Rules Regarding the Organization and Endorsement of IGS Events

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 For the purposes of this document the term IGS means an international body registered in the USA and represented by the elected IGS Council and Officers.

1.2 The IGS welcomes the opportunity to cooperate with the organizers of Events totally or partially related to geosynthetics. These Events may include, but not be limited to – international, regional and national conferences, symposia, seminars, workshops, short courses, training courses and technical exhibitions. The level of IGS involvement and endorsement may vary dependent on the scale and nature of the Event. If you are in any doubt about an Event you are planning, please contact the IGS Events Committee (EC) via the IGS Secretariat on igssec@geosyntheticssociety.org.

1.3 The IGS Events Committee (EC) is a committee comprised of the IGS Technical Committee Chairs, Regional Activities Committee Chairs, the IGS Officers Liaison and the EC Chair as appointed by the Council specifically created to undertake the following tasks:

    1.3.1 Receive and review any applications for Event endorsement.

    1.3.2 Provide advice and guidance to applicants to assist with compliance with IGS requirements.

    1.3.3 Provide recommendations to the IGS Officers on the suitability of Events for endorsement.

    1.3.4 Provide recommendations to the IGS Officers on any specific requirements or variations from standard associated with an Event.

1.3.5 Ensure that active Events are monitored before, during and after to check your compliance with IGS rules and Event related agreements.

1.4 The Secretariat is the point of initial contact and communication with the IGS with respect to all Events.

1.5 Please note that the IGS Council will receive recommendations from the IGS EC and may waive any of the Event-related rules as required. Consequently, the rules outlined in Sections 2 to 5 below should be viewed as the ideal.

1.6 Generally, Events involving IGS endorsement are of two types:

1.6.1 Events where the principal organizing body is the IGS or part thereof (e.g. a National IGS Chapter).

1.6.2 Local (usually National) events may receive endorsement from the local IGS Chapter. This is different from main IGS endorsement, and the reader should refer to the Chapters section of the Handbook.

1.6.3 The IGS (or part thereof) is not the principal organizing body, but the Event has sufficient geosynthetic content that IGS is prepared to endorse. Typically, these Events would be organized entirely by others.

2. GENERAL RULES – ALL ENDORSED EVENTS

The following are some general rules that apply to ALL Events which the IGS endorses. If the following conditions are not met, then the IGS (or part thereof) will have no involvement in the Event. The proposed Event must be dedicated to, or include, geosynthetics as one of its major topics.

2.1 The proposed Event is organized within an international framework in terms of participants, technical program and language. In other words, the Event would not normally be a national event which would typically be dealt with, and potentially endorsed, by the local IGS Chapter.

2.2 The official language is preferably English; otherwise, the primary language should be one which appeals to many nations. In the latter instance it is suggested that simultaneous translation to English be available.

2.3 The Event must allow the international participation of IGS members with regard to attendance and paper authorship, where the latter is relevant.

2.4 An application for Event endorsement should be made in accordance with the timetable given in Table 1 below (pg. 30).

2.5 In any application for endorsement of the IGS should be provided to the Secretariat for the consideration of the IGS Events Committee (EC) with the following information for the proposed Event:

- Aims
- Scope
- Program
- Venue
- Participation
- Sources of funding

2.6   The default position for the IGS is that it accepts no financial responsibility for any Events.

2.7   In addition to the information outlined, the organizers of the Event must send to the IGS Secretary a proposal including a letter freeing the IGS and its chapters from financial and other responsibilities and indicating that printed material such as bulletins, brochures, announcements, and proceedings will state the relevant agreed status of the IGS in respect of the Event.

2.8   The selection of any speakers should not be commercially biased or create any commercial imbalance in the Event.

2.9   All papers, presentations and other technical materials shall be peer reviewed unless otherwise explicitly approved by IGS.

2.10 All documents, presentations and other materials produced, presented or printed for the Event shall be of a non-commercial nature.   Materials should not include any logos or promotion of products, services, brands or companies. Clearly materials for use in trade exhibitions are exempt from these restrictions. Any exceptions to the above should be agreed specifically with the IGS. Exceptions would typically include notification of specific commercial sponsorship of a part of an Event like a dinner or coffee break, for example.

2.11 The IGS logo must be used in all promotional materials (both printed bulletins and digital documents) of the Event and on its website.

2.12 Link(s) to the IGS website should operate from the Event web page.

2.13 The authors of any papers or other materials should be identified by their name, title, affiliation, and country.

2.14 If a chapter of the IGS exists in the country/region of the conference, the IGS chapter should preferably be involved in the organization of the Event.

2.15 Circulation of information on the Event will be required to IGS members through IGS News, the IGS website, and other means, well in advance of the Event to meet a timetable agreed with the IGS.

2.16 Permission of the attendees to record and utilize their contact details for IGS related matters must be sought and provision of this permission will be a condition of registration.

2.17 Lower registration fees will be available for IGS Individual and IGS Corporate Members (five individuals per Corporate Member). Please see Table 1 (pg. 30) below for details.

2.18 Lower exhibition fees will be available for IGS Corporate Members. Please see Table 1 below for details (pg. 30).

2.19 The IGS President (or his or her representative) should be invited to give a welcome speech during the Opening Session.

2.20 The organizers of the Event will ensure that all presentation documents and other Event materials stored on conference computers (typically for the purpose of facilitating presentation) shall be deleted from those computers at the conclusion of the presentations.

2.21 Materials presented at the Event shall be given to all registered attendees and be available for purchase by non-attendees after the Event.

2.22 Suggestions from the IGS regarding the geosynthetic technical content of the Event should be taken into consideration by the organizing committee of the Event.

2.23 A set of the Event materials (eg proceedings, slide packs etc) should preferably be provided to the IGS Secretariat in electronic format for placement in the IGS archives.

2.24 The Event organizers should provide a summary report for publication by the IGS following the Event. That report should be delivered to the Secretary no later than 60 days after the conclusion of the Event.

2.25 Complimentary registration for one IGS Council member or another IGS representative as nominated by the IGS Council should be provided.

2.26 If requested by the IGS, the Event is expected to support IGS activities during the Event, including complimentary rooms for IGS meetings.

2.27 If the Event includes an exhibition, free space will be provided to the IGS within the exhibition area sufficient for, and including, a small table and two chairs.

2.28 Assuming all the criteria detailed above are met then the IGS will endorse the Event thereby:

2.28.1 Permitting use of the IGS logo on all Event materials

2.28.2 Undertaking to promote the Event to IGS members both in terms of participation and attendance.

2.29 Once an Event has been endorsed by the IGS the documents listed below shall be provided to the IGS by the organizers of the Event as far as it is legally possible and compatible with the corporate policy of the professional organizations involved in the organization of the Event.   These documents will be stored by the Secretariat and made available to the organizers of future IGS Events, again if legally possible. The IGS Events

Committee (EC) should be given access to these documents progressively, as they become available.

2.29.1 Copies of all bulletins announcing the Event,

2.29.2 Copies of the press releases and call for papers sent to journals and magazines.

2.29.3 List of addresses of journals and magazines to which press releases and call for papers were sent.

2.29.4 Copies of the instructions to authors

2.29.5 A memorandum describing the procedures followed by the paper review committee.

2.29.6 Copies of the information brochures sent to potential exhibitors and documents sent to exhibitors.

2.29.7 Copies of the program of the conference and other information leaflets distributed to attendees at the beginning of the conference.

2.29.8 A document indicating registration fees, exhibition fees, and fees for other functions.

2.29.9 A calendar of the main operations and publications, and related comments.

2.29.10 A document describing the conference hall and indicating the size of the rooms used for every session and function.

2.29.11 A document describing the exhibition hall and indicating the number and size of booths.

2.30 The IGS will not normally endorse another event which is predominantly dedicated to geosynthetics if:

2.30.1 The event takes place in the same IGS region (Europe, Africa, Asia & Americas) and is within 120 days of an existing IGS international or regional event.

2.30.2 The event takes place in a different IGS region and is within 60 days of an existing IGS international or regional event.

2.31 For events which are not predominantly focused on geosynthetics but may contain some geosynthetic content (e.g., a geotechnical conference) there is no specific rule about the permitted time between events and the EC will consider endorsement of each case individually on its merits and make recommendations to the Officers accordingly.

3. IGS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES ON GEOSYNTHETICS (ICG)

3.1. The General Rules outlined above in Section 2 also apply to International Conferences unless superseded by items in Section 4 below, set out as follows:
- 3.1.1 Technical Evaluation Guidelines
- 3.1.2 Delivery Requirements
- 3.1.3 Voting Procedure

3.2. ICG: Technical Evaluation Guidelines for Organizing Bids

Introduction

3.2.1. These guidelines set out specific requirements for evaluating bids to organize an *International Conference on Geosynthetics*. Once selected, the successful bid will be required to comply with IGS requirements for delivering the ICG.

3.2.2. All bidders must submit written bids covering all elements in these guidelines. This document includes:

- what bidders must include in their bid.
- notes of key conditions attached to each aspect of the bid.

3.2.3. All bidders are required to make a final presentation to the Council ahead of voting. This final presentation should cover the key aspects that bidders wish to highlight for the vote, and may take whichever form bidders wish (slides, video, multimedia etc). Presentations are limited to 10 minutes and will be followed by questions from Council members.

3.2.4. It is expected ICGs will attract over 1,000 registered attendees, with participants from 60 or more countries and all world regions. The number of participants will be dependent on the venue, the registration fees, the quality of the program, and the ability to obtain a visa.

Eligibility

3.2.5. The principal organizer can be one of:

- a chapter or group of chapters of the IGS
- an independent organizing body

3.2.6. The appropriate IGS Regional Activities Committee (European, Asian, Pan-American, and African) will lend oversight, review and recommend approval or not.

3.2.7. Bidders must provide:

- as a condition of eligibility, the principal organizer must confirm the identify of a sponsoring organization that shall bear full financial responsibility for the delivering the ICG should their bid succeed.

Vision

3.2.8. Bidders must provide:

- a proposed conference sub-title, theme and dates for the Conference.
- an outline of how the bid achieves the following:
  - supporting the IGS' mission and vision
  - relevance to the regional market in particular
  - highlighting geosynthetics' contribution to sustainability
  - inspiring and engaging Young Members
  - supporting IGS' Educational Programs
  - enhancing IGS relationships with key stakeholders in the market
  - delivering the event in a sustainable way.

3.2.9. Bidders should note:

- on request, alternative titles may be adopted, subject to approval by the IGS Officers. ICGs shall be numbered in sequential order, as determined by the IGS.
- an *International Conference on Geosynthetics* may not be organized or implemented without IGS endorsement.
- bids may not use the IGS name or Logo in their materials until they have secured confirmation from IGS that their submitted bid meets the minimum criteria.

Capacity to deliver

3.2.10. Bidders must provide:

- details of the conference Delivery Team including assigned roles and a short bio of each individual tailored to their role in delivering the ICG (maximum one page per bio)
- details of any advisory panel including assigned roles and a short bio of each individual (maximum one page per bio)
- details of supporting partners and their role
- formal letters of support from any partners cited in the bid.

3.2.11. Bidders should note:

- the organization of an ICG is a time-consuming process that begins more than four years prior to the Conference and does not end until at least six

months after the event. All named members of the delivery team must have the time available to commit to this demanding process.

Venue

3.2.12. The Conference should be staged in one main venue, either a congress centre or suitable hotel. It should be easily accessible using sustainable and affordable forms of transport.

3.2.13. Bidders must provide:

- the following details of any proposed or confirmed venue:
  o overview
  o location
  o venue accessibility by public transport to/from:
    ▪ airports and other international transport hubs where appropriate (e.g. international trains stations or sea ferry services)
    ▪ recommended accommodation.
    ▪ the host city's center.
  o floorplan for space to be used by ICG and IGS, including:
    ▪ entrance(s)
    ▪ registration area
    ▪ exhibition area
    ▪ plenary
    ▪ workshop/seminar/breakout rooms
    ▪ related ICG events (e.g. gala dinner)
    ▪ speaker preparation room
    ▪ rooms for IGS use.
  o exhibition space details
    ▪ area (typically around 1800+ m2)
    ▪ height (minimum 3m)
    ▪ quality
    ▪ numbers of exhibitors permitted (typically based on stand sizes of 3x4m and 2x3m)
    ▪ confirmation of conformity with health and safety standards.

3.2.14. Bidders should note:

- IGS has specific requirements for rooms, including meeting rooms for the IGS Officers, Council, Committees and General Assembly, at the conference venue. All must be free of charge to IGS.
- requirements will be confirmed during the planning phase. As a general guide, bidders should plan to provide:
  o at least one room for IGS meetings throughout the conference and on the immediately preceding and following days.

- o a room for two full days of Council meetings; one immediately preceding the Conference and one immediately following.
- o a room for the General Assembly for a total period of six hours (including two hours set-up time).

Host City & Country – Access

3.2.15. Bidders must provide:

- details of international/long distance travel options:
  - o main airports, train stations, bus stations, etc. and viable alternatives
  - o names of airlines and numbers of flights that serve the main airport
  - o plans to reduce travel costs, for example partnership deals for car parking, discounted rail/air travel and group fares.
- a recommended range of safe, comfortable and clean accommodation options, of varying categories and affordability:
  - o preferably within walking distances or ease of public transportation to the event venue
  - o include overnight rates (and indicative block-booking discounts)
  - o include budget options for use by students and other attendees for whom low cost is important.
  - o include an indication of the cost of living in the host city to help attendees assess the affordability of their stay.
- visa requirements
  - o outline the process and costs for delegates applying for visas to attend the Conference.
  - o list any countries or regions whose citizens might face difficulty obtaining visas.

3.2.16. Bidders should note:

- the successful bid team will be responsible for:
  - o invitation letters for visas based on the requirements of the host country.
  - o liaison with the relevant government officials in both the receiving and sending nations.
  - o communicating visa requirements to prospective attendees.

Host City & Country – Other Considerations

3.2.17. Bidders must provide:

- general background on the host City and region
- any current or anticipated health and/or safety risks (e.g. high levels of air pollution)
- opportunities for Geosynthetics-related site visits.

3.2.18. Bidders should note:

- if bidders feel it would strengthen their case, they may opt to include information on tourism and cultural opportunities for Conference attendees.
- historically, ICGs have rotated through geographical regions and IGS Council is likely to take into consideration the locations of previous ICGs when selecting future host cities.

The Program in General

Dates

3.2.19. ICGs generally take place every four years, ideally at a two-year interval from IGS regional conferences (RCGs), subject to the IGS Council. IGS will notify bidders of the window in which the ICG must take place.

3.2.20. When suggesting precise dates for the ICG, bidders should take into account any local holidays, religious and cultural events as well as major holidays, religious and cultural events globally.

Outline Program

3.2.21. The outline program should include the ICG and related events, which take place immediately before and after the ICG, typically spanning a total of six to eight days.

3.2.22. The ICG itself usually lasts for up to five days, including four days of technical presentations and a one-day technical excursion.

3.2.23. In addition to the ICG, the outline program must include two full days immediately prior to the Conference. The first of these will be for an IGS Officers' meeting, and the second for a meeting of the IGS Council.

3.2.24. Further, the outline program must include one full day immediately after the Conference for a meeting of the IGS Council.

3.2.25. Within the ICG conference schedule, organizers must include a four-hour period for the IGS General Assembly, with no other concurrent events. The opening plenary session must include one hour for the Giroud Lecture.

3.2.26. Day one of the outline program (IGS Officers' meeting) is typically a Saturday, with the closing Council session the following Thursday, Friday or Saturday.

3.2.27. On day two conference attendees arrive to register, typically including the opening ceremony and evening entertainment the same day.

3.2.28. The following three or four days involve technical sessions. These are a mixture of plenary and parallel sessions, complemented by workshops, training and technical meetings.

3.2.29. In addition to any entertainment provided on the evening of Day Two, the social program includes a gala dinner to be held on the evening before the closing session of the main Conference.

3.2.30. Bidders must provide:

- dates for the ICG
- note of any significant overlapping events/holidays etc.
- a one-page outline program in tabular form:
  o covering each day of the ICG including the preceding and following IGS meeting days
  o including a breakdown of the technical session days
  o including any social events
  o including any additional events, such as field trips.

3.2.31. Bidders should note:

- example programs can be found for Rome (2023): https://www.12icg-roma.org/ and Seoul (2018): http://www.11icg-seoul.org/
- if bidders wish to suggest variations to the format, they must seek IGS approval in advance of submitting their entry.
- the IGS President should be invited to give a welcome speech during the Opening Session
- diversity is important to IGS: the successful bidder will be required to ensure the technical program allows for as many individual presentations as possible from a broad cross-section of the profession.

Content

3.2.32. Bidders should note:

- the official language of the conference must be English for all written papers.
- all presentations should be in English but may be in another language provided there is simultaneous translation into English in plenary sessions (mandatory) and other sessions (recommended). Accompanying slides should be in English, or English and up to one other language.
- all papers, presentations and other technical materials shall be peer reviewed and shall be of a non-commercial nature.
- the successful bidder will be required to comply with IGS requirements on Copyright, including - but not limited to - making Conference materials (proceedings, slide packs etc.) openly available in electronic format suitable for placement in the IGS Digital Library
- the successful bidder will be required to comply with IGS requirements for establishing governance of technical papers for example the establishment of Conference Advisory and Technical Committees, the appointment of a

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Technical Chair for the Conference and procedures to call for papers, review abstracts and select Conference papers.

Marketing

3.2.33. Bidders should note:

- the successful bidder will be required to establish and manage the ICG website.
- IGS will agree with the successful bidder requirements for visual identity, including – but not limited to – use of the IGS logo on printed materials, on-line, and in signage and other branded items on site.

Finance – Budget

3.2.34. The budget for the ICG is needed primarily to evaluate each bid's economic and financial viability. It is a crucial element and IGS requires submissions to follow a set format so that all bids may be assessed consistently. As it is not practical to prepare or assess detailed budgets several years in advance, IGS requires an outline budget as set out below.

3.2.35. In assessing bids, IGS Council will carefully weigh the costs to attendees and the probability that an efficient, comfortable, safe, and professional meeting can be delivered.

3.2.36. As compensation for the help, support and standing of the IGS, the exhibition and registration fees at an ICG shall include a charge payable to IGS, as set out below. They are non-negotiable and bidders may not attempt to gain an advantage by offering more favorable terms to IGS.

3.2.37. Bidders must provide:

- an outline budget that:
  o is based on specified total numbers of attendees (paying and non-paying) and exhibitors respectively. These specified numbers of attendees and exhibitors should represent both 1) a realistic estimate of the numbers 2) the approximate numbers that will generate a balanced budget for the conference as a whole.
  o includes estimates of all revenues and all expenses for the ICG, using the subheads listed below.

- the budget must be set out in a template provided by IGS with the following subheads:
  o cost of Sales including VAT and local taxes wherever applicable
    ▪ venue hire
      • conference rooms including those needed for IGS meetings.
      • side meeting rooms

- exhibition space and related costs
- all catering
- IT, audio-visual and related facilities
- support services (security, ushers, technical support etc.)
- other staff costs on site.
  - marketing costs (including bid preparation costs)
  - payments to IGS as set out in the IGS handbook.
  - speaker costs (fees, travel, accommodation)
  - costs of any Professional Conference Organizer (PCO)
  - other related professional services and charges (e.g. legal, financial)
  - insurance
  - costs of any side-events
    - technical excursion
    - Welcome reception.
    - gala dinner
    - any other events.
  - costs of preparatory site, inspection and coordination visits
  - transport (e.g. shuttle service)
  - costs of producing conference proceedings
  - miscellaneous items
  - contingency

  - o income
    - full details of proposed attendee fee structure
    - full details of projected exhibitor income
    - sponsorship
    - grants
    - in-kind contributions
    - income from delegates not included in the registration fee.

3.2.38. Bidders should note:

- the sponsoring organization bears full financial responsibility for each ICG.
- bids that include budgets in which total expenses exceed total revenues will not be considered.
- the successful bidder will be required to provide IGS with a cash flow forecast, showing when income will be generated and when expenses will have to be paid. IGS will require an agreed timeline for financial reports to be submitted to the IGS Treasurer
- if a professional conference organizer (PCO) is engaged, all relevant details concerning contracts with, payments to, and services provided by the PCO must be specified.

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Finance – Registration Fees

3.2.39. Bidders must provide:

- a table of registration fees set out as follows:

Category	Early Bird	Pre-registration	On-site Registration
IGS member			
IGS non-member			
IGS Student member			

- a full list of what is included in the registration fee
- details of any additional/optional fees
- projected total income from registration fees.

3.2.40. Bidders should note:

- all IGS Members and Corporate Members (up to five attendees each) receive a minimum 20% discount.
- bidders should aim for a fee to IGS Student Members of no more than cost.
- IGS Officers (5) and Staff (2) shall receive complimentary registration at the conference.
- as compensation for IGS' help, support and standing, the registration fee shall include a charge of 10% of the full or part conference fee (excluding function costs) and not be less than $40 per full delegate or pro rata. This charge will be collected by the conference organizers and transferred in full to IGS within 120 days after the conference has concluded.

Finance – Exhibition Fees

3.2.41. Bidders must provide:

- a table of exhibition fees set out as follows:

Booth Type	Size (square metres)		Charge
A/B/C etc.	Size 1	IGS Corporate Member	
	Size 2		
	Size 3		
	Size 1	Non-Member	
	Size 2		
	Size 3		

- projected total income from exhibitor fees.

3.2.42. Bidders should note:

- exhibitor fees include one free conference registration.
- conference registration fees must include unlimited entry to the exhibition space. Casual visitors to the exhibition space should be charged a nominal entrance fee; IGS recommends a maximum of $10.
- IGS Corporate Member exhibitors receive a minimum 20% discount and four weeks' advance booking access. Rates must be at least as beneficial as any other "most favored" category.
- exhibition space in a prominent location shall be offered to the IGS free of charge to include a minimum size of 12m2 and reasonable standard of lighting, carpeting, booth furniture and cleaning.
- as compensation for IGS' help, support and standing, the exhibition fee shall include a charge of 10% of the total exhibition space payment. Subject to IGS approval, the exhibition may be awarded by concession to an external organization, in which case IGS shall receive 20% of the total concession payment. In either case the payment to the IGS from exhibition activity shall not be less than US$25,000. This charge will be collected by the conference organizers and transferred in full to IGS within 120 days after the conference has concluded.

Risk

3.2.43. IGS Council will expect bidders to take account of foreseeable risks, and to set out corresponding mitigating actions.

3.2.44. Bidders must provide:

- timing of any planned major concurrent events requiring high levels of security and/or leading to accommodation shortage
- venue availability risk
- physical risk
- pandemic risk
- legal risk
- compliance risks (e.g. data handling)
- any special factors relating to the host city/country.

3.3. ICG: Post-Selection Delivery Requirements

Introduction

3.3.1. These guidelines set out the requirements for delivering an *International Conference on Geosynthetics* once a successful bid has been chosen. As such these guidelines do not form part of technical evaluation of bids.

Delivery Structure

3.3.2. The winning bidders will establish a **Delivery Team**, consisting of named individuals included in the bid documents. The Delivery Team will be accountable

3.3.3. After Council's approval of a bid, IGS will promptly ensure the establishment of a **Conference Advisory Committee (CAC),** with a remit to steer ICG delivery:

- chaired by the chair of the relevant Regional Activities Committee
- vice-chaired by the chair of the Delivery Team
- including members of:
  o the corresponding IGS Regional Activities Committee
  o the Delivery Team
  o chair of the immediately preceding ICG (or alternate).

3.3.4. The **IGS Events Committee (EC)** will be regularly consulted on relevant policies, including:

- paper selection and review process
- proceedings
- language
- selection of the Conference Technical Chair and other key roles
- organization of the technical program

- promotion of the conference including EC agreement on the timing of announcements.

3.3.5. The EC will operate as set out in Sections 2 and 3 of the *Rules of the IGS Regarding the Organization and Endorsement of Events* (IGS Handbook).

3.3.6. To this end the **Delivery Team** will provide regular reports (e.g. monthly) to the EC, and progress reports to IGS Council meetings.

3.3.7. A **Conference Technical Committee (CTC)** will be established with a remit to oversee the review of abstracts and paper selection including authority for final approval:

- chaired by the Conference Technical Chair
- including at least four other persons whose combined area of expertise cover the conference matter.
- all CTC members to be approved by Council via the IGS EC.

Paper selection

3.3.8. Calls for papers will specify:

- IGS Membership will be taken into consideration when selecting papers.
- any minimum set by IGS for the percentage of papers that must include at least one IGS Member author (which will not exceed 66%).

3.3.9. The IGS Council may request national or regional chapters to participate in the CTC's selection of papers from their geographic area.

Selection of Chairs and Reporters

3.3.10. IGS Membership will be taken into consideration when selecting session chairs and reporters.

3.3.11. The IGS may set a minimum percentage of session chairs and reporters who are IGS members, which will not exceed 66%.

Selection of Speakers

3.3.12. The IGS Council, via the IGS EC, will approve the selection of opening session speakers. The IGS EC will be responsible for informing speakers about the IGS policy of non-commercialism in presentations.

3.3.13. Except for Special Sessions organized by IGS Technical Committees, the number of invited papers will be limited a maximum of one per half day of the conference and a duration of approximately one hour, typically in the morning and afternoon plenary sessions. The IGS EC may approve alternative proposals in consultation with the IGS Council.

3.3.14. The Giroud Lecture of approximately one hour's duration will be included in the program of the opening plenary session. Guidelines for lecturer selection are set out in the Benefits & Awards section of the IGS Handbook.

Preferential Access to Exhibition Space

3.3.15. There will be a period of at least four weeks during which IGS Corporate Members have an exclusive advance opportunity to apply for exhibition space. All applications received in this period will be reviewed and spaces allocated based on length of Corporate Membership (longest take priority). Thereafter, exhibition spaces will be allocated on a first come first served basis irrespective of Corporate Membership.

3.4. ICG: IGS Council Voting Procedures for Organising Bids

Eligibility

3.4.1. Only those bids deemed to have qualified by the Bid Evaluation Committee will be presented to the Council for consideration and voting.

3.4.2. In the interests of fairness and transparency, and to ensure the decision is taken on the basis of full and consistent information available to all electors:

- all Council members attending in person or remotely may vote, provided they attend all the presentations and related Q&A
- it is accepted that Council members may be involved in preparing one or more bids and still take part in the vote. However, they must openly declare this in advance of the vote.
- in the event that a disproportionate number of Council members have been involved in preparing a single bid (and hence skewing the vote), the President reserves the right to reconsider the make-up of the electorate (e.g. weighted voting)
- IGS Officers - with the exception of the Presiding Officers may vote – whether in person or remotely, provided they attend all the presentations and related Q&A
- IGS Officers may advise on bid preparation in their official capacity but must not otherwise contribute to preparations for any bids, or act as advocates for any bids.
- no-proxies or advance ballots are allowed.

Presiding Officers

3.4.3. The Presiding Officers are:

- the Council President (i.e. serving IGS President), responsible for chairing the voting session and with sole discretion to adjourn at any point.

- the IGS Secretary, responsible for conducting and recording the vote and ensuring the correct process is followed.
- an independent scrutineer(s), nominated by the Officers and confirmed by the support of at least two thirds of the Council in an open vote (e.g. show of hands)
- the IGS Secretariat Manager, to assist the Secretary and to record and tally the votes.

Proceedings

3.4.4. The vote will take place on the date and location notified by IGS when bids were initially invited.

3.4.5. The Chair will open the meeting.

3.4.6. For the purposes of transparency, the Secretary will:

- inform Council of any bids that were rejected and the reason(s) why.
- remind Council of the process in evaluating and deciding bids.
- confirm the bids that have been deemed eligible.
- inform the Council of the risk ratings for each of the bids.

3.4.7. The Chair will request that voting Council members and Officers declare any conflict of interest, if not done previously.

3.4.8. Where the Chair judges a conflict to be material, he/she has sole discretion to consult the Secretary and Independent Scrutineer(s) on whether to ask the Council member or Officer to recuse him/herself from the proceedings. It is expected that any voting member would agree to such requests.

3.4.9. In the interests of fairness, delegations are limited to a maximum of three people on-site. They may supplement this through on-line attendance (insofar as this assists Council to get the best possible responses to their questions).

3.4.10. Council members may form part of the bid delegation, provided this was notified to the Secretary in advance at the time of declaring their interests, and may still participate in the decision.

3.4.11. Each delegation will be invited to present their bid to the Council.

3.4.12. The order of presentations will be selected at random and notified to the bid teams at least one week in advance. This will aid in planning for any remote attendees joining from different time zones.

3.4.13. Bid teams may not distribute additional material at any time during the Council meeting, including at the voting session.

3.4.14. Bid teams may not be present in the room during each other's presentation and Q&A. Nor may they listen remotely. Any team found doing so will be reported to the Secretary and may be disqualified. Where a Council member is also a member of a bid team, they should have no contact with others on their bid team except during their own presentation and Q&A.

3.4.15. Bid teams may observe the vote remotely, but take no active part, nor be audible or visible to Council via devices of any type.

Running order – presentations

3.4.16. The Chair will:

- introduce the head of delegation for the first bid team and invite him/her to introduce other delegation members including any attending on-line.
- remind Council of the comments from the Bid Evaluation Committee, including any particular strengths or concerns and the risk assessment for the bid
- invite the delegation to present for a maximum of 10 minutes, using whichever means they wish.
- at the end of the presentation, ask any points of immediate clarification.
- open the floor to Q&A from Council members (only delegation members introduced at the beginning may respond to questions).

3.4.17. After the first team has presented and responded to Council questions, the Chair will:

- thank the delegation.
- remind them of the prohibition on further contact with the voting members ahead of the vote, whether in person or by any other means
- invite them to leave the room.

3.4.18. Once the delegation has left the room, the Chair will repeat the process for each remaining bid.

Running order – voting

Opening

3.4.19. Once all delegations have presented, the Chair will:

- convene the Council and Officers to vote.
- pass control to the Secretary.

Voting

3.4.20. There will be a maximum of two rounds of voting with no more than two bids in the final round.

3.4.21. The Secretary will

- confirm that the delegations are no longer present.
- confirm whether any delegations are observing the vote remotely (all will be on mute and not visible to electors)
- confirm the number of votes required to win the election (calculated as the simple majority of valid votes cast on site or remotely)
- invite all electors to complete a secret paper ballot to vote for their first and – where there are three or more bids – a second choice bid. The second-choice vote will be counted only if there is a tie for second place in the first round.
- instruct the Secretariat Manager to calculate the totals, without announcement.
- invite the Independent Scrutineer(s) to confirm these, without announcement.
- invite the Secretariat Manager to pass the totals to the Secretary.
- announce the totals based on first choice vote.
- declare whether any bid has won in the first round.

3.4.22. In the case of a winning bid the Secretary:

- returns control to the Chair.

3.4.23. In the case of only two bids and both are tied:

- The President has the casting vote and should explain his/her reasoning. This might include the relative risk scores of the tied bids, whether a region has not previously hosted an ICG, and the President's assessment of any key concerns arising from the presentations and Q&A.

3.4.24.   In the case of three or more bids and no first round winner, the Secretary:

- declares a run-off vote between the first and second-placed bids; all remaining bids are eliminated.
- in the event that two bids tied for second place:
  o the tied bid with the highest number of second choice votes enters the run-off; all remaining bids are eliminated.
- repeats the procedures above for the run-off round.

Closing

3.4.25. On receiving control back from the Secretary, the Chair will:

- invite the Independent Scrutineer(s) to confirm he/she is satisfied that the proceedings were properly conducted.
- invite the delegations back into the room.
- confirm the decision.
- congratulate the winning delegation.
- thank the unsuccessful delegations.
- thank the Presiding Officers
- formally close the proceedings
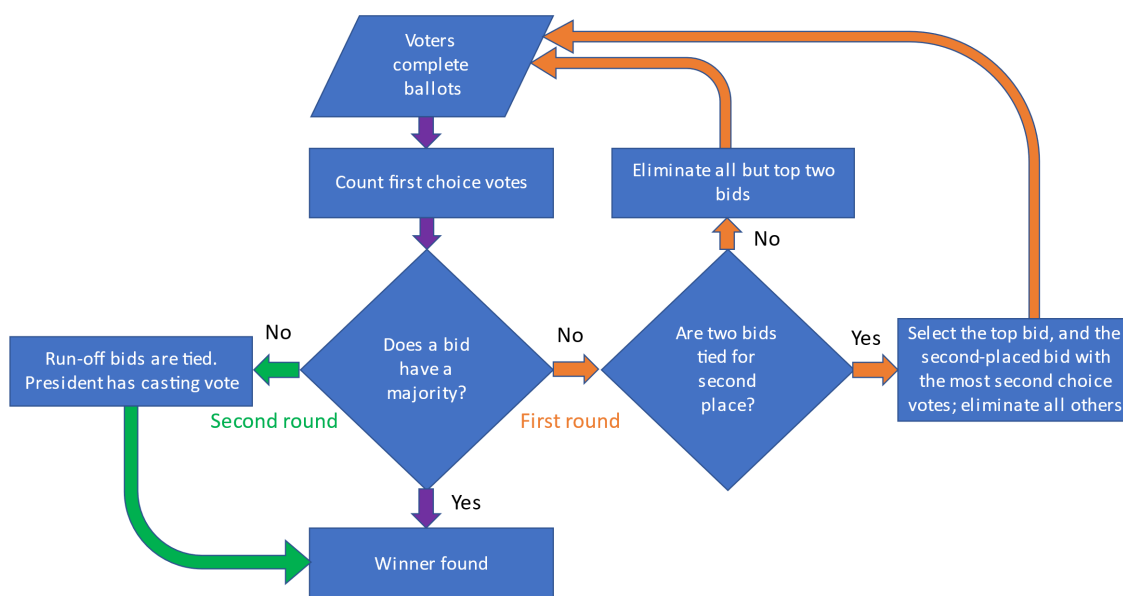
ICG Bids Voting Flowchart

Bid Withdrawal

3.4.26. If at any time during the vote, a delegation wishes to withdraw its bid:

- the Head of Delegation must inform the Secretary as soon as possible.
- upon such notification, the Secretary must notify the Chair and may recommend an adjournment or re-start of the votes.
- if the Secretary recommends an adjournment or re-start, the Chair has discretion to adjourn and/or request a procedural vote by the Council and Officers
- any decision to withdraw is final.

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Valid Votes

3.4.27. Votes must comply with the following criteria:

- electors may vote for one bid only in each round as first choice, and one only as second choice. The first and second choice votes may not be cast for the same bid.
- once cast, an elector may not change or revoke their vote in the same round.
- electors retain their right to change their preferred choice between rounds.
- in the unlikely event that an elector is unable to choose a preference, he/she may abstain (express no preference) by submitting a blank ballot paper.
- an elector may decide to declare a first choice and abstain from the second choice.
- an elector may not declare a second choice if they have abstained on the first-choice vote.
- an elector may decide for any reason to declare themselves absent from the vote (i.e. to record no vote) by submitting no ballot paper.
- abstentions will count towards the total votes cast and hence the total required for victory.
- an absent elector (i.e. no vote cast) will not count towards the total.
- an elector who abstains or is absent from the first round of voting retains the right to vote in the second (deciding) round.

Scrutiny

3.4.28. In the event that the Scrutineer(s) is not satisfied that procedures were followed:

- scrutineer must openly declare this to the Chair when invited to do so.
- the Chair will invite the Secretary to comment.
- the Chair will consider whether to adjourn.
- the Chair will recommend options for a course of action, which may include e.g. a recount or re-run of the vote(s).
- the Chair will conduct a Council vote on the course of action (show of hands). Presiding officers may not vote.
- the Chair will direct the Secretary to proceed as decided by Council.

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Impropriety

3.4.29. Bid rules of conduct are published in IGS' invitation for bids. They are the:

- obligation to always abide by the IGS Code of Ethics
- prohibition of gifts or any form of hospitality involving any person involved in the decision-making process in any way.
- prohibition of any form of unethical collaboration or collusion between parties.

Impropriety by those evaluating the bids

3.4.30. If at any stage, evidence emerges of improper conduct on the part of anyone involved in evaluating the bids (including their administration), the IGS President may investigate (or appoint a representative to do so). The individual(s) concerned will be suspended from the process pending investigation. If the President judges improper conduct to have occurred, the individual(s) will be removed from the process. They will otherwise be re-instated. Such procedures will be conducted confidentially. IGS reserves the right to inform bid teams and Council of any individual(s) removed from the process for improper conduct.

Impropriety by bidding teams

3.4.31. If at any stage, evidence emerges of improper conduct on the part of anyone involved in preparing and promoting a bid(s), the IGS President may investigate (or appoint an individual to do so). The bid(s) concerned will be suspended from the bidding process pending investigation. If the President judges improper conduct to have occurred, he/she may apply the following sanctions:

- IGS may insist on the removal of certain individuals from the process.
- IGS may disqualify the bid(s).

3.4.32. Such procedures will be conducted confidentially.

3.4.33. IGS reserves the right to inform the Council and other bidders of any individual(s) or bid(s) removed from the process for improper conduct.

3.4.34. Where concerns have arisen but were judged insufficient for removal or disqualification, IGS reserves the right to confidentially inform the Council, both of the fact and nature of the concerns.

3.4.35. Where concerns were judged to be unfounded, IGS will not automatically inform Council or others, but nonetheless reserves the right to confidentially inform Council that unfounded concerns were raised against one or more bids, without providing further details.

4. IGS REGIONAL CONFERENCES ON GEOSYNTHETICS (RCG)

4.1. Introduction

4.1.1. All General Rules outlined above in Section 2 also apply to Regional Conferences unless superseded by items in Section 4 below.

4.1.2. Given their international nature and high profile, the bidding process and delivery of IGS Regional Conferences on Geosynthetics (RCG) shall broadly follow the template for ICGs. Specific requirements and variations to this are set out below.

4.1.3. In any given region, an RCG is generally held every four years. RCGs should be timed to allow a gap of two years between the RCG and the global ICG. As ICGs are held on a four-year cycle, RCGs will normally take place two years before or after an ICG. Different regions may host an RCG in the same year as each other.

4.2. Eligibility

4.2.1. The appropriate IGS Regional Activities Committee (RAC) will lend oversight, review and recommend to Council the approval or otherwise of bids. The principal organizer can be one of the following:

- A chapter or group of chapters of the IGS,
- An independent organizing body.

4.2.2. The principal organizer must confirm the identity of a sponsoring organization that shall bear full financial responsibility for the delivering the RCG should their bid succeed.

4.2.3. Proposals for RCGs should not conflict with an ICG or other IGS-endorsed conference in the same region. IGS will normally approve only one RCG every four years within a given region. Any exceptions must be agreed to by the IGS Council, via the Officers.

4.3. Naming

4.3.1. Other than the use of the title 'International Conference on Geosynthetics', there is no prohibition on names chosen for RCGs.

4.3.2. It is recommended that the conference subtitle makes clear that the conference includes geosynthetics and related products and that this subtitle be prominent in all materials.

4.3.3. RCGs are recommended to adopt a unique numbering pattern such as: EuroGeo 1, EuroGeo 2; Geosynthetics Asia 2000, Geosynthetics Asia 2004 etc.

4.4. Bid Content and Delivery

4.4.1. In inviting and evaluating bids, it is recommended that the RAC follow the guidance for ICG bids above, which may be suitably adapted to regional circumstances:

- vision
- capacity to deliver
- venue
- host city and country considerations
- content
- marketing
- finance
- exhibition
- risk
- post-selection delivery requirements
- delivery structure
- paper selection
- selection of chairs and reporters
- selection of speakers
- preferential access to exhibition space.

4.4.2. The IGS will generally hold meetings of the IGS officers, council and/or various committees during each RCG. The conference Organizing Committee shall provide at least one room for IGS meetings within the premises of the conference throughout the conference. In addition, meeting rooms should be provided immediately preceding or following the conference in case of meetings of the IGS Officers and/or Council. The IGS Secretariat will clarify exact requirements on a case-by-case basis.

4.4.3. RCGs will host named-keynote lectures, typically of one hour, during the opening plenary. Detailed arrangements for named lectures vary and are set out in the rules for each (available on request).

4.5. Bid Selection

4.5.1. The location and date of RCGs shall be selected by the IGS Council, from applicant bids.

4.5.2. Note that there is no Bid Evaluation Committee for RCGs, instead the RACs will be responsible for evaluating bids prior to consideration by Council.

4.5.3. Where there is more than one bid, the RAC may recommend a single preferred bid for Council approval. Alternatively, the RAC may recommend that the Council vote on all the bids.

4.5.4. Council will have the final say on whether to consider a single preferred bid or to vote on all bids.

4.5.5. Votes will follow the same procedure as for ICG selection. Any variation to these procedures shall be notified to bidders, the RAC and Council at least 30 days in advance, on recommendation of the Events Committee.

5. SPECIAL EVENTS – IGS FINANCIAL INVOLVEMENT

5.1. The rules in this section apply to Events where the IGS may have some financial involvement. For example, TC Workshops or Training Courses where financial support may be given on a full or partial loan basis. These will invariably be Events organized by part of the IGS.

5.2. The **General Rules outlined above in Section 2 also apply to Special Events (SE) unless superseded by items in Section 5 below.** The following principally outlines additional specific requirements related to Special Events.

5.3. The organizing committee of the Event should have, at a minimum, the following three organizational members: A Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. In addition, the organizing committee of the Event should have an Event Technical Committee, whose members may also serve as organizational members. The Event Technical Committee may have a structure that reflects the needs of the SE (e.g., chair, topic leaders).

5.4. Any proposal to hold an Event should be submitted to the EC a minimum of 9 months in advance including:

5.4.1. A technical mission. The mission statement should include, at a minimum, the technical objectives of the Event and the expected conference deliverables (e.g., proceedings, white paper, guideline).

5.4.2. Details of the composition of the Event organizing committee.

5.4.3. A detailed Event budget, prepared by the Event Treasurer, should include the anticipated Event expenditures and the expected income and attendance fees. Ideally the Event should have zero net impact on the IGS yearly budget: It will be recorded as a liability (equal to the proposed overall Event budget) and an expected income of the same amount. A rationale should be provided on how the SE plans to achieve a balanced budget by the end of the SE.

5.4.4. The geographic location and date of the proposed Event and the rationale for the selection.

5.4.5. Details of the proposed venue and travel access arrangements.

5.4.6. A preliminary program with session titles.

5.5. The above information will be reviewed by the IGS EC and passed to the IGS Officers for approval within two months of receipt of ALL required information.

5.6. If the Event is proposed at a location where an IGS chapter exists, the chapter should agree on having an Event hosted at that location and a member of the local Chapter should be included in the organizing committee as liaison.

5.7. The IGS Treasurer's office will be authorized to pay expenditures incurred by the Event Committee. Expenditures should not exceed the IGS Council approved overall Event budget without recourse to Council for further approval.

5.8. Payment of expenditures will be made directly to the vendors. Such expenditures may include Conference venue fees, promotion expenses, management company fees, and hotel reservations.

5.9. The IGS is expected to manage the registration process through the IGS website. The Event Secretary will centralize the registration process on behalf of the IGS. Any direct additional costs to the IGS regarding registration/web management effort should be considered an Event expenditure to be reimbursed.

5.10. The Event Treasurer should maintain a budget projection, available to the IGS Officers, which should be continuously updated with the actual expenditure amounts.

5.11. The IGS remains liable for any losses and will benefit from any profits of the Event.

5.12. Within 90 days of the end of the Event, the Event Treasurer should prepare a summary financial statement documenting the expenditures and income from the SE. Close interaction with the IGS Treasurer and Secretariat Manager is anticipated in preparation of the summary financial statement.

5.13. The Event Secretary should prepare a roster of attendees to the Event including their contact information, as well as minutes of any relevant meetings that may have taken place during the Event. Close interaction with the Secretary and Secretariat Manager is anticipated in preparation of the roster of attendees.

5.14. The Event Technical Committee should compile any technical deliverables resulting from the Event. Close interaction with the members that participated in the Event is anticipated in preparation of any technical deliverables.

5.15. The Event Chair, on behalf of the TC, should prepare a summary report documenting the technical achievements of the Event in a format suitable for publication in IGS eNews within two weeks of the end of the Event.

6. NATIONAL (LOCAL) EVENTS

6.1. As indicated in 2.1 above, National Events would not normally be endorsed by IGS but instead organizers should seek endorsement from the relevant local IGS Chapter(s). It is anticipated that many of these events are likely to be organized by, or with the cooperation of, the local Chapter(s)

6.2. It is expected that event organizers will broadly follow the spirit of the rules outlined above for Regional and International IGS events but clearly some deviation is anticipated with respect to language, program etc.

6.3. National Events focused on geosynthetics should not be organized or endorsed if they overlap with, or are within 120 days of an IGS International or Regional Event taking place in the same geographical region (Americas, Africa, Asia & Europe)

6.4. National Events focused on geosynthetics should not be organized or endorsed if they overlap with, or are within 60 days of an IGS International or Regional Event taking place in a different geographical region (Americas, Africa, Asia & Europe)

6.5. The following other key rules apply:

    6.5.1. In any application for endorsement of by the local IGS Chapter(s) should ideally be provided to the IGS Chapter Secretary in good time for consideration with the following information for the proposed Event:

- Aims
- Scope
- Program
- Venue
- Participation
- Sources of funding

    6.5.2. The selection of any speakers should not be commercially biased or create any commercial imbalance in the Event.

    6.5.3. All documents, presentations and other materials produced, presented or printed for the Event shall be of a non-commercial nature.   Materials should not include any logos or promotion of products, services, brands or companies. Clearly materials for use in trade exhibitions are exempt from these restrictions. Any exceptions to the above should be agreed specifically with the IGS Chapter. Exceptions would typically include notification of specific commercial sponsorship of a part of an Event like a dinner or coffee break, for example.

    6.5.4. The IGS Chapter logo (not the main IGS logo) should be used in all promotional materials (both printed bulletins and digital documents) of the Event and in its website.

    6.5.5. Link(s) to the IGS Chapter website should operate from the Event web page.

6.5.6. The authors of any papers or other materials should be identified by their name, title, affiliation, and country.

6.5.7. The relevant IGS chapter(s) should preferably be involved in the organization of the Event.

6.5.8. Lower registration fees will be available for IGS Individual and IGS Corporate Members (five individuals per Corporate Member). Please see Table 1 below for details.

6.5.9. Lower exhibition fees will be available for IGS Corporate Members. Please see Table 1 below for details.

6.5.10. The Event organizers should provide a summary report for publication by the IGS Chapter following the Event. That report should be delivered to the IGs Chapter no later than 60 days after the conclusion of the Event.

6.5.11. If the Event includes an exhibition, free space should be provided to the IGS Chapter within the exhibition area sufficient for, and including, a small table and two chairs.

6.5.12. Assuming all the criteria detailed above are met, plus any others required by the local IGS Chapter(s), then the IGS Chapter(s) may endorse the Event thereby:

- Permitting use of the IGS Chapter logo on all Event materials
- Undertaking to promote the Event to local IGS members both in terms of participation and attendance.

6.5.13. IGS Chapters must inform the IGS EC of all events to which they have given endorsement. This can be communicated to the IGS Secretariat via igssec@geosyntheticssociety.org

TABLE 1	IGS EVENT GUIDANCE				
Event Classification	Frequency of Occurrence	Required Application Period	Members & Corporate Members Registration Discount	Corporate Members Exhibition Discount	Corporate Members Advance Exhibition Booking Access
ICG	Every 4 years	5 years	Min 20%	Min 20%	4 weeks
RCG	Max every 4 years per region	4 years	Min 20%	Min 20%	4 weeks
Other	N/A	6 months	Min 20%	Min 20%	2 weeks

7. DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION (DEI) GUIDELINES FOR IGS EVENTS

Scope

These guidelines apply to both IGS Conferences and to any associated side-events such as site visits.

Why develop an inclusive conference?

- Everyone wants to be included and accepted as they are, with fair and equal treatment, irrespective of age, gender, disability, sexual orientation, socio-economic status or any other characteristic.
- Including everyone is an unmissable opportunity to increase scientific progress.
- Creating a positive and welcoming environment, where people feel a sense of equality and belonging, empowers them to contribute to their full potential. This supports your goals for a successful event.
- A good conference experience can make a difference in the professional development of the participants and create long-lasting collaborations and opportunities.
- Speaking at conferences raises profiles and builds skills. Providing all members with this exposure may offer wider cognitive diversity within the presenters and be more attractive to audiences. Providing this exposure also demonstrates the value of their contributions and helps to support career progression.
- It is important that early career professionals see a diversity of speakers at conferences, as these can become important role models.
- Inclusive approaches visibly change the conference dynamics, allowing a wider variety of views to be expressed in an open and receptive setting.
- Opportunities for participating in conferences are not equally available to all. Conferences may inadvertently reproduce systemic inequalities, hence it is important to overcome the

barriers for participation and give more opportunities to less privileged individuals (e.g. students or attendees from low-income countries).

- We recognise that there are always lessons to be learnt. Diversity, Equity and Inclusivity cannot be fully achieved, but it is an ambition that conference organisers should continuously work towards.

Organising Committee

- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion begin with the Organising Committee (OC).
- Panels and speakers tend to mirror the teams that create and invite them. Start with a diverse and inclusive team that can create an inclusive event.
- Aim for the OC to have 50% diversity regarding gender, race, age, and other relevant identifiers.
- Include OC members who have diverse networks.
- The experience of people in marginalized groups is especially important; they cannot be replaced by good intentions or second-hand knowledge from people who have not lived through the same experiences. People with disabilities often say: "Nothing about us without us"; the same holds for other dimensions of diversity.
- OC members should have expertise and/or firsthand perspectives on various aspects of accessibility to be part of the team that visits and vets the event venue and hotels.
- A diverse delivery team contributes to a welcoming space because their diversity adds to a sense of belonging for all conference participants. If you have already started assembling an OC, check for gaps and do your best to fill them.
- Ensure that organizers with diverse backgrounds are not restricted to only work on diversity and inclusion aspects; every person should have the freedom to choose which areas of the conference they want to contribute to.
- Consider appointing a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Chair within the OC.
- Collaborate with the IGS's DEI Committee at key stages of event organization to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive approach.
- Explore having the Organizing Committee (OC) participate in a dedicated diversity training session to enhance awareness and foster an inclusive event environment.

Resources

- Achieving DEI will require resources. Plan for the costs of any specific measures and tools (e.g. OC member payments, code of conduct training, captioning, accessible software, scholarships).
- Consider subsidised attendance fees and scholarships for people from under-represented markets or groups. When offering scholarships or other grants, make them easy to apply for.
- Some groups may be marginalised by an inability to transfer funds internationally. Provide alternative payment options (e.g. register in advance but pay on the day).

- Consider reduced registration rates for local attendees when conferences go to underrepresented countries.
- Consider providing Visa invitation letters that include country-specific requirements. (e.g. include the full name, address, contact information and signature of the Organizing Committee.)

Dates

- Identify national holidays or religious festivals that could limit attendance.

Program: Overall content

- Make sure that your content resonates with all attendees and encourage discussions and differing opinions.
- Invite keynote speakers to address the importance of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) regardless of their main topic.
- It is important not simply to give women and minority groups 'some' opportunity to speak at an IGS conference. Organisers should spread diversity among <u>all</u> speaking and presenting roles (keynotes, session chairs, poster presentations etc).
- Consider including a diverse perspective (gender, race, ethnicity, differently-abled), on a range of topics beyond DEI and Human Resources (HR).

Specific DEI sessions

- For specific sessions on diversity, assign a time and location that is prominent enough to guarantee a good audience.
- Consider the branding of diversity sessions and focus on "diversity as a business strategy".

Paper reviews and abstracts

- Papers are a fundamental basis for IGS Conferences.
- Biases in the final list of abstracts begin with <u>self-selection</u>: potential conference participants may not feel confident enough to submit their work, especially to large and prestigious conferences.
- To mitigate such self-selection, pre-submission mechanisms can aid authors to prepare and receive feedback for their abstract (e.g. other Chapter or TC members).
- Allow for abstract submission in both English and the applicant's preferred native language and assign a reviewer who is fluent in that language. Organisers could define a set of accepted languages for abstract submission. The goal should be to judge the abstracts primarily by the quality or relevance of the work, not the quality of English.
- To mitigate self-selection from non-native speakers, consider accepting submissions in several languages.
- Where possible, anonymize the submission (e.g., double-blind, double-open, or single-blind reviews).

- Abstract reviews can be unintentionally biased when reviewers unconsciously assign a positive or negative value to the names and affiliations of authors—and their perceived origin, ethnicity, gender, or native language. Reviewers should be reminded of such biases in the evaluation process, e.g. to avoid judging more scrupulously the work of people perceived as part of minoritized groups or being kinder when reviewing the abstracts from those perceived as part of privileged groups.
- Examine the final list of selected abstracts to check for diversity.
- Note that self-selection and unconscious bias may be aggravated by the use of video abstracts as an alternative to written ones, affecting people without the resources to create good quality videos, people with disabilities, non-native speakers, racialized people, and people with diverse body types, among others excluded.
- Promote the abstract submission call beyond the usual communication channels, e.g. share calls for papers with organizations that advance people from traditionally marginalized identities, e.g. (in US) Society of Women Engineers, National Society of Black Engineers, American Indian Science and Engineering Society, Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers, American Association for People with Disabilities, and Out in STEM.
- Include proposal/paper reviewers and event planning committee members who are diverse demographically, geographically, professionally, and in age, gender, etc.
- Include language in the call for papers/proposals to establish that diverse points of view are valued and sought.

Logistics - Registration

- Registration forms should allow individuals to indicate the need for accessibility-related or other accommodations.
- Provide the option for participants to share their pronouns or titles for name badges. Allow for nontraditional titles such as Mx. or no pronoun or title at all.

Event Communication

Promotion

- Communicate accessibility when promoting the conference, including contact details for more information.
- Be transparent with potential attendees, on what to expect in terms of accessibility.
- Highlight diversity as a theme or priority for the event on marketing materials, communications, and social media. Include a variety of voices in quotes and event highlights.
- Use bias-free language e.g. gender-neutral terminology, such as "humanity" instead of "mankind", or "spokesperson" or "chair" instead of "spokesman" or "chairman".
- Publish a link and a summary statement of these guidelines on your event webpages.

- In any case, try to find meaningful ways to acknowledge everybody's work. Use the conference spaces (e.g., webpage, opening/closing ceremony at the conference, social media) to give proper credit to the people who are making the event possible.
- Be mindful of diversity when publishing photos of events or construction activities.

On the day

- Code of Conduct and DEI Statement on a poster at the registration desk
- Avoid addressing women by marital status ("Miss" or "Mrs.") unless they prefer. Use professional titles, or "Ms" as a neutral form of address.
- Avoid inadvertent gender-specific pronouns (e.g. "each speaker give his presentation").
- Become familiar with the terminology used for disabilities, racialized groups, gender and sexual orientations, terms that are preferred by each group, and the terms that should be avoided.
- Look out for marginalized voices, e.g. in male-dominated environments, men tend to interrupt women more often than they interrupt other men.

Post event communication

- Seek the opinion of event attendees in post-event surveys about the effectiveness of these guidelines in their view, e.g. "Was our commitment to diversity adequately demonstrated at this event?"

Impact assessment

- Gather data to measure the diversity of invited speakers, selected speakers, and attendees. Show the data at the closing session.

Behaviour expectations

- Communicate and enforce the expectation that all participants (attendees, speakers, staff) are to demonstrate fair treatment, mutual respect, and dignity toward themselves and all others.
- Require participants and speakers to agree to a code of conduct during the registration process.
- Equip moderators with strategies for managing Code of Conduct violations.
- Use signage and symbols that indicate diversity is valued and diverse identities are respected.

Presentations, speaker and audience considerations

Speaker diversity

- Keynote speakers are the highlight of your conference. Commit to diversity in keynote speakers to introduce role models for everyone.

- Strive for 50% diversity in keynote speakers and presenters. A panel discussion (2+ speakers) should have at least one member of an under-represented group.
- For larger panels, target 50% diversity. This ensures equality of thought leadership, and not just visibility of an under-represented person on-stage.
- Do not limit the selection of speakers from traditionally marginalized identities to diversity-related topics. Respect them as experts in their technical disciplines.

How to diversify speakers

- Finding and recruiting diverse speakers will require reaching beyond usual networks, methods, and practices, and may require offering compensation for their help.
- Individuals who represent diverse groups are tapped often, which leads to significant extra work and the possibility of feeling tokenized. People from underrepresented groups may be underpaid in their jobs and expecting them to work for free compounds this problem.
- Research other industry events for diverse speaker ideas.
- When approaching companies for speakers, remind them to consider underrepresented demographics when nominating a representative.
- Look beyond top management executives and chief officers to find capable speakers from diverse backgrounds.
- To increase the likelihood of both speaker diversity and audience attendance, consider pairing seasoned experts with emerging engineers from diverse backgrounds.

Audience considerations

- Provide guidance to presenters and moderators on how to foster an equitable and inclusive session, e.g. host pre-event run-through calls to ensure all their accessibility needs are met.
- Ensure all speakers utilize microphones.
- Provide instructions for presenters/speakers on how to create and deliver equitable and inclusive presentations.
    - Make sure electronic documents are assistive-technology friendly (with appropriate use of alt text for images and graphics).
    - Add audio description to videos.
    - Use high contrast between text and backgrounds.
    - Use colour combinations and graphic representations that are accessible for people who are colourblind.
    - Ensure that audience members use microphones when asking questions.
    - Avoid the use of quick flashing/strobing lights and/or video elements.
    - Encourage the preparation of accessible slides and presentations by providing accessibility guidelines and presentation templates.
    - During a Q&A session, moderators should aim to collect questions from a diverse range of audience members. If a woman is called upon to ask the first question, it may encourage other female audience members to raise their hands.

- Consider sessions in languages other than English. Promote these sessions among all conference attendees and give them the same importance as the rest of the program.

Logistics – accessibility

Accessibility

- Look for event venues and hotels (including the gala dinner and other evening events) that are accessible to and inclusive of all participants, for example:
  - Accessible parking areas, pathways, and entrances to the building for wheelchair users.
  - Providing transportation options to the venue for people with disabilities.
  - Providing a location and approximate distance for accessible parking.
  - Providing access at the main entrance from a seated position.
  - Posting visible signage that directs people to accessible entrances to the venue.
  - Registration desks should be accessible from a seated position.
  - Childcare services on site, e.g. baby-changing and feeding rooms.
  - Meeting rooms have wide aisles, clear of obstructions to ensure the safety of all participants.
  - Meeting rooms have multiple accessible areas in the front, middle, and back of the meeting rooms to ensure that wheelchair users have a wide range of seating options and can navigate the space freely, even after people are seated.
  - Gender-neutral restrooms.
  - Restrooms are accessible.
  - Prayer rooms available.
  - All elevators are accessible, with buttons that can be reached from a seated position.
  - Elevator buttons have braille/raised number markings and/or audible floor announcements, with clear visual floor indicators.
  - Directional and informational signs are high-contrast and in large print throughout the venue.
  - Elevate speaker platforms in meeting rooms to increase speaker visibility.
  - Speaker podiums have knee space for wheelchair users and adjustable height.
  - Speaker podiums are height adjustable.
  - Alternatives to hand-held microphones for speakers.
  - Venues allow for service animals (e.g. guide dogs), including relief areas.
  - Glass doors and the door frames have strong contrast.
  - Audio induction loops or other assistive listening devices upon request.
  - Reserve seating near the front for individuals who need to be close to the screen, access to sign language interpreters, space where there are minimized distractions.
  - Invisible disabilities (e.g. dyslexia, anxiety, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), autism) should be accounted for proactively, for example, by providing quiet spaces for privacy and noise-free conversations or providing chairs in open spaces.
  - All platforms (website, registration, abstract submission etc) should be screen reader-friendly and keyboard accessible.

Reference sources:

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https://www.computer.org/about/diversity-inclusion/best-practices-for-conferences

https://www.semi.org/en/workforce-development/DEI_Event_Guidelines

https://journals.plos.org/ploscompbiol/article?id=10.1371/journal.pcbi.1010164