

What Drives the Growth of Black Holes?

Moderator Guidelines

The SOC and LOC would like to ensure that all meeting participants feel safe, welcomed, and included, and that our meeting promotes and helps reflect diversity, inclusion, and excellence in science. As a session moderator, we expect you to help fulfill this goal by adhering to the following guidelines.

Before the session

- Review the programme for any updates.
- Familiarise yourself with the pronunciation of presenter names and affiliations.
- Ensure that all presenters are treated equally and have their fully allotted time.
- Check that you know the A/V assistant and equipment, in case of technical difficulties.

During the session

As moderator, you must keep the session on schedule. This includes:

- Announcing that questions will only be taken in the Q&A time.
- Coordinating with the A/V assistant in case of technical difficulties.
- Using any reasonable means to stop a speaker who has exceeded their allotted time; the conference organisers are happy to discuss some useful approaches.
- Addressing any inappropriate content or behaviour in the presentation.

If the speaker is having difficulty being heard by the audience, please assist them by using a microphone, or adjusting the A/V equipment. It is good practice to coordinate with speakers beforehand so they are aware of what signals you will use to indicate how much time they have left.

During the Q&A time, it is your responsibility to:

- Call on audience members with raised hands, and ask them to identify themselves and speak so everyone can hear the question.
- Please ensure you are calling on a diverse range of questioners – from different career levels, different genders, and different ethnicities. We are striving for a balanced conference where everyone feels their questions will be valued by the group.
- Recognize signs of aggressive questioning which may border on bullying, **especially if directed towards students or early career scientists**. It is your responsibility to intervene in real time if you witness such behaviour.

You are encouraged to ask a question if none are drawn from the floor, and time allows.

After the session

Ensure that the next session moderator is prepared, and pass along any helpful feedback related to specific conference idiosyncracies (e.g., where to sit so speakers can easily see you, how to deal with a common technical failure). The SOC/LOC would also appreciate any feedback you wish to provide to improve these moderator guidelines¹.

¹Loosely based on the Ocean Sciences Meeting Oral Session Moderator Training