

First Steps for the Chairman in the preparation of an International Congress

*For medical Congress see: **First Steps in the Preparation of an International Medical Congress for the Chairman of the Congress***

This document is to assist the Chairman of the Local Organising Committee in the host country and assumes that the country has already been selected, but not necessarily the venue

DEFINITIONS AND OBJECTIVES

The definitions and objectives of the Congress need to be clearly defined:

- Purpose of the Congress
- Organising body: National/International
- Composition of participants
- Market segment of participants
- Duration of Congress and Exhibition
- Year/month of Congress (avoid competing with established Congress)
- Frequency of Congress
- Number of abstracts
- Number of session halls
- Net exhibition space
- Official languages
- Identification of financial responsibility
- Publications
- Invited speakers
- Peculiarities of country in which Congress is to be held
- Technical infrastructure required
- Cultural (social) events
- General Secretariat

MANAGEMENT – ASSOCIATION

Refer to IAPCO document: **Guidelines for Co-operation between the International Association, the National Organising Committee and the PCO**

- Define the roles and responsibilities of the International and National Committees
- Appoint a National Organising Committee (Local) to embrace the various administrative activities
 - Promotion
 - Treasurer
 - Social
 - Sponsorship and exhibition
- Appoint the Scientific/Technical Programme Committee

MANAGEMENT – PROFESSIONAL CONGRESS ORGANISER (PCO)

Refer to IAPCO document: **How to Choose the Right PCO and Request for Proposal (RfP) for the Appointment of a PCO**

A PCO should be appointed at the earliest opportunity, the selection to take into account the following criteria:

- Experience
- Continuity
- Trust
- International recognition
- Financially stable
- Quality

MANAGEMENT – INDUSTRY

It is essential that Industry be considered to be a Partner of the Congress, with full co-operation and trust.

SELECT VENUE

In order to select a suitable venue for the Congress, the following points should be taken into consideration:

- Cost
- Infrastructure/services
- Quality/management
- Hotel capacities
- Accessibility
- Airport/international access
- Safety and Security
- Customs clearance/entry controls
- National regulations
- Capacity:
 - Exhibition space including access
 - Registration area
 - Session halls
 - Catering

CONFIRM DATES

When selecting the dates for the Congress, it is essential that an investigation be made into other events that may conflict, either in size, location or subject matter.

SECURE HOTELS

Having selected the venue, it is essential that the hotel accommodation is swiftly secured, taking into consideration:

- Speaker/VIP requirements
- Industry requirements
- Budget accommodation
- Sufficient accommodation for individuals in all categories

BUDGET

When preparing the initial budget, the following points should be taken into consideration:

- Tax implications
- Legal and audit implications
- Industry support (direct and indirect)
- Cash flow
- Funding
- Financial procedures
- Profit allocation (if appropriate)
- Airline contributions
- City/national support

In addition:

- The budget should be realistic
- The budget must balance on a sensible breakeven
- The budget should be transparent to all

SCIENTIFIC/TECHNICAL PROGRAMME

*Refer to IAPCO document: **Guidelines for the International Scientific Programme Committee and Poster Presentations at an International or National Congress***

Structure:

- Type of sessions
- Timetable grid

Abstracts:

- On-line
- Posters/oral/other
- Selection criteria

Speakers:

- Costs
- Conditions
- Other categories

Technical equipment:

- Quality
- Visibility
- Efficiency

Publications and Proceedings

PROMOTION

- Logo/design
- www
- Print
- On-site promotion at other events
- Journals/advertising
- Using industry
- Databank

INDUSTRY

Exhibition:

- Location
- Access
- Build-up/breakdown (allowing for sufficient time for the size of the exhibition)
- Duration/open times
- Proximity to session halls
- Services
- Integrated delegate activities
- Stand allocation

Sponsorship:

- Financing and pre-financing
- Marketing service opportunities
- Return on investment
- Free selection
- Guidelines for levels of sponsorship
- Hospitality suites
- Sponsors' Congress (pre-, on-site, and debriefing)

Contract:

- Payment against invoices
- Cancellation
- Terms
- Deadlines
- Rules and regulations

LOGISTICS

There are many detailed organisational tasks which need to be taken into consideration, some of the key elements to consider are as follows:

- Social programme
- Companions' programme
- Tour programme (Congress and pre-/post-Congress)
- Transportation
- Staff/hostesses/students (English language to be included)
- Registration
- Secretariat
- Press
- Technical equipment and construction
- Signs
- Catering
- Security

TIMETABLE

Once the above First Steps have been completed a detailed timetable, setting out all the management and organisational tasks that need to be undertaken to complete the Congress, can be prepared.

Depending upon the sequence of the Congress, this timetable should be undertaken as early as possible, as the timing of some items, for example, invitations to speakers, industry and promotion, are critical to the success of the Congress

AFTER THE FIRST STEPS

The PCO will guide and advise the Organising Committees on all aspects of the Congress

Reference Guidelines

All IAPCO documents and guidelines can be obtained from IAPCO or from the IAPCO website to assist in the planning of your event.

Disclaimer

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