



GUIDELINES FOR ORGANISERS OF THE ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL ESTA CONFERENCE

The object of this paper is to help future organisers of the ESTA International Conference as they make their preparations. Although some points are almost certainly legal or constitutional requirements, many of the suggestions are just that, suggestions. Conferences, over many years, have succeeded because they reflected the spirit, both musically and socially, of the host country. It is not the intention of the Guidelines Committee to interfere with that in any way.

We have divided the ideas in this paper into 3 categories:

IN BOLD are matters that every Conference should act upon, either because it is a legal requirement (in most countries), or because it is stipulated by the ESTA constitution.

IN STANDARD FONT are things which the guidelines committee strongly recommends.

IN ITALICS are ideas from recent conferences which you might find useful.

GENERAL

- A conference Committee should be appointed, and one person should be identified as the Conference leader.
- The host nation will take sole responsibility for the financing of the Conference. No financial help will be forthcoming from the Central Board.
- Health and safety concerns must be addressed. There needs to be a risk assessment, and it is essential to appoint qualified first aiders. There should be a first aid kit and information on local health services.
- Facilities for disabled people must be provided.
- Child safeguarding (Assuming any children will be present) is essential, as is the protection of any vulnerable adults. Policy needs to be clear on:
 - Photographs and videos
 - Recordings
 - Background criminal checks for responsible adults
- Policies and protocols need to be in place, so if an incident occurs, there are clear reporting procedures.
- Insurance needs to be in place for:
 - Public liability
 - Employer's liability
 - Event insurance
- A privacy policy needs to be in place to protect delegates' and customers' financial details. *An example is attached (Appendix 1)*
- Data protection may be relevant to your country.

All the above should be lodged with Central Board by the time that the Conference is open for booking. It should be signed off by the Conference Leader. This will protect the international ESTA brand.

- **The official language of Conferences is English.**
- The duration of the conference is normally three to five days and we recommend that it includes a week-end.
- Preparations for hosting a conference should preferably begin three years in advance.
- Evaluation reports of previous conferences can be a valuable resource. We recommend that previous Conference organisers are contacted and consulted.
- Advice can be sought from the Central Board, from organisers of previous International Conferences or from the Guidelines Working Group.

THE PROGRAMME

- **The Delegates' Meeting, Presidents' Meeting and (if relevant) performances by students short-listed by the ESTA Foundation should have clearly allocated schedules on the programme.** Parallel programmes are usually offered for the remaining participants.
- A minimum of one third of the conference programme should come from ESTA branches other than the one hosting the conference.
- There should be a balance of representation of all four string instruments *and possibly other bowed string instruments such as viola da gamba.*
- All programme contributions from other branches should be vetted and proposed by that National branch (and not by the individuals themselves).
- At least one masterclass or teaching demonstration by a prominent teacher should be included.
- A brochure should be provided, containing:
 - An easy to read timetable with clear places and times
 - Biographies of presenters and performers
 - Programme notes for concerts
 - Information about sponsors and exhibitors
- A pre-arrival pack should be provided for all attendees, containing:
 - Arrival instructions
 - A map
 - Information about local transport facilities (train/air/car)
 - Relevant local laws and customs
- The programme should contain some national characteristics of the hosting branch, such as teaching methods, choice of music, traditional/folk elements.
- There should be no repeat presentations from conferences of the previous 3 years.
- Coffee and tea breaks at appropriate times should be included in the programme.
- A list of all attendants to the conference with their contact addresses may be provided, given that participants agree at the time of application/invitation.
- Rehearsal time and facilities should be provided for all performers.
- All lectures should include multi-media, including, especially, music.
- *There could be a short student performance during the early part of the day's programme.*
- *Each day could end with music.*
- *The conference could include a grand play-together by all participants of the conference.*

PUBLICITY

- **The name and the logo of ESTA are protected and are subject to copyright.**
- A marketing and publicity strategy should be established in good time, and should include website, social media, printed matter and press releases.
- Drawing in new members is as important as contacting existing ESTA members.
- Organisers are encouraged to speak to former Conference organisers and exchange ideas
- It is highly desirable that organisers attend at least one International Conference before undertaking to organise a Conference of their own.
- Day to day social media output should occur before, during and after the Conference.

SPONSORSHIP

- Conference organisers are encouraged to seek sponsorship from commercial enterprises relevant to ESTA members, such as instrument makers, manufacturers of instruments and accessories, string manufacturers, music publishers and retailers and distributors of the above.
- A main sponsor should be sought (currently Thomastik Infeld Vienna until 2018), and subsidiary sponsors may well be willing to contribute. A range of options at different rates (Platinum, Gold Silver etc) should be considered.
- Trade stands should be part of the planning for a Conference. Rates should match the size (and possibly the position) of the stand. Some sponsors will not want a stand but will want to be associated with a particular presenter or concert. These stands should be placed centrally in the main Conference building - putting them in out of the way buildings will damage future opportunities.
- Care should be taken that presentations by sponsors should be controlled and should not in any way detract from the educational purpose of the Conference.

CONFERENCE CENTRE AND ACCOMMODATION

- Where sponsors are involved, good facilities must be provided for them:
 - The trade hall should be central, with tea and coffee close by.
 - The principal sponsor should be consulted as to the layout of the Conference
 - *An example of an exhibitors' information pack is attached(see below)*
- It has become standard practice for there to be 2 large halls for presentations and a number of smaller rooms for Delegates', Presidents' and other meetings, and trade demonstrations.
- Overhead projectors, wi-fi facilities and screens should be in all rooms, backed up by appropriate technical equipment and skilled staff support.
- Most recent Conferences have provided eating facilities, and accommodation close to the Conference centre (*if possible under one roof*).
- The members of the Central Board would very much appreciate being accommodated in the same place.
- *It has been found useful in recent Conferences for all staff/employees to be dressed in an easily identifiable uniform (such as a bright t-shirt).*

FINANCIAL

- **Contributors to the programme (lecturers, performers) are not paid a fee, but do not pay a Conference fee. Their branch of origin pays travelling costs, but the host country offers free board and lodging for two nights and two days.**
- **The members of the Central Board do not pay a conference fee.**
- **Members of branches who require visas will need to be sent invitations immediately after receipt of their applications.**
- The economic situation of poorer countries should be taken onto account in setting a Conference fee. *Some recent Conferences have offered different rates to different countries. Others have offered an "early birds" reduced fee to all, ending at a fixed date some time before the Conference; this may also give organisers an early indication of likely numbers of attendees.*
- There should be a variety of accommodation prices, so that students, their escorts and members from economically less privileged countries can

afford to attend. There should be some more elaborate facilities for those who are prepared to pay more.

- Supplementary fees for an outing may be charged.
- Additional concerts should as far as possible be part of the conference fee.