ABSTRACT REVIEW

1. Overview of abstract review and selection

1. Each abstract is reviewed by 3 independent scientific reviewers with expertise that is matched to the abstract subject track. Each reviewer will use the criteria and scoring system described below.
2. A final decision on the acceptance to the conference is made on the basis of the combined assessment from the 3 reviewers. The reviewer scores and assessment is applied to a predefined abstract selection algorithm. The algorithm indicates if an abstract is selected for an oral presentation, poster presentation or rejected. See ESCAIDE 'Abstract Selection' guidelines for more details.
3. Note that if a reviewer scores an abstract with 0 for any of the review criteria, the review result will be "Reject".
4. In cases of a lack of consensus in reviewer opinion, or when selection is unclear, the ESCAIDE Scientific Committee will be asked to give a final decision on the inclusion of an abstract into the Conference programme.

2. Reviewers' instructions

1. All abstracts are evaluated according to seven criteria (see below). Criteria 1-5 correspond to each consecutive section of the abstract; criteria 6 & 7 address the abstract as a whole. Second, each criterion is broken down into 3 statements. Reviewers are asked to consider each statement in turn and assess if it applies to the abstract. A "yes" answer is equivalent to a score of "1"; a "no" corresponds to a "0" score (i.e. no score). Thus each criterion can be scored with a minimum total of no score and maximum total of 3 points, where 3 = excellent, 2 = good, 1 = fair, no score = poor. All criteria are evenly weighted. **Note that a "0" score on any criterion, automatically leads to a decision "Reject".**

   In addition, reviewers are asked to give comments on the abstract, particularly for criteria scored with low overall scores (i.e. 0 or 1). These comments will be used to provide anonymous feedback to the abstract authors upon request.

   ESCAIDE authors are very interested in the reviewers' written comments. This feedback is highly valued by them, therefore, the Scientific Committee kindly asks all reviewers to provide comments and suggestions for the authors.

2. The seven evaluation criteria that reviewers should use are as follows:

Background: Rationale of the study (no score, 1, 2 or 3)

- Does the rationale formulate clearly the public health issue(s), which the study is about?
- Is key existing knowledge presented to set the stage for the study?
- Are the objective(s) of the study stated clearly?

Methods: Appropriateness of methods (no score, 1, 2 or 3)

- Are critical terms and definitions clearly explained?

- Are the methods appropriate for the study?
- Are these methods described sufficiently, avoiding undefined terms and unnecessary jargon?

Results: Presentation of the results (no score, 1, 2 or 3)

- Are the results summarised adequately, using quantitative terms?
- Is the analysis (descriptive as well as statistical) of the data appropriate?
- Are the data sufficient and presented in a way that allows the reader to reach a conclusion?

Conclusion: Conclusions and interpretations of results (no score, 1, 2 or 3)

- Are the conclusions justified, based on the results presented?
- Do the conclusions answer the issue and objectives stated in the rationale and background?
- Are the results and their interpretation discussed in the context of existing scientific knowledge?

Action: Recommended intervention and estimation of public health impact (no score, 1, 2 or 3)

- Are specific public health actions recommended, or reported as undertaken?
- Are the actions/recommendations/control measures practical, and derived directly from the results presented?
- Does the study provide clear evidence of its potential or actual public health impact?

Overall clarity of the abstract (no score, 1, 2 or 3)

- Are appropriate and simple terms used to describe the methods and discuss the results?
- Is the writing clear and concise?
- Is there a logical sequence and cohesiveness among all abstract sections?

Public health significance (no score, 1, 2 or 3)

- Does the study, in both its topic and its results, have a clear application to improving public health, and is this application obvious to the reader, without the need for complex explanation or extrapolation?
- Is the study sufficiently sound (including clarity and strength of results) to serve as a basis for taking public health action?
- Do the data solve an immediate problem, or build on existing knowledge (rather than simply repeat what is already known)?

3. Reviewers' comments are encouraged and particularly valuable for those abstracts with poorer scores (i.e. whenever there is a criterion with no score or 1), as their authors will most benefit from constructive criticism. All comments and scores will be shared with the authors anonymously.

4. After having scored and commented on the abstract, each reviewer is asked for a final recommendation, i.e. to:

   - Reject (the abstract is in your opinion unsuitable for ESCAIDE)
   - Accept as Poster
   - Accept as Oral Presentation

   Please note that generally 'Poster' and 'Oral' presentations in ESCAIDE should not reflect differences in scientific merit. Instead, the recommendation for 'Oral' or 'Poster' should depend on the more suitable way of presentation for any given study (e.g. abundant and complex results, long tables, may benefit from a poster). Therefore, recommendations should only be based on suitability of medium for presentation; the 'poster' category should not be used for studies that the reviewer considers to be scientifically 'less important'.

5. A final decision on the acceptance of an abstract to the conference is made on the basis of the combined assessment from all 3 reviewers. The reviewer scores and assessments are applied to a predefined abstract selection algorithm to indicate if an abstract is selected for an oral presentation, poster presentation or is rejected (see Selection Guidelines). The whole review process is overseen by the ESCAIDE Scientific Committee, and in cases of a lack of consensus in reviewer opinion, or when the selection decision is unclear, the Scientific Committee will give a final decision on the inclusion of an abstract in the Conference programme.