Explore Section: Possible Responses

Accessibility

Deaf/Hard of hearing:

**Obstacles:** May have difficulties understanding other’s presentations. Will need to be able to see presenters and their visual aids which can be difficult depending on the space. May have difficulty communicating their own work, especially verbally communicating.

**Policies:** Sign language interpreters be available to any conference attendees who might need one, or there could be captions or real-time transcriptions projected during presentations. Talks should occur in spaces in which audience members can see the presenter. Presentations should be recorded and visual aids (PowerPoints, posters) should be shared so that they may be reviewed at a later time. Microphones should be used if available.

Autism:

**Obstacles:** May become overwhelmed in a conference atmosphere. May have trouble communicating verbally and non-verbally, which would inhibit their ability to network and present their research. Ways of communicating or self-stimulating may be misunderstood by those around them. May have a hard time understanding idioms.

**Policies:** Conferences could have a designated quiet room for anyone that needs to remove themselves from the busy and loud areas. Respect someone’s decision to not shake hands or make other physical contact. Attendees should limit the amount of perfume or cologne they wear. Do not use flash photography without permission. Presenters should avoid using idioms.

Physical and mobility impairment:

**Obstacles:** May have trouble navigating the conference spaces, hotel, or travelling between the hotel and the conference, getting up on stage to present, standing near a poster to present it.

**Policies:** Conferences should occur in accessible spaces, including the hotel rooms and to the stage/podium for disabled speakers (meaning there should be ramps, elevators, etc). Volunteers could help physically disabled attendees navigate the space. Pathways should be kept clear.

Learning disability, example: dyslexia:

**Obstacles:** May have trouble reading slides and posters during presentations. May have a particularly hard time reading jargon.

**Policies:** During presentations, all contact should be conveyed verbally and pictorially in addition to being written out. Presenters should give their audience enough time to process their information and explain all jargon.