Natura 2000 Networking Programme
on behalf of the European Commission

Natura 2000 Networking Programme managed in
partnership by project partners EUROPARC Federation,
Eurosite and European Landowners Organization (ELO)

Checklist for Organising Workshops (Seminars, Conferences and other events)

Planning the Workshop
- Formulate and define theme(s) and subjects of event;
- Agree and set dates;
- Recruit organising working group(s) – ensure support within your organisation;
- Recruit conference staff/assistants.

Financial Planning
- Determine budget – list all costs and identify sources of funding/ income to cover the following items;

  - Hire of venues;
  - Catering – meals, lunches, tea and coffee breaks etc.;
  - Conference stationery;
  - Translation services and equipment;
  - Evaluation report and publication of results of workshop;
  - Local accommodation for non-paying delegates;
  - Transport requirements – e.g. shuttle bus to/ from venue; transport for site visits;
  - Opportunity to provide bursaries and cover the costs of participants with appropriate backgrounds and/ or experience that would be useful to include and help achieve the workshop objectives.

  Notes:
  This list is by no means exhaustive, nor is it intended to cover every situation. It is provided to start the thinking process involved in budgeting for a workshop. Each event will have its own circumstances and considerations, vary in terms of scale and scope regarding what the event is aiming to achieve/ who it is being provided for, and have different capacities for absorbing costs or passing them on to individual delegates. However, a budget is essential, in order to arrive at the total cost of the event, think through all elements of the workshop and arrive at a cost per delegate. This is essential for all workshops, but especially for those events where there is no opportunity to legitimately access available project funding to cover specific items.
  Sometimes, it is a condition of funding to demonstrate how and in what practical ways, participants from target areas/ target groups have been enabled to attend a workshop – for example, this is the case for LIFE projects, a condition of funding being to communicate the results and/ or funding to a wide European audience.

- Contact potential funders;
- Establish appropriate systems to control and account for all financial transactions. This must include, as a minimum, a list of confirmed registered participants detailing the amount paid and when this was received;

Targeting the Right Audience
- Prepare a brief person specification – the type of people you think will benefit most from attending;
- Recruit chairpersons
- Invite VIPs and other officials
- Invite speaker for opening address
- Invite keynote speakers
- Determine who is welcoming VIPs and other officials
- Recruit opening address and keynote speakers, and panellists.

Registration and Mailing
- Workshop registration – set deadline;
- Confirm method for registration – normally by email or the mailing address for registration forms;
- Create registration form, thinking through all essential information required – be critical and look at this from the point of view of recipients – easy to complete? / clear and unambiguous?;
- With reference to the budget, establish the registration fee and think about:
    o Late registration fees;
    o Discount fees for students etc;
    o Bursaries;
    o Deposits and final payments (deadline);
    o Specify preferred currency and method(s) of payment – include bank account details and other required information for international money transfers;
    o Cancellation and refund conditions.

    Final registration
    - Ensure all registration forms received have been processed and resolve any queries;
    - Send final confirmation of registration to participants;
    - Compile final list of registered participants;
    - Report updated list of participants to convener(s);
    - Produce name badges with participant's first name, family name and country of origin;
    - Produce name badges for workshop staff;

Final Mailing
- Contents of final mailing:
    o Workshop title, dates, location;
    o Description of workshop venue (facilities);
    o Postal address, telephone and fax numbers, e-mail address of lead contact;
    o Reception arrangements and registration desk opening hours;
    o Hotel and other accommodation details and locations relative to workshop venue – a map is always useful;
    o Any off-site workshop venues and arrangements for local transport etc:

Communication and Promotion
- Confirm all acknowledgements, including logos to be included on all material for the workshop – flyers, reports, adverts, website announcements, posters etc;
- Prepare a brief description of the event and use as the basis for internal communication (within your own organisation);
- Compile mailing list of specialist/trade journals;
- Compile mailing list of people useful to invite – a 'hit list' of people desirable to have attend, e.g. national officials, EU officials, specialists etc;
- Recruit graphic designer to help with production of promotional material;
- Create first announcement/workshop flyer, including challenge, outcome, venue, date and pre-registration deadline;
- Print first announcement circular and pre-registration form;
- Mail first announcement circular and pre-registration form;
- Ensure links established on appropriate websites as an outlet for news about the workshop.

Logistical Matters

- Identify suitable workshop site and venue – take into account remoteness of venue and ease of travel to and from venue for international participants;
- Determine the need for break-out rooms and their capacities;
- Negotiate prices and requirements and provision of equipment with venue staff – check scope for delegate day rate and reduced cost/ no cost for meeting rooms etc;
- Take options on selected workshop venues – make provisional bookings wherever possible;
- Recruit working group(s) and/or committee(s);
- Verify hotel-booking arrangements – it strongly recommended that participants are responsible for booking their own flights and accommodation. (The only exception may be to offer to book accommodation for invited guests.) A list of convenient, local accommodation with a range of prices should be provided;
- Where transfer to the venue for the workshop is beneficial and possible, check incoming and outgoing train/ flights times etc and make appropriate arrangements (coaches/ buses/ taxis etc.). For all participants, describe how to get to venue of workshop from main points of arrival;
- Check and arrange special transport for officials and/ or delegates from and to airports etc.;
- Determine catering facilities (coffee, tea, drinks, snacks, lunches, dinners, conference dinner) and likely requirements;
- Hire caterer - verify special meal requirements (dietary, vegetarian, kosher etc., extra costs);
- Contact suppliers of appropriate promotional items – bags, pens, hats etc!
- Contact local tourist information agency
- Determine events for evening and opportunities for social interaction facilities for disabled

Planning and Preparing the Programme

While developing the programme and its content, remember to check, where appropriate, the following elements:

- Confirm who will make the opening address and welcome;
- Plenary sessions;
- Parallel working sessions/ break-out groups;
- Poster and display set-up;
- Time within venue required to move from one location to another etc.;
- Transportation and how to get to the conference site: by air, train, local public transport, car:
    - Provide clear, concise route descriptions;
    - How and where to get tickets for public transport – indicate options and ticket prices;
    - Consider shuttle transport from and to terminals (airport, railway station) – may be a cost, but it can be very helpful in stopping people getting lost and delaying the programme!;

- Timing of the call for papers, posters and abstracts
- Deadline for submission of abstracts/ speaker biographies etc for inclusion in pre-workshop information;
- Availability of or need for guidelines for presenters/ speakers – amongst other things this should confirm;
    - Length and duration of presentations;
    - Responsibilities of the speakers before and after the presentation;
    - Advice on audience numbers, description of venue and technical facilities;

- Guidelines on display facilities for information and literature about participating organisations and their work – posters, flyers, reports etc. Confirm things such as:
    - Size of display areas / poster boards
    - Mounting system at poster boards
    - Arrangements to set-up and dismantle displays
    - Preferred formats for text, lettering, banners etc;

- Post workshop reporting:
    - Give clear advice on editorial requirements;
    - Confirm a deadline for submission of reports.

- Consider the need for receptions, depending on when any officials, special invitees or dignitaries, for example, are arriving;
- Preparations, venue, style, format and timing etc of a conference dinner. (Remember to confirm date, location, timing etc, and consider all costs and who will cover them within the available budget. A sponsor may be appropriate for this, especially as it is likely to be ineligible expenditure for most funders.);
- Appropriate entertainment;
- Parking facilities (parking lot, tickets);
- Transport to and from conference venue and hotels.

Additional Information, which may be of use to participants

- Electricity (voltage, plug-socket system)
- Telephone/fax/e-mail facilities for participants
- Public telephone facilities (cards, coins, tokens)
- Photocopy facilities
- Emergency numbers (police, fire, ambulance)
- Medical services
- Climate in the workshop period and advice for participants on clothing;
- Money - currency information, exchange facilities etc.;
- Access to cash dispensers and credit card facilities;
- Need for each individual to ensure they have their own travel insurance;
- Visa requirements and a clear statement that it is the responsibility of each individual participant to ensure they secure the appropriate visa.

Convention Stationary

Apart from the contents of the workshop pack, only badges are essential in the following list. The other items listed here are subject to available budget and the scale of the event being planned;

- Badges with clip/pin combination;
- Pens (or other promotional materials);
- Folders;
- Clip boards;
- Event (conference) bags.

[Note – for ordering purposes, the number to order = participants + keynote speakers + workshop staff + press + assistants + sponsors + some spares.]

Workshop Pack Contents

- Note paper;
- Up-to-date programme;
- Speaker biographies;
- List of participants;
- Up-to-date logistical information;
- Copy of evaluation form.

Venue Related Activities

- Signs to meeting rooms and other areas;
- Prepare display area for promotional stands etc;
- Set-up registration desk and ensure access to telephone, photocopiers, printers, first-aid supplies etc;
- Take stationery box – pens, marker pens, scissors, tape, blue-tac, paper, post-its etc. – as well as last minute registration forms, public transport time tables, city map and a list of all staff and their mobile phone numbers;
- Confirm arrangements for messages – a message board is often useful;
- Ensure workshop staff are familiar with emergency evacuation procedures, toilets and other services etc;
- Co-ordinate the timing of coffee/tee breaks and meal services
- Co-ordinate staffing of the registration desk
- Co-ordinate assistance in the meeting rooms
- Briefing with workshop venue staff
- Meet and greet arrangements for speakers, especially to provide technical support for those making presentations;
- Brief chairpersons and all speakers.

Meeting Rooms(s)

- Confirm requirements for break-out discussion or meeting rooms – flip-charts, white board(s) and special markers;
- Ensure glasses of water and/or soft drinks for chairpersons, speakers and panel members;
- Check seating and room-layout has been arranged as required, as far in advance as possible of individual programme elements;
- Consider need for interpreter booths.

Translation Requirements and Facilities
- Determine lead language for the workshop – most commonly this is English for international events;
- Determine need of interpreters and the number of languages to be translated
- Contact translation equipment provider for price offer
- Discuss number of necessary interpreters based on estimate participation levels and also the range of languages for which a translation service will be provided;
- Agree the need for interpreter booths and their locations in meeting room(s);
- Determine translation equipment;
- Negotiate and confirm all translation requirements in a contract agreement with translation services provider;
- Verify arrangements/ requirements for board and lodging for interpreters;
- Provide interpreters with copies of all formal papers in advance of the workshop, including copies of the programme and agendas for any meetings taking place as part of the workshop.

Photograph(s)
- Look through the entire programme and consider when and where it would be useful to have photographs;
- Make contact and enter an agreement with a photographer – this may be a local member of staff rather than an official photographer to keep costs as low as possible, but, for formal events, especially involving officials and dignitaries, a professional photographer is worth considering;
- If contracted-out, this should be a written confirmation, including:
    1. acceptance of offer
    2. conference site
    3. shooting date and time
    4. estimated group size
    5. size and number of photographs required
    6. black and white or coloured
    7. delivery date
- If the conference site has no house photographer, the involved photographer should visit the conference site in advance to determine the best in- and outdoor shooting sites

Press Releases/ Press Conference
- Draft press releases and consider means of dissemination – via participants, own media contacts, those of others participating. This can be a very formal expectation and requirements, especially for visiting dignitaries and officials;
- Compile mailing list for press release
- Consider the need for a press conference - site, date and time
- Determine a lead contact (official) spokesperson;
- Make arrangements for press to interview VIPs, officials, speakers, etc.

Other Information
With the possible exception of speakers or invited dignitaries, organisers should encourage participants to book their own accommodation as it saves a huge amount of work for workshop organisers. However, it is helpful to compile a list of local hotels and other accommodation available within easy walking or travelling distance of the workshop venue. This should aim to cover a range of budgets and provide a link to appropriate websites etc;

For all possible accommodation, provide the following information:

- Name, address, telephone and fax numbers, e-mail address;
- Distance to conference venue;
- Public transport to conference venue;
- Last public transport services (working days, Saturday, Sunday) from workshop venue.

Additional considerations for the following types of accommodation may apply:

1. Student Residences:
   - Availability of single, and double rooms;
   - What to bring - e.g. sheets, towels, sleeping bag;
   - Breakfast and other meal facilities;
   - Other facilities;

2. Youth Hostel(s):
   - Availability of single and double rooms, and dormitories;
   - What to bring: sheets, towels, sleeping bag, toilet paper;
   - Availability of rental sheets;
   - Breakfast and other meal facilities;
   - Other facilities;