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ORGANIZATION
FOR MYCOPLASMOLOGY**

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Guidelines for Planning and Hosting IOM Congresses

Note: *this document was originally produced by the 2006-2008 IOM Board led by Ken Waites (Chair) and Alain Blanchard (Chair-Elect). The present version has been updated in November 2023 by the IOM Board led by Meghan May (Chair) and Amir (Chair-Elect).*

In order for the Congresses to be successful and meet the needs and expectations of the IOM and its membership, there are a number of fundamental requirements that must be met at the local venue. Most of these requirements are based on historical precedent set at previous Congresses and aspects that have been approved by the IOM Board of Directors. This document provides a written record of the basic requirements that must be met by the organizer(s) of IOM Congress, delineates the responsibilities for the organizer(s) as well as the IOM, represented by its Board of Directors, and spells out requirements that must be included in a proposal for hosting an IOM Congress.

I. Selection Criteria for an IOM Congress Venue

- Any IOM member can submit a proposal to host an IOM Congress and all proposals will be considered by the IOM Board of Directors. The submitter may choose to do this with a group of IOM members or interested persons who will constitute a Local Organizing Committee. The organizer(s) may choose to work directly through an institution with which they are affiliated, work directly with a company specializing in planning and conducting scientific meetings, or work independently. It is highly recommended to have some type of arrangement with persons or organizations experienced in meeting planning and to consult with hosts from previous IOM Congresses when considering whether to submit a proposal to host a Congress.
- After due consideration of submitted proposals, presented in person by the organizer(s) at a regularly scheduled Board Meeting, or following discussion of proposals through email correspondence, the IOM Board of Directors will determine whether or not to accept proposals by a simple majority vote determined by secret ballot as described in the IOM constitution. These policies are in effect whether there is a single proposal to be considered or whether there are multiple proposals for the same date under consideration.
- The basis of selection of a venue for IOM Congresses will be based upon:
 1. invitations received from sponsoring countries or institutions
 2. geographic locations,
 3. sites of prior conferences
 4. an adequate concentration of local IOM members to form an organizing committee
 5. other contributing factors. These other factors may include, but are not limited to, aspects such as: (a) proximity to international airports, (b) lack of travel restrictions for people from other countries, (c) overall costs for attendance, (d) availability of convenient accommodation for

delegates, (e) evidence of the ability of the organizers to raise money to help defray expenses and (f) efforts made to reduce the environmental impact of the congress.

- Once a proposal is approved by the IOM Board, a document signed by the IOM Chair, containing the details of the arrangements as agreed to by the Board and the Chair of the Local Organizing Committee, will be sent for signature. Copies of the signed agreement will be maintained by the IOM Chair and the Chair of the Local Organizing Committee.

II. Letter of Intent to Host an IOM Congress

- It is expected that individuals or organizations who wish to submit a proposal to host an upcoming IOM Congress will officially notify the current IOM Chair with a Letter of Intent indicating their plans.

Required elements of the Letter of Intent are:

1. the city and country where the Congress will be held
 2. the name of a specific venue such as a university, convention center, or hotel
 3. the names of persons who will comprise a Local Organizing Committee and its designated Chair who will serve as the Host for the Congress
 4. tentative dates for the Congress, specific to weeks and months
 5. the date when a complete proposal can be delivered to the IOM Chair.
- The Letter of Intent must be submitted by electronic mail to the IOM Chair who will notify the IOM Board that a proposal is pending and acknowledge receipt to the submitting person or organization. This communication is especially important since there can be more person or organization planning to submit proposals for hosting a meeting to be held in the same year. Announcements in the IOM Newsletter will call for proposals as needed, and notify the membership on the status of future IOM Congress venues when new proposals are approved.
 - A period of time not exceeding six months following submission of the Letter of Intent is recommended for delivering the completed proposal. If no completed proposal has been delivered to the IOM Chair within six months following submission of a Letter of Intent, the Chair will contact the person submitting the Letter of Intent to verify the status of the proposal and may choose to call for additional proposals if it is apparent that the submitter may not follow through with a complete proposal within a reasonable timeframe.
 - In the event the IOM Chair receives a formal proposal and there has been notification by Letters of Intent that other persons or organizations also intend to submit proposals for the same year, the IOM Chair will notify these individuals that one proposal has been received and specify a deadline by which other proposals must be submitted so that the Board can fairly consider all of them before making a selection. In the event a single proposal is received and there is no indication that others are forthcoming by submission of a Letter of Intent, the Board will review and decide on the single proposal without further invitation or notification for other potential proposals that may have been discussed in an informal manner but without written notification to the IOM Chair.

III. Essential Components of a Formal Proposal to Host an IOM Congress

- Individuals proposing to host an IOM Congress who have submitted a Letter of Intent will prepare a formal presentation that addresses at minimum all of the aspects included in this document. Under ideal circumstances, such a proposal will be provided in written format delivered electronically to the IOM Chair who will then distribute it to all IOM Board members within a few weeks prior to a regularly scheduled IOM Board of Directors Meeting held during an IOM Congress. This is normally done four years in advance. The Chair of the Local Organizing Committee or a designee will then be invited to present the proposal orally at the Board Meeting. Having PowerPoint slides, photographs and/or

videos of the Congress venue will facilitate the Board members' ability to evaluate the suitability of the facilities. In the event that there are no proposals that can be discussed directly during a regular meeting of the IOM Board during an IOM congress, proposals will be presented by the organizers and discussed within the IOM Board during an intermediate on-line meeting. Prior to the discussion, the IOM Chair will disseminate a written proposal electronically to the Board members who will then consider it and initiate a discussion through email with the organizers to ask questions and obtain additional information as needed.

A. Congress Venue

The proposal must include a complete description of the venue with attention to the following aspects. Photographs of all of the facilities should be included in the proposal.

1. Accessibility

- The country and city chosen for the Congress should be readily accessible by international airline transportation. If the location is not served directly by air transportation, the proposal must describe which types of ground transportation are available and how far from major airports the venue is located.
- If there are travel restrictions to the host country for citizens coming from other countries, this must be described along with whether entry visas are necessary.

2. Physical facilities

- Auditorium. The Congress venue must have a suitable auditorium with seating sufficient for the expected number of attendees which will usually equal 200-300 persons. If the Scientific Program Committee determines that concurrent oral sessions are needed to accommodate the number of presentations, it may be necessary to have a second room available that can accommodate approximately one half of the total number of expected delegates. The Scientific Program Committee Chair will notify the Local Organizing Committee at least 90 days prior to the opening of the Congress, once abstract submission is completed, whether there will be a second auditorium required. Budgets provided in the proposal should reflect costs for an additional auditorium in the event one is needed.
- Meeting Rooms. There must be at least 3 conference rooms large enough to accommodate approximately 30 to 40 persons available for administrative meetings of the IOM and IRPCM Boards, the Taxonomy Subcommittee, and the individual IRPCM team meetings. At least one conference room must be available during the day prior to the opening of the Congress in order to accommodate administrative and committee meetings. If at least one of these rooms is large enough, it can serve as the second auditorium for general scientific sessions.
- Audiovisual equipment. All meeting rooms and the main auditorium must be equipped with adequate audiovisual equipment that will include projectors and laptop computers suitable for PowerPoint slide presentations. Possibility to connect speakers's laptop should also be considered. Personnel knowledgeable about how to use the equipment should be present on site during the sessions in case of malfunction.
- Poster Facility. The Congress venue must include a facility for poster presentations and provide a sufficient number of poster boards to accommodate the expected number of posters. It is advisable to expect up to 250 posters. The exact number will be available after abstract submission and review is completed, so the Chair of the Scientific Committee can inform the Local Organizing Committee of the actual number of poster board required approximately 90 days prior to the Congress. It is desirable to have the poster presentations held in a location nearby the oral presentations or the catering area (where morning/afternoon tea and lunch are served). It is also desirable to have a sufficient number of poster boards so that all posters can be hung on the first

day of the Congress and left in place until the last day. There will be designated times for the authors to stand with their posters. Dimensions of poster boards must be provided to authors once abstracts are accepted and instructions for poster preparation will be posted on the Congress website.

- Internet Access. A wifi connection should be available at least in the main auditorium and in the other conference rooms. Electrical power outlets for laptop computers and smartphones are also needed in all rooms.
- Business Center. Officers of the IOM may require access to printing and photocopying services during the congress. It is anticipated that there will be a modest amount of printing or copying of documents needed for administrative purposes. If there will be additional costs to the IOM for these services, the Local Organizing Committee is requested to announce these costs to the IOM in the proposal.
- Meal and Snack Service. Facilities for coffee breaks and meals should be provided in areas convenient to the location of the plenary sessions. Meal facilities will be provided on site so that delegates do not have to leave the premises for lunch.
- Environmental footprint. Real effort must be made to reduce the environmental footprint of the congress. It is expected from the Local Organizing Committee to take this aspect in consideration when choosing the venue and catering services. This will be considered during the evaluation of the bid by the IOM Board.

B. Registration Fees

Each of the following points must be discussed in the proposal.

1. The amounts to be charged to delegates for registration fees will be recommended by the Local Organizing Committee based on expected costs and attendance and are subject to approval by the IOM Board of Directors. These costs must be specified in the proposal and should be realistic, based on figures derived from the actual cost data for use of the facilities and provision of the required services described above. It is helpful to provide these figures for the Board to review in the local currency to be used at the Congress and in US dollars.
2. There will be a discounted registration fee for predoctoral student fellows that will be proposed by the Local Organizing Committee and approved by the IOM Board. The Local Organizing Committee may require a letter from a major professor or department head to verify the eligibility of an individual for the discounted registration fees if they choose to do so.
3. Persons who attend the Congress and who are not IOM members in good standing as defined by the current membership roster maintained by the Membership Secretary must pay an additional registration fee of 120 to 180 US dollars (which automatically includes a 100\$ 2-year IOM membership) in order to encourage Congress attendees to join and maintain current membership in the IOM. This additional fee should be discussed and decided with the IOM Board. For non-IOM registrations, the LOC will transfer the 100\$ corresponding to the IOM membership to the IOM treasurer after the congress.
4. The proposal must state specifically what costs are included in the registration fees. Having a single registration fee that includes Congress registration and a specified number of meals on site has been popular at most IOM Congresses and should be considered by the Local Organizing Committee. Depending of the congress location, it is also permissible to have the registration fee cover the costs of local accommodation for a specified number of days if this can be arranged, but this should be optional in the event delegates want to make separate accommodation arrangements.
5. A separate registration fee will be established by the Local Organizing Committee for persons who accompany delegates and share the same dormitory or hotel room. This fee should cover costs

associated with accommodation, if provided, and participation to the welcome reception and social activities provided for delegates, but does not include attendance at scientific sessions.

6. The registration fees should be payable by international credit card through the Congress Internet Website or by bank draft in the designated currency. The currency in which registration fees are paid is determined by the Local Organizing Committee and specified in the proposal.
7. The Local Organizing Committee will determine the deadline by which registration fees must be paid prior to the Congress. A tentative date should be listed in the proposal. The Local Organizing Committee may also determine whether there will be a deadline for early registration at a lower price and whether a later registration will incur a higher fee. All fee schedules must be approved by the IOM Board in advance.
8. The Local Organizing Committee will specify whether they will accept on-site registration and whether the absolute number of attendees of the Congress must be limited due to size of the facilities. If there is a maximum number of delegates who are allowed to attend, this must not be less than 250 persons.
9. The Local Organizing Committee will agree to the IOM policy that everyone who attends the Congress pays the applicable registration fee. The only exceptions to this are invited Keynote Speakers who are usually not IOM members or otherwise affiliated with the organization. These fees may be waived or paid by the Local Organizing Committee, at their discretion. The Scientific Program Committee may choose to invite other “special speakers” who are members of the IOM. If so, the IOM will be responsible for payment of the registration fees to the Local Organizing Committee for these individuals unless other mutually agreeable arrangements are made in advance. If the Local Organizing Committee chooses, they can discuss with the IOM Chair whether to consider joint sponsorship or provision of subsidies for a limited number of delegates from developing countries who are not eligible for reduced registration fees for students. In that case, financial arrangements and a process for selection of individuals who would qualify for this benefit would be worked out between the Local Organizing Committee and the IOM Board. Sponsorship of meeting attendance for persons from developing countries has not been handled in a consistent manner at previous IOM Congresses and has been dependent on the financial ability to pay these costs. The proposal should indicate whether the Local Organizing Committee wants to explore the possibility of providing subsidized registration fees so that an appropriate process for selection can be established and communicated to the membership and other potential attendees.
10. The Local Organizing Committee must state in the proposal that they agree not to raise the registration fee approved by the IOM Board more than 10% without asking for Board approval and providing a legitimate reason for doing so.

C. Accommodation for Delegates

1. The Local Organizing Committee will negotiate accommodation costs with hotels, guesthouses, and/or university dormitories for delegates. Since the attendees of the Congress include persons from many countries with varying financial abilities, the accommodation choices should include low cost facilities such as college dormitories, when available, as well as better hotels for those willing to pay more. A description of the accommodation options, with photographs if possible, and a negotiated rate per night based on a signed contract with the provider should be included in the proposal. Note that the negotiated rate should include at least two days prior to the opening of the Congress since several persons with administrative responsibilities must arrive early. At least, the Local Organizing Committee must provide a list of selected accommodation possibilities with URL of the internet website and price range.
2. The Local Organizing Committee may arrange a single registration/accommodation fee that includes meeting registration, specified meals, and accommodation if they choose to do so, as described above. If there is a separate fee for accommodation, the Local Organizing Committee

will specify in the proposal whether accommodation registration will be handled by their organization or directly through the hotels.

3. The proposal must specify the location of accommodation for delegates and its proximity to the Congress venue, including maps or diagrams, if possible. If suitable accommodation is not available within walking distance to the Congress venue, the proposal must indicate the extent to which reasonably priced public transportation such as trains, subways, buses, streetcars, etc. are available and what costs will be to utilize these vehicles. Venues that have convenient accommodation in close proximity are generally preferred over those that require transport from other locations.

D. Scheduling the Congress

1. IOM Congresses are usually held biennially in even numbered years. During the past several years, the Congresses have been held during June through August, with July being the most common month, and the one preferred by most IOM members. The proposal must include the tentative dates for the Congress.
2. The IOM Board has recommended a minimum of four and one half days dedicated to the scientific program, inclusive of all oral presentations, up to three keynote speakers, three award lectures, poster presentations, and IRPCM Team Meetings. A social event or local outing is optional for one day or less. The actual timing and scheduling of the scientific program with its specific presentations will be determined by the Scientific Program Committee and will be communicated to the Local Organizing Committee through the Scientific Program Chair. Preliminary arrangements will be available several months in advance of the Congress by discussions between Local and Scientific Program Committees. Any specific requirement of the Scientific Program Committee (need for two conference halls in case of concurrent sessions, schedule of IRPCM meetings during lunch breaks...) will be indicated to the Local Organizing Committee early enough to make the room and service booking. The Local Organizing Committee must provide the Scientific Program Committee with a deadline for submitting the final program. The proposal must provide a tentative day by day outline for the Congress that will be subject to approval and modification by the Scientific Program Committee. Local Organizers are invited to examine schedules for previous IOM Congresses and use them as a guide.

E. Congress Internet Website and Publicity

1. The Local Organizing Committee will develop an English language Internet Website that will contain information about the IOM Congress venue and eventually contain the information and instructions about meeting registration and allow payment of registration fees. Since fees may be paid by credit card over this website, it must be on a secure server. It is desirable to have this website in place several months prior to the Congress for informational purposes only. The opening date for meeting registration will be determined by the Local Organizing Committee after discussion with the IOM Board. The Congress website will be linked to the official IOM website. Alternatively, the new IOM website released in 2022 offers the possibility to host a dedicated Congress page. If this solution is preferred, the Local Organizing Committee should contact the IOM Information Officer to evaluate the feasibility. It is desirable to have a prototype webpage included in the proposal so the Board can see its organization.
2. Recent IOM Congress meeting announcements and calls for abstracts have been handled entirely through the Congress website, IOM website, and IOM Newsletters. All IOM members receive electronic communication about the Congress through these electronic media. Thus, there is no specific requirement for the Local Organizing Committee to prepare printed information that duplicates what is available through these electronic media. However, in order to generate interest in the Congress and hopefully attract interested persons who are not IOM members and who may

not be familiar with these congresses, the Local Organizing Committee is encouraged to prepare informational booklets/slideshow presentations that can be distributed/presented at other microbiology conferences by the Local Organizing Committee or by any IOM members who request them. The Local Organizers must agree that any promotional materials they prepare will be submitted to the IOM Chair for review before they are distributed. The IOM public relations/membership committee may be helpful with respect to publicizing the Congress.

F. Official Language

1. The Local Organizing Committee must agree that the official language for the Congress is English. All oral presentations will be given in English and all abstracts must be submitted in English. All posters must be written in English.
2. The Local Organizing Committee may provide simultaneous translation of presentations into other languages at their discretion, but this is not required. If this is planned, the proposal should indicate this intention.

G. Abstract Handling

1. The proposal must describe how the Local Organizing Committee will manage that abstracts and make them available to the Scientific Program Committee for review. The deadline for abstract submission will be determined by joint agreement between the Local Organizing Committee and the Scientific Program Committee. Acceptance of abstracts and their designation for poster or oral presentation will be determined by the Scientific Program Committee. The Scientific Program Committee will also determine whether abstracts must be submitted for invited lectures and keynote addresses.
2. To submit an abstract, at least one author must be a member of the IOM with dues paid at least through the current biennium. There is a place in the abstract submission form on the website where the IOM member submitting the abstract must be named. Verification of IOM membership of at least one author on each abstract will be performed by the IOM Scientific Program Committee in conjunction with the Membership Secretary. Abstracts submitted without documentation of at least one author as an IOM member will not be considered for presentation. Note that anyone can register and attend the meeting without regards to membership in the IOM. An IOM member can author and submit an unlimited number of abstracts. The person submitting an abstract must plan to attend the Congress to present it. There have been unfortunate instances in the past when the Scientific Program Committee selected abstracts and scheduled them as oral or poster presentations, printed them in the program, and no one showed up at the Congress for the presentation. To reduce the likelihood of this happening, the Local Organizing Committee must agree to notify the Scientific Program Committee of any abstract submitter who has not registered and paid to attend the Congress by a specified date and this abstract will be removed from the program schedule and final abstract book. This date will be determined jointly by the Local Organizing Committee and the Scientific Program Committee based on the schedule for abstract review and printing of the programs.
3. Final preparation and printing of the Program and Abstract Book will be the responsibility of the Local Organizing Committee. The Scientific Program Committee and Information Officer will provide the abstracts in electronic format and the overall schedule for oral and poster presentations for the entire Congress to the Local Organizing Committee. The Chair of the IOM and Chair of the Scientific Program Committee will assist the Local Organizing Committee in the organization and design of the final Program and Abstract Book and will give final approval of its contents before distribution at the Congress. Deadlines for getting this document its final form and printing will be established jointly by the Local Organizing Committee and the Scientific Program Committee. The

proposal will indicate the anticipated costs for printing the program and abstract books sufficient for the expected number of attendees. However, the option of providing only electronic versions or the program and abstract book to decrease the environmental footprint of the congress should be considered and discussed by Local and Scientific Program Committees and the IOM Board.

H. Student Travel Awards

1. It is a longstanding practice that predoctoral and postdoctoral students who have an abstract accepted for presentation are given financial assistance to attend IOM Congresses. The sources and amounts of these funds vary from time to time depending on the location of the Congress, cost of attendance, availability of funds, and financial arrangements for hosting the meeting between the Local Organizing Committee and the IOM. Generation of these funds is the responsibility of the Local Organizing Committee and the IOM. Specific arrangements and responsibilities vary from Congress to Congress, and must be worked out and agreed to by the Local Organizing Committee and the IOM Board. Typical amounts for individual student travel awards for recent congresses have been in the range of \$500 to \$1000 US dollars, depending on distance traveled. Students residing in the host country are not eligible to receive travel awards from this source. The proposal to host the IOM Congress must address the matter of how the Local Organizing Committee will approach fund raising to assist in reducing the costs for international attendees, how they will provide funds for student travel, and a realistic targeted goal. Administration of student travel grants will be the responsibility of the Student Travel Grant Committee which composition is decided by the IOM Board. The Chair of this committee will work with the Local Organizing Committee in these matters. In lieu of offering payment directly to students to offset expenses, the Local Organizing Committee may choose to offer subsidy for meals and/or housing in addition to a reduced registration fee if those services are not already included. These aspects should also be described in depth in the proposal if they are being considered. The IOM will assist the Local Organizing Committee and possibly contribute additional funds to assist student travel to the Congress that will be obtained from the IOM general fund, from money obtained from conference grants, and from money obtained from corporate sponsors. The amount of this support from the IOM will be determined by the IOM Board in consultation with the Local Organizing Committee and is dependent on the needs of the Local Organizing Committee and the financial abilities of the IOM at the time the Congress is being planned.

I. Social Program

1. The Local Organizing Committee is encouraged to provide at least one outing or social event during the Congress in addition to an opening reception, the cost of which will be included in the registration fee. Plans for this should be described in the proposal. Timing for any type of social events must be approved by the Scientific Program Committee.
2. The Local Organizing Committee will organize a dinner during the Congress for the combined Old and New Board Members, committee chairs and other individuals who have made significant contributions to the administration of the IOM during the previous biennium. The persons who will be invited to this dinner will be determined by the Chair of the Local Organizing Committee in consultation with the current IOM Chair. If any of these persons have family members or companions who have accompanied them to the Congress, it has been traditional that these persons were also invited. Costs for this function are to be included in the proposal.
3. It is suggested that the Local Organizing Committee will plan some activities and excursions during the Congress for accompanying persons and delegates who may wish to participate. The costs of these excursions will be in addition to the registration fee unless the Local Organizing Committee is able to include them in the fees for all delegates and/or accompanying persons. The Local

Organizing Committee may choose to require advance registration and payment for these excursions if necessary to determine the level of interest among participants. It is suggested that the proposal will include some suggested ideas for social activities for accompanying persons and their anticipated costs.

4. An opening reception for delegates and accompanying persons should be included in the proposal and budget. The Local Organizing Committee is encouraged to seek corporate sponsorship for this activity. If necessary, extra fees for the opening reception might be asked to accompanying persons. In this case, this should be clearly announced on the registration web page.
5. It is suggested that the Local Organizing Committee will work with travel agents of their choice to develop some post-Congress tours in the country where the meeting will take place that delegates can select and book in advance. This information with instructions on how to arrange and pay for them should be posted on the Congress website as soon as possible. The Local Organizing Committee is encouraged to list possible post-congress tours in the proposal.

J. Local Organization

1. The proposal must identify the Chair of the Local Organizing Committee. This person will be the one with whom all correspondence will be undertaken by the IOM Chair, Treasurer, and Scientific Program Committee Chair. This person must agree to attend the next IOM Congress to present the proposal in person for consideration by the IOM Board, or to present the status of planning the Congress to the Board and to the delegates in the event the proposal has already been accepted by the time the Congress is held. If the Chair of the Local Organizing Committee cannot attend the next IOM Congress, he or she must send another committee member to perform these duties.
2. The names of all of the members of the Local Organizing Committee will be included in the proposal. To the extent possible, delineation of duties and responsibilities of individual committee members should be described.
3. An overview of how the Local Organizing Committee will plan and administer the Congress must be included in the proposal. Specific information as to whether the institution or organization with which the organizers are affiliated will be utilized or whether a professional meeting planning organization will be utilized must be included.

K. Financial Responsibilities

1. Covering the costs of the IOM Congress is a responsibility of the Local Organizing Committee, the IOM, and the delegates who attend the Congress. In order to maintain the lowest possible registration fees and associated costs, attempts will be made by the IOM to obtain external sponsors to help defray the costs of the meeting. The Local Organizing Committee is also encouraged to seek external sponsorship to help underwrite costs of the Congress. This is separate from money expected to come from registration fees and student travel awards. Proposals to host the IOM Congress must include descriptions of financial commitments from corporate sponsors identified at the time the proposal is submitted and detailed plans for obtaining additional support. The IOM public relations/membership committee will provide assistance as requested by the Local Organizing Committee.
2. The IOM is responsible for payment of all of the monetary prizes and costs associated with all of the named IOM awards. There is no obligation of the Local Organizing Committee for these expenses. However, the Local Organizing Committee is responsible for payment of travel expenses and speaker honoraria for up to 3 invited Keynote Speakers. These expenses will include airfare and ground transportation to and from the Congress venue from their respective countries, hotel accommodations, and meals for as many days and nights during the Congress

that the individual speaker chooses to stay. The Local Organizing Committee and Scientific Program Chair will jointly determine the amount of a speaker honorarium fee to be paid to these individuals based on precedent from earlier IOM Congresses and availability of funds. If fundraising by the IOM during the previous biennium is successful, there may be additional funds and direct sponsorship available for designated speakers to offset costs to the Local Organizing Committee. However, this cannot be guaranteed until the amounts of such funds are known in a timeframe closer to the actual time for the Congress. The proposal must include these costs as a budget item.

3. The Local Organizing Committee will assist the IOM Treasurer in setting up a local bank account so that funds can be transferred there to be used for payment of expenses associated with the IOM Congress and as needed if payments from IOM funds to the Local Organizing Committee are necessary. The Local Organizing Committee will advise the IOM Treasurer concerning how payments for IOM-related expenses that may occur during and prior to the Congress should be handled in accordance with laws and customs of banking in the host country. In the event a local bank account cannot be established, an alternative plan for handling these financial aspects of the Congress should be described in the proposal.
4. The Local Organizing Committee agrees to provide the IOM Board with a comprehensive budget for consideration of selecting their venue for the IOM Congress at the time they submit their proposal. They will also provide a detailed financial statement concerning all of the anticipated income and expenses associated with the Congress at the IOM Board Meeting held just prior to opening the Congress. A final financial report will be provided to the IOM Chair as soon as it is available after the close of the Congress and all debts are paid. These reports will be summarized and published in the IOM Newsletter.
5. The Local Organizing Committee will arrange a convenient time for the IOM Chair and possibly the Chair of the Scientific Program Committee to visit the Congress within one year prior to the Congress to inspect the Congress venue and discuss pertinent aspects of the Congress with the Local Organizing Committee. Costs incurred for travel and local accommodations for these individuals for this site visit are the responsibility of the Local Organizing Committee and must be included in the proposal. However, to reduce the cost and environmental footprint of the congress, the site visit may be replaced with a 'virtual visit' of the venue. The Chair may also nominate another board member to conduct the site visit. Whatever the option chosen, it is has to be validated by a formal vote of the IOM Board.
6. The IOM Board may approve the advance payment of the sum of up to \$10,000 US to assist the Local Organizing Committee in getting the plans for the Congress started, realizing there are costs associated with organizing the Congress, reserving the venue, setting up the website, and doing advance promotion and advertisement. This is considered as an investment by the IOM in the Congress to assure its success and to help the Local Organizing Committee. Approval and payment of this sum is contingent on the Local Organizing Committee agreeing in writing to the terms described in this document, financial ability of the IOM to provide these funds, and a majority vote by the IOM Board of Directors. This payment, and the terms under which it will be provided to the Local Organizing Committee will be considered by the IOM Board after the IOM Chair has received a signed agreement signed by the Chair of the Local Organizing Committee indicating how financial liability for the Congress will be handled. It is understood that the Local Organizing Committee will use these funds solely for the purposes of the IOM Congress and that they will present to the IOM an itemized summary of how the funds were spent at the time of the IOM Board of Directors Meeting held immediately prior to the opening of the Congress. The proposal must specify how a funding advance from the IOM will be used if the Local Organizing Committee chooses to request such funds and why such funds are needed in advance. In this case, it should be very clear that this maximum of \$10,000 US is provided as a loan to help the organization of the congress but that this sum should be returned to the IOM at the end of the congress.

L. Financial Liability

There are 2 types of financial arrangements that have been made for previous IOM Congresses between the Local Organizing Committee and the IOM Board of Directors. The Local Organizing Committee will indicate which arrangement they prefer in their proposal. If neither of these arrangements is acceptable to the Local Organizing Committee, the Committee Chair must initiate a discussion with the IOM Chair to work out a mutually agreeable financial arrangement that assures the best interests of both parties that can be presented to the IOM Board for consideration.

1. The first type of arrangement is one where the IOM is financially responsible for the costs of the Congress in the event the event fails to produce sufficient revenue to cover expenses that are incurred in its conduction. This means that in the event the Congress fails to generate sufficient revenue from registration fees and sponsorship, the IOM will pay the difference to the creditors. This should not occur if a sound and realistic budget is carefully prepared unless some unavoidable external event occurs that prevents the Congress from occurring or prevents the expected number of persons attending and paying registration fees. Examples would be a natural disaster, outbreak of an epidemic of infectious disease, an act of war, etc. In this situation, if the IOM goes on record in advance as being financially responsible, the Local Organizing Committee is required to keep the IOM Chair and the IOM Treasurer advised of the operating budget for the Congress, how expenses will be planned, how funds will be managed and spent on a regular basis up until the time of the Congress. Furthermore, if there is any profit derived from the Congress after all expenses are paid under this arrangement, these funds will be returned to the IOM.
2. The second type of financial arrangement is that the Local Organizing Committee and its organization or institution, will take financial responsibility for the IOM Congress. This means that if there is some reason the Congress does not produce the expected revenue necessary to pay all creditors, the IOM is not responsible financially and all payments are the responsibility of the Local Organizing Committee and its respective institution. In this situation, any profits generated by the Congress are the property of the Local Organizing Committee and/or its institution and will not have to be returned to the IOM. In this arrangement, the Local Organizing Committee is still obligated to provide the IOM with an itemized financial report regarding how the initial funding given by the IOM, subject to approval by the IOM Board of Directors, is spent along with a detailed financial report for the Congress. However, the Local Organizing Committee is not obligated to consult with the IOM Chair and IOM Treasurer periodically on regular basis prior to the Congress to detail how funds are being acquired and spent.