



The
Geological
Society

GUIDELINES FOR CONVENORS FOR CONFERENCES

The objective of these guidelines is to provide an initial framework for convenors to manage conferences at the Geological Society. These may be held in conjunction with a virtual offering, however if in person they must adhere to this set of guidelines and timeframes.

Convenors must send a conference proposal to the Society's Science Committee before a conference can be badged as a GSL meeting. Meetings organised by specialist groups should be flagged to the conference office. There are also a range of options for conference office support for specialist group meetings.

Once approved, the conference office at the Geological Society will work with the convenors to prepare advertising materials and supporting literature alongside a budget to ensure the conference makes surplus.

Simon Thompson Executive Secretary

Every Conference must adhere to the below set of Aims.

Aims

- To develop a high quality and relevant programme of scientific meetings in London, around the UK and internationally.
- To stimulate the advancement of geological knowledge and to facilitate communication among professional geoscientists in academia, industry and government, through meetings and publications.
- To deliver the highest quality science output to the highest international standards through a series of Flagship events, identifying stimuli, monitoring and rewards, and to encourage the dissemination of the resulting knowledge.
- To advise on ideas for future Special Publications/Thematic Sets, and encourage publications resultant on meetings in Geological Society published Journals, Special Publications and Memoirs.
- To ensure that the scientific output of the Society remains entirely consistent with the Science Strategy.

Convenors Responsibilities:-

- Confirm conference subject classification
- Compile 'Call for Papers' text for marketing on website and poster
- Decide on social programme requirements
 - i. Conference Dinners

- ii. Evening drinks receptions will be held in the Lower Library or other breakout area if held off site
 - iii. Tea and Coffee Breaks will be held in the Lower Library or other breakout area
- Identifying and contacting potential sponsors and passing contact details onto the Conference Office for invoicing
- Confirm keynote speakers and contact details (must adhere to speaker budgets)
- Shortlisting abstracts within agreed time frames
- Submit provisional programme within agreed time frames
- Submit final programme
- Chase any outstanding sponsorship

Conference Office Responsibilities

- Develop and share the budget, and advise on income/spend versus targets ensuring the event is profitable.
- Conference Manager will attend planning meetings where required
- They will create and update conference webpages
- They will create a system for online upload of conference abstracts
- They will create an online and paper registration system
- They will design advertising material, and arrange advertising in Geoscientist and other relevant publications
- They will assemble abstracts for distribution to conference organiser
- The office staff will also undertake to assemble and publish abstract volumes
- They will help to assemble a comprehensive budget (based on input from Convenors)
- They will advise on keynote speaker expenses
- They will support with invited speaker accommodation if required (must adhere to GSL speaker budgets)
- They will arrange virtual conference rehearsals and handle all registrations.
- They will arrange poster boards, lecture room facilities, AV etc.
- They will create conference signage
- They will attend the conference and handle registration etc. if required.
- Dealing with delegates on the day of the conference
- Supporting on the day with Virtual Conference logistics and handling any technical issues.
- Support with follow up emails and surveys to delegates

General convenor notes

- There must be a Science Committee member acting as a convenor (whether lead, co or sleeping convenor) or dedicated liaison on all meetings.
- When working in collaboration with other societies or organisations, then terms of agreement need to be drafted at the initial planning stage of the conference. Of particular importance is the destination of any surplus funds generated
- Convenors are responsible for their own expenses and registration fees. In unusual cases, waivers may be available; please contact the Conference Office for details.

- If these expenses are approved, then they must be included in the conference budget.
- Expenses for speakers and poster exhibitors are expected to be borne by the speakers and exhibitors themselves. Exceptions may be made for keynote speakers who are not able to source funding from their companies or institutions.
- Requests for visa invitations or letters should only be issued if accompanied by an appropriate due diligence investigation of the speaker or exhibitor. Further advice should be sought from the Conference Office.
- Convenors will adhere to the Geological Society's Code of Conduct for Meetings and Events
- Convenors will adhere to the Geological Society's GDPR policy
 - As convenors are representing the Society, they must not solicit papers or sponsorship from individuals within companies that they do not personally know. For this they can use the generic 'info@' inbox.
 - Convenors can contact an individual who has expressed interest in the conference/event to solicit papers or sponsorship if it comes under 'Legitimate Interest'.
 - Convenors will not share individuals personal details

Conference Planning Time Frame

*The best results in terms of conference success are achieved when an appropriate amount of time is set aside for planning. In our experience, the first planning meeting should be held **at least 14 months before** the proposed date of the conference. This allows time to secure the attendance of the best invited speakers and of the largest number possible of delegates.*

These are the guidelines of which objectives must be met in order to ensure the conference is approved.

14 months prior – Event proposal approved by the Science Committee.

- Hold planning meeting
- Confirm marketing material for inclusion in Geoscientists and other relevant publications
- Put together Hashtag for conference and Social Media Marketing material
- dates for registration and abstract submission
- Put together conference website
- Create and send out first circular with details of workshops, technical sessions, conference themes
- Send first social media blast on Twitter and LinkedIn
- Consider possible sponsor
- Create e-mailing and snail-mailing list
- Send out second circular, including latest list of sessions, invited speakers etc.
- Set up online registration scheme
- Put together draft budget to include a tiered pricing system for virtual offering.

12 months prior – Call for papers promoted.

Circulate third circular (including costings, conference arrangements; provisional outline programme; plenary/poster/dinner etc. essentially a reminder/final circular, electronic).

8 months prior – Outline of sponsorship required.

The convenors will agree sponsorship commitments with sponsors. Convenors are encouraged to leverage their professional network in seeking sponsorship. Conference Office will issue invoices to the sponsors for payment.

Review of abstracts by convenors in order to get together programme started. Speakers contacted to confirm their participation.

6 months prior – Deadline for submission of papers/abstracts.

Provisional programme/details of keynotes, other speakers and sponsors to conference office for interim promotion. If a provisional programme is not submitted, then the Geological Society has the right to decide whether the meeting should be postponed or cancelled.

4 months prior – Final programme sent to conference office to allow time for final round of promotion. Convenors to check status of sponsorship payments. All sponsorship must be paid prior to the conference. It is the responsibility of the lead convenor to ensure all sponsorship is paid, and chase any outstanding payments.

1 month prior - Final complete set of abstracts should be sent to the Conference Office to allow time for compilation of abstract booklet.

The Conference Office will format the booklet and expect prompt review by the convenors.

Post Meeting – Convenors to provide a short (2/3 paragraph) write up of the meeting to The GSL Conference Office or the Communications Officer of the Committee for inclusion on the website. The conference office contact will be able to assist with any financial or attendance figures that may be required

Photographs - of key events, keynote/plenary speakers, presentations, of delegates at poster sessions/coffee/banquet, anything else which was memorable and which will show the group/society in a good light.

Presentations - copies of the PowerPoint presentations made by keynote speakers and possibly others for publication on the conference website.

Podcasts - recordings (on a device to be provided by the Society) of some talks, for podcasting purposes (to tie in with PowerPoint presentations above).

Text - quotations from delegates (optional)

Feedback from delegates - on all or any aspect of the conference, good or bad. This will enable us to improve future conferences.