



## Specifications for Hosting the European Survey Research Association Conference

Any organization interested in hosting the biennial ESRA conference should take into account the following information:

### **Budget**

The conference is primarily funded by a combination of core funding from ESRA (approximately 20,000 euros), registration fees paid by delegates (which at their highest were €160-350 euros (including VAT) in 2019 for around 900 delegates, varying depending on discounts for members, students, and early-bird registration), sponsorship, and contributions by the host organisation/venue. The number of delegates has grown steadily since the first conference that took place in 2005, and in 2019, is expected to be somewhat higher again.

To keep organisational costs to a minimum, to date, ESRA conferences have been held in universities providing meeting rooms free-of-charge, making it possible to maintain the relatively low registration fees for the conference. The ESRA Committee is committed to continuing this convention.

Once selected, the host must budget for the costs of the work of the local organising committee in the years preceding the conference (further details of responsibilities are provided below) and ensure that this is adequately resourced.

### **Location of venue**

The location of the conference venue should be situated within a reasonable distance from a major airport.

The venue should be accessible by reasonably priced public transport from the nearest airport. The town needs to have hotel capacity for approximate 1000 conference attendees.

Hotel accommodation should be available across a range of budgets, but include a sufficient number of moderate- to low-priced options, within easy reach (either by foot, or by public transport) of the conference venue.

It is usual for the host to negotiate with a selection of hotels a special room rate at a lower price than the 'public' rate and to reserve a block of rooms corresponding to the number of delegates anticipated. This block reservation will normally have a cut-off date some days or weeks (or even months) before the start of the meeting, after which the negotiated reduced rate may no longer apply.

## Choice of venue

As mentioned, ESRA conferences have so far been hosted in universities. Other venues (e.g. hotels, conference centres, or the host organisation's premises (if not a university) may be considered, as long as their availability can be guaranteed, and that the costs for hiring rooms, if not covered by the local organisers, do not exceed the available ESRA budget or entail the need to increase the conference fee. Furthermore, the venue should fulfil the requirements detailed below:

- A reception area that can accommodate a reception desk – a large table to serve as the registration desk, where delegates can collect their badges, bags, and programmes, and an information point and technical helpdesk (ideally, with a printer) throughout the conference.
- One or more reception areas sufficiently large for coffee breaks.
- Approximately 18 seminar rooms (with appropriate audio-visual equipment) available for parallel sessions with minimum 25 seats.
- A large auditorium, ideally with at least 400 seats for two keynote addresses.
- A large room or open area suitable for exhibitors and poster sessions (requires suitable display boards for posters, skirted tables for sponsor exhibits, and/ or booths).
- A dining room/ cafeteria able to provide lunches for approximately 800 delegates.
- A welcome reception and a formal conference dinner are typically hosted outside the conference venue at venues of touristic interest in the town. These venues should ideally be able to accommodate approximately 600 delegates.
- The venue should be able to provide delegates with internet access (Wi-Fi) free-of-charge.

## Timing

The biennial ESRA conference takes place in odd-numbered years, and should ideally be scheduled during the middle weeks of July.

The rooms should be available for four full days, usually Tuesday-Friday.

On one additional day (Monday), at least five additional seminar rooms are needed for short courses and a larger auditorium or other suitable venue is required for the conference opening.

## Responsibilities

The host is responsible for:

- All the local event planning and logistics of the conference, including finding suitable venues for the conference sessions and social events (and providing them free-of-charge), room reservations, catering orders (lunches and coffee breaks), negotiating reduced rates at hotels (and establishing booking procedures), and finding local sponsors.
- Hiring temporary staff (typically students at the host university) to staff the conference (e.g. reception desk, audio-visual and other technical support), as well as handle email inquiries in the months preceding the conference (costs covered by ESRA).
- Planning of special events including the welcome reception and conference dinner and related entertainment (e.g. live music at either event; speeches from local representatives,

and special transport requirements), as well as any other planned tourist activities for delegates (e.g. special tours at negotiated rates).

- Gathering location promotional material (e.g. from local tourist board), including maps, information about local restaurants and travel information.
- Printed materials (including the conference programme) and the preparation of delegate registration packs and their contents.
- Assisting the Scientific Committee in finalising the programme and logistical aspects of assigning sessions to rooms, etc.
- Arranging accommodation and transport for keynote speakers. Arranging for keynote speaker compensation (costs covered by ESRA).
- Arranging gifts and certificates for invited speakers and prize-winners (costs covered by ESRA).
- (Optionally), providing an opportunity for local media to participate in publicising the event.

This requires a significant amount of work, and staff time should be budgeted accordingly. The ESRA budget contributes financially towards the costs of the local organising committee. The conference fees cover all other costs that cannot be met by the host. However, the budget for local organisation must be agreed with the ESRA Committee to ensure that these are reasonable and in line with expenditure in previous years.

The ESRA Committee is responsible for organising the scientific program of the conference, including inviting keynote speakers, short-course instructors, and international event sponsors. Additionally, the ESRA Committee is responsible for managing the website, processing abstract submissions, and the conference registration procedure.

## Planning Meetings

Members of the ESRA Committee typically organise two meetings with the local organisers (at the venue location) in the year preceding the conference. The first meeting is typically held in the spring of the ‘off year’, in order to inspect the conference venue to ensure its adequacy, decide the dates of the conference, agree the budget with the host, and to discuss other aspects of the organisation. The second meeting takes place in the winter before the conference, once all abstracts have been submitted and before planning the allocation of sessions to rooms.

## Previous ESRA conference locations and dates

| <i>Dates</i>    | <i>Location</i>        | <i>Venue</i>            |
|-----------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 18-22/7/2005    | Barcelona, Spain       | Pompeu Fabra University |
| 25-29/6/2007    | Prague, Czech Republic | University of Economics |
| 29/6 - 3/7/2009 | Warsaw, Poland         | University of Warsaw    |
| 18-22/7/2011    | Lausanne, Switzerland  | University of Lausanne  |
| 15-19/7/2013    | Ljubljana, Slovenia    | University of Ljubljana |
| 13-17/7/2015    | Reykjavik, Iceland     | University of Iceland   |
| 17-21/7/2017    | Lisbon, Portugal       | University of Lisbon    |
| 15-19/7/2019    | Zagreb, Croatia        | University of Zagreb    |