

dance studies association

Best Practices for First-Time Conferencers Compiled by Sariel Golomb, Graduate Student Representative Updated August 2022

Ahead of the Conference

- Practice explaining what interests you as a researcher/practitioner in a few words.
- Think about who you're looking forward to meeting and explore what their current projects are. If there is anyone in particular you hope to meet in person, consider reaching out and inquiring about a quick coffee date.
- Take a look at the conference schedule and curate an agenda of presentations you're drawn to based on topic, networking possibilities, and the chance to be in community with presenters and attendees. Be sure to make time for self-care and socializing outside of formal presentations! Search for your own name under "participants" to make sure you are aware of any moderating assignments you've been given.
- Practice your presentation (if you are presenting). Keeping to your allotted time is a matter of kindness to your co-presenters. Generally, a 3-person panel allots 20-minutes to each presenter and a 4-person panel allots 15-minutes to each presenter.
- Put together a Power Point if you want. This is always optional, but many presenters display visuals while they talk and/or show a short video clip. NOTE: DSA does not provide computers or adapters. There will be wi-fi and a projector in every room. You will be responsible for hooking up your own laptop (with tech assistance if you need it!).
- Sign up for one-on-one Office Hours when they are announced. DSA Office Hours are a great way to connect with Board members, Editors, and/or Conference Chairs for informal meetings.

At the Conference

- Find a conference buddy to attend events with and encourage each other along the way, but stay open to new connections.
- Don't be afraid to approach scholars whose research aligns with your own and invite them into conversation through a question, comment, compliment, or point of relation to your own project. Feel affirmed that you belong here and can take space!
- You're encouraged to ask questions at panels and approach the speaker afterwards to follow up.
- While it can be challenging to find the time to sit down together during the conference weekend, you can ask new contacts if it's ok to follow up with an email to keep the conversation going.
- Rest when you need it. The conference is jam packed, but if you need to sit alone and process – go for it!

After the Conference

- Follow up over email with people you conversed with as well as speakers whose papers were meaningful to you.
- Think through any useful feedback or questions you received on your own work while it is fresh on your mind.
- Stay involved with DSA to benefit from your membership year-round. Was there an initiative or program mentioned that sounded interesting to you? Reach out and serve on a Standing Committee.

FAQs:

What should I wear?

You should wear whatever you feel comfortable and confident in, from casual to business attire. You might also wish to wear or bring rehearsal clothing if you plan to attend workshops that involve movement, and a layer for air-conditioned spaces.

What sorts of questions should I expect at my panel/workshop?

While it's hard to anticipate what listeners may ask, we expect our DSA members to ask generous questions to clarify their understanding, find meaningful connections across papers, or push you to expand your own thinking on a subject. If you feel unprepared to answer a question posed towards you, you can request that the asker rephrase their question, or let them know that you will put more thought into it and invite them to speak with you further after the panel.

Will food be offered?

There will be coffee, tea, and small bites offered during daytime hours; a cash bar at the opening reception; boxed lunch available on Friday; lunch offered to the entire membership during Saturday's member luncheon; and a light grab-and-go brunch on Sunday morning. Other food options can be found at one of the many local dining spots, which can be a great opportunity to connect with a new contact or old acquaintance!

Is there parking?

DSA is not providing parking. Parking is available at the hotel for a nightly or hourly fee (check the website). There are parking options adjacent to SFU's Goldcorp Centre for the Arts - check [HERE](#).

What if I'm not presenting– how can I make the most of the conference?

There is so much to take in at the DSA conference! You should attend those workshops, panels, working groups, etc. that connect with your field of research/practice, but also look widely across the conference for new learning experiences. You can make connections with colleagues over their presentations and introduce what you are currently working on in conversation.

Additionally, graduate students, early career professionals, and contingent faculty are all invited to participate in the following special events:

- *“Acts of Tribute, Practices of Citation: Recognition as Resistance to Cultures of Individualism” Graduate Professionalization Panel* Tuesday, October 11th at 8am, Zoom
- *Graduate Students in DSA Working Group Meeting* Wednesday, October 12th at 3:30pm, Zoom
- *Graduate student meetup and guided walk-through of “It’s About Time: Dancing Black in Canada 1900-1970 and Now”* Thursday, October 13th at 2pm, Audain Gallery

How does the hybrid thing work?

All plenaries, screendance events, Matriarchs Uprising performances, the awards ceremony, and the Provincializing convos will be livestreamed. The fully-remote breakout sessions are listed with the location as "Zoom." Any panels that are hybrid are responsible for their own technology. The onsite participants will have to Zoom-in their co-presenters (with projectors in every room and free Wi-Fi), or play a pre-recorded presentation. You will need to bring your own laptop and adapter.

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