

## 2026 MODERATOR (ORGANIZER) GUIDELINES

### Special Interest Sessions

On behalf of the Program Committee, thank you for serving as a Special Interest Session moderator at the **ITS America Conference & Expo 2026**, taking place in Detroit, Michigan, June 9-12. We greatly appreciate your participation and commitment to the success of the Conference. Active communication between moderators and speakers is key to ensuring engaging and well-coordinated sessions, and your role is vital in facilitating meaningful discussion and interaction. To help you prepare, we've included important details and guidance. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact the **Conference Manager, [Dana Stange](#)**.

#### Preliminary program

Check the program tab at the [Education Website](#) for current details.

#### Conference registration

As a reminder, all speakers and moderators should register and pay on our [Conference Website](#) **by March 30, 2026**. Moderators/Organizers are eligible for a **discounted registration rate**. To register, select the Speaker category that best fits your profile — no code is required. We encourage you to register early to secure the best rate.

Please note:

- **Exhibitor Booth Personnel** and **Exhibit Hall Only** badges **do not grant speaker or attendee access** to session rooms.
- **Moderators/Organizers** must have either a **Speaker** badge or a **Full Conference** badge to access session rooms.

#### Special Interest Session format

These sessions are designed to provide a focused discussion on a specific topic of interest to the ITS community. A panel-style format is the most commonly used approach and is encouraged to promote interaction among speakers and engagement with the audience. However, a format consisting of individual presentations is also acceptable, at the discretion of the moderator and session participants.

Sessions typically:

- Include one moderator and **3–5 speakers/panelists**
- Run for **60 minutes**

#### Responsibilities of the organizer/submitter

Organizers are responsible for the **overall coordination and structure** of their session. In most cases, the organizer plays the role of moderator. Key responsibilities include:

- Designing the **session format** and ensuring it aligns with the conference's goals and guidelines.
- **Recruiting the moderator and speakers**, confirming their participation, and maintaining communication throughout the planning process.
- Keeping the session information **up to date in the speaker portal**. All edits or changes will automatically be reflected in the Conference website and digital program.
- If serving as both **organizer and moderator**, select *Moderator* in your conference profile to ensure proper role designation.

## Responsibilities of the moderator

ITS America will appoint a moderator to the session in advance of the Conference. Moderators are responsible for managing their session **before and during the Conference** to ensure a lively, informative, and well-organized experience for attendees. This includes:

- **Pre-Conference Preparation:**
  - Coordinating with speakers in advance to confirm presentation details and session logistics.
  - Determining the final presentation order for formal presentation sessions, while following the order published in the digital program and mobile app whenever possible.
  - Preparing at least one question for each speaker to encourage audience engagement and thoughtful discussion.
  
- **During the Session:**
  - Serving as the emcee, introducing speakers, maintaining timing, and ensuring smooth transitions between presentations.
  - Leading the Q&A segment, allowing attendees to ask questions either after each presentation or at the end of the session, depending on the chosen format.
  - Fostering a lively and inclusive discussion that highlights key insights and promotes audience participation.

## Moderator and speaker changes

If something occurs that prevents you from moderating your session, please advise the ITSA Events and Education Manager, [Sami Salinas](#), immediately so we can replace your role. If one of your speakers withdraws or replaces themselves, please advise the Conference Manager, [Dana Stange](#).

## Pre-Session Preparation

### Communications with speakers

ITS America will not directly contact speakers regarding session-specific details beyond general reminders. **Moderators are responsible for communicating with their speakers** and sharing any session-specific instructions.

Before the Conference, moderators should:

- Encourage speakers to log in to the [speaker portal](#) to complete any outstanding tasks by **February 24, 2026**.
- Obtain short professional bios for introductions (name, title, organization, and one–two sentences of relevant expertise).
- Confirm presentation order and speaking times.
- Review PowerPoint presentations for length and clarity.
- Remind speakers that registration and payment are required **no later than arrival at the Conference**.

### The speaker portal will be open until the end of the conference

Moderators have been granted access to their session in the speaker portal. The portal enables editing of some session details, viewing of speakers' contact information, adding and removing speakers, and editing of your own profile. We encourage moderators to look at the session to gather speaker information and to review presentation uploads.

**By 11:59 pm ET February 24, 2026, moderators should:**

- Update own profile
- Update own biography and upload photo
- Sign speaker agreement

## Allotted speaking time

All sessions are 60 minutes in length. How the time is distributed among speakers is at the discretion of the session moderator. When planning the session, please allow sufficient time for the moderator to:

- Introduce themselves, the session, and each speaker (either before each presentation or at the start, for panel discussions).
- Facilitate audience Q&A.
- Provide closing remarks and summarize key takeaways.

As a general guideline for sessions featuring formal speaker presentations, the recommended time allotments are:

5 speakers - up to 8 min. each

4 speakers - up to 10 min. each

3 speakers- up to 12 min. each

## PowerPoint template

An official Conference PowerPoint template is available in the task area of the [speaker portal](#). Speakers are strongly encouraged to use this template — especially the official title slide. Moderators are not required to use PowerPoint.

## Speaker PowerPoint presentations

Speakers are required to upload their presentations in the [speaker portal](#) by 11:59 pm ET on **May 22, 2026**. All presentations must be uploaded in advance to the speaker portal. If this presentation is not uploaded by the date above, the presenter will need to load it onto the session room laptop. If you need assistance while on-site, stop by the speaker lounge the **day before the scheduled session**.

## On-site at the Conference

### Pre-session briefing

To ensure your session runs smoothly, we ask that moderators and speakers meet at their session room **15 minutes before** the session starts to confirm that all presentations have been loaded correctly and that all support equipment is operating to the moderator's and speakers' satisfaction.

### Speaker Lounge | Huntington Place Convention Center | Room **320** | Level **3** |

The Speaker Lounge is available for all organizers, moderators, and speakers to meet and discuss their session, and for speakers to work on and practice their presentations. **We recommend that you bring your own laptop as equipment is very limited in the Speaker Lounge.**

*The Speaker Lounge hours are subject to change.*

**8** | Tuesday, 12:00pm – 5:00 pm

**10** | Thursday, 9:30am – 5:00pm

**9** | Wednesday, 9:30am – 5:00 pm

**11** | Friday, 9:30am – 2:00pm

### Session room audiovisual

Each session room will include:

- Laptop (PC), mouse, podium with microphone, screen.
- Head table microphones for Q&A.
- Pre-loaded presentations (if uploaded via speaker portal in advance).
- Wireless wi-fi (no hard lines are provided).
- On-site technical support.

### Promotion of your session

We encourage moderators and speakers to promote their participation via social media, newsletters, and other communication channels. Speakers will receive personalized promotional assets to share with your networks. [Find general media and press information here.](#)

Thank you in advance for your contribution to the success of the ITS America Conference & Expo 2026. We look forward to seeing you in Detroit.