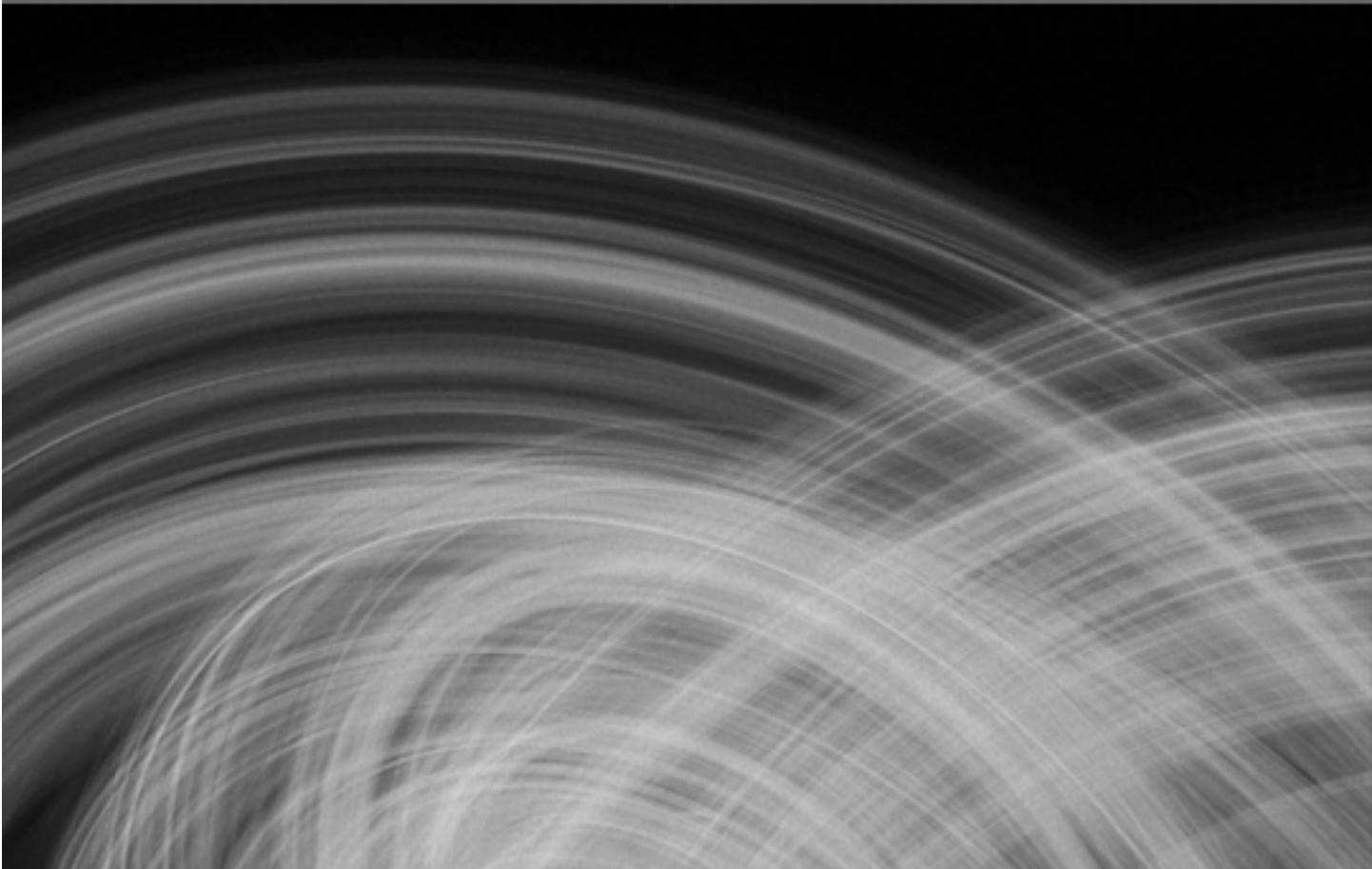




Identifying Quality Conferences

School of Advanced Studies Tip Sheet



Tip Sheet: Identifying a Quality Conference

Because of changes in technology in recent years, it is extremely easy for an individual or organization to create what appears to be legitimate research conference, publication, or both. If you are submitting your research to a conference in the near future, ask yourself the following questions to help ensure it is reputable and worth your time.

Is the conference on a list of known predatory conferences?

Dana Roth at Cal Tech Library has a list of some of the known predatory conferences around the world. While Roth regularly updates his list, it is not comprehensive. Do not assume that a conference is not predatory because it is not included on Roth's list.

Tips

- Review Roth's list of known predatory conferences: <http://libguides.caltech.edu/content.php?pid=134993>
- Ask researchers within your field who present research at reputable conferences what conferences they would recommend and why.
- Be discerning. It is better to have a smaller number of quality conference presentations than to submit your work to something that is predatory.

Is it organized by well-established and specific scholarly or professional societies or associations?

Most reputable conferences are well-established and hosted by or directly affiliated with scholarly or professional societies or associations.

Tips

- Always verify the legitimacy of any stated societies or associations with established researchers in your field of study who publish in reputable research journals and present at credible research conferences.
- Be wary of overly generic-sounding conference organizers or conference titles such as "International Research Institute" or "Global Academy Research."
- Avoid "mega-conferences" that combine many fields of study into one conference and multiple conferences being held at the same time and location. It is most typical that an organization serves a particular niche, market, or field.
- Predatory conferences are often organized by revenue-seeking companies that exploit unknowing researchers, and many are hosted outside the U.S.

What options are there to contact conference organizers?

Many conferences rely on association or society members to help peer review studies by those wishing to present and organize sessions at the conference. However, the main method of contact for professional or academic conferences is rarely a free email account (e.g., Gmail, Yahoo, etc.). Many credible conferences often have contacts affiliated with a ".edu" address. Many quality conferences will use a ".org" or ".com" address that is specifically affiliated with the conference or association hosting the conference.

Tips

- Be wary of conferences that use free email accounts as their main method of contact.
- If a conference solicitation email goes to your spam folder, be wary of the legitimacy of the conference.
- Always check the conference website to identify their organization of content. Most of the higher quality conferences have a strong web presence.
- Many conferences have online submission forms where you submit an abstract and attach your paper (if required).
 - Follow-up is conducted via email, so be sure to monitor the email account you used when filling out the submission forms.

What is the timeline of paper acceptance to a conference?

Regardless of conference size, professional or scholarly conferences generally receive a fairly large number of submissions. Session organizers need time to adequately review submissions to guarantee the quality of the work that will be presented at the conference. This can often take one or more months as reviewers are often doing the work on a voluntary basis.

Tips

- Although conference acceptance rates are often much higher than quality peer-reviewed journal acceptance rates, predatory conferences often promise alarmingly quick decisions for submissions – sometimes as fast as 1-2 weeks. Such a quick decision makes it unlikely that a peer-review was actually conducted on your submission.
- Plan ahead as you look for conferences. Calls for research—whether presentation, poster, or round table format—generally occur 6-11 months in advance of the event.

Does the conference have research or paper awards?

While many conferences have awards for outstanding research and papers, be mindful of conferences that guarantee a specific proportion of papers will earn an award or recognition of some type.

Tips

- Awards and accolades only mean something professionally if they are from a reputable organization, foundation, society, or association.

Is there a promise of publication based on conference presentation?

Professional and scholarly associations often publish a journal or several journals. Publishing in their journals is not typically guaranteed even if you have presented at the association or society conference.

Tips

- Be extremely wary of these promises; predatory conferences often promise full publication in predatory journals.
- Review our Tip Sheet “Vetting Journals” before you submit your research for publication.