

Procedures of the International Society for Systems Biology to select venues for its yearly conference, the International Conference on Systems Biology ICSB

ICSB is the most visible yearly event organised by ISSB and hence serves as a show case for the goals, ambitions and activities of the society.

A **call for bids** will be published by the President four years in advance of the congress. The Congress venue will be selected by the Executive Committee at three years in advance.

Prospective Congress organisers should first inform the chair person of the conference working group of their intentions and then prepare a **written proposal**. The **deadline of submission** of the bid material is **June 1** three years before the relevant congress.

The proposal should be submitted to the chair person of the conference working group (presently: Stefan Hohmann; stefan.hohmann@gu.se).

The proposal should contain the following information:

- A written endorsement from the local organising committee with the name of the person responsible for the proposal and the prospective composition of the Organising and Scientific Committees.
- A written statement giving assurance that the ICSU policy on free circulation of scientists, including a time table for visa application and insurance, as recommended in the 1989 Resolution on the Free Circulation of Scientists, will apply.
- The location and proposed dates. The conference should commonly take place within a time window between August 15 and November 15. Exceptions are possible but care will be taken that the period between two congresses is no shorter than nine and no larger than fifteen months.
The conference should ideally take place in a city where several members of the organising committee are working and a local scientific community relevant to the conference should exist.
- A general conference outline; an example is attached as APPENDIX to these instructions. Major deviations from this outline should be well justified.
- The Congress facilities available and pre-booked, indicating the number and size of lecture rooms, space for poster boards and for the commercial exhibition, and social facilities such as restaurants.
- Name and address of one or several potential Professional Conference Organisers (PCOs) for the event.
- The availability of hotels and student accommodation, their locations and distance from the venue along with approximate room rates both current and anticipated; it should also be indicated which type and amount of rooms have been pre-booked for the conference.
- Travel access to the venue (with examples of current return fares including a Saturday night to some major cities) and transportation facilities (e.g. taxi, shuttle, metro) and their costs to hotels following arrival by air, rail and road.
- Typical daily expenses, such as for meals and local transportation.
- An estimate of the number of participants at both regular and reduced registration rates expected from host country and the host continent.
- An outline budget, which includes:
Income from registration fees, commercial exhibition, other sources and potential

opportunities for further fund raising from sponsors and exhibitors;
Expenditure on preliminary announcements, organisers expenses, conference facilities, speakers, abstracts, programme booklet and bags, the social programme, transport provision (if appropriate), security, insurance and any taxation charges which may apply.
Registration fees for regular delegates, commercial delegates and PhD students (typically 50% of regular rate).
Possible availability and projected number of **student grants** to support participation of young scientists.

- Weather conditions at the time of the Congress.
- Opportunities for accompanying persons, outlining possible excursions and local attractions.
- Other points that may make the Congress more attractive.

In assessing proposals, the Executive Committee will pay special attention to:

- The immigration policies of the country concerned.
- The likelihood of financial and political stability.
- The availability of appropriate infrastructure and facilities, including the safety of participants.
- Relative cost and ease of travel, especially with respect to participation of young scientists.
- The general attractiveness of the venue.
- The time since the last ICSB was held in that country, and recent conferences in the same geographical area.
- The existence of a qualified organising committee with experience in conference organisation and expertise in systems biology as well as a strong regional base of potential conference delegates.

Obligations of Organisers

The Organisers will keep the chair person of the conference working group well informed of the status of their planning and supply copies of all minutes of planning meetings and of all draft announcements and other publications.

At least one and a half years before the conference date, the chair person of the conference working group is to be invited to attend a meeting of the Organising Committee.

The Organising Committee will present a tentative outline of the programme, including topics for symposia, workshops and possibly plenary lectures to the Executive Committee through the chair person of the conference working group, at least one and a half years in advance of the ICSB. A preliminary Programme including the names of most speakers and titles of presentations will be presented at least one year before the ICSB.

During the two years preceding the Congress, a member of the Organising Committee will attend the ISSB Executive Committee meeting and present the current status of plans for the Congress.

Within six months of the end of the Congress, the Organisers will supply the chair person of the conference working group with a full report of the ICSB, including any recommendations for the benefit of future Organisers.

APPENDIX - General conference outline

The ICSB outline below is in effect from and with ICSB2008.

1. A tutorial programme based on a call for proposal. ICSB organisers provide facilities for the tutorials and include costs in the budget. Otherwise, tutorials should be economically independent.
2. A main conference programme of three full days plus two half days, where one afternoon is free for social activities and networking.
3. A workshop programme based on a call for proposals. Workshops are economically independent and the ICSB organisers support workshop organisers in identifying suitable locations and infrastructure. If necessary, more time than indicated in the outline below may have to be allocated to workshops to prevent overlaps.
4. Lunches are provided within the conference centre and included in the budget.
5. Speaker's corner is an activity where plenary speakers are available for discussions at a specific time and a specific location in the conference centre.
6. Parallel sessions will contain short lectures of those that organise the session plus presentations prepared from abstracts (also presented as posters).

International Conference on Systems Biology								
Location and dates								
Time	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	
0830-0900	Tutorial programme	Tutorial programme; registration opens at noon	Four plenary lectures	Four plenary lectures	Four plenary lectures	Four plenary lectures	Workshop/satellite meeting programme	
0900-0930								
0930-1000								
1000-1030								
1030-1100			Coffee	Coffee	Coffee	Coffee		
1100-1130			Three parallel sessions with two invited talks and presentations selected from abstracts	Three parallel sessions with two invited talks and presentations selected from abstracts	Three parallel sessions with two invited talks and presentations selected from abstracts	Three plenary lectures and closing ceremony		
1130-1200								
1200-1230								
1230-1300			Lunch, Poster Session, Arenas, Speaker's corner, Exhibitions, Coffee	Lunch packages	Lunch, Poster Session, Arenas, Speaker's corner, Exhibitions, Coffee	Lunch packages		
1300-1330								
1400-1430			Opening ceremony and three keynote lectures	Four plenary lectures	Social programme, such as an excursion	Four plenary lectures		
1430-1500								
1500-1530								
1530-1600								
1600-1630			Welcome reception	Poster area open, Speaker's corner		Workshop/satellite meeting programme		
1630-1700								
1700-1730								
1730-1800								
1800-1830								
1830-1900								
1900-1930								
1930-2000								