

**PROTOCOL FOR SUBMISSION AND HANDLING OF
ABSTRACTS SUBMITTED FOR POSSIBLE PRESENTATION AT
A SASA CONFERENCE**

(All communications shall be conducted online)

1. ABSTRACT PREPARATION:

Abstracts shall be prepared following the “SASA *Guidelines for the Preparation of Abstracts*” ([Attachment 1](#))

Guidelines shall be available (SASA central website; Local Organizing Committee's website)
Abstracts not following the Guidelines shall be returned to their authors and shall not be reviewed

2. ABSTRACT SUBMISSION:

All abstracts shall be submitted to the office of the Chairman, Scientific Committee
(currently: alain.fymat@fimas.org)

Within three (3) business days following the receipt of any abstract, a representative of the above-named office shall issue to the author an “Acknowledgment of Receipt of Abstract and Submission for Review”

3. ABSTRACT SUBMISSION DEADLINE:

SASA's Scientific Committee shall establish a strict deadline for submission of Abstracts
The above set deadline may only be amended under exceptional circumstances to accrue to the benefit of SASA (for example: greater participation to the SASA Conference)

Individuals who have experienced extreme hardship that caused them to submit after the deadline may appeal the rejection of their abstract by contacting directly the Chairman, SASA Scientific Committee. On a case by case basis, the appeal process shall follow SASA's established procedure in “SASA *Appeal Procedure for Abstracts Submitted after the Deadline*” ([Attachment 2](#))

3. ABSTRACT REVIEW AND OUTCOME:

All abstracts shall be forwarded to two (2) members of SASA's Scientific Committee (membership listed on SASA website) for review and consideration.

Abstract review and disposition shall follow the procedure established in “SASA *Instructions to Reviewers of Abstracts*” ([Attachment # 3](#)). Guidance to reviewers is provided in “SASA *Guide to Reviewers*” ([Attachment 4](#)).

Within two (2) weeks after receipt of an abstract, the office of the Chairman, Scientific Committee will notify the submitting author of the abstract disposition in any one of the following forms:

“Acceptance without modification”

“Acceptance with suggested modifications”

“Conditional Acceptance with required modification(s)”

“Rejection”

Conditionally accepted abstracts shall be returned for re-review within two (2) weeks from the date of notification. Final disposition shall be made and communicated to the author within one

(1) week thereafter

The decision to reject an abstract is not appealable

Attachment 1
SASA Guidelines for the Preparation of Abstracts

Checklist to form Part of the Submission:

Thank you for submitting your Abstract for possible presentation at the 2015 SOCIETY FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE IN AFRICA (SASA) Conference “Science Research & Education in Africa”, Toronto, Canada, August 28-September 2, 2015.

Please make sure you have satisfied the points on the following checklist before submitting your Abstract. If you have any questions about the submission process, please contact alain.fymat@fiimas.org.

1. **Email Addresses:** Provide a list of the email addresses for all the co-authors so we can inform them when the Abstract has been received and what decision was made regarding its acceptance or rejection.
2. **File Format:** PDF or WORD file.
3. **Potential Competing Interests:** Declare any such interests at the end of your forwarding Abstract.
4. **Submission by a Non-Author:** You cannot submit the Abstract on behalf of the authors.
5. **Contact Author:** As part of the submission process, assign a contact author, and this can be yourself or a co-author. Once the Abstract is submitted the contact author takes responsibility so only he/she will be able to receive correspondence sent throughout the peer review process.
6. **Conditions of Submission, and Copyright and License Agreement:** All the authors of the Abstract must have:

Read and agreed to its content,

Agreed that readily reproducible materials described in the Abstract will be freely available to any scientist wishing to use them for non-commercial purposes,

Have ethical approval for any human or animal experimentation, and

Confirm that the Abstract is original, has not already been published in a

journal and is not currently under consideration by another journal.

Grant to any third party, in advance and in perpetuity, the right to use, reproduce or disseminate the article for non-commercial use. However, authors retain the copyright of their Abstract and are free to reproduce and disseminate their work.

Open Access:

All accepted Abstracts will be conditionally published online in the SASA website: www.sasascience.net. This condition will be removed when the Abstract would have been presented by its author(s) at the Conference. The publication is made freely and permanently accessible online shortly after presentation, without subscription charges or registration barriers.

Content Overview:

For the 2014 SASA Conference, the following types of Abstracts will be considered that promote the Conference's theme "SCIENTIFIC INNOVATION FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT":

Research - reports of data from original research.

Reviews - summaries of recent insights in specific research areas within the scope of the Conference.

Citing articles in submitted Abstracts:

Articles in submitted Abstracts should be cited in the same way as articles in a traditional scientific journal. Because articles are not printed, they do not have page numbers; instead, they are given a unique article number.

Article citations follow this format:

Authors: Title. *J Nanobiotechnol* [year], [volume number]:[article number].

e.g. Roberts LD, Hassall DG, Winegar DA, Haselden JN, Nicholls AW, Griffin JL: Increased hepatic oxidative metabolism distinguishes the action of Peroxisome Proliferator-Activated Receptor delta from Peroxisome Proliferator-Activated Receptor gamma in the Ob/Ob mouse. *J Nanobiotechnol* 2009, **1**:115 (refers to article 115 from Volume 1 of the journal).

SASA Appeal Process for Abstracts Submitted after the Deadline

SASA recognizes that exceptional circumstances may prevent an author from submitting his/her Abstract in a timely manner. In such situations, and on a case by case basis, SASA Scientific Committee will consider late submitted Abstracts. However, it behooves the author to make his/her case for why the Abstract is submitted past the deadline and why it deserves to be considered.

Two members of the Scientific Committee will be designated to review the author's explanation and determine whether the Abstract should be considered for review and acceptance/rejection notwithstanding its lateness.

If the above two reviews do not agree, the Chairman of the Scientific Committee will have the deciding vote.

SASA Instructions to Reviewers of Abstracts

Criteria for Acceptance and Publication:

Peer review is designed to ensure that the research published is 'good science'. Abstracts in the theme retained for the Conference will be accepted as long as the results and conclusions are scientifically justified and not misleading.

We recognize the importance of highlighting Abstracts that contain the most interesting, important or significant research. Peer reviewers are asked to indicate articles they consider to be especially interesting or significant. These Abstracts will be given greater prominence within the Conference and greater external publicity.

Submitted Abstracts will generally be reviewed by two external experts. Peer reviewers will have four possible options:

“Acceptance without modification”

“Acceptance with suggested modifications”

“Conditional Acceptance with required modification(s)”

“Rejection because inappropriate, scientifically unsound or of little value”

In deciding whether to accept or reject an Abstract, a reviewer asks him/herself whether the scientific community is better served by accepting or rejecting the Abstract. The suitability of a research Abstract is assessed by peer reviewers, who base their decision primarily on the Abstract's validity and coherence but who also consider its comprehensibility and level of interest to the Conference participants.

When asking for revisions, reviewers have two possible goals: to ask authors to tighten their arguments based on existing data or to identify areas where more data are needed. Reviewers are also asked to say if the manuscript is not sufficiently clearly written for presentation. In such cases authors are asked to revise the manuscript, seeking, if necessary, the assistance of colleagues or a commercial editing service.

SASA allows authors a maximum of two revisions.

SASA Guide to Reviewers

This Guide for reviewers contains information about basic considerations that should be applied when reviewing an Abstract that has been submitted for possible presentation at a SASA Conference.

Submitted Abstracts are usually reviewed by two (at times) more experts. Peer reviewers will be asked to recommend whether an Abstract should be accepted, revised or rejected. They should also alert the SASA Scientific Committee Chair of any issues relating to author misconduct such as plagiarism and unethical behavior.

SASA operates using a closed peer review system.

Acceptance and online publication of Abstracts submitted is dependent primarily on their validity and coherence, as judged by peer reviewers. The reviewers may also be asked whether the writing is comprehensible and how interesting they consider the Abstract to be. Submitted Abstracts will be sent to peer reviewers, unless they are out of scope or do not conform to the theme of the SASA Conference for which they are submitted, or else if the presentation or written English is of an unacceptably low standard.

Points to consider:

Reviewers are asked to provide detailed, constructive comments that will help the authors improve their submission. A key issue is whether the work has serious flaws that should preclude its acceptance, or whether there are additional experiments or data required to support the conclusions drawn. Where possible, reviewers should provide references to substantiate their comments.

Reviewers should address the points below and indicate whether they consider any required revisions to be 'Major Compulsory Revisions', 'Minor Essential Revisions' or 'Discretionary Revisions'. In general, revisions are likely to be 'Major Compulsory Revisions' if additional controls are required to support the claims or the interpretations are not supported by the data, if further analysis is required that may change the conclusions, or if the methods used are inadequate or statistical errors have been made.

Is the question posed original, important and well defined? The research question posed by the authors should be easily identifiable and understood. It is useful to the authors if reviewers comment on the originality and importance of the study within the context of its field and its relevance to the theme of the SASA Conference. If the research question is unoriginal because related work has been published previously, please give references. Reviewers should ask themselves after reading the manuscript if they have learnt something new and if there is a clear conclusion from the study.

Are the data sound and well controlled? If you feel that inappropriate controls have been used please say so, indicating the reasons for your concerns, and suggesting alternative controls where appropriate. If you feel that further experimental/clinical evidence is required to substantiate the results, please provide details.

Is the interpretation (discussion and conclusion) well balanced and supported by the data? The interpretation should discuss the relevance of all the results in an unbiased manner. Are the interpretations overly positive or negative? Conclusions drawn from the study should be valid and result directly from the data shown, with reference to other relevant work as applicable.

Have the authors provided references wherever necessary?

Are the methods appropriate and well described, and are sufficient details provided to allow others to evaluate and/or replicate the work? Please remark on the suitability of the methods for the study, which should be clearly described and reproducible by peers in the field. If statistical analyses have been carried out, specify whether or not they need to be assessed specifically by an additional reviewer with statistical expertise.

What are the strengths and weaknesses of the methods? Please comment on any improvements that could be made to the study design to enhance the quality of the results. If any additional experiments are required, please give details. If novel experimental techniques were used, please pay special attention to their reliability and validity.

Can the writing, organization, tables and figures be improved? Please do comment if you consider the standard is below that expected for a scientific presentation and publication. If the Abstract is organized in such a manner that it is illogical or not easily accessible to the reader, please suggest improvements. Please provide feedback on whether the data are presented in the most appropriate manner; for example, is a table being used where a graph would give increased clarity? Are the figures of a high enough quality to be published in their present form?

When revisions are requested. Reviewers may recommend revisions for any or all of the following reasons: data need to be added to support the authors' conclusions; better justification is needed for the arguments based on existing data; or the clarity and/or coherence of the Abstract needs to be improved.

Are there any ethical or competing interests issues you would like to raise? The study should adhere to ethical standards of scientific/medical research and the authors should declare that they have received ethics approval and or patient consent for the study, where appropriate. Whilst we do not expect reviewers to delve into authors' competing interests, if you are aware of any issues that you do not think have been adequately addressed, please inform the SASA Scientific Committee Chair.

Reviewers are reminded of the importance of timely reviews. If reviewers encounter or foresee any problems meeting the deadline for a report, they should contact The SASA Scientific Committee Chair.

Confidentiality Any Abstract sent for peer review is a confidential document and should remain so until it is formally accepted and published.

Minimization of the Burden of the Peer Review:

To support efficient and thorough peer review, we aim to reduce the number of times a manuscript is reviewed, thereby speeding up the acceptance and publication process and reducing the burden on peer reviewers.