

Speaker Guidelines

for **BREAKOUT SESSIONS**

BREAKOUT PRESENTATIONS

Breakout and Lightning sessions are oral presentations focused on specific topics and are designed to share information via PowerPoint slides, with the opportunity for questions/answers at the end of the session. Breakout and lightning sessions are the same format and content, just different lengths of time (10 minutes vs. 5 minutes per presentation). All sessions will take place in person at the meeting facility in Boston, Massachusetts.

Sessions have audiovisual equipment available, consisting of a **laptop** computer, **LCD panel, screen**, and the appropriate **sound equipment** for room size. Sessions do not have telephone or video conferencing equipment, telephones, or internet lines available. All presentations will be preloaded onto the laptop computer.

★★ **BREAKOUT SESSIONS WILL NOT BE RECORDED** ★★

RESPONDING to THE SPEAKER INVITATION

Formal letters of invitation are sent by e-mail from the CSTE national office by Friday, March 6, 2026. Presenting authors should respond to the invitation online no later than 11:59pm EDT on Wednesday, April 1, 2026.

Submission of an abstract implies that presenting authors are committed to giving the presentation at the conference. Should circumstances change and a presenting author is unable to attend, then the author is responsible for finding a substitute presenting author. Presenting authors that fail to respond by the deadline will be considered accepted and expected to present. **Acceptance or withdrawal of an accepted abstract must be made no later than 11:59pm EDT on Wednesday, April 1, 2026.** Withdrawals made after this date or failure to present an accepted abstract could result in disqualification from presenting an abstract at future conferences.

All presenting authors must register for the conference and pay related fees. CSTE does not provide a travel allowance, honorarium, or reimbursement for presenting authors or moderators attending the conference. Presenting authors and moderators are encouraged to become CSTE members, but it is not a requirement to present at the conference. **CSTE membership is required to attend position statement sessions and the Business Meeting.**

KEY POINTS

 Breakout and lightning sessions are oral presentations with PowerPoint slides. Breakout presentations are 10 minutes each and lightning presentations are 5 minutes each.

 Speakers must accept the invitation to present by Wednesday, April 1, 2026. Presenters that do not respond by the deadline will automatically be accepted and expected to present.

 All slides must be uploaded in advance in the OpenWater account portal by Thursday, May 7, 2026. Details are available below for slides that must be uploaded on site.

 For questions about your presentation, please reach out to the moderator listed in the OpenWater account portal for your assigned session.

IMPORTANT DATES

APRIL 1, 2026
Invitation Response Due

MAY 7, 2026
Advanced Presentation
Upload of PowerPoint Slides



QUESTIONS

Contact the CSTE national office at 770.458.3811 or nationaloffice@cste.org if you have any questions that are not addressed in the guidelines or on the CSTE conference website.

DEVELOPING YOUR PRESENTATION

All breakout sessions have an overall length of 75 minutes for the meeting schedule. In order to respect presenters and the audience, all presentations must not exceed their allotted timeframes. **Presentation times do not include Q&A, which will be facilitated at the end of the session. Additionally, ensure that your presentation and its slides have been approved by your agency by the presentation upload deadline.**

Detailed presentation times can be accessed through your online information in your OpenWater Account portal. A direct link to your OpenWater account portal can be found in your acceptance e-mail.

Presentation Format	Breakout	Lightning
Key attributes	Oral presentation	Oral presentation limited to speedy sharing of relevant results and conclusion
Presentation length	10 minutes	5 minutes
Q&A	10-20 minutes at end of session	10-20 minutes at end of session
# of Presentations in Session	5-6 presentations	Up to 11 presentations per session
Session length	75 minutes	75 minutes



FORMATTING YOUR POWERPOINT

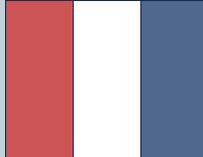
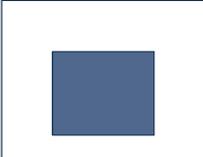
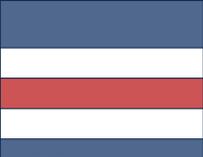
- The **acceptable file formats are .ppt, .pptx or .pdf**. If you are uploading in the OpenWater account portal before arriving onsite, the **file size limit is 10MB**. If your file is larger than 10MB, please upload your presentation file onsite in the Speaker Ready Room. This option is available until 24 hours before your presentation time.
- Use high-contrast colors between text and background for readability. Light-colored backgrounds are acceptable only when paired with dark, high-contrast lettering. Deep blue backgrounds with white or yellow text are especially effective. Avoid using dark red or blue text on dark backgrounds, as it reduces legibility. Do not place text over patterned or busy backgrounds.
- Recommended fonts are san serif font, such as Arial, because san serif fonts are easier to read than serif fonts, such as Times New Roman. **Do not use any special or customized fonts**, as these will not be on the laptops in the meeting rooms. Avoid using small print on presentations that can't be seen from a distance.
- Avoid complex graphics and tables. If video or audio is included in the presentation, use approved video/audio file formats (.mp4, .wmv or .mov) and activate captions.
- Do not include links in your presentation that require internet access.
- Simplify slides by using key words, brief and concise phrases. Avoid writing complete sentences on slides.
- Presenting authors using Apple Keynote must export their Keynote as a PowerPoint or pdf, and if possible, test it on a PC before arriving onsite. The instances of formatting issues arising from the Mac to PC transition has declined significantly over the last few years. Please be sure to preview your presentation in the Speaker Ready Room when you arrive onsite, as the laptops in this room will be the same make and model as in the meeting rooms. In the exceptional case, after all troubleshooting has been performed and we are still unable to properly repair any Mac to PC issues, you will need to present from your own laptop in the meeting room. Please bring your own power cable and HDMI adapter to the meeting in case it is needed.

Speaker Disclosure



Presenting authors must disclose to participants prior to speaking any significant financial interest or other relationships with the manufacturer(s) of any commercial product(s) or provider(s) of any commercial services discussed in a session presentation and with any commercial supports of the activity. This pertains to relationships with pharmaceutical companies, biomedical device manufacturers, or other corporations whose products or services are related to the subject matter of the presentation topic. Having an interest or affiliation with a corporate organization does not prevent a speaker from making a presentation, but the relationship must be made known in advance to the audience. Questions regarding CSTE presenter disclosure should be directed to the CSTE National Office.





PREPARING FOR YOUR SESSION AND PRESENTATION



PRACTICE / REHEARSE

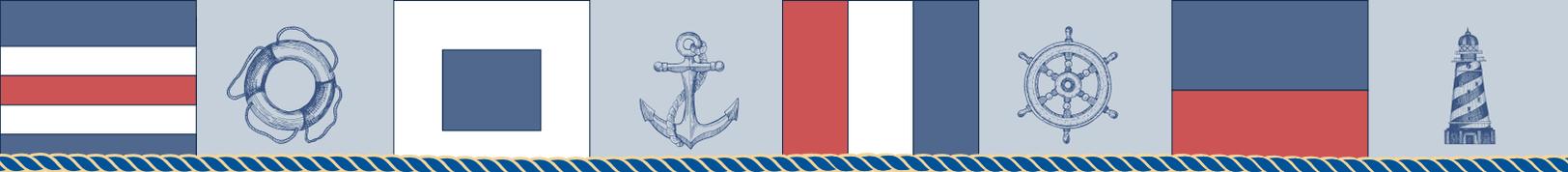
- Time yourself, then decide if you need to add or remove any content to meet the allotted time you have available. Allow participants extra time to look at visual materials and give people time to process information by pausing between topics.
- Introduce yourself by full name and agency at the beginning of your presentation.
- Limit your review of the abstract background and focus on relevant results.
- End your presentation with conclusions and contact information for attendees to reach you for further discussion outside the session date and time.



BEFORE YOUR LIVE PRESENTATION

- **Upload PowerPoint Slides – Presentations must be uploaded through your OpenWater Account portal by 11:59pm. EDT on May 7, 2026.** Presenting authors are strongly encouraged to upload their presentation slides by the advance upload deadline to help accommodate accessibility requests from other attendees. A direct link to your OpenWater Account portal can be found in your invitation email. Pre-recording of your presentation is not required; however, PowerPoint slide presentations must be uploaded before your session. After the advance deadline of May 7, 2026, presentations may only be uploaded or updated on-site in the Speaker Ready Room, no later than 24 hours prior to the start of your session. Do not upload or update a presentation in the meeting room. You may preview your presentation in the OpenWater account portal if it is uploaded by the advance deadline. **Save a copy of your presentation on a USB/flash drive to bring with you to the conference in event of technical difficulties or should you have changes to a previously submitted presentation.**
- **Speaker Ready Room** – A computer station is available for presenting authors to prepare and rehearse their presentations prior to their sessions. Presenting authors may also print one (1) copy of their presentation if needed. See the conference agenda for office hours.
- **Questions** – Questions regarding the session, time allotment, or general consent information for your session should be directed to your session moderator. Moderator contact information is provided with the session information in your OpenWater Account portal. If a moderator is not currently identified, then the Program Planning Committee has not yet selected an individual for the role and will be doing so within the next few weeks. In this case, please contact the CSTE National Office at (770) 458-3811 or nationaloffice@cste.org.
- **Handouts** – Breakout and lightning presentations will not be recorded during the 2026 CSTE Annual Conference. Participants are encouraged to make use of handouts and come prepared with enough copies for session attendees. Printing will not be available on-site through CSTE.





PREPARING FOR YOUR SESSION AND PRESENTATION

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DURING YOUR LIVE PRESENTATION

- Arrive at your designated meeting room 15 minutes prior to the scheduled session to meet other presenting authors and your moderator(s).
- Moderators will strictly enforce the presentation time. You will be interrupted by the moderator if you go over time.
- The computer in your room will be preloaded with PowerPoint presentations submitted online by the advance deadline and all presentations uploaded or updated in the Speaker Ready Room 24 hours before the start of the session.
- During the session, presenting authors are encouraged to sit at the front of the room for quick transitions.
- Briefly describe PowerPoint slides, but do not read your slides verbatim; it is strongly recommended to verbally describe visual materials (e.g., slides, charts, etc.).
- Engage with your audience by looking at them rather than the screen or your notes.
- Allow enough time for people to read each visual during presentation.
- IT and Audio-Visual technicians are available onsite for assistance when needed. Because they monitor many technical components to the conference, they are not able to remain in the room throughout a session. If you need a technician in your session, please notify the CSTE Program Staff Lead in your session.



Photography Disclosure

By participating in the annual conference, uploading photographs to social media with the hashtag #CSTE2026, or uploading photographs to the CSTE conference app and/or platform, you grant CSTE the right to take and distribute photographs, video, audio and/or electronic reproductions of events and activities for use in CSTE print and digital materials. By agreeing to present, you agree to allow CSTE to make video recordings of your presentation and archive this publicly available media on the CSTE website.

★★★ CSTE may select presentations or sessions for promotion to ★★★ media outlets during the CSTE Annual Conference. Therefore, media personnel may attend conference sessions and can be identified by their conference name badges.

