THE PEER REVIEW PROCESS

Because of the need to maintain and assure the quality of the congress proceedings, a rigorous two-stage peer review process by than two acknowledged experts in the field was followed. In this context, each abstract received was twice blind reviewed in terms of:

- relevance to congress theme and objectives
- originality of material
- academic rigor
- contribution or knowledge
- research methodology.

Authors whose abstracts were accepted after stage one of the review process was completed were provided with anonymous reviewers' comments and requested to submit their full papers noting and addressing these comments. Evidence was required relative to the action taken by authors regarding the comments received. The papers and comments were reviewed in terms of:

- relevance to congress theme and objectives
- originality of material
- academic rigor
- contribution to knowledge
- research methodology and robustness of analysis of findings
- empirical research findings
- critical current literature review.

Authors whose papers were accepted after this second review were provided with additional anonymous reviewers' comments and requested to submit their revised full papers. These final papers were included in the congress presentation program and the congress proceedings after evidence was provided that comments were appropriately responded to, having been double peer-reviewed for publication. At no stage was any member of the Scientific and Technical Review Committee or the editor of the proceedings, involved in the review process related to their own authored or co-authored papers.

The role of the editor was to ensure that the final papers incorporated the reviewers' comments and to arrange the papers into the final sequence as captured on the USB flash drive and Table of Contents. Of the 155 abstracts originally received, 105 papers were finally accepted for presentation at the congress, 92 of which are included in these proceedings.

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