32nd international symp⊕sium on ALS/MND

Virtual

7 – 10 December 2021

Abstract submission
Conditions of Acceptance

32nd International Symposium on ALS/MND
Conditions of Acceptance for abstracts

This document contains important information on the conditions of acceptance for abstracts submitted for consideration for the 32nd International Symposium on ALS/MND to be held virtually on 7-10 December 2021.

This year, submissions will be considered primarily for poster presentations. However, there are a very limited number of oral presentation slots available for submitted abstracts that are deemed suitable by the Symposium Programme Committee. During the abstract submission process, you will be asked if you would be prepared to accept one of these oral presentation slots should you be offered one.

Key dates and deadlines

Abstract submission opens	**Monday 28 June 2021**
Abstract submission deadline	**Thursday 29 July 2021** (23:59/11:59PM UK time)
Abstract decision notification	**Late August 2021**
Withdrawal deadline	**Monday 6 September 2021** (23:59/11:59PM UK time)
Poster PDF & video submission opens	**Tuesday 28 September 2021**
Poster PDF & video submission deadline	**Thursday 4 November 2021** (23:59/11:59PM UK time)
Abstract book published on Taylor & Francis website	**Wednesday 17 November 2021**
Abstract book published on Symposium website	**Thursday 18 November 2021**
Poster presentation training	**November 2021** (TBC)
Symposium	**Tuesday 7 December - Friday 10 December 2021**

This document contains information on:

1   Corresponding / presenting author
2   Correspondence
3   Abstract content
4   Commitments of accepting the decision of your abstract
5   Withdrawing
6   Poster prize
7   Queries

1 Corresponding / presenting author

1.1 Abstracts should be submitted by the **presenting author**. This is the only person that will receive email correspondence from us about the abstract submission, poster submission and poster presentation. Please note, **submissions are limited to one abstract per presenting author**.

1.2 If the abstract is accepted, the presenting author will be the person presenting in the pre-recorded 'lightning explainer' video for the ePoster Hall and will take part in the allocated Live Poster Session during the virtual event.

1.3 A request to change to the presenting author may be made up to the abstracts withdrawal deadline (6 September 2021) by emailing **abstracts@mndassociation.org**, quoting your abstract submission number in all correspondence. There is no guarantee that changes will be processed in time for publication of the abstract book.

2 Correspondence

2.1 To submit an abstract, the **presenting author must first register** for the Symposium. The email address and contact details in the registration should relate to the **presenting author**. Once registered, a **unique link to the abstract submission portal** will be sent in the confirmation of registration email. A link to the registration page can be found on the MND Association's website: **symposium.mndassociation.org/register**.

2.2 The email address of the presenting author may be published with accepted abstracts.

2.3 Notification of abstract decisions will be communicated via email to the presenting author:

- The first notification in late August will include the abstract decision.

- If the submission is accepted as a poster, a second notification will be sent in late September with your **allocated poster reference, confirmed theme, live poster session** (with date and time). This will also include instructions on how to **submit the poster material** (PDF and pre-recorded 3-minute 'lightning explainer' video) before the poster submission deadline (4 November 2021, 23:59 UK time).

- There will also be a **virtual platform training session** provided for poster presenters in November so that presenters are fully prepared for the Symposium. Details of this will be communicated in advance.

2.4 The presenting author must be contactable by email. Alternative email addresses for the author can be provided during the abstract submission process.

2.5 If the corresponding author email address becomes invalid, please contact the MND Association as soon as possible, at **abstracts@mndassociation.org**, to change it.

2.6 To ensure you receive symposium correspondence from us, please add **abstracts@mail.mndassociation.org** and **symposium@mail.mndassociation.org** to your e-mail 'safe senders' list and check your spam/junk folders regularly.

3   Abstract content

3.1   Abstracts must be in English and be **no longer than 450 words**; this includes references and acknowledgments but not the title. If you exceed the word limit **your abstract will not be accepted.**

3.2   Please ensure that your abstract is checked for grammar, understanding and accuracy as it will **NOT** be proofread by the MND Association and **there is no spellchecker** available within the submission system (unless your browser can do so). Any mistakes remaining in your abstract after the submission deadline may be published and the MND Association can not accept responsibility for this.

3.3   The title should be as brief as possible but long enough to clearly indicate the nature of the study (maximum of 35 words). The title will be searchable in the ePoster Hall on the virtual Symposium platform, and be published in the abstract book.

3.4   Do **not** include author names in the title or body of your abstract because a 'blind' reviewing process will be used. You will be asked to enter author names in a separate section in the submission form.

3.5   Do **not** start abstracts with very basic descriptions of ALS/MND e.g. 'ALS is an adult-onset, rapidly progressive neurodegenerative disease' as an opening sentence (this is an ALS/MND conference so this knowledge is assumed).

3.6   The submission system has one text box to input your abstract. Please type in or copy in your abstract in **plain text** and **add subheadings manually** where appropriate (i.e. background, objectives, methods, results, discussion, references, acknowledgments). Please note, **special characters must be inserted manually** using the '**special characters keyboard**' tool.

See the example, using a previous abstract, below (word count 364):

Background
Diagnostic uncertainty in ALS has serious management implications and delays recruitment into clinical trials. Emerging evidence of pre-symptomatic disease-burden provides the rationale to develop diagnostic applications based on the evaluation of *in vivo* pathological patterns early in the disease. After years of descriptive MRI studies in ALS, a number of studies have now emerged outlining diagnostic and prognostic applications based on pattern recognition (1).

Objectives
To outline and test a diagnostic classification approach based on an array of complementary imaging metrics in key disease-associated anatomical structures.

Methods
All participants of this prospective biomarker study provided informed consent in accordance with the Medical Ethics Approval of the project (Beaumont Hospital, Dublin, Ireland). Data from 75 ALS patients and 75 healthy controls were randomly allocated in a 'training' and 'validation' cohort.

Spatial masks were created for anatomical foci which best discriminate patients from controls in the 'training sample'. In a virtual 'brain biopsy', data was then retrieved from these key disease-associated brain regions. White matter diffusivity indices, grey matter T1-signal intensity values and basal ganglia volumes were evaluated as predictor variables in a canonical discriminant function.

Results
Following predictor variable selection, the canonical discriminant function reached an Eigen value of 0.871, a canonical correlation value of 0.682, Wilks lambda of 0.534, Chi-square 62.983 and a significance of less than 0.001. The model showed an overall classification sensitivity of 89.1% and specificity of 85.5% in the 'training' group. In the 'testing sample' both sensitivity and specificity reached 90%.

Discussion
This study evaluates disease-associated imaging measures in a diagnostic application. From a biomarker perspective, the meaningful interpretation of data from single individuals is paramount for the development of viable clinical applications. Although larger samples will be required for robust validation, the study confirms the potential of multimodal quantitative imaging in clinical applications. The concept of region-of-interest (ROI)-based, spatial reference system guided 'data biopsies' is also applicable to longitudinal analyses and potentially for the development of monitoring markers.

References
1. Cereda C, Gabanti E, Corato M et al. ALS. 2006; 7:227-234.

Acknowledgements
We would like to thank patients for taking part in the study. Funding for this study was provided by '*name of funder*' from grant '*grant code*'.

3.7 If the work is on a case study, please clearly state the nature of the case study to be presented.

3.8 Abstracts must not include tables or figures.

3.9 Data presented must be statistically robust and authors are requested to clearly state P and N values where necessary.

3.10 Where the research involves the use of animals, presenters should consider the points raised in the ARRIVE guidelines when writing their abstracts **www.nc3rs.org.uk/arrive-guidelines**.

3.11 SI units should be used and non-standard abbreviations must be fully defined when first used (ALS and MND do not need defining).

3.12 Authors listed on the abstract must fulfil the criteria linked here: **authorservices.taylorandfrancis.com/defining-authorship**

3.13 All abstracts must be submitted online, via a **unique link to the abstract submission portal** that can be found in the presenting author's confirmation of registration email. A link to the registration page can be found on the MND Association's website: **symposium.mndassociation.org/register**. Abstracts cannot be accepted via email.

3.14   Where several abstracts on a similar subject are submitted by the research group, only one poster may be offered.

3.15   Any draft abstract submission forms that have not been submitted by the deadline will not be considered for an ePoster presentation. Abstracts submitted with very little content may be rejected.

3.16   Abstracts may be submitted even if previously presented at a national/international meeting.

4   Commitments of accepting the decision of your abstract

4.1   The presenting author must be fully registered for the virtual symposium to submit an abstract. No reduced fees are available for poster presenters.

4.2   If an abstract is accepted, the presenting author **must submit the poster material** (poster PDF and pre-recorded 'lightning explainer' video) by the poster submission deadline (4 November 2021) for the ePoster Hall. Instructions on how to submit these documents will be provided with the notification in September. We advise you begin this submission well in advance of the deadline to ensure that any difficulties can be resolved in good time.

Failure to submit the poster material by 4 November 2021 will result in the poster being withdrawn from the virtual symposium.

4.3   If an abstract is accepted, the presenting author **must attend the symposium to present during their allocated Live Poster Session**. The presenting author will be notified of their allocated session with the date and time slot in advance and it must be abided by (see section '2: Correspondence'). We highly recommend the presenting author attends one of the **training sessions** that we will provide in November, details will be communicated prior to this as stated in 2.3.

4.4   Abstracts will be published in an online open access supplement of *Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis and Frontotemporal Degeneration*. This abstract book will be published online, via the Symposium website (**symposium.mndassociation.org**), around 17 November 2021. *Printed abstract books will not be available. If you require hard copies of abstracts, please print these in advance of the meeting from our website.*

4.5   By submitting an abstract you consent to give us the license to act on your behalf with the Taylor & Francis group to publish your abstract in the symposium supplement of *Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis and Frontotemporal Degeneration*. You also confirm that your abstract is:

- Your own work
- Approved for submission by all authors and funders
- Does not infringe any intellectual property rights of any other person or entity
- Cannot be construed as plagiarising any other published work
- Contains no content that is abusive, defamatory, libellous, obscene, fraudulent, nor in any way infringes the rights of others, nor is in any other way unlawful or in violation of applicable laws

5   Withdrawing your abstract

5.1   If you wish to withdraw an abstract, please contact the MND Association by email at **abstracts@mndassociation.org** as soon as possible stating the abstract submission number.

5.2   Due to publishing deadlines, abstracts withdrawn after **6 September 2021** will be published in the journal supplement.

6   Poster Prize

The International Symposium on ALS/MND poster prize celebrates early-stage career MND/ALS researchers' outstanding work, presented at the conference.

6.1   Prizes will be awarded for the best clinical and best biomedical posters.

6.2   Presenting authors are eligible to enter if they are **aged 35 years or under** on the abstract submission deadline (29 July 2021) OR if they were awarded their **PhD within the last three years**. Career breaks may also be considered, please email **abstracts@mndassociation.org**.

6.3   If the presenting author meets the eligibility criteria stated in 6.2, they can select the box during abstract submission should you wish to be considered for the prize. Only those who confirm their eligibility at the abstract submission stage will be considered for prizes.

6.4   Indicating that you are eligible for a poster prize will not affect your likelihood of being chosen for one of the very limited oral presentations.

6.5   Only abstracts accepted for publication in the online symposium journal supplement will be eligible for consideration for the prizes. Late abstracts will not be eligible for the poster prizes.

6.6   The initial stage of judging will be conducted by members of the Symposium Programme Committee, based on the abstracts submitted by the deadline of 29 July 2021. This will generate the clinical and biomedical poster prize shortlists. All poster presenters are required to submit their poster material (PDF and lightning explainer video) by 4 November 2021. Poster material submitted by the shortlisted candidates will be judged before the Symposium, based on content, design and layout, presentation of the poster.

6.7   The winners of the clinical and biomedical poster prizes will be announced during the closing session on 10 December 2021. Winners will be awarded a certificate, an engraved glass paperweight, and a free registration place for the 2022 International Symposium on ALS/MND (excluding travel and accommodation).

6.8   Further details about the poster prize will be available on the Symposium website (**symposium.mndassociation.org/poster-prize**) following the opening of the submission system in June 2021.

7   Queries

7.1   Any queries regarding the submission of abstracts or posters should be sent to **abstracts@mndassociation.org** with your abstract submission number.