



Terms of Reference

EBSA Conference Programme Working Group - CPWG

Background and rationale

EBSA organizes an annual Conference covering a wide range of scientific and regulatory areas that are expected to have an impact on biosafety and biosecurity in Europe. The Conference has a pivotal place in EBSA's mission, presenting technical developments, offering training, providing an opportunity for discussion and networking, as well as accommodating official functions such as the Annual General Meeting. Furthermore, the Annual Conference represents EBSA's primary revenue stream.

Council delegates the preparations for the Annual Conferences to the Conference Programme Working Group (CPWG). This includes the development of the scientific programme for the next Conference, and the proposition to Council of locations for future conferences. The EBSA Conference Office works with the CPWG and performs many of the logistic, administrative and communication tasks related to the Conferences.

Aim

To ensure that high quality annual EBSA Conferences are held in line with the expectations of EBSA members and the indications set by Council.

Objectives

- Collect any suggestion, develop own initiatives and submit for Council decision proposals for future Conference venues and preferred timeslots of the year up to 3 years in advance.
- Analyse input of interested parties, in particular EBSA members, on their expectations for EBSA Conferences.
- Promote the establishment of a Local Conference Team.
- Develop budget proposals and, upon Council approval, manage budgets to achieve the expected result.
- Establish a scientific programme for the Conference, including selection of appropriate lectures, discussion sessions, poster presentations, exhibition, etc.
- Decide on options for the social program and any logistical aspects of the Conference.
- Work with other EBSA WGs to accommodate their activities during the Conference.
- Interact with EBSA Conference Office on all aspects to make a successful Conference.

CPWG Membership

- The Working Group consists of 5 - 8 EBSA members. The term of a CPWG member is for a period covering 3 consecutive Conferences. Council appoints WG members and can decide to renew appointment of WG members for an additional 2-year period.
- Whenever a WG member steps down, Council may decide to open a call for a new member.
- EBSA President appoints a CPWG member as CPWG Chair for a 2-year mandate.
- The CPWG identifies one member to liaise with Council.
- Whenever possible, a Local Conference Team will be established comprising different interested stakeholders (e.g. authorities, academic, industry). The Local Conference Team can include EBSA members as well as non-EBSA members. As appropriate, they may support the organisation of the Conference at the local level by identifying topics of local relevance and local (or regional) experts, exploring sources of sponsorship, providing logistical support and advising on communication.

- A member of a Local Conference Team(s) for future Conferences is invited as representative on the CPWG. Such membership expires one year after the specific Conference.

CPWG Operation

- The CPWG shall plan its own activities/programme of work to meet the objectives. The CPWG works through face-to-face meetings, conference calls and e-mail communication.
- As required, CPWG members may be charged with particular tasks and they report on progress to the Chair.
- Meetings are called by the Chair. The meeting location is decided based on what is most convenient and least expensive for all participants.
- Decisions are made by simple majority, while the Chair should strive as much as possible for unanimity. Whenever disputes cannot be resolved by the CPWG members, they will be reported to Council.
- CPWG prepares two types of budgets:
 - The Conference budget covers all revenue and costs associated with each Conference..
 - The CPWG budget covers all costs associated with its operations as well as any cost not directly related to a particular Conference (e.g. exploratory visit of future venues). Any costs that a CPWG member incurs to attend a meeting called by the Chair will be reimbursed by the EBSA Conference Office according to the general EBSA reimbursement guidelines.
- Upon approval by Council, the budgets are managed by the EBSA Conference Office and supervised by CPWG.
- CPWG and the EBSA Conference Office establish an Operational Manual, which covers all procedures and indicates timing and persons responsible for different tasks during preparation of the Conference, at the Conference and after the Conference.
- The CPWG shall report at all Council meetings on activities and status. In case CPWG observes any financial risk or has requirements that go beyond the agreed budget, Council is informed before any action can be taken.
- All reports, proposals, meeting notes, budgets etc are stored at the CPWG space on the EBSA website, thereby ensuring continuity of the CPWG activities. All CPWG members and Council members have access to the web space.

Relationship to EBSA Conference Office and other EBSA Working Groups

- CPWG will work closely with the EBSA Conference Office according to an agreed time schedule.
- CPWG will seek the input and support of other EBSA WGs.
- The planning of training (courses, workshops) in conjunction with the Conference will be taken up by the ETWG. Until such time, CPWG will organize the Pre-conference training workshops. CPWG will continue to ensure that the necessary provisions are taken to hold the training.
- CPWG will interact with the ICWG on opportunities for communication.

Time frame

- CPWG -initially the SAWG- was established in 2001.
- Announcement and call for members typically follows the closure of a Conference.
- For each Conference a programme of work, including timeline, and budget is developed and presented to Council at the latest 12 months before that Conference.