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**Terms of Reference for Hosting a Congress  
of the International Society for Forensic Genetics (ISFG)**

**1. Parties**

- The International Society for Forensic Genetics (ISFG), represented by the executive board
- The Local Organizing Committee (LOC)

The parties shall co-operate to organize an ISFG Congress. The official organizer of the Congress is the ISFG Board in co-operation with LOC.

**2. Hosts**

Members of the ISFG, who are active in the field of forensic genetics and are employed in either forensic science institutes or in academia are invited and eligible to host an ISFG Congress. The hosts will form the LOC and will conform to the regulations outlined in this document.

**3. Host & Venue Selection**

The host and venue for the ISFG Congress is selected by the ISFG General Assembly four years in advance. In order to be reviewed, the LOC must submit their proposal to host an ISFG Congress to the ISFG Board by April 1<sup>st</sup> of the year at which the decision will be made.

Proposals to host an ISFG should have sufficient information to allow the ISFG Board members to evaluate the proposal based on the following criteria: (1) proposed dates of the meeting; (2) details about the venue including location, availability of transportation, description of accommodations that will be used for the meeting (congress facilities, lodging and dining facilities, recreational and cultural opportunities); (3) cost of registrations; (4) a preliminary budget plan.

The ISFG Board will make a decision if the bid meets these criteria within 2 months of receiving the submission. If deemed suitable the proposal will be presented to the General Assembly.

If deemed suitable, the proposal will be presented to the General Assembly and decided upon by majority vote according to §7 of the ISFG statutes. A presentation of not more than 10 minutes should be prepared for the General Assembly to allow members of the ISFG the opportunity to judge the proposal prior to the vote.

**4. General role of the Local Organizing Committee (LOC)**

The LOC shall cooperate with the ISFG Board to ensure the success of the congress. The LOC designates the Congress President (CP), who will assist with scientific programme of the Congress and be the spokesperson for the congress. The CP will be given the opportunity to give a presentation at the closing ceremony of the previous congress. For the two years preceding the congress, the CP will be invited to attend the ISFG board meetings.

The LOC will be responsible for the overall organization of the congress including the following:

- Appointing a Professional Conference Organiser.
- Production of the congress budget and regular up-dates as requested by the ISFG Board.
- Establish a web site and coordinate with the ISFG Secretary to link to the ISFG web site.

- Establish a timeline for abstract submission, abstract closure, abstract review, and notification of authors of any decision.
- Handle abstract submission and communication with the authors.
- Handle the registration process.
- Provide marketing material as required.
- Prepare and distribute any documents such as conference programmes.
- Organize the social programme.
- Organize sponsorship.
- Plan exhibitions.
- Handle staffing at the Congress.
- Provide local arrangements and cost reimbursements to invited speakers.
- Assist in the local organisation of satellite workshops.

## 5. General role of the ISFG

The ISFG Board will have the final decision on the Congress timetable, which will be provided by the LOC, indicating the proposed dates of: the opening ceremony, the General Assembly, meetings of the ISFG Working Parties, any social events, and the closing of the Congress.

The LOC should provide suggestions for invited speakers and possible workshop organizers to be presented to the ISFG Board. The final decision of invited speakers is the responsibility of the ISFG Board. The ISFG president will issue the official invitations to all invited individuals.

The ISFG Board will be responsible for the scoring of the abstracts. The CP will be invited to assist with the abstract selection.

The ISFG will support the LOC by sharing decisions, templates, budgets and other information that have been gathered from previous ISFG conferences.

## 6. Workshops

Adding pre-conference educational workshops to the scientific program is optional but preferred. If workshops are planned, the LOC will incorporate all workshop related budget needs

and logistical support into the conference planning.

## 7. Speaker reimbursements

The LOC will be responsible for waiving the registration fee and covering the travel costs and accommodation for two nights for invited conference speakers.

The members of the ISFG Board are to be provided with free registration and accommodation for the entire time of the congress. The members of the ISFG Board will be liable for their travel costs.

Workshop organizers will get free congress registration and be provided with financial support using the following suggestions: If the workshop is for ½ day then one person will be provided with funds towards travel and two night's accommodation; for a one day workshop up to two tutors should be provided with the same reimbursement as for a ½ day workshop; for a two day workshop the same reimbursement should be provided for up to four tutors. Travel reimbursement is based on the costs of an economy roundtrip airfare.

These entitlements should be included in the congress budget.

## 8. Proceedings

The congress budget needs to include funding for the electronic publication of the ISFG congress proceedings "Progress in Forensic Genetics" (at present as a special issue in the "Forensic Science International: Genetics Supplement Series"). Costs and terms of publication are subject to contractual negotiations with Elsevier; information about the expected publication costs will be shared with the LOC in the year before the congress. The contract with Elsevier will be signed by a member of the ISFG Board. The CP will be invited to be one of the editors; the ISFG board will assist in administrative review of article submissions.

It is a goal of the ISFG to share information presented at the congress in a timely fashion

and publish these proceedings within the same calendar year.

## **9. Financing**

### **9.1. Financial Responsibility**

The LOC will assume the financial responsibility for the congress and associated workshops.

The bi-annual congress of the ISFG should be totally supported by its registration fees and income from exhibition and sponsors. Annual membership dues will not be used to subsidize the meeting.

### **9.2. Registration fees**

The registration fees should be set high enough to cover costs, but still competitive with other conferences. Fees should be reduced for ISFG members and students, and staggered for early, regular, and onsite registration.

### **9.3. Surplus Sharing**

Any surplus funds remaining, after taking into account all items provided for in the budget, shall be allocated to the funds of the ISFG.

A final comprehensive budget should be provided by the LOC to the ISFG Board within 6 months of the completion of the congress.

## **10. Selection of a Professional Congress Organizer (PCO)**

The LOC may select a PCO and sign an agreement. A member of the LOC should sign any agreement. This agreement shall include documentation that the PCO will comply with these Terms of Reference.

## **11. Congress Flyer and Website**

The LOC will design a printable marketing flyer and provide a website for the congress, such as “www.ISFG2017.org”. The website should be created at least two years prior to the congress. Preliminary information will be

updated to include marketing information, the names of the featured speakers, travel (including visa requirements), lodging, and exhibitor logistics. Latest 10 months prior to the congress the website should go live with a mechanism for electronic registration and submission of abstracts.

The website should be designed with attractive features highlighting the invited speakers, scientific topics, and the culture of the host city. The website should remain accessible for at least one year after the end of congress. Then the website content should be archived and made available to the ISFG.

## **12. Copyright**

The ISFG holds all copyrights and any other intellectual property rights used or developed for the congress, or otherwise relating to the congress, and any related material produced in whatever form. The ISFG logo shall appear on all congress materials. Logos will be provided on request.

## **13.1. Meeting requirements**

### **13.1.1. Main conference facility**

Seating capacity of at least 700 persons in the plenary session hall; 6-7 various size rooms for meetings of the ISFG working parties; adequate space for the commercial exhibition (see 13.3); a room to accommodate a meeting of the ISFG Board.

### **13.1.2. Workshop facilities**

Space for workshops can be in the conference venue or a nearby alternate location. Workshops are typically organized on the two days preceding the main conference. Seating capacity and room requirements may vary based on planned topics. Catering facilities should be provided if the workshop exceeds 4 hours in duration.

### **13.1.3. Registration area**

Sufficient space is required to handle the registration and inquiry regarding logistical support for at least 700 participants.

### **13.1.4. Information and communication**

Adequate arrangements for information and communication, including free WiFi access to internet/email. Other desirable features include an interactive congress App, audience participation technology, and options for electronic sharing of scientific posters.

### **13.1.5. Office space**

A speaker preparation room and one office or small meeting room to be used for the ISFG Board during the Congress should be provided.

### **13.1.6. Catering facilities**

Sufficient catering facilities/restaurants should be available to accommodate all participants either in the conference building or in the immediate vicinity.

## **13.2. Hotel requirements**

The city should be able to provide the following number of hotel accommodation in the following categories:

- 4 and 5 star: 150-200 rooms
- 2 and 3 star: 150-200 rooms
- Low budget / student accommodation: 150-200 rooms

The LOC must ensure that the accommodation is at a reasonable distance for the congress participants. LOC will initiate the negotiation with suitable hotels covering a range of prices and will obtain written agreements regarding availability of rooms at a fixed rate for the congress dates.

## **13.3. Exhibition requirements**

A minimum requirement of approximately 500-600 square meters is required to accommodate at least 400 posters.

Sufficient space (approximately 500-1000 sq. m.) should be guaranteed to commercial exhibitors in a location easily accessible by congress participants during breaks.

The poster area and exhibition space should be in close proximity to allow movement of delegates.

A booth should be allocated free of charge for Elsevier as agreed with the publisher of FSI Genetics.

## **14. Liability**

All activities will be conducted in accordance with laws of the host country. The ISFG shall not be liable for any claims made against the LOC, the ISFG or any other person or organization as a result of the work conducted as part of the congress. This includes any negligent acts, omissions or wilful misconduct on the part of the ISFG congress agents.

## **15. Timeline and example schedule**

The appendices to these terms of reference contain a typical timeline for LOC activity and congress logistics, and a template for the congress week schedule.

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## Bi-annual International Congress Timeline

Version September 2016

The timeline below covers the application for hosting a congress and organizational deadlines to be met by the board and the local organizing committee.

Year	Month-Day	Step to be taken	Comment
4 prior to congress	April 1 <sup>st</sup>	Deadline for a prospective LOC to submit the application to host conference to ISFG board	
	May	Board will notify prospective hosts if proposal can move forward	
	September	LOC delegate presents conference hosting proposal to ISFG General Assembly	
3 prior to congress	flexible	LOC provides update on conference planning to ISFG board	By e-mail
2 prior to congress	August	LOC creates logo, marketing material, and a congress website with initial announcements including congress site and dates	
	September	LOC delegates attend bi-annual congress to participate at ISFG board meeting, and address ISFG members during the closing ceremony	No financial support via ISFG
	September	ISFG board places the logo and a link for the upcoming congress on the ISFG website	
1 prior to congress	May	One LOC delegate invited to ISFG board meeting. Decisions to be made on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Workshops</li> <li>- Invited Speakers</li> <li>- Congress fees</li> <li>- Congress deadlines</li> <li>- Date and location of abstract selection board meeting</li> <li>-</li> </ul>	ISFG will cover travel for one individual



## Bi-annual International Congress Timeline

Version September 2016

Year	Month-Day	Step to be taken	Comment
1  prior to congress	May-July	ISFG President issues official invitations to invited speakers and workshop organizers	
	May – July	LOC and ISFG board obtain updated quote and negotiate Elsevier contract	
	July – August	LOC updates website and marketing material (flyer) with names and topics for invited speakers and workshops	
	September	One LOC delegate invited to ISFG board meeting. Discuss progress and open topics.	ISFG will cover travel for one individual
	September	ISFG board distributes updated flyer to members via the email list	
	December	LOC ensures that congress website is operational with – preliminary agenda with workshops, invited speaker names, fees, deadlines, links for registration, hotel reservation, abstract submission.	
	December	ISFG board sends another member list email with the new website link and an abstract solicitation.	
Congress year	Early March	ISFG board sends member list email with reminder to submit abstract	
	April 1st	Abstract submission deadline	
	April-May	LOC delegate invited to ISFG board meeting. Decisions to be made on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Abstracts for oral and poster presentation</li> <li>- Placement of oral presentations</li> <li>- Selection of session chairs</li> <li>- Day to day schedule</li> </ul>	ISFG will cover travel for one individual



## Bi-annual International Congress Timeline

Version September 2016

Year	Month-Day	Step to be taken	Comment
Congress year	May	ISFG board will contact session chairs	
	May	LOC notifies first authors of accepted abstracts	
	June 1st	Early registration deadline	
	August	Select and invite poster jury	
	Aug/September	ISFG CONGRESS	
	September	ISFG webmaster sends out workshop and congress feedback surveys	
	September	ISFG Board obtains copies of workshop and meeting presentations from workshop organizers and invited speakers; obtain permission and post on ISFG educational pages	
	September	ISFG president writes up conference highlights for FSIGen society pages	
	September – October	Selected LOC and board members edit congress proceedings; write editorial	See separate document for guidelines and timing
1 year after congress	Till September	LOC follow up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Submit final budget and settle finances with ISFG board</li> <li>- Maintain congress website</li> <li>-</li> </ul>	
	September	Archive congress website and provide files to ISFG board	



## Generalized Congress Agenda and Room Requirements

Version September 2016

Aside from the scientific presentations, each ISFG Congress is the venue of various society activities like the language based working group meetings and the general assembly.

A representative congress schedule would look like this:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
GHEP meeting	GHEP meeting	Scientific session 1	Scientific session 3	Scientific session 5	Scientific Session 7
Full day workshop 2x	Full day workshop 2x				
½ day workshop 2x	½ day workshop 2x	Lunch Symposium	Lunch Symposium	Lunch Symposium	Closing ceremony
	ISFG Board Meeting	Scientific session 2	Scientific session 4	Scientific session 6	
	Opening ceremony	Poster session	Poster Session	Poster Session	
	ISFG Scientific Prize lecture	ISFG Language based working groups	ISFG General Assembly		
	Welcome reception	Speaker Dinner		Congress Dinner	
<b>Room requirements</b> Auditorium 4 class rooms Speaker prep room	<b>Room requirements</b> Auditorium 4 class rooms Speaker prep room board meeting room Poster space Vendor Exhibit	<b>Room requirements</b> Auditorium 5 class rooms Speaker prep room board meeting room Poster space Vendor Exhibit	<b>Room requirements</b> Auditorium  Speaker prep room board meeting room Poster space Vendor Exhibit	<b>Room requirements</b> Auditorium  Speaker prep room board meeting room Poster space Vendor Exhibit	<b>Room Requirements</b> Auditorium  Speaker prep room