

GUIDELINES FOR IUGG GENERAL ASSEMBLIES

Guidelines are listed here as an aid to the bidding and planning of IUGG General Assemblies.

CHOICE OF VENUE

Invitation

- Who are the official inviting body/bodies and other supporting institutions?

Dates & Timing

- IUGG General Assemblies are usually held between June and August. Avoid clashes with other functions that may compete for conference facilities, living accommodation, and transport. Dates when University accommodation is available are desirable.

Participation

- What is the maximum number of participants who can be accommodated by the planned conference facilities?
- Possibility to hold virtual and hybrid meetings (e.g., technical equipment, pricing etc.)

Access

- Is the venue easy to reach? Include the cost of ground transport and any daily commuting costs.

Sustainability

- Which sustainable practices are offered by the venue (e.g., reductions of greenhouse gas emissions, use of plastic, food/paper/energy waste etc.)

Immigration control

- Will there be government support to assure the free circulation of scientists consistent with the International Science Council (ISC) policy on freedom and responsibility and the Principle of Universality of Science?
- What arrangements will be put in place to facilitate the visa application process for participants in the Assembly?

Accommodation

- Will there be enough accommodation to cater for the full range of requirements?
- Low-price options for students and others are essential.
- How far is the accommodation from conference centre(s), places to eat, and entertainment?

Affordability

- Combining registration, travel (incl. visa), accommodation, food, and entertainment.

Geographical balance

- Assembly locations should be spread around the world, with a preference for developing countries provided the “Guideline” requirements can be met.

Climate

- What is the average temperature, humidity and rainfall at the time the General Assembly will be held? Air conditioning may be an important issue. Put information into the circulars.

Currency

- Put information into the circulars. What currencies and credit cards are widely accepted? What is the availability of ATM (cash dispensing) machines?

Competing/complementary conferences

- What other organizations might hold a meeting/Assembly at a similar time and location?
- What locations in the same vicinity have been used for Association Scientific Assemblies?

Local Organizing Committee (LOC)

- Are there enough scientists in the IUGG disciplines available with the right experience?

Outreach program

- Will there be any plans for public lectures, training courses, lecturers visiting to schools, and press conferences?

Regional impact

- What benefits will the Assembly bring to the region?

Scientific attractions in the region

- Research centers, universities, laboratories, observatories, and industries?

Sponsorship

- Any subsidies, free facilities, free staff, financial support for young scientists, and grants from the host city?

Tourist attractions in the region

- In particular for accompanying persons and pre- and post-conference visits.

CONFERENCE ACCOMMODATION

Conference centers are the best place to hold General Assemblies. Assemblies are also held at university venues where many good lecture halls are available in relatively close proximity to one another.

Accommodation is needed for

- Union Lectures and Symposia;
- Scientific sessions (many small rooms);
- IUGG Council meetings;
- IUGG and Association Plenary, Bureau, and Executive Committee (EC) meetings;
- Division/Commission/Working Group meetings;
- Offices for IUGG and each Association - with internet, telephone, photocopying, fax, tables and chairs (desks are not necessary);
- Opening Ceremony;
- Receptions;
- Closing Ceremony
- Expect requests for accommodation for special functions (e.g., affordable rooms for business meetings out-of-hours) and receptions.

For lecture rooms, we generally need halls with capacities ranging from 100 to 500 persons; theatre-style seating is preferred. In the evenings, rooms accommodating 50 or more people (classroom size) will be needed for committee meetings. There should be one hall available with seating for about 2,000 people for the Opening Ceremony.

HOTEL/HOSTEL ACCOMMODATION

- Potential registrants need convenient access to accommodation booking information and booking services. Experience has shown that some people will not bother to register if they encounter difficulties in booking suitable accommodation. Efficient communication, confirmation, and provision of details about accommodation are important.
- Publicize distance and commute times for accommodation.
- Cater for the full range of requirements (5 star hotels to hostels; include apartments). Many participants require low-cost accommodation.
- Provide an accommodation booking service through the LOC as an option; the LOC should negotiate favorable hotel and hostel rates and try to secure undertakings from the providers about cost ceilings vs. self-bookings – e.g., the actual rate charged to through the LOC should be significantly lower than the rates available by booking privately (usually via the Internet).
- Provide advice to registrants about options for self-booking by Internet, which is usually the cheapest option, but may not be available to many attendees because of Internet or language/culture issues.
- University student accommodation is desirable. Reasonable prices for standard hotels (and meals) are very important.

PROGRAM CONSIDERATIONS

Assembly duration

- The Assembly normally spans over 10 days; the first and last days are reserved for business meetings. However, this practice is under frequent review and so 10 days should not be automatically assumed as the duration. Many Associations will fit their programs into no more than 5 days.

Scientific Sessions

- Scientific sessions meet in parallel each day. Sessions usually begin at no earlier than 08:30 and end no later than 18:00.

Scientific Business meeting

- Many Association bodies (Commissions, Working Groups, etc.) schedule business meetings into the evening (from 18:00 until 21:00 or 22:00) on most days.
- The Conference Center must be kept open late for those who stay for these business meetings.

Opening ceremony and reception

- Entertainment.
- Invite famous people; local celebrities.
- Reception (e.g. with finger food) to follow Opening Ceremony.

Timing of sessions

- 15 minutes is a unit for oral time slot; invited talks can continue for 2 or 3 time slots.
- 90 minutes for 3 Union Lectures (each 30 min) for 3 days during the General Assembly (the biggest hall for the Union Lectures, all sessions are blocked for Union Lectures).

- Special (e.g., public) Lectures.
- Association Lectures; no clashes.

All these points must be discussed with IUGG and the Association Secretaries General.

Exhibition booths

- Publishers, instrument suppliers, societies, IUGG, etc.

Posters

- Large enough space to allow posters to stay for as long as possible.
- How long can the posters stay?
- Posters are best set up close to the session rooms (to link with oral presentations) and refreshments.
- Corridor space for posters?
- Information about space to be available for planning.
- Poster presentations/viewing times should be linked to the relevant sessions.
- Approximately 500-600 posters per day.

The IUGG and the Associations Secretaries General are responsible for formulating a first draft of the scientific program. This must then be reviewed and finalized in conjunction with the LOC on the basis of the facilities available.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATIONS

The LOC is responsible for issuing the Call for Papers (Assembly Circular) based on the scientific program, collecting abstracts, publishing the program, and all local arrangements, including setting the registration fee and the registration of participants. We expect that the LOC will use the Internet to communicate with participants and carry out the tasks of abstract submission and pre-registration. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between IUGG and the local organizers should be signed three years before the beginning of a General Assembly. Modifications of the IUGG logo are not permitted.

Web services

- Start a conference website as soon as possible, then update. Include information about everything listed in this document and more.
- Hotel information, costs, distances, internet costs at hotels.
- Downloadable copies of circulars as pdf's.
- Advertise size and orientation (portrait or landscape) of poster boards.
- Facility for officers to search for participants and abstracts.
- Provide internet access at all conference facilities.

Program and abstracts

- The web-based system of managing registrations, abstract submission and program arrangements must be fast and robust. Abstract and Program management will be provided by a company hired for this aim. The web-based system must be compatible with mobile devices.
- The LOC needs to be flexible and accept various communication routes and ways of inputting data, i.e., e-mailing, web-page, even fax.

- The final program must be available when participants register on site.
- A conference bag is nice to have but not essential; cheap ones are OK. Do not fill the conference bag with commercial advertising material (except advertisements of co-sponsors and exhibitors).
- Participants need a printed program book, including a quick-look summary for each day (via electronic gadgets).
- Abstracts do not have to be printed, but must be available via the conference website and on USB stick. A small number of printed copies at key conference venues would be useful.
- Give full names of Association Divisions, Commissions and WGs (not just WGII-G, etc.)
- List main officers (e.g., EC, Division and Commission chairs, WG chairs). IUGG and Association Secretaries General will provide the list of officers.

Transport

- Provide information about ground transport in circulars and website. How to get from airport to hotels and typical costs. Make arrangements to assist people when they arrive – signs to ground transport; helpers on site at busy times.
- If needed, arrangements for local transportation should be provided.
- Buses for evening functions.

Security

- Bomb scare preparation.
- Badge control.
- Some services should be available for non-registered accompanying persons and visitors, such as seating and toilets outside the controlled conference area.

FINANCES

Financial risk

- The LOC takes financial responsibility for the Assembly and any profit or loss incurred.
- Agreement with the IUGG Secretary General must be reached on all main financial decisions, such as setting the registration fee.
- IUGG will not contribute directly to the LOC to support the cost of the Assembly.

Registration fee

- The Registration Fee must cover all the local costs for organizing the meeting. The fee should be as reasonable as possible.
- Allow reduced registration fees for students and retired persons.

Levy for the Associations

- A levy is normally taken out of the registration fee and paid to the Associations. Registrants will need to tick a box to declare their preferred affiliation (Association).
- The levy in 2019 was USD 30 and must be negotiated with the IUGG Secretary General.

Sponsorship

- The LOC should seek support from organizations (government/academic/business) for the meeting, to assist scientists in need.
- The Associations normally provide significant support for selected (mostly young) persons to attend. Responsible for allocating grants can either be the LOC (recommended) or the Associations when they themselves provide the funding. Funds paid to the LOC by the Associations for participant support must be used only for that purpose. The LOC must account for how the money was used and the signed receipts must be available to those donating the funds.
- The Associations are responsible for deciding who receives support grants.
- Grant money from IUGG, the Union Associations, and LOC is often distributed together according to an agreement between the partners. In this case an eventual reimbursement of a surplus (for instance, in no-show cases) to the partners must be negotiated beforehand between the partners.

Auditing accounts

- IUGG has the right to view all conference accounts.

Education and Outreach Program

- Public Lecture at a time and place convenient for schools and the wider general public.
- Outreach program – speakers to schools and colleges.
- Block visits by college students (is the timing right?).
- Press conference.

Accompanying Persons Program; Tourism

- There should be an accompanying persons program.
- Associations may wish to arrange special tours during the middle weekend.
- Commercial operators are OK.
- Expect up to 300 accompanying persons, depending on the cost of attending and the availability and attractiveness of tours.
- Provide information about commercial options on the website and circulars.

Catering

- Reception after Opening Ceremony (about 1500-2000 people) and after Closing Ceremony (about 500-1000 people).
- Drinks are needed at mid-morning and mid-afternoon breaks.
- Provide fruit juices and soft drinks as well as coffee and tea.
- Refreshments should be dispersed to avoid congestion; place milk and sugar away from dispensers of drinks so people move away.
- Refreshments will be needed at many business meetings – at the cost of the body convening the meeting?
- Lunches will be needed during or near venues for lunchtime lectures/meetings.
- Quick-serve lunches may be needed for lunchtime lectures.
- Cafés and bars open at all times with tables and chairs for discussions.
- Banquets for each Association and possibly other groups – at their expense

- Availability of food for those with dietary restrictions (due to religious/cultural, lifestyle choice or for health reasons)

Marketing

- Advertise everywhere possible – use email lists, newsletters, etc.
- Publicize at the end of each Assembly the date and venue of the next IUGG Assembly.
- Website information should be available as early as possible.
- Usual web services for conferences
- Hats, T-shirts and similar items could be for sale?

Follow-up

- Abstracts should be placed on the IUGG website.
- Publication of Comptes Rendus (the manuscript of the Comptes Rendus is prepared by the IUGG Secretariat and should be printed and mailed to about 500 addresses by the Local Organizing Committee).
- An e-mail list of participants should be passed to the IUGG Secretary General.
- Keep all statistics and provide them to the IUGG Secretary General - numbers of abstracts, posters, and no-shows.
- Hold a de-briefing/review meeting with the IUGG Executives at the end of the Assembly.

Deadline

Inquiries to the IUGG Secretariat regarding a potential invitation are welcome at any time. The official invitation should be received by the IUGG Secretary General at least six months before the next General Assembly. The IUGG Council selects the winning invitation. All invitations will be evaluated by an impartial committee selected for that purpose, and a report will be given to the IUGG Council before their final vote.

Statistics from past General Assemblies

	2023 Berlin	2019 Montreal	2015 Prague	2011 Melbourne	2007 Perugia
Number of participants	5198	3715	4231	3392	4375
Number of abstracts accepted	>5000	4582	5700	4758	6990
Number of posters	1300	1815	2300	1927	2743
Registration fee – early, full registration	EUR 650	CAD 780	EUR 540	AUD 890	EUR 430
Registration fee – early, student registration	EUR 350	CAD 390	EUR 360	AUD 550	EUR 250