EURASLIC conference minimum requirements

EURASLIC conferences are held biannually, usually as EURASLIC-only conference, and sometimes as a joint IAMSLIC/EURASLIC conference.
EURASLIC conferences are normally held in spring (April or May), and joint conferences in autumn (September or October).

EURASLIC conferences are usually held in person in marine or freshwater scientific research institutions, but the conference can also be an online event in case of pandemic or any other circumstances that prevent organising in person meeting. The meetings could also be organised as a hybrid meeting or in person meeting could have some hybrid elements.

In person meeting is preferably held in marine or freshwater scientific research institutions instead of meeting in a conference centre or hotel, because (a) there should be no charge, or only a minimum charge, for the meeting room; (b) participants and local staff benefit from meeting in a working institute environment; (c) support staff, computing, photocopying etc. facilities are to hand.

Basic requirements are:

The meeting place

- A meeting room/lecture theatre capable of accommodating the registered number of participants. The number is lower for EURASLIC only conferences (30-40) and higher for joint conferences (50-90)
- audiovisual facilities;
- An area close to the meeting room for a registration/information desk, and for exhibitors, and posters;
- An area close to the meeting room for coffee/tea breaks. [could be shared with the registration/exhibit etc. room];
- Toilet and washroom facilities;
- A restaurant/canteen, and/or the facility to provide lunches [buffet lunches are adequate, but sufficient seating is necessary].

The availability of a smaller room for group and committee meetings is desirable.

Under extraordinary circumstances like pandemics etc. prescribed measures should be followed.

Hotels

- Sufficient hotels and guesthouses for the participants, within reasonable distance of the meeting place and within a range of price brackets.

Travel arrangements

- Adequate air and rail links with the conference location.

Local transportation

- If the meeting place is not within walking distance of the hotels, coaches/transport must be provided or public transport available.

Social arrangements

- Participants' hotels should normally be located in an area served by suitable restaurants and bars;
- A reception, possibly sponsored by one of the exhibitors, or by the host institute, is normally arranged for the first evening;
- A conference dinner, possibly with musical entertainment, is normally arranged at a local restaurant, hotel or at the institute;
- A half-day "field trip" visiting a local tourist attraction is usually arranged as an option, either midway through the conference, or at the end.

Local host

Arranging and running a conference is time-consuming, and before making an offer the local organiser (conference host) should ensure that sufficient time and support will be available.

The following list gives an outline of the range of the work involved in arranging a conference

EURASLIC Board members assist in organising conferences. A conference organising committee is normally responsible for overall arrangements, coordination, and specific tasks. The local host will be a member of the committee and will be responsible for local matters. The other members will be responsible for the conference programme, speakers, exhibitors, sponsors, and related matters, and will assist the local organiser in all relevant ways.
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Checklist for conference organisers:

Hotels
- Liaison with hotels;
- Pre-book rooms in two hotels nearby (at least one cheap accommodation);
- Participants book directly;
- Accommodation to be arranged for sponsored participants;
- Participants with special needs, for example:
    - disabled,
    - vegetarian.

Negotiate a conference rate for the hotel rooms. The rate should extend at least one or two days before and after the actual conference dates to accommodate long-distance travelers. You may need to guarantee a certain number of rooms. Keep this number as low as possible. Establish with the hotel reservations manager a procedure for making reservations and the deadline by which reservations should be made. Put the hotel's reservation card or appropriate information into a conference mailing packet.

Attendees take care of their individual reservations. An exception could be in the case of sponsored participants whose hotel costs are being paid by EURASLIC, in which case reservations need to be made by the local host. All arrangements (and possible problems) are strictly between individuals and the hotel management. Provide a brief list of other types of housing for attendees. It is best to concentrate as many attendees as possible in one place for social interaction and to avoid complicated and expensive transportation problems.

Tourist information to be made available
- Brochures;
- Maps;
- List of hotels;
- Travel information;
- Currency exchange;
- Restaurants.

Travel arrangements
- Travel arrangements are the responsibility of the attendees.
- Provide information about:
    - airport;
    - ground transportation between airport and hotels / conference site;
    - rail travel;
    - time table and costs of transportation services;
    - how to make reservations;
    - restrictions, visa requirements … (e.g. cash only, which credit cards accepted…)
    - include local street map in hotel/registration packets.

Transportation
- If the meeting site is not within walking distance of hotels, transportation is provided;
- Use of institution vans and drivers;
- Use of hired commercial companies;
- Public bus transport;
- Transportation for the field trips or conference banquet;
- If there are costs – cover them in conference registration fee.

Information about transportation arrangements, departure times, etc. should be displayed at the conference hotels and detailed in the registration packets. Attendees will arrive at all hours and days and will need to know when and how to get to the meeting place.

Meals
- Is breakfast served in the hotels?
- Some attendees have problems with their institutions if the registration form states that specific or any meals are included in the conference fee. Usually lunches, coffee/tea breaks, and the conference banquet are covered by the conference fee (unless a sponsor can be found to cover some of the costs). In the registration mailing, describe which meals are covered, but DO NOT put that information on the registration form.
- The caterer/restaurant will need to know in advance how many are expected for each meal. Some people may not want to eat all the meals that are provided, but they must still pay the full registration fee. Do not try to factor out separate costs and "meal options";
- welcoming reception (first evening);
- three lunches;
- field trip lunch (possibly);
- conference banquet (second or third evening);
- six coffee/tea breaks;
- A conference welcoming reception in the host library is appropriate if it can be arranged and if it is convenient to the hotels. Depending on the availability of sponsorship funding, this reception could be completely free, or could include at least one free drink and a "no host" bar. Be sure to factor the price of the "free" drink into the registration costs.

About meals in general:
- Provide vegetarian choices. A space on the registration form should indicate if applicants require vegetarian meals or have special dietary needs);
- Lunches: can consist of cold or hot food – a buffet would be adequate, due to the time constraints;
- Coffee breaks: provide coffee (regular and decaffeinated), tea (regular and herbal), bottled waters and other drink choices.

Space requirements
- Reception/Registration/Information room/other spaces;
- Conference hall;
- Tables and wall space for Poster Papers – size of Poster Papers;
- Exhibition room/space;
- Coffee/Tea Room;
- Restaurant/Canteen for meals;
- Additional rooms required - for small meetings; for secure storage.

Equipment:
- Audio-visual equipment;
- Computers – number of terminals; possible requirements for a workshop;
- Online access – number of terminals (decide whether to make available to exhibitors or not);
- To provide basic hardware requirements for online conferencing (computers, camera, microphone, high internet speed, video display screen, video conferencing software…)
- Power Point – all power point presentations to be provided in advance for pre-loading on to Conference computer – stipulate version of power point (ppt) to be supplied

Signage
- External signs;
- Internal signs;
- Conference Banner (optional)

Other considerations
- Public bulletin board for posting official copies of EURASLIC minutes and other general announcements and messages;
- In case of an election – box for ballots;
- Availability of toilets;
- Cloakrooms/space for coats to be left;
- Special needs: e.g. wheelchair access to conference hall and other locations;
- Photographer – for group photograph;
- Transport needed - Hotels to institute? Social activities?
- Transport costs to be recovered from participants, or possibly from sponsors;
- Schedule of expected times of arrival of key participants and speakers;
- Any special transportation arrangements for arriving participants and quest speakers?

Field Trips:
Field trips are completely at the discretion of the host. If desired, a free afternoon could be left for participants to do "touristy" things. Do not schedule a field trip and the conference banquet on the same day.

ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CONFERENCE ORGANISING COMMITTEE

Human resources: (identify and confirm)
● Speakers;
● Opening/welcome speaker(s);
● Guest or "Keynote" speakers (expenses? meals);
● Chairpersons;
● Presenters;
● Panel members;
● Rapporteurs;
● Workshop/study group leaders;
● Facilitators (to meet speakers, conduct to meals, etc.);
● Support staff for registration desk, etc.;
● Technicians - to be available/on call;

Sponsored participants
● Seek sponsorship from international, regional, national and local organisations and companies;
● Determine the amount available to support travel, registration and hotel costs of sponsored participants;
● Invite applications for full or partial support from potential participants in economically restrained European countries and institutes, with estimates of travel etc. costs;
● Select suitable participants and arrange with the EURASLIC Treasurer appropriate methods of refunding travel etc. costs.

Exhibitors and Exhibits
● Criteria for selection of exhibitors;
● Types of material and services to be exhibited;
● Floor plan

CONFERENCE COSTS

(1) Pre-conference costs: (if not provided by institute)
● Staff;
● Photocopying;
● Printing;
● Postage;
● Telephone; Fax.

(2) Conference costs:

● Clerical staff for registration desk and Conference office, and for technicians (if not provided by institute);
● Space charges (if not within the institute);
● Conference hall;
● Meeting rooms;
● Other spaces;
● Cleaning, tidying, security
● Speakers' expenses;
● supplies (envelopes, stationery, folders, etc.);
● name tags; mailing labels;
● brochures/maps
● support staff and technicians on hand or on call (if not provided by institute);
● taxes and gratuities;
● Hire of any special equipment;
● Meals/coffee (if possible sponsored);
● Banquet;
● Transport;
● Printing; photocopying and postage;
● Publicity/Advertising;
● Speakers fees and expenses.

Should build in a profit margin so speakers, subsidised travel, and unexpected costs can be covered.

(3) Post-conference costs
Production and distribution of print or online Conference Proceedings.

CONFERENCE FINANCES

- Establish a Conference account;
- Determine procedures for:
    - Paying bills, including petty cash payments;
    - For recording payments;
- Determine procedures for receipt and deposit of money received pre-conference;
- Arrange for receipt and deposit of money received at the conference;
- Prepare a budget - with optimistic and pessimistic levels of income and expenditure;
- Obtain "seed" money;
- Contribution from Host Institute and/or Local Authority;
- Contribution from EURASLIC.

Income
- Seed ("up-front") money - a loan from Euraslic to organiser to start organisation of the conference if needed
- Registration fees – should normally be host country currency (avoid currency exchange charges); Provide different options of paying fee (bank transfer, by credit card, online/on site)
- Amounts to be decided for:
    - Full fee
    - Part/Day fees
    - Fees for partners/spouses
- Special rates;
- Sponsors' cash contributions and "in kind" contributions;
- Exhibitors' fees and payments and "in kind" contributions.