

Responsibilities of SASUOG Congress organisers

Introduction:

This document serves as a guideline to help with the process of organising the SASUOG Congress, as host university department.

The aim of the SASUOG Congress is two-fold:

1. To provide a CME activity of high academic standard to help improve the quality of ultrasound performed in the field of Obstetrics and Gynaecology.
2. To generate an income both for SASUOG and the hosting department.

Responsibilities:

1. Local organising committee (LOC)

- 1.1. Identify a small core (probably seven or less) of people who are committed to put in the many hours it will take to make this event a success.
- 1.2. Make sure a sufficient number of them have been exposed to SASUOG congresses in the past.
- 1.3. Include people you can trust to complete tasks delegated to them.

2. Congress organisers:

- 2.1. Appoint a reputable congress organiser well in advance (recommended approx. 2 years)
- 2.2. At least two conference organisers should be approached for quotations to organise the conference.
- 2.3. Preference should be given to an event organizer that with experience with the O&G trade, with the representatives and with SASUOG council.
- 2.4. Ensure that the organizer is of a reputable standard, understands what the congress is about and the importance of both the trade and the delegates.
- 2.5. Read through the contract carefully to be clear about the organizer's responsibilities and fee structure.
- 2.6. Any refund from the venue should be deducted from the gross income.
- 2.7. Make it clear that a full database needs to be made available to SASUOG council after completion of the congress, including contact details of all registered delegates and all trade companies involved in the congress.
- 2.8. Make it clear that a full and detailed (and officially audited) financial report needs to be presented by the congress organiser to SASUOG within 12 months after completion of the congress, or earlier, as soon as all accounts have been reconciled. The financial report of the main congress is separate from the workshop(s).
- 2.9. Determine a reasonable registration fee, keeping SASUOG's diverse membership base in mind and making provision for non-medical practitioners, early bird registration etc. Remember to include the automatic 2 year SASUOG membership into the registration fee as these monies need to be ring-fenced. Draw on the congress organizer's experience to determine what is reasonable and affordable, keeping in mind that the main aim is education and not profit.

- 2.10. Re-visit the budget regularly with the congress organizer, to ensure expenses remain on track.
- 2.11. Agree on deadlines for first (8-10 months in advance) and second announcement (approx. 2 months in advance), final programme (2 weeks in advance) etc.
- 2.12. Ensure the congress organiser applies for CPD points well in time and specify the ethics CPD points that need to be obtained separately. This can be useful for marketing. Keep in mind the special application process for ethics CPD points.
- 2.13. Consider a link in the existing SASUOG website to the webpage of the specific SASUOG congress.
- 2.14. Review ALL correspondence, incl. letters, flyers, programme etc. before it is mailed or e-mailed by the congress organiser and make sure SASUOG is visible on all printed material.

3. Date:

- 3.1. As soon as the allocation becomes available identify a date, which is according to the SASOG-SASUOG agreement.
- 3.2. Identify a date that does not clash with any religious or public holiday or any major cultural or sporting event. Request assistance from your congress organiser in this matter.
- 3.3. There should also be no clashes with the different examination processes or other major scientific events including important South African or International Ultrasound meetings like FMF or ISUOG.
- 3.4. Confirm the date with SASUOG Council. This can be done via email.
- 3.5. The congress organiser should communicate this date to the trade as soon as possible, to ensure they budget for sponsorship in time.

4. Venue:

- 4.1. Book a venue for the date well in advance – this may need to be 1.5-2 years ahead of time.
- 4.2. The venue should be able to host 250-300 delegates, depending on where the conference is being held and the expected number of delegates.
- 4.3. There should be adequate space for the trade to set up their exhibitions, ideally 25-30 stands, close to the auditorium and easily accessible for delegates.
- 4.4. If possible tea and lunch should be served in the same venue as the Trade exhibitions to maximise delegate exposure to commercial products.
- 4.5. Choose a venue in a safe and easy to reach area, with affordable accommodation in the vicinity.
- 4.6. Ensure that the contract is finalised and the deposit paid asap to secure the booking. Seeding money can be provided by the organizing department, or made available from SASUOG.
- 4.7. Comb through the fine print in the contract before signing.
- 4.8. Ensure that a reputable audio-visual company is available/allowed on site and that there is a back-up plan in case of electricity shut down.

- 4.9. Make sure that the audio-visual company provides high definition projectors.
- 4.10. Ensure that there is an escape clause to avoid deposits being lost in case of a calamity (such as the COVID-19 pandemic)
- 4.11. If necessary, identify a different venue for the workshop(s). If that is the case, indicate it clearly in the announcements and programme.

5. Trade:

- 5.1. As soon as the venue and date have been confirmed, work with the congress organisers to get the trade on board. Personal contact by the LOC can do miracles.
- 5.2. To get the trade involved they must be assured that they will receive as much as possible exposure to the delegates. Every effort must be made to ensure this materialises.
- 5.3. Together with the congress organiser, draw up a list for the trade of all possible sponsorable activities and the cost thereof; this will include local and international speakers, name tags, stationery, social events, breakfast symposia, lanyards, tea, lunch, wi-fi café, cappuccino-bar, speakers' dinner, workshops...
- 5.4. To avoid conflict amongst the trade, it is suggested that companies who have already committed to sponsor an exhibition stand, will be considered first for other sponsorships.
- 5.5. Make sure that all verbal communications with trade representatives and promises made by them are followed through by the congress organiser until a signed contract is finalised.
- 5.6. Clarify the conditions of the contracts signed with the trade in case of cancellation or no show.
- 5.7. To avoid conflict with the trade, it is strongly recommended that sponsoring opportunities are allocated on a first come-first serve basis, not based on promises by representatives but only on receipt of a signed contract from the company.
- 5.8. As LOC, become personally familiar with the people in the Trade to get their goodwill.
- 5.9. Make sure that the Trade get adequate exposure during the whole event. Instruct session chairs to have strict time management so sessions do not run into tea or lunch time.

6. International Speakers:

- 6.1. Book the international speakers as early as possible (probably need to be approached 2 years in advance) and keep in contact with them on a regular basis.
- 6.2. Make sure their names are mentioned in all congress communications, to attract delegates and trade support (first announcement can mention "invited" speakers, even if they have not yet formally accepted the invitation; replace by "confirmed speakers" asap).
- 6.3. Make sure about their travel arrangements and try to finalise them asap to limit cost.
- 6.4. Different deals are possible to keep the international travel costs as low as possible and your congress organiser can advise you on this. Be clear on what budget you allow for this, what kind of air ticket you are prepared to offer and what other

benefits you offer to them (number of days of free accommodation, free registration, transfers, honorarium if requested,...). Make sure this is all within reasonable limits.

- 6.5. Keep SASUOG Council informed about the “deals”.
- 6.6. As a matter of courtesy, the international speakers should be invited, with their partners, to all social events.
- 6.7. Consider a special thank you gift and make sure that they are comfortable and assisted when needed, as we want them to feel welcome and become future ambassadors for SASUOG. Make sure there are no hiccups with their transfers and that their welcome and goodbye are managed properly by a designated senior person of the LOC.

7. Local Speakers:

7.1. There are three categories of local speakers:

- 7.1.1. “SASUOG Officials” incl. speakers of SASUOG Council and members of the LOC
- 7.1.2. Invited local guest-speakers
- 7.1.3. Speakers who submitted an abstract to be considered for presentation at the congress.

Different arrangements apply to the different categories:

7.2. SASUOG officials:

- 7.2.1. It is recommended that as many as possible SASUOG Council members are invited to speak at the congress, chair sessions and help with the workshops.
- 7.2.2. There is no financial obligation from the congress host towards SASUOG council members who have declined any opportunity to assist in any of the congress activities.
- 7.2.3. SASUOG council members who assist the LOC in some form or other should receive free registration to the main congress as they are expected to attend and help promote the society, and this includes the 2 year SASUOG membership fee.
- 7.2.4. For council members from other provinces who assist the LOC, the local congress host is responsible for air travel (incl. airport transfers) and accommodation expenses for the duration of the congress. Specify in writing what kind of air ticket is budgeted for (basic economy is sufficient) as well as the type and duration of the accommodation provided (only for the congress, 1 person each, usually 3 nights is sufficient unless the person assists in a workshop). It is suggested that a reasonable limit is set for travel reimbursement as prices rise quickly if booking is delayed.
- 7.2.5. As a matter of courtesy it is advised that all SASUOG council and LOC members are invited to the speakers’ dinner. Invitation of partners to the speakers’ dinner is not customary but at the discretion of the LOC.
- 7.2.6. Specify in writing what entitlements SASUOG council members have, as well as LOC members, whether they are part of SASUOG council or not.

7.3. Invited local guest speakers:

- 7.3.1. Clarify their entitlements before they accept the invitation and confirm these in writing.
- 7.3.2. Free registration (for the main congress) for guest speakers and reimbursement of travel expenses for those coming from far, are suggested as a minimum token of SASUOG's appreciation.
- 7.3.3. As a matter of courtesy it is advised that all guest speakers are invited to the speakers' dinner. The provision of a special thank you gift is at the discretion of the LOC.

7.4. Speakers who submitted an abstract to be considered for the congress.

- 7.4.1. Only delegates registered for the main congress can be considered for abstract presentation.
- 7.4.2. If the abstract is accepted, these can usually get financial support from their academic institutions to attend and cover the registration fee.
- 7.4.3. No special financial offer needs to be made to them by the LOC.

8. SASUOG Council:

- 8.1. Check with SASUOG Council if there will be a council meeting at some point during the congress. If so, arrange a venue for the allocated time, with refreshments if needed.
- 8.2. Time should be allocated in the programme for an AGM, during which the treasurer needs to present the financial report of the Society to the delegates, as per the constitution.
- 8.3. Check with SASUOG Council whether there will be an election (every 4 years) and, if so, facilitate the election and voting process, announce this beforehand (with first and second announcement) and slot it in the congress programme at such time to ensure maximum member (and council) representation.
- 8.4. As per constitution, the registration fee for the main congress includes 2 years SASUOG membership. Check with SASUOG Council what the membership fee is. This money must be ring fenced as such in the budget as it is not part of the congress income.

9. Social events during SASUOG:

- 9.1. Speakers' dinner (usually without partners, except for the international/guest speakers) – the LOC and all speakers should be invited to this free event, as well as SASUOG council members who are not presenting but chairing a session or helping with a workshop.
- 9.2. Opening cocktail function – this is usually included in the registration fee and should be for free for all delegates and speakers who have been allocated free registration.
- 9.3. Both events should be budgeted for.
- 9.4. Congress dinner – this event is requires prior confirmation and payment by delegates. Beware of a possible shortfall which would be the responsibility of the

LOC.

- 9.5. The trade is welcome to attend the congress dinner, but this should probably be limited to no more than 1 person per company, unless places are not filled with registered delegates. Trade representatives should preferably pay the same dinner fee as delegates.
- 9.6. Approach the trade to sponsor the cocktail function, speakers' dinner or a table (or drinks) at the congress dinner etc.
- 9.7. For insurance reasons it is not advisable that private cars are used to transport congress guests to the different activities, esp. not the international guests – it is recommended to utilise registered transport companies, who are appropriately insured for this.

10. Main Congress

- 10.1. As soon as date and venue are confirmed, consider an email to all registered members, slide to be projected during breaks, or banner to be placed at other O&G-related scientific events in the country (approx. 1 year in advance)
- 10.2. It is important to get the first announcement out as soon as possible (approx. 10 months in advance). It is of great benefit if the international speakers are confirmed by then.
- 10.3. Speak to other congresses like SASOG and ask if a special deal for SASUOG delegates can be advertised with the announcements for the first event. If the same congress organiser is used it may for example be possible to offer a reduced registration fee for delegates who register for both events simultaneously.
- 10.4. Finalise the programme as soon as possible and get it circulated, with regular e-mail reminders, esp. when approaching the early bird registration deadline.
- 10.5. Ensure the congress organiser has obtained CPD points and that registration for CDP points is possible on site.
- 10.6. Make sure all speakers and chairs receive instructions in writing about their sessions and request that they confirm with you these arrangements are fine for them. Include specific instructions from the audio-visual team regarding which presentation formats/laptops can be accommodated or not.
- 10.7. Ensure that the organizers obtain permission from speakers for their presentations to be published (either as PDF or as video) on the SASUOG website after the congress, and make the presentations available after the congress.
- 10.8. Keep the introduction of the speakers short. Make sure the chairs receive the CVs of the speakers of their session from the congress organiser, before the start of the session.
- 10.9. The full income/expenses balance sheet for the main congress needs to be reconciled by the congress organiser as soon as possible after the event, in order to determine the total profit of the main congress. This needs to be presented to SASUOG council at the next council meeting and checked by SASUOG's financial adviser.
- 10.10. Once all queries have been resolved, the profit of the main congress is divided between the hosting department and SASUOG on a 50:50 basis.

11. Pre- or post-congress workshop(s)

- 11.1. SASUOG Council members are welcome to assist at any of the workshops and encouraged to assist the LOC when invited.
- 11.2. In order to prevent competition with the main event, it is recommended that companies sponsoring the main event, will be given the first choice to support a workshop and demonstrate their equipment to delegates during the practical sessions.
- 11.3. If patients are utilised during the workshops it is a prerequisite that patient dignity is preserved at all times and that the patients have been scanned by a qualified professional prior to their participation in the workshop, in order to minimise the risk for unexpected pathological findings during the practical sessions.
- 11.4. The workshops are run separately from the main congress and the budget needs to be kept completely separate, including expenses as well as income.
- 11.5. The profit of the workshop(s) (if any) is exclusively for the hosting department.

12. General points:

- 12.1. Regular meetings with the congress organisers are an absolute necessity.
- 12.2. Regular LOC meetings are essential to ensure delegated tasks are completed and deadlines are met.
- 12.3. Keep track of the budget and guard against unexpected or unreasonable expenses.
- 12.4. Keep track of the needs and issues of the Trade and make sure all verbal commitments result in a signed contract.
- 12.5. Make sure the international guests are well looked after at all times.
- 12.6. Keep in mind at all times that you are ambassadors for SASUOG.
- 12.7. Pay attention to detail.
- 12.8. Again, pay attention to detail.
- 12.9. Good luck, you will need it!