



## PhD Volunteer Support Staff

### Expectations, Policies, and Guidelines

*In order to facilitate an excellent conference, SMS relies on having excellent volunteers. Below is a list of our core expectations for PhD Support Staff Volunteers. All volunteers must acknowledge and adhere to these policies and guidelines. Note: This document has been modified in accordance with the changes necessitated by this year's virtual conference environment.*

#### **Qualifications**

Volunteers **MUST** be enrolled full-time in their college/university to qualify for this opportunity. Preference will be given to 2021 SMS Student Members.

#### **Availability**

Volunteers will be scheduled to work approximately 10 hours total during the conference on September 18-21 and/or conference events outside of the main conference dates. Work hours will be assigned based on SMS needs and each volunteer's availability and presentation schedule. Volunteers must have availability to attend a scheduled Volunteer Orientation. Be aware that volunteers may be scheduled to work during research presentations, Interest Group & Community sessions, workshops, plenaries, and networking sessions, causing the volunteer to miss some portion of these events. We will make every effort to stagger shifts to ensure that volunteers are able to attend a variety of activities.

#### **Scheduling**

Volunteers are responsible for working scheduled shifts and tasks as assigned. SMS staff will determine the best volunteer schedule for everyone based on volunteer availability and conference needs. Volunteers should make sure the volunteer coordinator is aware of any sessions in which they are presenting or any other schedule conflicts with the conference. Schedule changes are made by request only and must be made at least two weeks before the conference. If any changes are needed during the conference, they must be approved by the volunteer coordinator.

#### **Orientation**

All volunteers will participate in a scheduled virtual orientation 1-2 weeks before the conference. The orientation is designed to provide a framework for volunteering and familiarity with the conference platform. Volunteer assignments and training will be provided by the volunteer coordinator.

### **Equipment and Setup**

Volunteers must be able to equip themselves with the supplies and set-up required for their duties, as SMS cannot supply this environment for them. Equipment needed to fulfill this role includes a computer or laptop, reliable internet connection, video camera, microphone (headset preferred), optimal web browser, email access, and a mobile device. A review of technology setup and environment will be completed during the Volunteer Orientation to ensure that all volunteers are set up for success.

### **Communication**

Volunteers will use tools explained during the orientation session to remain in communication with the volunteer coordinator and SMS staff. This will expediate assistance in situations where a volunteer needs help, a question arises, or a situation moves out of the volunteers' purview and should be handled by SMS staff.

### **Attendance**

Please arrive on time for scheduled shifts and check in with the volunteer coordinator.

### **Dress Code**

The dress code for SMS conferences is business casual. As representatives of the organization, volunteers, like staff, are responsible for presenting a good image to conference registrants and the SMS community.

## Duties for PhD Volunteer Support Staff

*Volunteer staff should expect to be assigned a variety of responsibilities by the volunteer coordinator. Below is a list of some of the potential volunteer responsibilities. Volunteers should be comfortable participating in any of the responsibilities below.*

### **Hospitality and Directional Support**

Volunteers are responsible for providing hospitality support and giving directions to conference attendees as needed throughout the conference. Volunteers need to be very familiar with the virtual conference platform, conference schedule, networking activities, and other items that will contribute to an overall positive conference experience, including information about SMS for first-time attendees. Attendees may expect volunteers to have the answer to everything, so volunteers should familiarize themselves with the FAQs provided at the Volunteer Orientation.

### **Platform Assistance**

Volunteers will assist attendees with navigating and utilizing the virtual platform. This may include providing very basic technological support or elevating an issue to IT support or SMS staff when necessary. All volunteers should explore the platform ahead of time and become familiar with the platform's functionality.

### **In-Session Support**

Volunteers will monitor sessions throughout their assigned shifts to see that everything is functioning well, and that presenters and attendees understand the process for their session type and platform. During a session, volunteers may be asked to share their screen and audio in order to play a pre-recorded video presentation.

### **Interest Group & Community Session Support**

Volunteers will monitor sessions to see that everything is functioning well, and support session organizers as needed.

### **Workshop Support**

Volunteers will monitor workshops to see that everything is functioning well, and support organizers as needed. Volunteers may be asked to create and manage breakout rooms in Zoom.

### **Networking Event Support**

Volunteers may support the virtual networking events, answering basic questions, and facilitating networking opportunities for attendees. Volunteers may be asked to create and manage breakout rooms in Zoom.



### **Reporting of Issues or Misconduct**

Volunteers should alert staff to any technical issues or problems that occur during the conference. For the safety and security of SMS program attendees, volunteers will report to SMS staff any misconduct or harassment witnessed in the virtual setting.

### **Social Media Support**

Volunteers may be asked to record quotes or discussion summaries or take screenshots of some sessions or plenaries for SMS social media platforms.

## What do PhD Volunteer Support Staff Receive in Exchange for Their Time?

*Our student volunteers receive several benefits, including:*

### **Conference Registration Fee Waiver**

Volunteers are provided complimentary admission to the SMS 41st Annual Conference, which includes access to all conference sessions and events. Please note that if the volunteer does not already have 2022 SMS Membership, the membership fee that is bundled into conference registration will also be complimentary.

*\*Any volunteer who has already paid for their conference registration will be given a refund upon their appointment to the PhD Volunteer Support Staff role.*

### **Access to Conference Platform and All Recorded Sessions Post-Event**

Volunteers may not be able to participate in live sessions that conflict with their volunteer duties, but a benefit of volunteering this year in our virtual environment is that volunteers will be able to watch any session that they may have missed on-demand.

### **Recognition**

Volunteer recognition before, during, and after the conference and exposure within the SMS community.



## PhD Volunteer Support Staff Application Form

*Please apply via this SurveyMonkey <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/G6WLT8S> application form by May 10, 2021. Volunteers will be selected and notified in late-May.*