

Annual GCB Symposium

Doctoral Student's Guide



GCB Symposia

Overview

What is it about?

As part of the doctoral training, the GCB organizes an annual symposium for all PhD candidates and their thesis committees. From the second year onwards, doctoral candidates are expected to submit abstracts and to present their research projects in the form of blitz talks and posters or brief lectures. This is an opportunity to showcase research project work, network across disciplines and schedule time with mentors.

What are the participation requirements?

Participation in the annual research symposium is stipulated in the GCB Promotion Regulations, Art. 7⁵ *A doctoral symposium for all doctoral candidates and thesis supervisors takes place once a year. From the second year onwards, doctoral candidates present their research projects in the form of posters or short talks.* It is expected that students present at a minimum of two GCB symposia. Active participation in two GCB symposia is one pre-requisite to qualifying for graduation.

How is eligibility determined?

Students are eligible to participate in the first symposium that takes place beginning from the second year (from 13th month) after official registration. For example, a student registered on April 15, 2023, will be eligible for the first symposium taking place 12 or more months after registration, specifically, June 2024. The GCB will determine who is eligible and will send a Call for Abstracts several months in advance of each symposium. Students receiving the Call for Abstracts are required to submit an abstract. Refer to the Symposium module on the ILIAS [GCB101](#) site for more information. Questions are to be addressed to the symposia committee at info.gcb@unibe.ch.

Where will the symposium take place?

The symposia have taken place either on the University of Bern campus or virtually (during the Covid-19 pandemic). It is anticipated the event will continue to be located on the University of Bern campus.

What are the presentation types?

There are several types of presentations: talks, poster blitz talks, poster presentations, and in some years, a (voluntary competition) Science Slam has been held. The GCB will determine your presentation assignment, based on seniority and prior attendance. Your assignment will be communicated to you approximately 4-8 weeks prior to the event.

What is the symposium format?

The symposia have historically has taken place throughout one full day with an ambitious agenda. This is already a significant commitment for all par-

ticipants, including clinical researchers and others supporting the event. Students are expected to respect this commitment and make the most of this opportunity.

Generally, the symposium begins with a welcome and opening address from the GCB Coordinator. This is followed by sessions (involving all five expert committees in parallel) of first talks, then poster blitz talks. Two poster presentation sessions follow. Then, there will be an award for the best PhD thesis of the prior year. The award winner's supervisor provides a short introduction and then the prize winner will make a short presentation of their research. The final item on the program is the keynote address by an internationally recognized researcher invited to present their latest research. A short question and answer period follows. Some years include a science slam competition. The proceedings are ended by the GCB PhD Committee president. When a change in leadership (PhD president) will take place, the official hand-over takes place at this time. Finally, there is a light Apéro for those who would like to continue discussions started earlier in the day or start new ones, or simply to unwind and relax.

When must talks, posters and poster blitz talks be submitted?

Students will be contacted with detailed instructions on how and where to submit assignments. As a general rule, talks and poster flashes must be submitted no later than one week in advance of the symposium.

Is registration required?

Students are required to register on the GCB symposium website prior to submitting an abstract. Additionally, registration for non-presenting participants aids the planning process (catering, rooms, etc.) for an event that typically exceeds 350 participants and attendees. Participants register on the GCB Symposium website platform. Abstracts are uploaded there. Students will be notified by email when the abstract is successfully submitted, as well as when it has been assigned to a session.



Will I earn ECTS?

This is 0 ECTS event 100% sponsored by the GCB. Participation is tracked in the doctoral database and attendance will no longer be administered in CTS/KSL. However, participation can be listed on CVs.

Guidelines for Talks, Poster Blitz and Poster Sessions

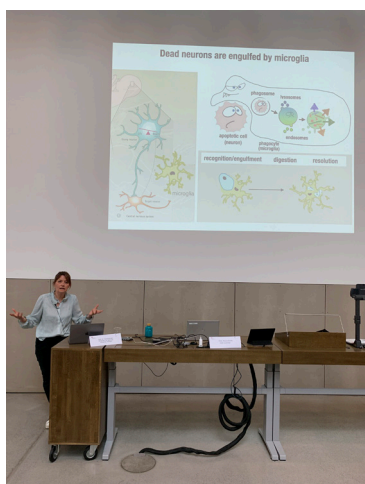
Talks

This is a presentation of your research, much like a presentation at a society meeting or congress. The format for slides is PowerPoint, as all presentations will be submitted prior to the event and presented from one PC. In other words, all presentations for one session will be concatenated and saved as one large presentation file. Therefore, Keynote and other programs are not accepted.

Total time: 15 minutes

This includes:

1. Session Chair introduction (30-60 seconds)
2. Student presentation:
 - (a) a 2-3 minute brief introduction to research topic for non-specialists in the audience.
 - (b) 7 minute talk
 - (c) 5 minute discussion, Q&A



Poster Blitz Presentations

The blitz is a presentation intended to entice the audience to visit researchers at their posters during the poster session. Students chosen for poster blitz presentations will also be chosen to present their poster at a poster session. However, not all poster presenters will be selected for a blitz presentation.

Goal:

- Actively stimulate the audience to come view research poster and discuss with researcher. Focus attention on research main topic.
- Show main findings research project only (not the complete poster, which will be available during poster session).

Total Time: 2 minutes

This includes:

1. One (1) PowerPoint. PPT Format (Keynote and Pdf not accepted) slide.
2. Introduction, content, and conclusion (with call to action e.g., *come see me/my poster*).

Pro Tips

1. Abstract and posters will be public. Contact the GCB if you have intellectual property concerns with preting your data.
2. Presentations are assigned to the expert committee to which the student's mentor belongs.
3. Students are expect to meet the deadlines and to keep presentations to allotted times.
4. Poster blitz - find inspiration by viewing examples and watching the tutorial video on GCB101

Poster Presentations

Scientific posters will be prepared to present an illustrated summary of research project work to date. Approach preparation for this poster session the same as for national or international conferences, symposia, or meetings. The poster should be clear, well-organized, and structured in a way that the information can be presented in 15 minutes or less.

Format as follows: DIN A0, i.e. 119cm height x 84cm width (portrait orientation; landscape will not fit on the posterboards).

Keynote Addresses

The GCB invites an internationally recognized researcher to present the keynote address which centers on his or her particular area of research and current work. Student researchers are encouraged and expected to attend and ask questions.

GCB Science Slams

This is a 7-min. presentation, without discussion. The GCB Slam is conducted as a competition. Students volunteer to participate. Members of the audience judge the presentations.

Presenters are expected to present their research in a concise and easily understandable scientific language. Although researchers are expected to present scientifically sound research, it should be done in an entertaining way as the audience will be comprised of non-expert peers from other research fields.

The GCB will record videos of the competition and upload the three winning presentations on the GCB website and the GCB101 ILLIAS site.

Apéros

The Apéro provides symposium participants with opportunity to continue discussions started earlier in the day, begin new discussions, or just relax and spend time with colleagues outside of the research laboratory.



Universität Bern
Graduate School for Cellular and Biomedical Sciences (GCB)
Mittelstrasse 43
3012 Bern

Telefon +41 31 684 59 61
info.gcb@unibe.ch
www.gcb.unibe.ch