

Introduction to IPEM events and conferences

A new handbook
for Scientific
Programme
Leads



Why run an event?

IPEM objectives are:

1. Setting and influencing standards and best practice
2. Supporting and influencing research and innovation
3. Influencing and engaging with national and international bodies
4. Influencing and delivering education, training and CPD
5. Strengthening public engagement and influencing decision makers.

IPEM's conferences and events strategy sets out how our rolling programme of events contributes to these objectives. Events provide a forum where scientists, engineers, technologists and other professionals can share with each other the outcomes of research and development work they have undertaken, discuss state-of-the-art developments in a particular field, or receive update training to develop their professional practice.

Any member of IPEM can suggest a topic for an event which is put forward via an event proposal form which is then assessed by the Conferences Department.

How does IPEM event organisation work?

The IPEM National Office based in York has a full time conference and events department who are responsible for the organisation of all IPEM events. IPEM currently runs a programme of around 30 one or two day conferences and events a year as well as the three day Medical Physics and Engineering Conference.

The **dates** and **venues** for the forthcoming year's events are set by the National Office approximately 18 months in advance although if there are specific reasons for an event being held in a certain month or location then please do mention this when applying.

The conference department organise all aspects of the logistics of an event including venue liaison, budgets, invoicing, delegate registrations online and via phone, collation and printing of abstract books, as well as be on-site during the day. The office staff also co-ordinate the central events calendar to ensure that IPEM events do not clash and that sufficient time for planning and registration is allowed.

We work closely with the proposer of the event who becomes the **Scientific Programme Lead (SPL)**. The **SPL** takes responsibility for the programme and duties can vary depending on the type of event ([see here](#))

The role can include:

- suggesting and informally approaching invited speakers,
- refereeing any proffered papers
- putting together the final programme
- finding sponsorship
- liaising with other groups on content

How do I start?

The first thing to do is fill in the form that can be found here. This then needs to be returned to the conference team who will evaluate it and reply within 2 – 3 weeks. Once the form has been assessed you will be sent through confirmation of the type of event and details of deadlines and responsibilities.

Guidance on completing the form

The following information will help you complete the form correctly. If you have any questions or queries please don't hesitate to contact the conferences team (Email or 01904 550598)

Working title

Let us know what the title of the event will be. This may change depending on the final decisions regarding type of event.

Type of event and content

There are different types of meeting that IPEM run. Presentation based events would usually take the form of a speaker with a powerpoint presentation or equivalent and is the most popular type of event run.

Practical based events are for topics that work best as a teaching event, typically they will require specific equipment or setting such as a laboratory or specialist IT. On-line webinars are where there would usually be one person offering a short seminar online whilst allowing questions and interaction. For further details on the different types of events [click here](#).

Suggested date / region

It is the responsibility of the National Office to find and book a suitable venue after taking into account a number of considerations including ensuring a good balance across the country, where previous events have taken place and where the main spread of interest amongst delegates may be.

If however there are specific reasons why an event should take place in a certain venue, for example a workshop needs equipment found within a department, then please indicate here.

Equally the National Office will make the final decision on dates that the events will run however if there are specific times to avoid for example there are similar meetings running at the same time.

Content of event

The type of content included in an event can vary depending on the focus of the event. It may be that the event is focusing on one specific topic and will be the presentation of research around this topic.

Alternatively the event may be focusing on new policy, or be a platform for debate around a topic. Use this section to indicate what the majority of content will be. Tick all that are relevant.

Speakers

The majority of meetings will be a mix of mainly proffered papers with a couple of invited speakers usually from within the UK. Proffered paper meetings are a useful opportunity for people to present work and

stimulate debate. However there may be cases where an event would benefit from having more invited speakers, or from inviting overseas speakers, therefore this should be indicated here.

Length of event

The majority of scientific focused meetings will be one day events. If there is going to be a wider focus it may be that there needs to be additional days and / or additional strands.

Sponsorship

For scientific meetings the registration fees are set in order to ensure the whole programme breaks even. Frequently events benefit from having exhibitors attend. It is important that IPEM is not seen to be endorsing any commercial companies, or to be seen as having commercial talks at events. Therefore all contact and liaison with exhibitors is done via the National Office.

The exception to this is for larger conferences where it is assumed they will be able to generate income for IPEM and therefore fees may need to be increased, and/or additional sponsorship acquired. Sponsorship is separate from an exhibition.

If this is the case then the SPL is best placed to identify and informally discuss options with potential sponsors. If you are suggesting a large conference then please indicate the potential sponsors on the form and whether they have been contacted. If you would like advice on gaining sponsorship then please ring the National Office and speak to a member of the conferences team.

Partnerships

Sometimes the success of an event can be enhanced by working in partnership with other organisations. For advice on the different ways of partnership working please contact the office.

Target Audience

Please indicate who your target audience is as this will help us focus the advertising in the correct way. Please list all disciplines you think may be interested in attending this event.

Expected size of audience

Please give an estimate of the size of audience you think the event may attract. If you are unsure the office will be able to give an idea of numbers based on similar events.

Short summary of event

This summary is used to advertise the event on the website and in all communications. Therefore it is important to include any key words or phrases that may help with the advertising.

Educational aims and learning outcomes

These will be displayed on the website and will allow potential attendees to see how the event will align with their CPD needs. It is important that these are completed as it will also help us to see how the event proposed fits within the overall IPEM Strategy.

Potential competition to event

Please indicate here if you know of any similar events being run that may need to be either avoided, or linked up with.

Speaker details

If at this stage you have suggestions for Invited Speakers please indicate them here.

Once you have completed the form please email it to the Conferences team.

What next?

Once the form has been received it will be assessed by a member of the Conferences Team. They will then decide where best the proposal fits across the whole of the events programme. Once this has been done you will receive a formal indication of the type of event that is being run, this usually takes around 2 – 3 weeks of the proposal form being received.

A budget will then be drawn up and fees set by the office. You will then be sent a checklist of responsibilities and a timeline including deadlines.

Frequently asked questions

How much time will I need?

The National Office aims to produce a rolling programme of events that are planned 18 months in advance. Additional events can be included with shorter timescales but at a minimum there would need to be around 5 months lead time from acceptance of the proposal.

In terms of input from a SPL this would depend on the type of event being run. For a one day Scientific Meeting the main time needed is for identifying the Invited Speakers, refereeing the abstracts and drafting a programme. For a larger conference there would be an additional time need for gaining sponsorship and liaising with more speakers. All practical aspects of an event are covered by the National Office.

What's the budget?

Financial aspects of all types of event are managed by the IPEM National Office, based on agreed budgets. The Scientific meetings programme is run as an overall programme whereby some events would subsidise others and charge a set delegate fee. Larger conferences would have an individual budget drawn up to ensure that either via increased fees, or sponsorship they are able to run successfully. The expenses policy for speakers is [set out here](#).

What's the difference between an Invited Speaker and a proffered speaker?

Invited speakers

Invited Speakers are people who are specifically asked to present on a particular topic and in exchange they get their registration fee and all expenses covered by IPEM. They are often desirable (but not essential) at an event. You are asked to identify suitable speakers if appropriate, however it is important that they always bring something to the event that would not otherwise be there.

It is important that the number of invited speakers agreed at the outset is adhered to. All invited speaker details should be passed to the National Office who will then send out formal letters of invitation. It is essential to make clear the differentiation between invited speakers and proffered speakers (see below)

Proffered speakers.

Proffered speakers are those who submit an abstract for refereeing and then if accepted they will have to register and pay to attend the event.

Full details of how authors can submit an abstract are available on the [IPEM website](#). The deadline for accepting abstracts will usually be around 3 months before a event. Immediately after the deadline the office will forward all abstracts to you for refereeing. Once these have been refereed the final programme needs to be sent to the office. An example programme is [available here](#).

Whilst it is quite usual for you to ask people to proffer a paper, the distinction between being asked to proffer a paper and being asked to be an invited speaker must be kept clear. All proffered speakers have to register and pay. If asking people to proffer papers the Programme Lead must make it very clear that they are not an invited speaker and that they will be required to pay in order to present their talk.

How are IPEM events advertised?

All advertising is done by the National Office using the information given in the proposal form. The following is routinely completed:

- Year planner sent to every member in December the preceding year
- Website updated with all forthcoming events
- E-newsletter sent out monthly to members with details of event deadlines
- Fortnightly postings on the mailbase again detailing upcoming deadlines
- Links on other organisations websites where appropriate
- Direct emails to attendees of previous meetings
- Targeted emails to those who have indicated the topic as an interest under their IPEM profile where appropriate
- PDF flyer on the website for people to print out for their departments
- Twitter, and facebook

If as Programme Lead you have any other ideas for advertising, or wish to highlight specific elements of your programme please consult the National Office in the first instance to avoid any duplication.

Will the course be accredited?

All IPEM run scientific meetings automatically receive IPEM accreditation.

Occasionally it is beneficial to have external bodies accredit our events. This can only be requested once a full programme has been completed. The National Office will apply for the accreditation as there may be a charge. On average it takes around 4 – 6 weeks to gain accreditation, however if timescales are tight it is possible to advertise that this has been applied for to encourage delegates to in turn apply for study leave.

How are abstracts published?

All abstracts are published in a pdf and can be downloaded from the website.

Where appropriate abstracts and presentations received prior to the events are printed in the proceedings guide, which is distributed at the event or placed on a memory stick for delegates. All abstracts and presentations need to be received at the IPEM office no less than two weeks before the event. IPEM will ask all presenters to send their final presentation by the deadline but cannot take responsibility if presenters do not send their information in.

For regional and user group events pdf can be created for the website although no printed copies would normally be made available.

For some of the larger events it is preferable to place the abstracts on a memory stick as this makes it easier for delegates to search and carry round.

Can I view the presentations online?

Abstracts and presentations (where permission has been granted) are provided after the event as pdf's on the members area of the IPEM website. These are usually available around 2 weeks after the event and will be the most up to date versions given on the day so may differ slightly from printed versions. This is a member only benefit.

Currently we don't record presentations for viewing on the website, although this may be something we look at for some events if applicable.

How many delegates can attend?

All delegate registration is done online and arranged by the National Office. The number of delegates is dependent on the type of event and varies tremendously. The maximum number who can attend is dictated by the venue and the numbers the rooms can hold. Location and timing can also be factors in determining numbers. If a month before the event there are insufficient numbers to make it break-even the event will normally have to be cancelled.

The deadline for booking places is around 2 weeks before the date of the event. Upon booking the final event programme is emailed to all delegates along with final confirmation details, map of the venue and local hotel accommodation options.

Can I add additional delegates after the booking deadline?

Please be aware that all venues have a cut off point for accepting new delegates which will often be one to three weeks before the event date – this in turn dictates when IPEM has to give final numbers to the venue. Time also has to be allowed for the printing of badges; booklets etc therefore only occasionally or if an event is being held in IPEM offices at Fairmount House can bookings be taken after the cut off point.

Will my event get cancelled?

Occasionally it becomes necessary for the National Office to cancel an event. Whilst this will be a last resort an event will be cancelled if it falls into one or more of the following criteria.

- 1) If 8 weeks before an event a full programme has not been agreed with the National Office.
- 2) If there have been insufficient abstracts received by the abstract submission closing date. The abstract submission closing date can be extended from the original by up to two weeks if the programme lead believes that they are able to encourage people to submit.

- 3) If submitted abstracts are not deemed of a high enough quality to make a programme viable.
- 4) If two weeks prior to the event the number of delegates is less than two thirds of the number of attendees. E.g if total attendees is 30 the number of speakers and organisers must not exceed 10.
- 5) The programme provides less than four hours of educational content.
- 6) The event is financially non-viable. E.g number of delegates is lower than the minimum agreed.

Event will sometimes need to be cancelled for external reasons including but not limited to:

- Venue being un-useable (please note wherever possible if there is no significant financial loss to IPEM the event department would seek to move to an alternative venue)
- A significant number of speakers have pulled out and cannot be replaced.
- Staff from the National Office being unavailable to attend.

What happens on the day?

On the morning of the event usually a member of the IPEM events department will be available to run the registration desk, meet and greet and provide signage for rooms. The exception to this is for regional meetings or small workshops. We do ask that Programme Leads aim to arrive half an hour before the start of the talks to ensure there is some time to go through housekeeping announcements and meet Invited Speakers.

On the day all delegates will receive a name badge, a certificate of attendance and a copy of the abstract book. The abstract book contains the final programme, addresses and abstracts of all speakers, plus their PowerPoint presentations if the speaker has given permission, as well as a delegate list.

At the end of the day a large freepost envelope will be left on the registration desk for delegates to place their badge holders in. This should then be returned to the IPEM office which is usually done by the venue.

How can I get feedback after the event?

After the event the National Office will email out an evaluation form to all attendees. These will then be analyzed and the results relating to scientific content will be sent to the Programme Lead and the SIG Chair within four weeks of the event.

