



Chairing a Session

As part of the conference, you will be given an opportunity to chair sessions. A chair is an individual who ensures a conference session runs smoothly, by guiding speakers and making sure the schedule is adhered to. It can be a fantastic CPD (Continued Professional Development) opportunity, as well as provide greater confidence in public speaking and presenting.

Here are some top tips that we've gathered as a committee:

1. **The focus is on the speakers:** as a chair you'll oversee the speaker(s) and ensure their objectives and that of the audiences are met. You won't have to speak throughout the session, unless required, but instead introduce and conclude proceedings.
2. **Do your research:** make sure you have read through the speaker(s) bios beforehand and know their presentation topics, so you are able to introduce them to the audience in an informative way.
3. **Admin role:** as a chair you will be required to do certain admin tasks. You may be asked to keep an eye on any incoming audience questions for the Q&A or speak about 'online etiquette' (such as staying muted during the presentation). These admin requirements will be explained to you in advance.
4. **Timings:** timings are a large part of a chair's role, especially when there are speakers before and after your session. Keep an eye on the clock, and ensure things remain on track when questions are being asked and answered. It's a chair role to ensure you all (speakers and audience included) finish on time.
5. **Enjoy yourself!** It may be cheesy and a bit of cliché but enjoy yourself! It's a great honour to chair a conference session and you should be proud of yourself and everyone involved. Your enthusiasm and effort will influence the audience and their enjoyment of the talk.

Suggested Resources

[You Tube video of a chair in action:](#) CIfA2022 'Journeys into an Archaeological Career'.

Organised by Dr Claire Corkill and Dr Jo Kirton (CBA) and presented by CIfA EC SIG with Phil Pollard as Chair.