

# **DIOXIN SYMPOSIUM MEETING PLANNING**

## **History & General Information**

A listing of future and past Dioxin Symposia can be found on the Symposium page.

The International Dioxin Symposium has been held annually since 1980, except in 1983 when there was no conference. With increasing numbers of participants, oral and poster presentations, exhibitors, and topics presented, the conferences have become a relatively large event and this requires more lead time for preparation by future organizers. Therefore, the International Advisory Board (IAB) decided that the location of a future symposium (including the symposium chair, the host country and organization) will be selected at least four years in advance of the date of the meeting. Decisions on future symposia are based on a review of the applications received and take place at IAB meetings that occur during the annual Dioxin Symposium. A major criterion for a future Dioxin Symposium organizer is the person's/group's international scientific standing and networking. The applicant must be a scientist and not a professional conference organizer or tourism association.

The International Dioxin Symposia are independent conferences that have no permanent affiliation with an individual institution or scientific society and thus they do not have an established financial support mechanism in place. The symposia series was initiated by Dr. Otto Hutzinger in 1980 and for more than three decades, the conferences have been coordinated by the IAB. The members of the IAB are organizers of past symposia and/or experts in persistent organic pollutants and related scientific disciplines. Presently, the two IAB secretariats are: Dr. Heidelore Fiedler and Dr. Michael S. Denison (contact information below). The IAB assists the chair of an annual Dioxin Symposium in administrative, programmatic, technical, and scientific issues.

## **Symposium Organization**

Details of the organizational format for plenary lectures, scientific sessions and presentations, coffee and lunch breaks, receptions, tours and other events at previous symposia.

From a meeting logistics perspective, on-site registration begins on Sunday afternoon and should continue throughout the meeting, as there are always individuals who register on-site for single or multiple days. An informal "get together" reception for all participants is also held on Sunday evening. Monday morning is the first official day of the Dioxin

Symposium and it starts with welcome ceremonies, including presentations by the organizers and invited participants (commonly local and national governmental officials and other dignitaries). The welcome presentations are typically followed by a performance or entertainment by local artisans (music, dance, art, etc.) after which the conference organizer officially begins the scientific sessions with a plenary lecture from a keynote speaker (a room for 600 or more people is required). After a coffee break that follows the keynote presentation, participants split into topical platform sessions (there are typically 3-6 concurrent sessions that will require lecture rooms that accommodate 80-300 people, depending on the expected attendance for a specific topic). There is a break for lunch, followed by continuation of afternoon sessions, interrupted by a coffee break. Each day there should be a time slot for viewing of the posters by all participants and the venue should have sufficient space to accommodate ~300 or more posters (at least 150-200 per day). It is preferred that all posters will be on display during the entire meeting (at least until Thursday evening). However, if space is limited, it is suggested that posters be displayed for at least two full days with an exchange of posters on Wednesday. An official welcome reception should be scheduled for Monday evening.

The organization and scientific sessions for Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday will follow the same general format as Monday, with the morning session starting with a plenary presentation from an invited keynote speaker. Typically, no scientific sessions are scheduled for Wednesday afternoon and organizers often have made arrangements for local sightseeing tours for all participants (the cost of which may or may not be included in the registration fees) or have left the afternoon open with no organized tours planned for participants. However, the organizer may also include special sessions for Wednesday afternoon if they desire. A meeting banquet is typically planned on Thursday evening.

Friday is the final day of the meeting and it usually lasts only a half day. There is some flexibility in the events that can be held on Friday and scheduled events have included: a plenary lecture by a keynote speaker, panel discussions on an important topic area by experts present at the meeting, scientific overview presentations of new research presented at the symposium and other events. These scientific sessions are followed by presentations of the Hutzinger Student Awards by IAB members, the official closing of the meeting, followed by a presentation that welcomes participants to next year's Dioxin Symposium by the organizer of that meeting.

While meeting attendance peaked at ~1200 participants, attendance has been between 500 and 800 people since 2010. Thus, it seems reasonable to assume that a future organizer may count on a similar number of participants when considering an appropriate venue for the Symposium.

## **Financial Aspects**

Information regarding financial support sources for the Symposium and a description of typical expenditures.

Financial support for the Symposium is primarily from participant registration fees, corporate sponsors and exhibitors. Significant income is also commonly obtained from governmental (primarily the host country) institutions or grants. Major expenses for meeting organizers include: personnel to assist in the organization, registration, and execution of the Dioxin Symposium, rental of the venue and audiovisual equipment, preparation and distribution of electronically-based meeting materials, printing of the program, three or four lunches and coffee breaks as well as tours and transportation, and food and venue costs for social events (i.e., informal and official welcome receptions).

A table of registration and banquet costs for participants of recent conferences is shown below.

Typically, the conference package for full and student registration includes: access to all scientific sessions, exhibits, program, informal get-together on Sunday, official welcome reception on Monday, coffee breaks (typically eight total: two on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday, and one on Wednesday and Friday morning), three or four lunches (described in the paragraph below), and a sightseeing tour on Wednesday afternoon (if planned).

The conference package for accompanying persons typically includes access to the informal get-together on Sunday, the official welcome reception on Monday, lunches, a sightseeing tour on Wednesday (if planned) and past Symposia have often included an additional sightseeing tour or event for accompanying persons.

The costs for the Symposium banquet are not included in the registration fees and participants pay for this as a separate cost.

Lunches should be included for all participants on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday and possibly Wednesday depending on the program events. If Wednesday afternoon includes a sightseeing tour or an open afternoon

with no organized tours, then lunch may not be provided. However, if the organizers plan special sessions for Wednesday afternoon, they should provide sandwiches or boxed lunches for meeting attendees. Often exhibitors have special sessions on Wednesday afternoon and they have commonly provided lunches for participants of these sessions. It should be noted that this level of detail is not needed when submitting the first application proposal.

One additional consideration with regards to meeting costs occurs when Symposia are in the United States (or countries with similar provisions) and breakfast is not commonly included in the room rates at hotels and accommodations. In this instance, organizers should provide a continental breakfast at the venue for all participants prior to the keynote address each morning and this should be included as part of the registration fee. For European-type arrangements breakfast is typically included in the room rates at hotels.

## Sample Registration Fees

For general reference, approximate registration fees (\$USD) for participants at three recent symposia are presented. Early and late refers to registration fees paid before or after the early registration deadline at each meeting.

Registration Fees	Dioxin2016		Dioxin2017		Dioxin2018	
	early*	late*	early**	late**	early***	late***
Full	840	1,170	780	960	895	1,180
Student	340	475	400	480	450	590
Accompanying Person	280	390	280	360	330	415
Banquet Ticket	??	??	80	100	105	160

## Participation Fee Considerations

General information regarding previous symposia fee reduction and waivers and travel assistance.

While there is no fixed policy as to payment of registration fees, it is recommended to waive these fees for IAB members as they are expected to serve as session chairs and/or to carry out other substantial work, such

as participating on the student award committee and assisting the meeting organizers as needed. Session chairs that assist with the review and selection of papers for oral and poster presentations should receive a free ticket to the Symposium banquet. Also, invited keynote speakers for each of the morning sessions typically have their Symposium registration fee waived and may have their travel and hotel costs reduced or reimbursed. In addition, past meeting organizers have reduced the registration fees for student participants that have assisted in meeting oral and poster sessions. In order to facilitate the participation of scientists coming from developing countries for which meeting costs are prohibitively expensive, meeting organizers are encouraged to provide significantly reduced registration fees for such participants. In return, participants from developing countries must submit at least one short paper that is accepted as an oral or poster presentation. However, travel assistance is only paid for very few people. Travel assistance and reduction in registration and other fees are entirely at the discretion of the Symposium organizer. Using the above information, an organizer should be able to estimate income from registration fees for full participants and students (or others that will have a reduced registration fee).

## **Application Submission**

Process for submitting an application to host a future Dioxin Symposium.

If you are interested in hosting a future Dioxin Symposium, please send your meeting proposal application information (details of which are outlined below) to the IAB secretariats (Dr. Heidlore Fiedler and Dr. Michael Denison).

Applications must be submitted electronically no later than three weeks before the opening of the annual conference. The application should be as comprehensive and self-explanatory as possible since it will be reviewed by the IAB at the meeting without a formal presentation by the applicant.

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## Application Information

The following information is required for consideration of a symposium application.

Application for: [Year, Country, City]

### 1. Organizer and Venue

- Chair of the symposium [Name, Affiliation]
- Venue for the Symposium [City; indicate if in a university, conference center, hotel, or other]

### 2. Institutional support and infrastructure of the Symposium chair

- [Please provide detailed information]

### 3. Indicate individuals (proposed are agreed) on boards/committees

- Local organizing committee [those responsible for technical arrangements and coordinating the scientific program]
- National Committee Members [names, expertise and affiliation]; Note: although the Symposium may have an emphasis on certain areas, all of the traditional scientific areas should be covered]

### 4. Potential local/national sponsors

- In-kind [from your own institution but also from research networks, etc.]
- Cash [from your own institution. but also national governmental support, research networks, etc.]

[You will receive a list with our long-term sponsors and exhibitors]

### 5. Date, location and venue

- Information on infrastructure at the venue [e.g., capacity, meeting rooms, restaurant facilities]
- Accessibility and capacities [Accessibility from abroad – flight, train connections, overview on hotels (their capacities and prices for participants to stay). Please also look into inexpensive hotel options for students, etc.]
- Timing [Please look into potential conflicts with other relevant meetings]

### 6. Financial arrangements

- Estimated income and expenses [projected numbers based on costs of the proposed conference and financing arrangements [e.g., if your institution can pre-pay some of the early expenses]

### 7. Main/Special topics and unique aspects to the meeting

[Special topics of interest to your own activities, national research interest, geographical topics, etc.]

### 8. Additional information

[Whatever information the IAB should know that was not covered in the above categories]