

G-I-N Conferences organisation: Bidding process

Background

The Guidelines International Network (G-I-N) conferences provide a forum for discussion and dissemination of specialised scientific information about guidelines amongst Network members and other interested participants. G-I-N conferences take place every year.

Each G-I-N Conference supports and enhances the mission of the G-I-N Network.

After extensive deliberations the G-I-N Board has decided to investigate possibilities to better control, manage, and brand the G-I-N conferences thus enabling better recognition, follow up and, if possible, increase of income for the Network, consequently, allowing G-I-N to provide increased support to the various activities of the Network.

Preliminary information and formal requirements

1. The organisation process of the conferences is based on the following:

- Increasing the control of G-I-N with regard to its conferences
- Reducing the burden on local hosts but keeping an active link with them, in particular to:
 - o Ensure that the content of the conference is also relevant in the local context and that there is local buy-in
 - o Provide targeted marketing and sponsor/exhibitor search locally
 - o Support selecting relevant venues and hotels
- Facilitating interactions with participants and potential long term sponsors and exhibitors

2. Aims and goals of the conference:

- Address priority topics of high interest/relevance to guideline developers/users/implementers
- Identify emerging or underrepresented topics of broad scientific significance
- Provide networking opportunities
- Promote international collaboration in guideline activities and improve coordination with other health care quality initiatives.
- Promote the scientific development, adaptation, dissemination, implementation and evaluation of guidelines in healthcare and health promotion
- Improve and harmonise guideline methodologies
- Facilitate the implementation of research findings into practice
- Promote international project groups Promote the Network internationally and locally (nationally /regionally) and encourage the recruitment of organisations/individuals, including, those in disciplines not already involved in G-I-N to G-I-N membership

3. Formal requirements

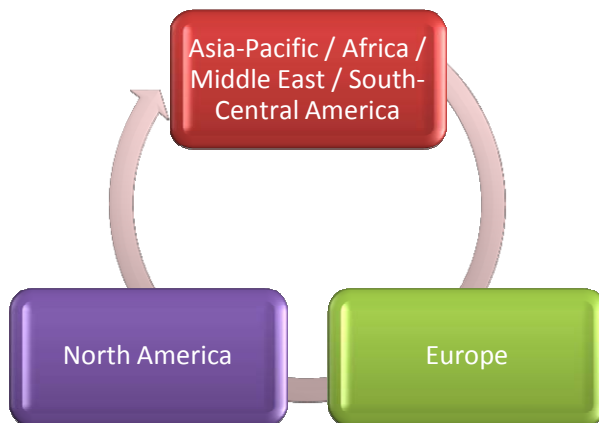
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Validated by:	G-I-N Board of Trustees

3.1. Location of the conference:

The Board has decided that a 3-year geographical rotation of the conferences would enable:

- ensuring equity between the regions
- ensuring communication on the Network and its activities throughout the world and recruiting new members to the Network while remaining attractive to current members,
- keeping the interest of participants and providing them with adequate opportunities of participation

The rotation model is as follows:



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3.2. Timing and duration of the conference

According to results from the 2009 G-I-N members' survey the best seasons to schedule the G-I-N conferences are:

- Spring¹ (about 30% of survey respondents find this season excellent to hold a G-I-N conference and an additional 40% finds this season good to hold the G-I-N conference)
- Autumn² (about 35% of survey respondents find this season excellent to hold a G-I-N conference and an additional 30% finds this season good to hold the G-I-N conference)

As much as possible the G-I-N conferences should be scheduled in Autumn every year. This choice should facilitate organisation and reduce confusion of the participants. It will also better coincide with the legal and financial calendar of the Network.

When scheduling the conference, G-I-N will ensure that the dates chosen do not fall within those selected for the HTAi conference (regularly in May-June) nor the Cochrane Colloquium as well as the ISQua conference (both regularly in October),...

¹ Throughout the document, the term "Spring" is to be considered according to the northern hemisphere i.e. April - June.

² Throughout the document, the term "Autumn" is to be considered according to the northern hemisphere i.e. September-November.

G-I-N conferences should last 2.5 days minimum. Their organisation should also enable the provision of pre and/or post-conference courses as well as the scheduling of G-I-N groups and committee meeting and the G-I-N Annual General Meeting.

3.3. Other requirements:

- English is the official language of the conference
- The conference organisation should allow for the participation of at least 450-500 participants
- Meetings rooms for G-I-N business such as the AGM (1 ½ hour - held before or during the conference), Board meetings (at least 1 day prior the conference and ½ day after the conference) and G-I-N committees and group meetings should be provided (often during lunch breaks).
- Scheduling and holding of pre and/or post-conference courses by G-I-N should be facilitated by all parties
- A conference dinner and welcome reception as well as a G-I-N Board and plenary speakers dinner should be planned during the conference
- G-I-N Board members and staff, plenary speakers and the Chair of the Scientific Committee as well as some members of the host organisation(s) should be provided with free registration.
- Accommodation for G-I-N Board members and staff, plenary speakers and the Chair of the Scientific Committee should be included in the conference budget
- The fee schedule should offer the following different levels of fees:

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- Early and late registration
- Members (including conference dinner)
- Reduced fees for student, consumers and participants from lower income countries
- Non-members
- Optional conference dinner

Bidding and selection process

The selection process for the host of the G-I-N conferences is performed via a bidding process that allows the obtaining of expressions of interest and of further detailed information to be sent using the template designed by G-I-N.

The expression of interest needs to be provided using the template designed by G-I-N.

In the case where no organisation in the geographical region in rotation expressed an interest to host the conference, G-I-N may directly approach organisations in the region.

Note: To reduce the potential for conflict of interest Board members involved in an expression of interest will not be permitted to participate in the selection process.

1. Obtaining/providing expression of interest

A call for expression of interest to host the conference is sent by the G-I-N Board to all organisational members – targeting the relevant region of the globe according to the 3-years rotation model mentioned above.

Whenever feasible this call:

- is sent at least 20 months before the planned date of the conference, i.e. January N-1 at the latest if the conference is to be scheduled in Autumn
- has a deadline of at least 18 months before the planned date of the conference, i.e. March N-1 at the latest if the conference is to be scheduled in Autumn

When communicating on their expression of interest the organisations have to provide a pre-determined set of information including:

- Name of the main organisation responsible
- Name of potential co-hosting organisations
- Foreseen country and city
- Foreseen support from other organisations (no amount required but the name of the organisation along with, if possible a letter of support)
- Transportation (ease of access)
- Suggested dates
- Reasons for submission of the letter of intent
- Suggested theme
- Suggested venue
- Information of costs of venue and hotels
- Suggested pre/post-conference course of “local” interest

A more detailed set of information is provided in the template to be completed.

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The G-I-N Board has 3 months to review the proposals and select the host. The Board may request additional information from bidders before making a final decision. All organisations having submitted a bid will be informed of the decision.

2. Main criteria for selection of the host

- Interest and engagement of the submitter and other organisations in the country/region
- Attraction of the proposed country/city to foreseen participants including ease of access
- Finances: level of anticipated costs (venue, hotel rooms...) and anticipated possible sponsorship to enable keeping registration fees at a low level
- Anticipated benefits for the Network

Division of responsibilities for the organisation of the conferences

To decrease the burden on the host organisation(s) and to increase control over the conference by G-I-N while not increasing the burden of the organisation and management of the conference on the G-I-N staff, the logistics is provided by a professional conference organiser (PCO) that enters into a contract with G-I-N.

The PCO will provide at least the following services:

- Search of venues (conference, conference dinner, welcome reception) and hotels (in partnership with the local host which may be aware of venues that could be obtained at a lower rate or for free)
- Contracting with venue and hotels
- Online participant registration enabling the possibility to register for more than one event (e.g. main conference + conference dinner + pre-conference courses), to send email to the participants...
- Fundraising: sponsor and exhibitor management
- Development of a conference website and marketing strategy including flyers...
- Site visits
- Budget management
- Multi-national conference management experience

Depending on system possibilities and costs, abstract management will be under the responsibility of the PCO or of G-I-N via the use of a specialised vendor. The chosen system will need to offer: online abstract submission enabling management of at least 3 different types of abstracts, online review by the scientific committee, programme management, emailing to the submitters...

The host organisation is mainly involved with the scientific content of the conference thus ensuring relevance to the local context and local buy-in, and the communication/marketing on the conference especially at the local level (also including providing support in obtaining “local” sponsors and exhibitors). It is also the main advisor for G-I-N in term of decision on the venues and social programme and may suggest the use of specific venues that could be obtained at a lower rate or for free.

Agreement between G-I-N and the local host(s)

Beside the membership fees, the conferences are one of the only sources of income for G-I-N. Therefore, and to enable sustainability of the Network as well as the development of additional activities providing added value to the members, it is essential that G-I-N retains as much benefit as possible from its conferences.

As the burden of the organisation of the conference has been removed from the local host(s),

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there should be no profit-sharing arrangement between G-I-N and the local hosts.

In compensation for their support and work the local host(s) may be provided with a number of free and/or reduced conference registrations (the quantity and other potential options for compensations will be directly negotiated with the host(s)).

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