

International Congresses of SLE

Committee of Presidents

1.0 Introduction

The International Congress of SLE (hereafter referred to as ‘the Congress’ in singular or plural) was inaugurated in 1986 by Drs. E.M Tan and M.J. Fritzler and convened in Calgary, Canada. Since then, Congresses have been held in various locations that literally encircle the globe: Singapore, London, Jerusalem, Cancun, Barcelona, New York, Shanghai, Vancouver, Buenos Aires and Vienna. From the outset, the Chair from the host city and the growing cadre of past-chairs were constituted to facilitate a high quality meeting and served as the *ad hoc* committee known as the Committee of Presidents (hereafter referred to as ‘the Committee’) that received and vetted proposals for, and chose the location(s) of, future conferences; normally 4 to 6 years in advance. The remarkable success and hallmark of the Congresses has been based on world class and state of the art scientific, clinical and patient oriented content. The logistics and the proposals to host upcoming Congresses from various jurisdictions have reached a level of complexity wherein a more formalized approach is desirable. Hence, this document provides both Terms of Reference and Operational Procedures which are intended to provide a more formalized guide to future deliberations of the Committee.

2.0 Applications to host the Congress. Historically, there has been no a priori “formula” for where a congress would or should be held. Nevertheless, it is recognized that in order to facilitate the ability of individuals around the globe to attend without prejudice of distance or cost, the location of the Congresses are ideally held in jurisdictions geographically distant from the immediate previous Congresses. Hence, Congress sites should be in rotation as follows: The Americas, Europe/Africa, and The Rest of the World (including Asia, Middle East and Oceania

3.0). If a proposal from the country/region considered to be next in line to host the Congress is not received, the Committee will decide how to change the rotations accordingly. Jurisdictional/continental/country rotation notwithstanding, it is understood that the quality of the proposal as defined below is pre-eminent in making a choice of future locations and hosts of the meetings.

Invitations and processes to submit a proposal should be included on each Congress’ website a minimum of one year before the congress date, or are available from the presiding Chair of the Committee. Proposals to host the Congress four years in advance of the current Congress may be invited. All proposals should be accompanied by pertinent information and should be submitted by a deadline that will be announced in advance. Normally, each applicant will prepare a written proposal and will be invited to provide an oral summation of the proposal and address any questions at the time of the Committee meeting.

The criteria for a successful bid of future Congresses are based on the quality of the proposal:

- 3.1** Expertise in SLE by the bidders as evidences by scientific credentials and publications;
- 3.2** Selection of a venue that would accommodate up to 2000 people, depending on projected attendance;
- 3.3** Proposal of a structured program;
- 3.4** Patient involvement.

4.0 Terms of Reference: The primary roles of the Committee:

- 4.1 Receive written proposals to host future meetings of the International Congress of SLE. These proposals may be submitted to any member but must be transmitted and collated by the current Chair until 2 (4?) weeks prior to the Congress.
- 4.2 Invite formal presentations to the Presidents Committee that will form the basis of decisions of the future locations of the Congresses.
- 4.3 Come to an informed and simple majority (>50%) decision on the future location of the Congresses.

5.0 Organization

- 5.1 **Composition and Membership:** The composition and membership of the Presidents' Committee shall include one individual who was, or is a representative of, the Chair of the previous Congresses. Normally, each Congress center will be represented by one voting member. Absence from more than three consecutive meetings will be taken as just cause to relinquish membership on the Committee.
- 5.2 **Chair:** The Chair of the current Congress will be considered the Chair of the President's Committee. The term of that Chair will terminate at the end of the meeting hosted in that location/city and transfer to the Chair of the next or upcoming congress. The Chair shall:
 - 5.2.1 Be responsible for receiving and collating proposal for future Congresses.
 - 5.2.2 Inform the Committee of all matters relating to the logistics or location of future Congress meetings.
 - 5.2.3 The Chair of the next Congress will be a non-voting member of the Presidents Committee without voting rights
- 5.3 **Term:** Each member shall serve continuously until such time she/he elects to resign or dies. In the event of resignation or death of a member, each Congress center may appoint one person as their representative. This appointment must be formalized in writing to the Presiding Chair.
- 5.4 **Communications:** Communications (i.e. email or other digital media) on all matters relating to current or future sites of the Congress will be communicated by the presiding Chair to all members of the Committee.
- 5.5 **Meetings:** The Committee will normally meet at the time of the meeting held at the host location. The Chair will be responsible for communicating the logistics of the meeting (i.e. location, time) and will circulate the agenda. All meetings must be called with due notice (normally two weeks in advance). In appropriate situations, the Chair may call a meeting by teleconference or other digital media.
- 5.6 **Minutes:** All recommendations, directions, decisions and resolutions of the Committee shall be recorded by the secretary to or Chair of the Committee in the minutes of the meetings. Minutes will be circulated to the members of the Committee and the Chairs for review and edits within two weeks of the meeting. The Chair may exercise the option to have someone (non-voting) attend meetings to record such deliberations.
- 5.7 **Confidentiality:** all deliberations of the Committee are regarded as confidential.

6.0 Procedures and Minutes

- 6.1 The time and place of the meetings of the Committee and the procedures at such meetings shall be determined from time to time by the Chair in consultation with the Committee, provided that notice of the time and place of every meeting shall be given to each Member of the Committee by email, fax or direct mail, at least 14 days prior to the time fixed for such meeting.
- 6.2 A resolution in writing, signed by all members of the Committee entitled to vote on that resolution at a meeting of the Committee, is as valid as if it has been passed at a

meeting of the Committee. A copy of any such resolution in writing shall be kept with the minutes of the proceedings of the Committee.

- 6.3 Any matter to be voted upon shall be decided by a simple majority of the votes cast on the question.
- 6.4 Any member that has a vested commercial or conflict of interest in any of the agenda items or pending decisions of the Committee must declare the same prior to the start of the meeting. Similarly, if a member has reason to believe another member has a conflict of interest, this must be brought to the attention of the Chair, prior to the start of the meeting or prior to an action being brought to a vote.
- 6.5 Except for unusual circumstances, assigned proxy votes in absentia will not be permitted.
- 6.6 The selection of the location of all future Congress meetings will be by secret ballot and adjudicated by the Chair. Proposals from all candidate hosts will be considered by the Committee without prejudice. A simple majority will determine the outcome of the selection process and may follow written and/or oral presentations as agreed upon by the Committee. In the event of a tie, the Chair shall immediately cast the deciding vote.
- 6.7 Proposed changes to these Terms of Reference, Procedures and Processes must be submitted to the presiding Chair of the Committee prior to the meeting and after consideration will be approved by a two-thirds or greater majority vote.

These terms and procedures are dated January 23, 2025.

Appendix – Successful meeting bids – Expectations of an International Congress of SLE

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1. The Congress will be held every two years, in the odd-numbered year (2025, 2027, 2029 etc), in order to alternate with the European Lupus congress.
2. Each Congress is a stand-alone event in terms of its President, organising committee and secretariat, finances and logistics.
3. The incoming President, who will chair the organisation of the subsequent Congress, will convene an organising committee with appropriate skills in Lupus clinical and basic research and in congress organisation.
4. It is expected that the Congress secretariat will appoint a Professional Congress Organisation (PCO) to implement the Congress.
5. Fundraising, including industry sponsorship, is the responsibility of the President and organising committee.
6. The Congress will be held in an appropriate venue with suitable conference facilities.
7. Based on past attendance, the Congress venue should be one able to accommodate from 1500 to up to 2000 delegates.
8. The Congress program should ensure
 - a. a scientific program of the highest quality, able to attract researchers to present their most high impact research data at the Congress and thus attract large number of delegates
 - b. an appropriate balance of clinical and basic science content in terms of invited speakers and free paper sessions, to ensure the meeting is attractive to clinicians as well as clinical and basic researchers
 - c. a balance of plenary and concurrent sessions, with a recommendation that no more than 3 concurrent sessions be planned
 - d. adequate opportunities for oral free papers selected from submitted abstracts
 - e. adequate opportunities for new investigators to participate in the meeting
9. Subject to funding, opportunities for new investigators to participate in the meeting should be financially supported, e.g. with travel grants.
10. Opportunities for free paper submission via abstract, for presentation via poster or oral communication, should be provided. Past meetings have received as many as 450 abstract submissions and thus sufficient space and time allocation for poster presentations should be included in planning.
11. It is an expectation that patient involvement in the Congress be significant, although it is noted this can take a variety of forms e.g. patient-orientated satellite or parallel sessions, patient registration for entire congress, patient-submitted abstracts, etc.
12. A meeting of Presidents' Committee should be convened during the Congress, for the purposes outlined in the Terms of Reference. It would be expected that past Presidents would receive favourable conditions for participation at the Congress, e.g. waiver of registration fees.
13. A call for expressions of interest in the meeting four years hence from a current meeting should be lodged on the meeting website approximately one year from the Congress opening, to allow for preparation of bids.
14. Outgoing Congress Presidents should provide all assistance necessary to incoming Presidents, including access to key materials such as financial information, sponsor contacts, email lists (if available), and other data helpful to the organisers of the next meeting.

¹ As of January 2025