

CHAPTER VII

RULES AND GUIDELINES FOR IAU SCIENTIFIC MEETINGS

1. Introduction

The program of IAU scientific meetings is one of the most important means by which the IAU pursues its goal of promoting astronomy through international collaboration. A large fraction of the Union's budget is devoted to the support of the IAU scientific meetings. The Executive Committee (EC) places great emphasis on maintaining high scientific standards, coverage of a balanced spectrum of topics, and an appropriately international flavor for the programme of IAU Meetings. In that respect, the ICSU rules on non-discrimination in the access of qualified scientists from all parts of the world to any IAU meeting apply.

Because of limited available funds, the number of meetings per year that the IAU can sponsor financially is restricted to nine IAU Symposia (CHF 25,000 each); one Regional IAU Meeting (LARIM and APRIM; CHF 25,000 each) in the years between General Assemblies (GAs); and one to two Co-Sponsored Meetings (CHF 3,000 each). Accordingly, not all meeting proposals worthy of support can be awarded IAU sponsorship.

The IAU Colloquium Series has been terminated after IAU Colloquium No. 200 (October 2005), to the benefit of the IAU Symposium Series.

Contacts with meeting organizers during the preparation and conduct of IAU scientific meetings are maintained by the IAU Assistant General Secretary (AGS) and the President of the Coordinating Division (see below).

2. IAU Symposia

The IAU Symposium Series is the scientific flagship of the IAU. Symposia are organized on suitably broad, yet well-defined scientific themes of considerable general interest, and normally last 4 to 5 days. They are intended to significantly advance the field, by seeking answers to current key questions and/or clarify emerging concepts in invited reviews, contributed papers and poster papers. Therefore, their programs should consist of reviews and previews, and should provide ample time for discussion.

IAU Symposium proposals for a certain calendar year, backed by a coordinating IAU Division and supported by a reasonable number of supporting IAU Divisions, IAU Commissions, and IAU Working/Program Groups, are to be submitted to the IAU Proposal Web Server (see below), before December of the year two years before the intended Symposium.

The scientific merit of each IAU Symposium proposal will be evaluated by the twelve IAU Division Presidents (DPs), taking into consideration comments and advice received from the Organizing Committees of IAU Divisions, IAU Commissions and IAU Working/Program Groups. The DPs will provide their recommendations for selection to the IAU EC. The EC will decide on and announce the final selection of the nine IAU Symposia to be held in a certain year, in Spring of the year before.

IAU Symposium Proceedings are published in the IAU Proceedings' Series by the IAU Publisher, since 2004 Cambridge University Press (CUP). To date, CUP has published the Proceedings of IAU Colloquia Nos. 195 through 199, and of IAU Symposia Nos. 222 through 231.

In the year of a GA, six of the nine IAU Symposia of that year are scheduled as GA Symposia, within the scientific program of the GA and held at the GA venue. Each GA Symposium normally lasts 3.5 days. For GA Symposia, the GA Local Organizing Committee (LOC) handles the local organization. The General Secretary (GS), in consultation with the organizers of the individual GA Symposia, coordinates the financial support to be allocated to each of the GA Symposia.

In the year of a GA, the three IAU Symposia outside that GA should, as a rule, be scheduled no closer than three months before or after the dates of that GA.

URL of IAU Proposal Web Server: <<http://solarphys.uio.no/IAU/>> .

2.1. SELECTION CRITERIA FOR IAU SPONSORSHIP OF SYMPOSIA

The following guidelines for the selection of meetings for IAU sponsorship should be observed by prospective proposers:

(a) An IAU Symposium should have a well-defined and scientifically relevant theme, be scheduled at a propitious time for significant progress in the field, and be of interest to young researchers as well as senior experts.

(b) Where the IAU embraces all fields in astronomy, the proposed IAU Symposium program should maintain a broad and balanced scope and cover the main active fields at appropriate intervals. Accordingly, even scientifically strong proposals in the same or largely overlapping fields can only be approved at some intervals. While some themes have developed series of IAU Symposia with intervals of 3-5 years, approval is not automatically guaranteed, since each proposal will be judged on its own scientific merits.

(c) Scientific programmes of proposed IAU Symposia should be well balanced, to be demonstrated by the proposed draft program and the proposed draft list of key speakers.

(d) Given the international nature of the Union, IAU Symposia are by definition internationally oriented. This requires a well-balanced geographical and gender distribution of both the proposed Scientific Organizing Committee (SOC) and the proposed key speakers. Normally, substantially less than half of the SOC membership and of the key speakers should come from any single country. The SOC membership should reflect in a balanced way the current activity in the field.

(e) The statement that the ICSU rules on non-discrimination in the access to the meeting should be strictly observed, and MUST be explicitly confirmed before a proposal will receive final approval by the EC. A summary of the measures taken to ensure this should be given, and the signatures of both the SOC and LOC Chairpersons are required.

(f) Presentation of scientific results in IAU Symposia is by invitation of the SOC chair person. Suitably qualified scientists working in the field may seek invitations. It is the policy of the IAU to promote the full participation of astronomers worldwide in its Symposium program. It is essential that no restriction based on gender, race, color, nationality, religious or political affiliation be imposed on the full participation of all bona fide scientists in any aspect of the organization and conduct of IAU Symposia, either by its organizers, or by the authorities of the host country. Approval of a proposal for an IAU meeting requires explicit guarantees that this principle will be respected.

(g) In association with some IAU meetings, educational activities may be organized, like International Schools for Young Astronomers (ISYAs) and Teachers' Workshops. By taking advantage of the presence of many expert national and foreign scientists, one- or two-day events may be organized for the benefit of university and high-school astronomy

educators in or near the country hosting the meeting. Such initiatives have generally been well received and successful. While the scientific quality of the proposed Symposium will remain the primary selection criterion for IAU sponsorship, a good parallel educational program will certainly add to the overall merit of a proposal.

(*h*) The scientific merit of each IAU Symposium proposal will be evaluated by the IAU Division Presidents (DPs), taking into consideration comments and advice received from the Organizing Committees of IAU Divisions, IAU Commissions and IAU Working/Program Groups.

In Spring of the year before that of the intended Symposium, the IAU EC, taking into account the recommendations from the DPs, decides on the final selection of the nine Symposia. The decision of the EC on each Symposium, including any conditions to be fulfilled before final approval, are communicated to the proposers by the AGS. A letter of award will be issued to them, accompanied by an official form listing the essential facts of the meeting as approved by the EC. Any revision of the details recorded on this form will require approval by the AGS.

2.2. PROCEDURES FOR PROPOSAL PREPARATION FOR IAU SYMPOSIA

2.2.1. GENERALITIES

Normally, the initiative to propose a scientific meeting for IAU sponsorship originates from a group of scientists in a certain field. In collaboration with colleagues worldwide, they should prepare a draft scientific program and nominations for the members of a SOC, who will be responsible for the scientific aspects of the meeting from its inception to its conclusion. Responsibility for the preparation and timely submission of the final proposal rests with the chair person of the proposed SOC.

Prospective meeting organizers should contact the AGS well in advance of their intended proposal submission by sending a Letter of Intent (LoI, see below).

Application procedures have been designed so as to ensure that the information necessary for the evaluation of the proposals by the IAU Division Presidents and the IAU EC is complete and in an uniform format, that allows direct comparison between proposals as far as possible. Therefore, proposals, with all entries properly answered, have to be submitted electronically to the IAU Proposal Web Server (see above).

2.2.2. LETTER OF INTENT

Before submitting a proposal for an IAU Symposium, proposers must send at their earliest convenience a Letter of Intent (LoI) to the AGS, with a copy to the President of the desired Coordinating IAU Division covering the scientific field of the meeting, stating:

- (*a*) the title of the intended IAU Symposium;
- (*b*) the full name(s) of the proposed SOC chair person(s);
- (*c*) the desired Coordinating IAU Division for the intended IAU Symposium;
- (*d*) the venue and the preferred dates; and
- (*e*) a short list of topics (up to 10).

A list of received Letters of Intent will be posted and updated on the IAU web site, informing prospective proposers of other existing plans for IAU Symposium proposals. This, in order to avoid unnecessary competition between proposals, and to stimulate possibly collaboration between otherwise competing groups.

2.2.3. TOPIC AND TITLE

The title of a Symposium should state the topic of the meeting as concisely and succinctly as possible. Long and detailed titles do not catch the eye, and are cumbersome for the announcement of a Symposium as well as on the cover of its subsequent Proceedings.

Therefore, as a rule, Symposium titles should be no longer than 10 words (or 70 characters including spaces) in total.

Any change of title after an IAU Symposium has been accepted requires the prior approval of the AGS.

2.2.4. COORDINATING IAU DIVISION; SUPPORTING IAU DIVISIONS, IAU COMMISSIONS, IAU WORKING/PROGRAM GROUPS

An IAU Symposium can be proposed by individual astronomers (preferably members of the IAU), by an IAU Working/Program Group, or by an IAU Commission.

An IAU Division should accept the coordinating responsibilities for an IAU Symposium proposal as Coordinating Division.

When other Divisions, Commissions, and or Working/Program Groups, are listed as supporting a proposal, a report of the communication between the proposers and the above should be submitted together with that proposal.

Proposals must be electronically submitted to the IAU Proposal Web Server (see above) before the posted deadline. Normally, this deadline will be in December, two years before the year of the proposed Symposium.

2.2.5. SCIENTIFIC ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

The composition of the proposed SOC is a key element in assessing the scientific value of a proposal. The SOC of a Symposium has the overall responsibility for its scientific standards and should make sure to cover the principal topics of the field to be covered.

The SOC should normally not be larger than sixteen persons and should represent an optimum scientific, geographic and gender distribution. Therefore, the composition of the SOC should reflect in a positive way the intent of the ICSU Statement on Freedom in the Conduct of Science. Normally, any one institution should not be represented on the SOC by more than one person. It is customary, but not required, that SOC members are members of the IAU.

The SOC chair person(s) and its members are appointed by the IAU EC, as part of the approval process.

The SOC exercises responsibility in five main aspects:

– before the Symposium:

(a) The definition of the scientific program of the Symposium, including the choice and distribution of topics for individual sessions, and the selection of invited reviews, invited papers, contributed papers, and poster papers;

(b) The choice of key speakers for invited reviews;

(c) Provide in the proposal a list of about 10 preliminary scientific programme topics (for announcement in the IAU Information Bulletin);

(d) Provide a list of individuals qualifying for IAU Travel Grants, with amounts recommended (for criteria, see below). That list has to be submitted for approval to the AGS at least FIVE months before the start of the Symposium;

– after the Symposium:

(e) Within one month after a Symposium, the SOC chair person will send to the AGS the Post Meeting Report of the Symposium, including

(e.1) a copy of the final scientific program;

(e.2) a list of participants;

(e.3) a list of recipients of IAU grants, stating amount and country;

(e.4) receipts signed by the recipients of IAU Grants (this does not apply to GA Symposia);

(e.5) a report to the IAU EC on the scientific highlights of the meeting (1-2 pages).

The Post Meeting Report Form is available at:

<<http://www.iau.org/fileadmin/content/pdfs/PostMeet.pdf>>.

A compilation of the 2005 IAU Post Meeting Reports is available at:

<http://www.iau.org/fileadmin/content/pdfs/Post_MR05.pdf>.

Any change of SOC membership after a Symposium has been accepted requires the prior approval of the IAU AGS.

2.2.6. LOCAL ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

The LOC, to be identified in the proposal, is responsible for all aspect of the local arrangements associated with the Symposium. Those tasks include booking and preparation of meeting rooms, provisions for modern audio-visual facilities, for coffee and tea breaks, arranging for necessary transportation for meeting participants, ensuring that accommodation within reasonable price levels is available, and providing assistance to meeting participants with their booking. In addition, the LOC should prepare and schedule social events.

2.2.7. EDITORS OF PROCEEDINGS

It speaks for itself that the success of a Symposium and its Proceedings depends in the first place on arranging for the best possible scientific programme and on selecting the best possible speakers.

It is of paramount importance that the Proceedings of an IAU Symposium will be published timely, as a valuable record of the event for future reference. Arrangements for Authors and Editors for the publication of Proceedings of IAU Symposia are summarized in the <README.txt> files of the ftp site

<<ftp://ftp.sron.nl/pub/karelh/UPLOADS/IAU-CUP.dir/Symposium.dir/>>.

Full names of the proposed Editors must be given in the proposal. One of the proposed Editors should be marked as Chief Editor, with prime responsibility for the contacts with the IAU AGS and with the IAU Publisher, Cambridge University Press.

In the contract between the IAU and CUP, it is stipulated that the Proceedings of an IAU Symposium will be published within six months after that Symposium. Since CUP needs three months for its processing and publishing of a complete Proceedings' manuscript, Editors have the first three months after their Symposium to complete their editing task. This requires that all Authors have to deliver their completed manuscripts to the Chief Editor before or during the Symposium. Authors are allowed to submit a revised version of their manuscript to the Chief Editor within four weeks after the Symposium.

Thus, Editors are committed to submit the final complete manuscript of the Proceedings of their IAU Symposium to CUP within three months after their IAU Symposium. Editors should realize that editing an IAU Symposium Proceedings volume can be a full time job for three months.

Any change of Editors, after a Symposium has been accepted, requires the prior approval of the IAU AGS.

2.2.7.1. IAU EDITORIAL BOARD

In order to ensure the quality of the IAU Symposium Proceedings Series, to strengthen the working relation between the IAU Proceedings Editors and the IAU AGS, and to provide a platform for communication, the EC has established the IAU Editorial Board (EB) for the Series.

The EB serves as a communication and support platform for all Editors of IAU Symposium Proceedings, where they can exchange experience and ask for advice, whenever necessary, in their efforts to ensure that all papers published in their Proceedings are

of the highest quality and that their Proceedings are published on time, i.e., within six months after their Symposium.

Members of the IAU EB for a certain year are: (a) all Chief-Editors of the Proceedings of IAU Symposia of that year (working members); (b) the IAU AGS (chair); and (c) the IAU GS plus three or four members appointed by the EC for a period of at least three years (advisory members).

The constitution of the EB of a certain year will be listed in all nine IAU Symposium Proceedings of that year. EB members of a certain year will receive copies of all nine IAU Symposium Proceedings of that year.

2.2.8. REGISTRATION FEE

2.2.8.1. REGISTRATION FEE FOR IAU SYMPOSIA OUTSIDE GAs

Keen efforts should be made to keep the Symposium registration fee low, to make the Symposium affordable to all. Such efforts should include the use of low-cost meeting facilities and finding local sponsorship. The acceptable level of a registration fee will depend on local circumstances, and proposers should carefully specify what services the registration fee will cover. Including the price of the Proceedings (2006 participant's price: US\$ 75.-), a registration fee of US\$ 250.- (~ CHF 320.-) is the current upper limit for IAU Symposia. The EC may reject or withhold approval of otherwise valid proposals if the proposed registration fee is exorbitant.

2.2.8.2. REGISTRATION FEE FOR IAU SYMPOSIA INSIDE GAs

For IAU Symposia held as part of GAs, participants are required to pay the full registration fee for the GA.

2.2.9. VENUE AND ACCOMMODATION

The proposed venue should be reasonably accessible and affordable. The venue should have modern audio-visual facilities, and allow that all poster presentations will be on display during the whole duration of the Symposium, preferably in the tea/coffee break areas.

In order to enable interested and qualified colleagues from all countries around the world to attend a Symposium, affordable accommodation should be available. It is recognized that some hotels offer conference room, board and lodging all in one location, which is most favorable to the all scientific interactions of a Symposium. In case such resorts are expensive, efforts should be made to secure additional financial sponsoring, in order to keep costs down.

2.2.10. SUBMITTING THE PROPOSAL

Once the above requirements are observed, completed proposals for IAU Symposia should be submitted electronically to the IAU Proposal Web Server (see above), before the posted deadline.

3. Travel Grants for IAU Symposia

3.1. TRAVEL GRANTS FOR IAU SYMPOSIA OUTSIDE GAs

IAU Travel Grants are intended to cover in part expenses associated with attendance at the Symposium.

Participants of IAU Symposia may apply for an IAU Travel Grant, using the form available at <<http://www.iau.org/fileadmin/content/pdfs/GrantOutGa.pdf>>.

Proposals for the distribution of IAU Grants to individual participants are provided by the SOC and sent by the SOC chair person to the AGS for approval. IAU priority is

to support qualified scientists to whom only limited means of support are available, e.g., colleagues from economically less privileged countries and young scientists. IAU support should carry significant weight in ensuring the participation of the selected beneficiaries, rather than adding comfort for colleagues whose attendance is already assured. In addition, a reasonable gender and geographical distribution is expected; normally, no more than 1/3 of the funds should be allocated to a single country or region.

Within these general guidelines, it is left to the judgment of the SOC how to formulate their proposal for IAU Travel Grant distribution, maintaining the overall scientific standard of the conference as the primary criterion. The recommendation for the distribution of the IAU Travel Grants shall be sent by the SOC Chair to the AGS, specifying for each person: name, nationality, full mailing and e-mail address, amount of proposed grant (in Swiss Francs: CHF), and title and nature of contribution (invited review, invited paper, contributed paper, poster paper). The recommendation of the SOC should reach the AGS no later than FIVE months before the Symposium. This deadline has been found necessary in order to ensure timely notification to beneficiaries and completion of visa formalities. After approval by the AGS of the IAU Travel Grant distribution proposal of the SOC, individual IAU Grant notification letters will be mailed to the recipients by the AGS, with a copy to the SOC Chair and LOC Chair.

The regular administrative procedure is that the LOC opens a bank account in the name of the meeting (or uses a bank account of its institute or university) to which the IAU Secretariat will transfer the allocated IAU Travel Grant. Individual IAU Travel Grants are paid to recipients upon arrival and registration at the Symposium.

3.2. TRAVEL GRANTS FOR IAU SYMPOSIA INSIDE GAs

In case of IAU Symposia inside GAs, IAU Travel Grants are intended to cover in part expenses associated attending the entire GA. For all IAU meetings inside the GAs, electronic applications for Grants are collected by the IAU Secretariat. The Application Form for an IAU Grant for attending a GA is available at http://www.iau.org/IAU_Grant_Application_Form_wit.102.0.html.

Full completion of the form is mandatory, including submission of an Abstract if relevant. The deadline for receiving these applications will be such, that enough time is left to the IAU Secretariat to prepare relevant summaries of applications, to be sent to the SOCs of the different scientific meetings for ranking, before a final selection is made in consultation with the IAU GS and IAU AGS.

IAU Travel Grants for GAs will be allocated by the IAU Secretariat, upon recommendation of the organizers of the events. These grants are paid to recipients upon arrival and registration at the conference.

4. Regional IAU Meetings (RIMs)

The IAU sponsors two series of Regional IAU Meetings (RIMs): a series of triennial meetings in the Latin-American region (LARIM, since 1978), and a series of triennial meetings in the Asian-Pacific region (APRIM, since 1978). A past series of twelve European Regional IAU Meetings (1974-1990) has effectively been succeeded by the series of Joint European and National Astronomy Meetings (JENAM), under the auspices of the European Astronomical Society.

APRIMs and LARIMs are held at the invitation of a national astronomical society in, respectively, the Asian-Pacific region and the Latin-American region in years between GAs. Their purpose, in addition to the discussion of specific scientific topics, is to promote contacts between scientists in the regions concerned, especially young astronomers.

Therefore, both a much wider range of scientific topics, a larger SOC, and a larger total attendance are expected than for IAU Symposia. The Proceedings of RIMs are usually published by a regional publisher or in a regional astronomical publication series.

5. Web site for IAU meetings

As soon as a successful applicant has been informed by the AGS of the approval of her/his proposed IAU meeting, the SOC and LOC are kindly requested to create a web site for that IAU meeting, containing, *inter alia*, those parts of the above information which are essential for the participants of that IAU meeting. The URL of the web site should be communicated to the IAU AGS as soon as available.