FIRST-TIME ATTENDEE CONFERENCE GUIDE

GETTING READY

Contact your advisor, department head, or supervisor. Ask for introductions to their colleagues who are attending the conference and who may be available to meet with, or mentor, you during the conference. When possible, schedule meetups in advance and then be sure to keep your appointments. Your advisors may also be able to direct you to travel grant opportunities.

When booking your flight, plan to depart on Thursday afternoon. Conference sessions officially go until 12:30pm with other co-located activities happening afterwards. Make sure you don't miss anything by planning your travel carefully.

Figure out which sessions you'd like to attend and who you'd like to meet. Review the schedule in advance to plan your time during the conference. Research the participants and drop them a note prior to the conference and schedule a meeting. Download the CVENT app from the Google Play or Apple App Store and enter PEARC22 in the conference search bar or go directly to: https://cvent/me/EWzw5P. (You will need to log in with the same email with which you registered for the conference.) The CVENT app allows you to build your own personal schedule and carry it in the palm of your hand. The app replaces our traditional printed schedule and will be updated in real time as changes are necessary. If you do not have a smartphone, a printed copy of the schedule can be requested at the registration desk.

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Plan your thirty-second elevator introduction. In other words, be able to summarize who you are and what you do professionally in the time it takes to reach your floor—about thirty seconds. Need tips on your elevator speech? Check out Indeed.com for the latest on crafting your personal sound bite.

If you're coming to the conference on a job search, polish up your interviewing skills and bring a current resume.

Carry extra business cards. If your institution doesn't provide them for you, make your own using any word-processing software and business-card stock, or one of the many websites that offer low-cost design and printing. Better yet, make a digital version using an app such as HiHello, Popl, or Blinq.

Pack comfy shoes to help you dash between sessions or explore the city.

And a water bottle. We've eliminated bottled water in keeping with our commitment to sustainability.

During the Conference

Post on social media using #PEARC22! If you're heading to a session of interest or enjoying a particular event, let other people know. This will also get your name in front of other attendees.

Charge your laptop, tablet, or smart phone every night, and remember to pack your charger in your bag. You may not be able to plug in during every session, so come prepared with your devices already fully juiced. If you do charge during a session, don't leave your devices unattended in public spaces or forget to grab your charging cables when moving to the next session!

Dress in layers. The temperatures in conference session rooms can fluctuate, so be ready to change accordingly.

Arrive with plenty of time on the first day to pick up your Conference Program and badge. You can usually expect a line at registration—even when registered in advance—so plan to arrive at least thirty minutes before your first

session or event. Even better, if you are attending tutorials, you can pick up your materials on Sunday evening until 6:00 PM. You should also orient yourself to the hotel or study the [hotel floor plan](#) in case you are running late.

Keep track of your badge. Your conference badge allows you admission to all sessions, including meals and social events. But be sure to take it off when venturing outside the conference hotel. Wearing your conference badge identifies you as a tourist and makes you a target for scammers and thieves.

Check meeting times closely. The Conference Program lists the times and locations for all sessions, events, workshops, and exhibits. These times and locations, however, occasionally change—check the conference app or website for updates.

Session-hop. You don't have to stay for the full length of a session. The speakers for each session are listed in the Conference Program, and on the conference app or website, in chronological order and you are free to move around. If you play "musical sessions," grab a seat near a door so you can easily slip in and out without disturbing the speakers or other attendees.

Allow enough travel time between sessions. Give yourself enough time to move from session to session—especially since you may have impromptu conversations with folks you meet in the hallways! It's not a problem to join a few minutes late, but be respectful of the speaker and other attendees.

You can use your laptop or smart phone during a session. Typing notes during a talk is okay; so is tweeting. Just be mindful of your neighbors and respectful of the speakers. Don't forget to silence your phone and share your tweets using #PEARC22.

Ask a question. Speakers and moderators usually reserve time at the end of the session for audience questions. Write down your question in advance and make sure it's related to the discussion. Don't forget to state your name and your institutional affiliation so that people can remember you. If you'd like to respond to the presentations with your own comments, talk to a speaker afterward and get his or her email.

Introduce yourself to the person sitting next to you. A big part of attending the conference is networking. Before the session begins is a great time to introduce yourself and make a connection! Make a game of it and challenge yourself to meet three new people each day.

Visit the Student Program Room (Terrace Room, Lower Lobby). It is a place where you can meet friends and colleagues, network to make new connections, and relax with exceptional company.

Partner with friends or colleagues to cover sessions happening at the same time. It's not possible to do everything, so decide in advance who will attend each session and take notes for each other. Meet up after the sessions – while the content is still fresh – to regroup and discuss.

Don't spend all your time with your friends. You're at the conference to network, so leave your comfort zone and set a goal to meet at least three new people every day. Jot down their name, where you met them, and what you discussed so you'll remember later. Use a free app, such as CRM Contacts Journal, to help you keep track of people you meet.

Attend the evening social events. Just because you're at a conference doesn't mean you shouldn't have a little fun, but be mindful, observant, and professional when interacting in a social environment. You never know who you might encounter!

Remember to visit the Exhibitor's Forum. This is another great way to expand your network. You may even get a lead on a job opportunity.

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After the Conference

Follow up with your new contacts. Send an email to those you've networked with to follow up on a question or discussion—or just to say, "It was a pleasure meeting you." Connect with your new contacts on social media and extend your professional network.

Volunteer for next year. Join the conference planning by becoming a member of the PEARC23 organizing committee. There are always opportunities for reviewers, sub-committee and members, mentors, session moderators, among many others. This is a great way to forge long-term professional relationships and get your name out in the community!

Complete the post conference survey. Please take a few minutes to let the planning committee know about your experience. The PEARC23 committee will carefully review survey responses as it plans for next year.

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