ILA STYLE GUIDE

The main purpose of the *ILA Style Guide* is to ensure that the style used in ILA's in-house publications and communications (e.g., newsletters, conference program books, association emails) is clear and consistent. Due to our global, multidisciplinary membership, the ILA follows, in general, the style of the Associated Press (AP) with the UNESCO manual for English language publications also being used as a reference. These professional style manuals are international in nature, and they value clarity. When formatting references, we usually follow APA 7th edition. The *ILA Style Guide* is not a comprehensive manual, but rather a handy sheet for resolving common confusions in ILA communication. It is also a living document and will be revised as new style questions arise and are agreed upon.

Spelling, Foreign, & Special Words

- American English should be used (not British English).
- Geographical names should be spelled according to the official usage of the country concerned.
- Names of departments and organizations that are used in people's affiliations should be spelled according to the official usage of the organization.
- Foreign words and phrases that a) are not proper nouns and b) have not become anglicized (e.g., *perestroika*) should be italicized and should include any appropriate diacritical marks.
- Specialized or otherwise emphasized words should be italicized.
- Use double quotes around a word or phrase for direct quotation or to indicate irony.
- Spell out numbers up to ten. 11 and above should be numerals.

Capitalization

- Capitalize the first word of the title, the last word of the title, all principal words (i.e., nouns, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, subordinating conjunctions, and prepositions that are used adjectivally or adverbially), and **all words that are longer than three letters**.
- If the first letter of a hyphenated, compound word is capitalized, the first letter after the hyphen should also be capitalized unless the only reason for capitalization is that it started a sentence.
- **Do not capitalize models and theories** (if someone's name is part of the model or theory, capitalize only their name), but do capitalize test names as they are considered publication titles/proper nouns.
- Capitalize acronyms but note that when an acronym is spelled out the words within it may not be capitalized according to the rules already noted.

Punctuation & Other Marks

- Serial (Oxford) commas should be used. For example: We bought apples, bananas, and grapes.
- Punctuation is used inside of quotation marks and outside of parentheses.
- Em Dash: Em dashes can be used in place of commas, parentheses, or colons. When to use: In the place of commas, they enhance readability. Em dashes are less formal than parenthesis and draw more attention to the parenthetical content. Em dashes can be used in place of a colon to emphasize the conclusion of the sentence. While most style guides do not insert a space before and after the em dash, AP (Associated Press) style does and so does ILA.
- En Dash: En dashes are usually used to represent a span or range of numbers, dates, or times. It can replace the words "to" or "through." En dashes can also be used between words that are connected in some way. For example, "the Baltimore–Detroit flight."
- Hyphens: Hyphens are usually only used for hyphenated compound words. ILA does not hyphenate words for the purposes of line breaks. Instead, the full word is used on the next line.
- Semicolons: Avoid the use of semicolons. Instead, write one sentence with a connector (e.g., a conjunction) or write two sentences. If a presenter in a concurrent session guide has more than one affiliation, use a semicolon in between the affiliations.
- Spacing: Use one space in between sentences, not two.
- Italics: Italicize titles of books, art, movies, etc. that are mentioned in the body of a text or title. If needed, italics can be used for emphasis or specialized language, but use these sparingly! Note: Depending on the submission system, italics may not be possible to format.

Avoiding Bias and Stereotypes

- Do not use language that victimizes. For example, use "wheelchair user" not "confined to a wheelchair," or "people with a disability," not "the disabled." **Note**: Some individuals and groups have preferred language that they use to describe themselves. Be mindful of that and use as appropriate. For example, some "people with autism" prefer to be referred to as "autistic."
- Avoid gender-specific words. For example, use "chairperson" not chairman, "executive" not businessman/woman, or "non-specialist" instead of layman.
- Avoid using America as a stand in for the USA. Instead use U.S. as a descriptor and U.S.A. for the country. Use United Kingdom or U.K. unless there is a reason to specify England or Great Britain (England, Scotland, and Wales).

Top Tips Regarding Your Conference Title and Description

Question: With so many sessions at the conference, how can you make your session stand out and attract the audience most interested in your topic?

Answer: First, craft a distinctive and enticing title – in 110 characters or less! If someone is not excited by your title, they may not even read your short description, so having a good title really matters! This is the primary way that you'll attract people to your session.

Second, write a descriptive, specific, and compelling short description. Think of it as a 30-second elevator pitch where you say what you did and what attendees will learn by attending. Consider opening with a thought-provoking statement about the focus of your presentation. Please make sure that the content fits with your assigned presentation format! For example, if your presentation format is an interactive roundtable, don't say, "this workshop"!

Third, check your three key takeaways and make sure they succinctly describe what people will learn/come away with if they attend your session. We encourage you to take reviewer comments into consideration during your revision process.

After you read these tips, please edit your submission, then check your ILA profile to be sure your name, title, and affiliation will be listed correctly in the program book. If, for example, you are a CEO and a PhD Student, or a Professor and a Mayor, you can list two distinct identities.

1. DO follow the ILA Style Guide and:
   - ☐ Use the appropriate tense in your description. The conference takes place in the future, therefore, "Presenters will share…" or "Attendees will learn…."
   - ☐ When discussing the paper or work you are presenting use the present tense, "This paper argues…"
   - ☐ Your work took place in the past, therefore, "The study showed…" or "Research indicated…."
   - ☐ Try not to start your description with "This session…" or "This presentation…" etc. Instead, dive right in to what your talk is about.

2. DO summarize what's special and important about your work.

- ☐ Panel Discussion – be clear about what will be discussed by the panelists, why it's important, and the basis of their expertise.
- ☐ Workshop – be clear about what skills/methods will be learned and how.
- ☐ Symposium – synthesize the whole in the overall description and make sure each presentation description within clearly states that presentation's contributions, such as research, approach, and relevance/outcomes.
- ☐ Presentation/Paper – clearly describe your program, research, approach, and relevance/outcomes.
- ☐ Interactive Roundtable Discussion – frame the topic and list the questions to be explored via discussion.
- ☐ Display Poster – be clear about the program or research, and outcomes.
- ☐ Book Buzz – the title of your book is the recommended title of your talk. A back cover blurb can be an excellent foundation for a description of your talk.

3. DO look at the examples from past conferences on the past conference page: https://ilaglobalnetwork.org/past-ila-conferences/. Click on a specific conference for a link to the printed and online programs (when available).

4. DO avoid repeating the theme in the title and description.

5. DO NOT waste precious words restating the title or format of your presentation in the description.

6. Referring to general facts and knowledge or making sweeping statements in your description is usually a waste of space.

7. DO NOT use in-text references or citations in the short description.

8. DO be sure you save your edits (click "Accept and Continue" on *every page* –until you are returned to the main menu. This will often take three or four times.) and then proofread your description to be sure it makes sense, will attract the desired audience, and is saved in the system.

9. DO check your ILA profile to be sure your name, title(s), and affiliation(s) are correct.