodynamic) and research findings, or lack thereof, that led you to your understanding of the topic you intend to present.

- Explicitly state how the presentation **furtheres our understanding** of complex trauma and dissociation. Tell us exactly why you believe the information you plan to present extends what we currently know about the field. Or, if it is summarizing information already known in the field, explain why it warrants being presented at this conference.
- **Share your completed abstract with at least two professional colleagues.** Ask them whether they can understand your ideas and presentations based on the abstract alone. It is often helpful to get feedback from peers familiar and unfamiliar with your work.
- When relevant, **discuss the role of larger systems of harm** (e.g., lack of protection of children from childhood abuse, racism against people of color, bias against LGBTQ+ communities). Many of the topics relevant to ISSTD are nested within these larger systems, which play a critical role in shaping the harm and responses to harm in our history. Thus, consider these systems and discuss their role, as relevant to your presentation.
- If anything is unclear in the submission guidelines, **ask the conference committee for clarity.** We are excited to read the brilliant ideas of our community and members. We offer these guidelines so that you can transform your ideas into acceptable submissions. If you have questions, please contact the conference committee so that we can help you! It will also allow us to make revisions to these guidelines to help more people in the future.

## Common Mistakes to Avoid

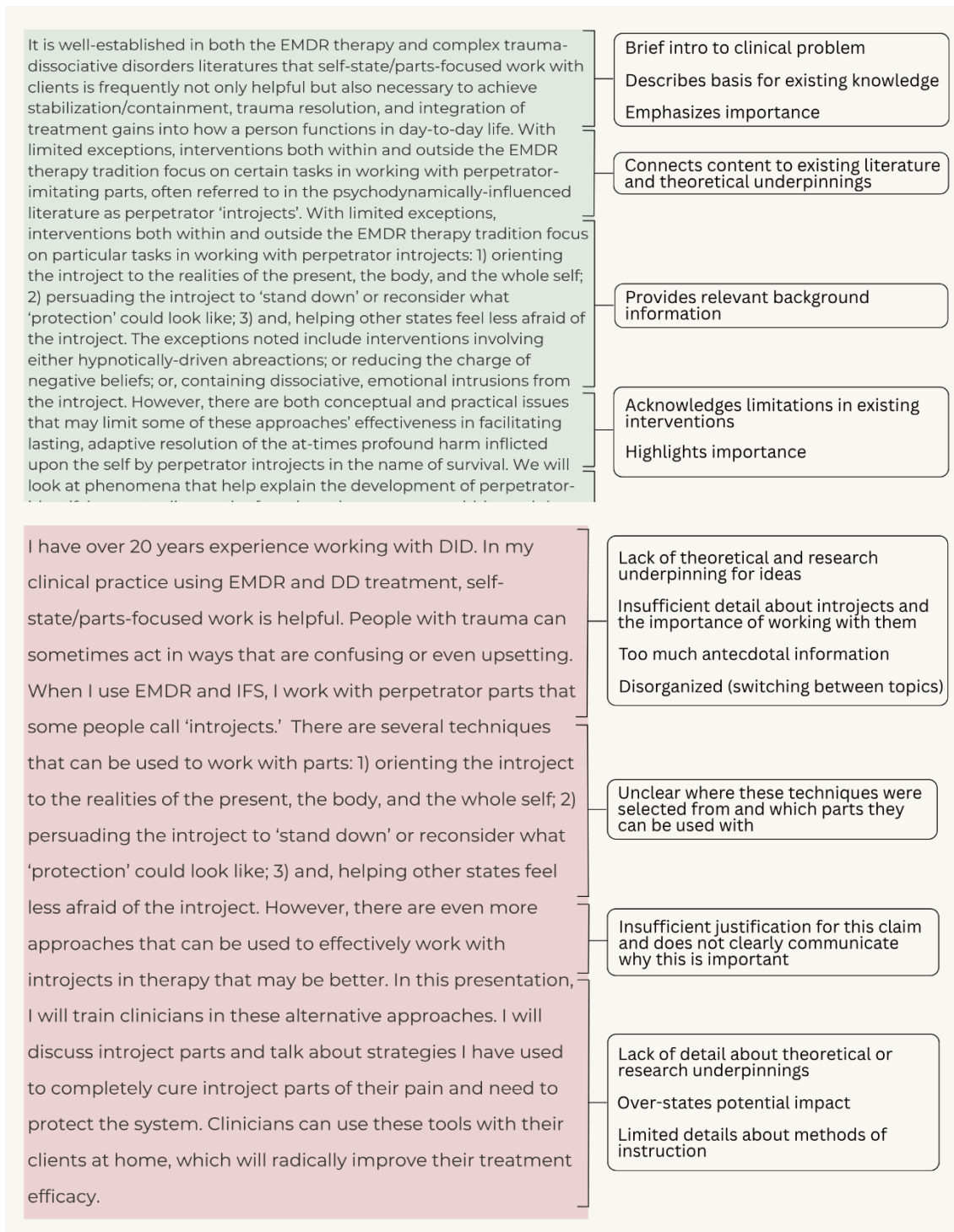
- **Review the sample abstracts below.** We provide examples of successful abstracts, along with weakened versions, to scaffold your understanding of what makes an abstract strong. Follow their format to create an outline for your own.
- **Don't assume that readers or reviewers will be familiar** with your particular area of work. The reviewers represent a diverse group of people across fields (e.g., psychology, social work, psychiatry, medicine, nursing) and with varying degrees of clinical and research experience. The same is often true at our conference. Therefore, write your abstract in a way that is inclusive to a wide breadth of potential readers.
- Avoid **over-stating** your findings or potential impact. Try not to over-interpret the results or make broad claims not supported by your study or presentation. Remain open and curious about your impact rather than making definitive claims that are untrue.
- Be **objective.** Stick to the facts. Avoid inputting your opinion into the abstract unless you are also providing a research or theoretical justification for doing so.
- Use **as few words as necessary** to explain your point. We often encounter submissions that use wordy prose or rely on elaborate words and/or sentence structures to make a point that could be more clearly and concisely stated. Use your 300-500 words intentionally. If you do not need the words to make your point, omit them.

- Use **inclusive** language. We will not accept proposals that use language that is biased, argumentative, or oppressive.
- **Promote open-access science.** Our conference values making our field’s knowledge accessible. When possible, avoid a proprietary focus, such as promoting the presenter’s book or a copyrighted technique.

## Examples

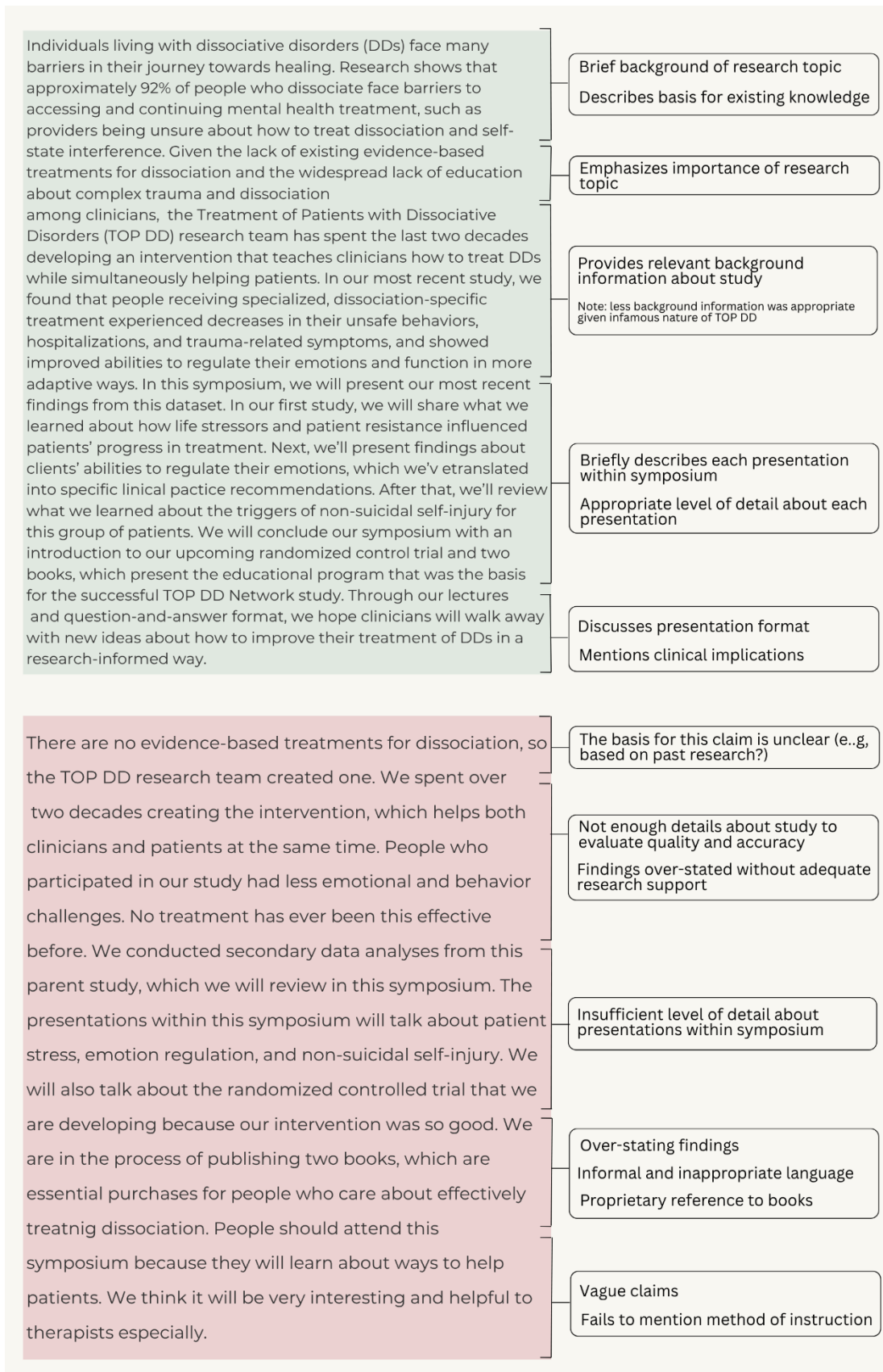
### Example 1: Clinical Abstract (3hr Workshop, Intermediate)

See below for a sample strong (green) and weakened (red) abstract. The abstracts are examples of the same content/presentation.



## Example 2: Research Abstract (1.5hr Symposium, Overview Abstract, Beginner/Introductory)

See below for a sample strong (green) and weakened (red) abstract. The abstracts are examples of the same content/presentation.



## Learning Objectives

Objectives should advise what the participant will be able to do once they have completed a conference session and should be measurable. Please make your objectives as detailed and specific as possible. See [APA's Guidance for Writing Behavioral Learning Objectives](#) for more information.

### Strong Examples

- Name three existing approaches to working with perpetrator-identifying self-states.
- Describe two reasons that mapping a client's self-system early in treatment may be helpful.
- Identify at least two precautions for employing the Introject Decathexis protocol.
- List triggers that lead individuals with dissociative disorders to engage in non-suicidal self-injury.
- Summarize the impact of life stressors and client resistance on treatment outcomes in the TOP DD studies.
- List specific treatment interventions that can be used with individuals struggling with unsafe behaviors

### Weak Examples

- Learn about approaches to working with self-states
- Understand why mapping a client's self-system early in treatment is helpful
- Know at least two precautions for employing the protocol taught in the workshop
- Become familiar with reasons for non-suicidal self-injury
- Appreciate the impact of stressors and resistance in treatment
- Remember treatment interventions based on the symposium content

## Presenter Biographies

All presenters are required to submit a 200 to 300 word professional biography written in third person that **must** include the following information:

- Highest degree including type of degree, major, university and graduation year
- Professional work history
- Summary of publications (if applicable)
- Summary of training completed
- Involvement in ISSTD and other associations
- Awards and designations (if applicable)

See below for successful examples.

## Example 1 (Professional):



Joan A. Turkus  
MD

McLean, VA, United States

Joan A. Turkus, MD maintains a consulting and clinical practice in psychiatry and traumatology in McLean, Virginia. She is the Medical Director, TraumaSci: Complex Trauma Disorders Program at Dominion/HCA Hospital in Falls Church, Virginia and Co-Founder/Past Medical Director of The Center: Posttraumatic Disorders Program at the Psychiatric Institute of Washington, DC.

Dr. Turkus has years of experience in the trauma field and maintains a national profile with teaching and consultation. She is a graduate of Rutgers University with a degree in pharmacy and graduated from The George Washington University School of Medicine with honors. She is a Distinguished Life Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association and a Fellow of the International Society for the Study of Trauma and Dissociation, of which she is a Past President. She has been awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award, the Cornelia Wilbur Award for clinical contributions, and a Distinguished Achievement Award by the International Society for the Study of Trauma and Dissociation. She is a Diplomate of both the American Board of Psychiatry and the American Board of Forensic Psychiatry.

She is trained in psychiatry, traumatology, clinical hypnosis and EMDR. She maintains a keen interest in neurobiology and psychopharmacology, particularly in their application to the complexity of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder.

## Example 2 (Student):

Shae Nester (they/them) is a doctoral student pursuing a Ph.D. in clinical psychology at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro in the USA, where their current research is focused on using experience sampling designs to understand momentary dissociation and interoceptive functioning among trauma survivors. Prior to pursuing their Ph.D., they received their master's degree in clinical psychology at Towson University in 2021, where they worked in the Treatment of Patients with Dissociative Disorders research lab with Dr. Bethany Brand. Here, their research was primarily focused on non-suicidal self-injury, and the assessment and treatment of dissociative disorders. As part of these research teams, Shae produced close to 20 published manuscripts. They serve as an ongoing research consultant for several external collaborations, including with the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, University of Maryland's SAFE Center, and Survivor Alliance. They have over 8 years of clinical experience working with trauma survivors, with a particular focus on severe childhood abuse, sex trafficking, and complex dissociative disorders. They currently provide therapy and assessments as the UNCG Psychology Clinic. Shae serves as a member of the ISSTD Scientific Committee and Annual Awards Committee, and was the recipient of the 2023 Outstanding Student Award from ISSTD for their critical contributions to the field of trauma and dissociation.

## Criteria for Review

Each presentation will be reviewed by at least two members of the ISSTD Scientific Committee. The reviewers will include at least one psychologist and one social worker in order to comply with continuing education requirements. Reviews will be blind (reviewers will not be able to see the names of the presenters). Different

evaluative criteria and questions will be used for clinical and scientific/research presentations. We will utilize specialty reviewers when necessary to ensure each submission is properly reviewed.

Reviewers will review the following information about each submission:

- How well the presentation relates to the ISSTD Core Areas of Knowledge
- Scientific relevance to the field of trauma and dissociation (Scientific/Research only)
- Advancement of research in the field of trauma and dissociation (Scientific/Research only)
- Clinical importance in the field of trauma and dissociation (Clinical only)
- Originality and presentation of new/different perspectives
- Inclusion of how the conference theme, complex trauma, dissociation and sociocultural determinants are addressed (please be as detailed as possible in this section)

Reviewers will also review the presentation writing style and adherence to guidelines. Presentations may be accepted on the condition that changes be made to ensure the information is clear and in line with the guidelines.

## Potential to Distress

All submissions must declare whether the presentation has potential to cause audience distress. The conference abstract submission site will ask about this and if you answer yes, will ask you to provide details about the reason the presentation could cause audience distress. The submission site will ask you about this issue; you do not need to place a statement about potential for distress in your abstract. Should your presentation be accepted, the information included in the submission will be shared so please ensure that the detailed description is written in a way that is acceptable for publication without editing.

## Statement of Ethical Standards

All work presented at the ISSTD Annual Conference must conform to discipline-appropriate national or professional ethical standards. ISSTD strongly opposes the exploitation of patients for any purpose. Submissions wherein clinicians, researchers, or academics collaborate and/or co-present with their own patients are considered dual relationships and are wholly unacceptable. All case material, including biographical information, must be disguised so that the patient's identity is concealed. All presentation contents should be appropriately cited giving credit to the original author when appropriate.