



# International Biometric Conference (IBC) Manual

## Revised:

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## 2018 Revisions by

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## 1. Foreword

- 1.1. International Biometric Conferences (IBCs) have been sponsored by the International Biometric Society (IBS) since 1947 and are one of flagship activities.
- 1.2. Since 1982, IBCs have been held every other year. This pattern has been established to avoid overlap with the biennial meetings of the International Statistical Institute.
- 1.3. IBCs are truly international, attracting participants from across the globe, and representing the full range of Biometry.

## 2. About this manual

- 2.1. This manual gives an overview of what is involved in organising a successful IBC, and sets out the key financial requirements.
- 2.2. It is not an exhaustive nor prescriptive manual; detailed development of IBC is a collaborative process involving a range of groups from the society. Detailed arrangements will inevitably vary from conference to conference.

## 3. Key Facts

- 3.1. IBC venues typically rotate to reflect the geographic diversity of the Society, ideally visiting in turn (a) Europe, (b) North America and (c) South America, Asia, Africa and Australasia. An alternative interpretation of the typical rotation is (a) Europe, (b) North, Central and South America, and (c) Asia, Africa and Australasia.
- 3.2. IBC is a one-week meeting. It starts on Sunday evening with a reception and ends on Friday afternoon.
- 3.3. Wednesday is reserved for sightseeing or scientific tours
- 3.4. The conference social event is usually on Thursday evening
- 3.5. There are typically 700-1200 participants depending on location
- 3.6. Full-day or half-day short courses may be organized by the Education Committee prior to, during or after the conference.
- 3.7. IBS governance meetings take place during the meeting.

## 4. What constitutes a successful IBC

- 4.1. Good representation from around the world
- 4.2. A varied and stimulating scientific programme reflecting the full breadth of the IBS
- 4.3. An exciting and stimulating educational programme
- 4.4. Strong involvement from young biometricians
- 4.5. A social programme which both allows the space to network and enables participants to appreciate and engage with the host region's culture
- 4.6. Reasonable prices, so that members from developing countries and students will be able to attend

## 5. Conference Governance

- 5.1. The President of the IBS presides over the IBC, and gives a presidential address
- 5.2. The outgoing (ie immediate past) IBS president is responsible to the IBS Executive Board for all aspects of IBC organization. This person is referred to as the Organizing President.
- 5.3. The Conference Advisory Committee (CAC) is charged with identifying potential locations for future IBCs (taking account of recent conference venues to ensure geographical variation), and encouraging the development of proposals
- 5.4. Conflicts in both location and timing with other societies and groups should be avoided if possible (see §7.3)

### 5.5. *International Programme Committee*

- 5.5.1. The International Programme Committee (IPC) is charged with the planning and direction of the scientific programme.
- 5.5.2. IPC members should include representatives of the full breadth of scientific activity within the society and should reflect the geographical spread of the society. The IPC includes a representative from the LOC.
- 5.5.3. The IPC is responsible for organising the review of abstracts for invited sessions, for contributed papers, (oral and posters) and assembling the final programme for the LOC to publish (see 5.8.2)
- 5.5.4. Annex B shows the prototype programme which includes the following elements: (a) short course programme; (b) invited programme, including showcase sessions and the awards session; (c) contributed programme; (d) poster sessions (e) social programme and tours, and (e) IBS governance meetings (for which the International Biometric Office will provide the schedule)
- 5.5.5. Since many participants will need to present in order to secure funding to attend, the IPC should seek to accommodate as many contributed oral presentations and posters as possible (contributed talks should not be shorter than fifteen minutes).

5.5.6. The IPC is appointed by the Executive Board who will be guided by the Organizing President. The IPC chair should not normally be a member of the hosting region.

5.5.7. The timeline in Annex A shows when the IPC should be appointed.

#### 5.6. *Education Committee (standing committee of the IBS)*

5.6.1. The Education Committee is tasked with developing the short course programme (typically run on the Sunday before the conference) and the *Statistics in Practice* session that takes place during the conference. See Annex A for the suggested planning schedule.

5.6.2. The IBO will assist with preparation and distribution of short course materials as well as registration, accounting and other related functions.

#### 5.7. *Awards and Prizes*

5.7.1. Annex E details the awards and prizes typically made at and IBC, and who is responsible for them.

#### 5.8. *Conference Management Company*

*In 2017, the Executive Committee of the IBS, in consultation with various IBS Standing Committees and with the approval of the Executive Board, signed a multi-year contract with MCI, one of the world's largest professional conference management companies (<https://www.mci-group.com>) to help with the organization of IBC meetings. A multi-year agreement provides valuable continuity and corporate memory in terms of what needs to be done for each conference and potentially provides access to economies of scale. While our Core contract is with the MCI office in Canada, the concept is that various local offices of MCI will engage with Local Organizing Committees to help plan the meeting.*

#### 5.9. *Local Organizing Committee*

5.9.1. The Host Region/Network proposes a Local Organizing Committee (LOC) for approval by the Executive Board.

5.9.2. The LOC is responsible for planning and the direction of all the non-scientific facets of the conference, working closely with the Organizing President, the IBS Secretary/Treasurer, and the IBO.

- 5.9.3. The LOC will liaise with our MCI account manager in Vancouver who will, as appropriate, provide links and introductions to a local MCI office. MCI will assist with all practical aspects of conference management, including negotiations with potential conference venues and hotels, as well as providing assistance with accommodation, transportation, venue logistics, coffee breaks, lunch (if appropriate), preparation of participant packs, registration *etc.* *Contracts with conference management and conference venue are to be signed by an officer of IBS.*
- 5.9.4. The LOC, with help from MCI, is responsible for provision of the social programme. This could be by either (a) providing a range of tour / activity options specifically for participants which they can choose from when they register online, or (b) – in established tourist centres - through directing participants to a range of local tour operators with whom they can book direct.
- 5.9.5. The LOC, with help from MCI, is also responsible for ensuring (a) the programme is published on the website well in advance of the conference (refer to Annex A - timeline); (b) at registration a printed programme is included in the participant pack; abstract and participant lists should be in electronic format (eg a memory stick); (c) appropriate conference bags are provided to participants at registration.
- 5.9.6. The LOC, with help from MCI, is further responsible for (a) providing a message board during the conference; (b) providing an information desk with details of local restaurants, maps, shopping events *etc* (c) identifying volunteers to help throughout the conference.
- 5.9.7. The timeline in Annex A shows when the LOC should be appointed

#### *5.10. Conference website*

- 5.10.1. The conference website is the responsibility of the IBO, and will include on-line abstract submission and conference and short course registration.
- 5.10.2. Arrangements for collection of fees are set out in the Finance section below
- 5.10.3. The timeline in Annex A shows when the website should be created and populated.

## 6. Conference Venue

- 6.1. See 2.1 above for guidance on geographical location.

- 6.2. IBC locations will ideally be close to an international airport.
- 6.3. A well-established public transport system makes a location attractive.
- 6.4. A range of accommodation options is necessary, with some located in walking distance of the venue and some being suitable for students and others with tight budgets.
- 6.5. Both dedicated conference centers and University-based locations have been successful in the past.
- 6.6. The conference venue should accommodate at least six parallel scientific sessions, a registration desk, refreshments, exhibit space, and have internet access. At least one lecture hall must be able to accommodate a plenary session. Nearby rooms are also needed for IBS business meetings during the conference and for the short courses prior to the conference. Good audio visual provision is essential.

## 7. Conference Timing

- 7.1. IBCs are generally held in July, which of course is Summer for the northern hemisphere. December is also a possibility that might be more suitable for some Southern hemisphere locations. Note that for some southern hemisphere locations closer to the equator, a July conference can work very well (e.g. Cairns, Australia in 2004).
- 7.2. Consideration should be given to the dates of academic terms and other conferences in order to maximize attendance.
- 7.3. Once the date is fixed it should be circulated as widely as possible to prevent clashes emerging.

## 8. Satellite meetings

- 8.1. One or two-day satellite meetings may be organized just prior to or immediately after the IBC. These may be organized under the purview of the IBS or be developed by other societies and groups.
- 8.2. For those organized by the IBS:
- 8.3. One specific topic of methodology or application area is highlighted. Emphasis is on plenary sessions in a workshop-type format, with room for discussion.
- 8.4. As this is not part of the official IBC program, a separate local organizing committee and scientific program committee will be appointed by the organizer of the satellite meeting.

8.5. Satellite conference or workshops not organized by the IBS may be co-sponsored by the IBS, usually without any financial commitment or administrative support.

## 9. Finances

9.1. A typical outline budget, providing a template for submission of a bid, is shown in Annex C.

9.2. After a venue is selected, the final budget is developed by the LOC, conference management organization IBO and IBS secretary treasurer (who may seek advice from the IBS Finance Committee as appropriate.)

9.3. The registration fees should be set at a level to ensure that all meeting expenses are covered (including expenses incurred by the International Biometric Office). Meeting expenses *excludes* (a) the short course programme and (b) the IBS Governance meeting expenses.

9.3.1. Students and participants from developing countries should pay a reduced registration fee in each category.

9.3.2. The IBS officers shall submit the registration fees for approval by the Executive Board: see Annex A timeline.

9.3.3. All participants, from the Organizing President down, regardless of their role in the conference, must pay their registration fee.

9.4. All contracts associated with the IBC must be reviewed by the officers and authorized by the Organizing President. They should be signed by the Organizing President or the Executive Director.

9.5. Final balance

9.5.1. Where the IBO collects all registration fees, and takes full financial responsibility, (a) forty percent (40%) of any surplus will be transferred to the host region or shared if more than one region hosts and (b) any loss is born entirely by the International Society.

9.5.2. Where the host region collects the registration fees, (a) forty percent (40%) of any surplus is retained by the host region and the remainder transferred to the IBS (b) thirty percent (30%) of any loss is met by the host region.

9.5.3. Where there is a shared responsibility for collecting registration fees...

## 10. After the conference

- 10.1. An electronic evaluation should be conducted with assistance from the IBO.
- 10.2. Accounts should be settled within sixty days and a full financial report presented to the Executive Board within three months.

## 11. Preparing a successful bid

- 11.1. The Conference Advisory Committee is responsible for setting the procedure for inviting bids to organize the IBC, soliciting bids, and making a recommendation to the Executive Board.
- 11.2. The location and venue should be identified two conferences (ie typically four years) in advance.
- 11.3. Successful bids will convince the Conference Advisory Committee that the organizers can deliver on all aspects described above, and should include an outline budget (Annex C) and an indication of the likely travel costs of participants.

## 12. List of Annexes

- Annex A – timeline
- Annex B – typical programme outline
- Annex C – outline budget spreadsheet
- Annex D – relevant financial policies
- Annex E – awards and prizes
- Annex F – Past conference venues and registration numbers

END