

TAM Academic Projects Abstract Preparation Guidelines*

General – Academic Project submissions for TAM 2024 can take many forms, but each submission should demonstrate clear relevance to the museum field, and should align with one of the categories listed on the submission form. Outstanding projects will effectively communicate concepts and information to a diverse audience using a combination of visuals and texts. The abstract is a concise but comprehensive written summary of the project, program, or investigation that the student is conducting. An abstract should not be a complete summary of an undertaking but rather should highlight the most important points.

Importance of writing a good abstract – abstract quality is the key factor considered in the juried review process for an academic presentation at a conference.

Abstract structure – Use a structured abstract format to organize your content. This structure allows the reader to find information quickly and assists the author in making the content more informative. Abstracts generally have the following subject areas: introduction/objective; methods/design; results; and conclusions.

- Introduction/objective (~10-20% of abstract): a brief statement (1 sentence) of the objective or purpose. Be clear and precise. This section might also include a brief background (1-2 sentences) about why the undertaking is important.
- Methods/design (~30-40% of abstract): describe the design of the undertaking, setting, study population, outcome measures, and any other information collected.
- Results (~30-40% of abstract): list the most important findings or describe the completed/anticipated product. This should flow logically from the methods/design. Present important positive and negative results to avoid bias.
- Conclusions (~10% of abstract): list the most important points encountered during the undertaking and propose pertinent recommendations. They should relate to the objective(s) of the undertaking and should not just rephrase the results. The conclusion should be supported by the information presented.

A good abstract – the abstract should reflect the purpose of the undertaking. Be concise and follow specifications completely (e.g., word count, format). Write clearly using short sentences and use the active voice.

Additional tips – Ask a colleague to review the abstract and provide feedback on readability and comprehension. Avoid waiting until the deadline to submit an abstract.

**adapted from PPAG Guidelines for Abstract Preparation*