

# **First Steps in the Preparation of an International Medical Meeting for the Chairman of the Meeting**

**Endorsed by**

**The Healthcare Congress Alliance**

**Healthcare Convention & Exhibitors Association**

**International Association of Professional Congress Organizers**

**International Pharmaceutical Congress Advisory Association**

**HCEA**

**IAPCO**

**IPCAA**

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

**Updated 2005**

<p><b>I.</b> <b>DEFINITIONS AND OBJECTIVES</b></p>	<p>The definitions and objectives of the Meeting need to be clearly defined:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Purpose of the Meeting</li><li>• Organizing Body: National/International</li><li>• Composition of participants</li><li>• Market segment of participants by speciality and country</li><li>• Duration of Meeting and Exhibition</li><li>• Year/month of Meeting (avoid competing with established Meetings)</li><li>• Frequency of Meeting</li><li>• Number of abstracts and presentation time</li><li>• Number and size of session halls</li><li>• Net exhibition space</li><li>• Official languages</li><li>• Printed materials</li><li>• Invited speakers</li><li>• Identification of financial responsibility</li><li>• Tax and regulatory concerns</li><li>• Safety and security standards</li><li>• Technical infrastructure required</li><li>• Cultural (social) events</li><li>• General Secretariat</li></ul>	
<p><b>2.1</b> <b>MANAGEMENT – ASSOCIATION</b></p>	<p>Define the roles and responsibilities of the International and National Committees</p> <p>Appoint a Local Organizing Committee to embrace the various administrative activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promotion</li><li>• Treasurer</li><li>• Cultural</li><li>• Sponsorship and exhibition</li><li>• Safety and security aspects</li></ul> <p>Appoint the Scientific Programme Committee</p>	<p>Refer to IAPCO document: <b>Guidelines for Co-operation between the International Association, the National Organizing Committee and the Professional Conference Organizer</b></p>
<p><b>2.2</b> <b>MANAGEMENT – PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCE ORGANIZER (PCO)</b></p>	<p>A PCO should be appointed at the earliest opportunity, the selection to take into account the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Experience</li><li>• Continuity</li><li>• Trust</li><li>• International recognition</li><li>• Financially stable</li><li>• Quality</li><li>• Proposed fees</li></ul>	<p>Refer to IAPCO document: <b>How to Choose the Right PCO</b></p>

<p><b>2.3 MANAGEMENT – INDUSTRY ADVISORY BOARD (IAB)</b></p>	<p>To be successful it is essential that Industry be considered to be a Partner of the Meeting, with full co-operation and trust.</p> <p>The IAB will provide advice and support, and consideration should be given to a representative of the IAB, as an Industry Liaison Officer, being invited to join related meetings of the Local Organizing Committee</p>	
<p><b>3.1 SELECT VENUE</b></p>	<p>In order to select a suitable venue for the Meeting, the following points should be taken into consideration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cost of rental, resources, management and promotion</li><li>• Infrastructure/services</li><li>• Quality/management</li><li>• Hotel capacities and negotiated rates</li><li>• Accessibility of airport to the city, congress centre and hotels</li><li>• Airport/international access</li><li>• Safety and security</li><li>• Customs clearance/entry controls</li><li>• National regulations including regulations on the promotion of drugs and/or medical equipment, as appropriate</li><li>• Capacity of congress centre:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Exhibition space including access</li><li>- Registration area</li><li>- Session halls</li><li>- Catering</li></ul></li></ul>	
<p><b>3.2 CONFIRM DATES</b></p>	<p>When selecting the dates for the Meeting, it is essential that an investigation be made into other events that may conflict, either in size, location or subject matter.</p>	
<p><b>3.3 SECURE HOTELS</b></p>	<p>Having selected the venue, it is essential that the hotel accommodation is swiftly secured, taking into consideration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Speaker/VIP requirements</li><li>• Industry requirements</li><li>• Budget accommodation</li><li>• Sufficient accommodation for individuals in all categories</li></ul>	<p>Refer to Healthcare Congress Alliance document: <b>Housing Guidelines</b></p>

#### 4. BUDGET

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

- Tax implications including VAT/Sales Added Tax
- Legal and audit implications
- Industry support (direct and indirect)
- Cashflow
- Funding
- Financial procedures
- Profit allocation (if appropriate)
- Airline contributions
- City/national support
- Insurance

In addition,

- The budget should be realistic
- The budget must balance on a sensible breakeven
- The budget should be transparent to all parties, including industry

#### 5. SCIENTIFIC PROGRAMME

Structure:

- Type of sessions
- Timetable grid

Satellite sessions:

- Core programme days only
- Included in congress programme
- Avoid conflicting/parallel topics
- Allocation of timeslots avoiding parallel slots if feasible

Abstracts:

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

Speakers:

- Costs
- Conditions
- Other categories

Technical equipment:

- Quality
- Visibility
- Efficiency

Publications and proceedings

Refer to IAPCO document:  
**Guidelines for the  
International Scientific  
Programme Committee**

<b>6. PROMOTION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Logo/design</li><li>• Webpage</li><li>• Print</li><li>• Mailing</li><li>• On-site promotion at other events</li><li>• Journals/advertising</li><li>• Using industry</li><li>• Databank</li></ul>	
<b>7. INDUSTRY</b>	<p>Exhibition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Location</li><li>• Access</li><li>• Build-up/breakdown (allowing for sufficient time in accordance to the size of the exhibition)</li><li>• Duration/open times</li><li>• Proximity to session halls and posters</li></ul> <p>Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Integrated delegate activities</li><li>• Stand allocation</li><li>• Catering</li></ul> <p>Sponsorship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Financing and pre-financing</li><li>• Marketing service opportunities</li><li>• Return on investment</li><li>• Free selection (itemised à la carte shopping list accruing to sponsorship levels, as opposed to a medal table)</li><li>• Guidelines for levels of sponsorship</li><li>• Hospitality suites</li><li>• On-site inspection visit (pre-, on-site, and debriefing)</li></ul> <p>Satellites (see Scientific Programme)</p> <p>Contract</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Payment against invoices</li><li>• Cancellation and penalty information</li><li>• Terms</li><li>• Deadlines</li><li>• Rules and regulations</li></ul> <p>Group registration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Delegate registration</li><li>• Hotel accommodation</li><li>• Cancellations</li><li>• Deadlines</li><li>• Name changes</li></ul>	<p>Refer to Healthcare Congress Alliance document: <b>Sponsorship Prospectus</b></p> <p>Refer to IPCAA document: <b>IPCAA Congress Guidelines</b></p> <p>Refer to HCEA document: <b>Guidelines for International Healthcare Exhibitions and Congresses</b></p>

**8.  
LOGISTICS**

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

- English language capability of all congress parties (including technicians and suppliers of services)
- Cultural (social) programme
- Companions' programme
- Tour programme (Meeting and pre-/post-Meeting)
- Transportation
- Staff/hostesses/students (English language included)
- Registration
- Secretariat
- Press
- Technical equipment and construction
- Signs
- Catering
- Security

Refer to Healthcare Congress Alliance document:

**Safety and Security at Healthcare Congresses**

**9.  
TIMETABLE**

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

The development of 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 Meeting.

**10.  
AFTER THE FIRST  
STEPS**

The PCO and representatives from Industry will guide and advise the Organizing Committees on all aspects of the Meeting, however, there are many responsibilities pertaining to all parties about which the Organizing Committees should be aware and should embrace.

Refer to Healthcare Congress Alliance document:

**Accountability Issues in Healthcare Congress Management**

## REFERENCE GUIDELINES

The following documents can be obtained from association headquarters to assist in the planning of your First Steps

IAPCO Headquarters (\*),  
IPCAA Headquarters (\*\*),  
HCEA Headquarters (\*\*\*)

- Guidelines for Co-operation between the International Association, the National Organizing Committee and the Professional Conference Organizer (\*)
- How to Choose the Right PCO (\*)
- Housing Guidelines (\*)
- Guidelines for the International Scientific Programme Committee (\*)
- Sponsorship Prospectus (\*)
- Accountability Issues in Healthcare Congress Management (\*)
- Safety and Security at Healthcare Congresses (\*)
- IPCAA Congress Guidelines (\*\*)
- Guidelines for International Healthcare Exhibitions and Congresses (\*\*\*)

### Definition:

The Healthcare Congress Alliance, hereinafter known as the HCA, includes the member associations of the HCA, namely the Healthcare Convention & Exhibitors Association (HCEA), the International Association of Professional Congress Organizers (IAPCO), and the International Pharmaceutical Congress Advisory Association (IPCAA).

### Disclaimer:

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