

Working Together Toward a Successful OSM 2022

IN MY SEPTEMBER COLUMN, I'd like to share some history of the AGU/ASLO/TOS partnership that organizes the biennial Ocean Sciences Meeting (OSM). The three societies each fill a unique niche in the development of the conference agenda and messaging, and cooperate to make OSM vibrant, inspiring, and welcoming. I am proud of the way the three organizations have worked together to make this meeting a huge success.

OSM is the preeminent venue for scientific exchange in the marine sciences. It is *the* meeting we all look forward to attending, *the* meeting that inspires each and every one of us. I vividly recall the plenary talk given by Jane Lubchenco at OSM 2020 as the inaugural recipient of the TOS Mary Sears Award. It was a call to arms to every one of us in the ocean sciences community, reminding us of the important role we all play in building a resilient planet. Moments like these are what make OSM a flagship meeting.

The first OSM was convened in 1982 as a joint venture between AGU and ASLO, with 700 attending; OSMs have been held biennially since then. TOS formally joined the partnership in 2004, so the 2006 meeting in Hawai'i was the first to be organized under the AGU/ASLO/TOS partnership, with the number of attendees having grown to 3,500. By OSM 2020 in San Diego, we counted 6,300 attendees. It is important to reflect on this growth, to acknowledge the central role that this meeting plays in our ocean sciences community.

The organization of each OSM starts years before the actual meeting. While all three participating societies play an important role in the planning, a lead society is placed in the driver's seat for each meeting. The venue and lead society are determined four to six years before the meeting takes place. It is typically necessary to make commitments for hotel and conference venues two to four years before the actual meeting. The financial investment is enormous and comes with a healthy dose of risk to the organizing societies.

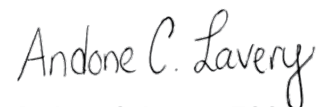
Volunteers play critical roles in the organization of each OSM. Approximately 22 months prior to the meeting, the core members of the Program Committee (a co-chair, a vice chair, an early career representative, a student representative, and staff representatives appointed by each society) meet to reflect on community input regarding the previous OSM and develop the theme for the next event, generate ideas for plenary speakers, and discuss inclusion of new activities. As the upcoming OSM begins to take shape, additional members with expertise in a broad range

of ocean science-related disciplines are added to the Program Committee. Members review session proposals as they are submitted, communicate with proposers to identify duplication with other sessions, and can encourage submissions in emerging areas of research. After abstracts are submitted, the Program Committee schedules the abstracts as oral or poster presentations.

In guiding the planning process, the three co-chairs invest hundreds of hours of their time. I'd like to thank Grace Chang for her service as 2022 co-chair on behalf of TOS. Because the responsibilities of serving as a co-chair are quite involved, co-chairs from each society are initially appointed as vice chairs in order to gain two years of experience prior to taking on the co-chair role for the next OSM. We're fortunate that Dick Crout will follow Grace as TOS OSM co-chair in 2024, a role he is familiar with since he served as co-chair for OSM 2018.

While we're still in the midst of executing OSM 2022, we're seeking the next wave of volunteers for OSM 2024. TOS recently issued a call for self-nominations for vice chair, early career representative, and student representative. Those who apply to serve as vice chair for 2024 must be prepared to serve as co-chair in 2026. TOS members who apply for the early career and student representative slots will work collaboratively with AGU and ASLO representatives to build upon previous activities and initiatives aimed at their constituencies. Examples of programs scheduled by the TOS Early Career representative, Logan Brenner, and Student Representative, Josette McLean, include dedicated workshops, receptions, and career discussions. More information on these events will be posted soon at oceansciencesmeeting.org.

I hope this column gives everyone a glimpse into the complexity and timeframes involved in organizing an OSM as well as the extensive commitment of a vast number of dedicated volunteers from all three participating organizations. I am still in awe at the seamless appearance of OSM to the regular attendee. While the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact our lives and travel is still uncertain, we may have some difficult decisions ahead of us in the coming months. But I am sure that working together, and with the dedicated leadership of all three participating societies, we will be able to provide you with the OSM you have come expect.



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