

SEPA Policy on Inclusion of Underrepresented Groups and Gender Equality for Speaker Invitations to the Annual Meeting

The Southeastern Psychological Association (SEPA) condemns *ALL* forms of discrimination. We support the diversity of members and guests as well as the involvement of individuals who are interested in psychology in all its forms. The diversity of the SEPA community is reflected in terms of research interests, areas of practice, pedagogical efforts, theoretical training backgrounds and institutional affiliations of SEPA members. It also is reflected in terms of race, ethnicity, culture, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, ability, language, national origin, veteran status, socioeconomic status, marital status, parental status, and religion of SEPA members. SEPA celebrates this diversity.

The annual meeting presents SEPA with its premier opportunity to highlight member accomplishments and welcome new attendees (and potential new members) to the association to share their accomplishments and learn from others while in a supportive and inclusive environment. We have many student members and attendees, as well as early, middle, and late career members. SEPA strives to maintain an intellectually engaging, diverse and respectful program for all attendees.

As part of the annual meeting, individuals can propose symposia and other presentation formats (such as “data blitz” sessions, workshops, roundtables, and others). The Executive Committee of the SEPA believes that the organization of the annual meeting, as well as the choice of all invited speakers for the meeting, must be done in careful recognition of the need to highlight the diversity of our membership in terms of topic areas. It is also important that our programmatic activities engage and recruit speakers/panelists/workshop facilitators that mirror the diversity of SEPA’s community. Our annual meeting program attests to our mission to promote gender equality and inclusion of presenters from underrepresented groups.

The SEPA Invited Speaker Policy

Organizers in charge of inviting presenters for any part of the annual meeting program are encouraged to generate an initial list of preferred invitees that includes women and speakers from underrepresented groups. Organizers are strongly encouraged to then invite potential presenters in an order of invitation that allows for balancing sessions or invited speaker lists in a way that reflects gender equality and the presence of those from underrepresented groups. Organizers may be asked to provide their invitation list through the point at which a panel or set of speakers was fully confirmed, so that it is clear who was considered and who was invited, and it is clear whether gender equality and speaker diversity was present in the invitation list. Of course, one cannot force an invitee to accept, and in some cases it is recognized that a panel may be restricted in terms of its diversity because of the nature of the topic and the small number of experts in that area. However, collection of these data aids in demonstrating the degree to which invitations were offered in a way that reflected this policy even if the final panel or speaker list could not reflect the ideal level of gender equality and inclusion of underrepresented groups.