SECTION 10
MEETINGS

(Last Updated April 2009)
NUMBER 10.1 MEETINGS COMMITTEE

EFFECTIVE: APRIL 2009

POLICY

The Meetings Committee is established for the purpose of overseeing policy and proposing to the Board strategic direction for Institute meetings in order to accomplish the overall mission of INFORMS.

The Director of Meetings reports to the Executive Director of INFORMS and, together with the Meetings Department and other INFORMS staff, oversees the scheduling, contracting and administration of the meetings in order to accomplish the overall mission of INFORMS.

PROCEDURES

Membership
The Meetings Committee includes four members plus the Chair, who is normally the Vice President of Meetings. The Chair is a voting member of the Committee. Members serve two-year terms staggered so that two members are appointed by the President each year, in accordance with Policies and Procedures Section 2.1. The Meetings Committee is encouraged to make recommendations to the President regarding the appointment of new members.

The INFORMS Director of Meetings serves as an ex officio member without a vote. The Vice President of Meetings is the Board Liaison for the Meetings Committee. All terms begin on January 1.

Functions
The Committee reviews statistics related to meetings and informs the Board of trends in attendance as well as cost of meetings. In addition, the Committee recommends to the Board procedures that in the view of the Committee will improve efficiency, technical content, and general operations of meetings. It oversees the development and maintenance of Meetings Manuals for use in operating meetings.

Budgeting
The Meetings Committee submits its recommended budgets, including the committee budget and budgets for the coming year’s meetings, to the Finance Committee. - See Number 15.1, Subdivisions Committee, Functions sections, for procedures related to expenditure approval of subdivision and special interest meetings. These procedures may involve action by the Meetings Committee, as indicated in this procedure.

Appointment of Meetings Chairs
The Meetings Committee recommends future national meeting sites and Chairs to the Board for review and approval.

Relation to Meetings Chairs
Meetings Chairs will submit reports on the status of their meetings at least twice each year for review at the -Meetings Committee meetings. The reports should describe progress relative to planned scheduled and identify current or potential problem areas. Summaries of these reports will be included in the Meetings Committee reports to the Board.
**Selection of Meeting Chairs and Program Committees**

If a local chapter exists near the site of a future Annual meeting, the Meetings Committee is strongly encouraged to consult with the local chapter officers prior to selecting the General Chair of the meeting and similarly to encourage the General Chair to consult with the local chapter officers prior to forming the organizing committee.

**Relation to the Board**

The Meetings Committee will report to the Board through semi-annual written reports prepared before the annual national meeting and the spring Board meeting. The reports will describe planning for and status of future meetings, recommendations concerning meeting times and location, and progress on specific subjects requested by the Board.

**Meetings**

The Meetings Committee should meet at least three times each year. These meetings may be by conference call. A quorum shall consist of the Chair and three additional voting members of the Committee. Motions to be considered by the Board at the Board meeting along with supporting documentation should be approved at these meetings and submitted to the Board prior to Board meetings. The Meetings Committee will also meet with the Chairs of future meetings at each Annual meeting.

**RELATED DOCUMENTS:**

INFORMS Policies and Procedure Manual, Section 2, General Procedures
INFORMS Policies and Procedure Manual, Section 10.1.1, Joint Organization and Co-Sponsorship of External Conferences
JOINT ORGANIZATION AND CO-SPONSORSHIP OF EXTERNAL CONFERENCES

EFFECTIVE: AUGUST, 2008

POLICY

Jointly Organized Conferences
Agreements by which INFORMS organizes a conference in conjunction with an external organization must adhere to certain practices to ensure that INFORMS’s logo, finances and reputation are adequately safeguarded.

Conference agreements between INFORMS and external organizations must explicitly specify the method(s) of:

- Distributing the financial liability and potential gains of the conference;
- Sharing management responsibilities for the conference, including site selection, content development, executing contracts, handling meeting logistics, collecting revenue, paying invoices, etc.;
- Ensuring that all revenue, expenses, surplus and liabilities are properly reported and all required Form 990’s are completed and filed;
- Distributing licensing and created intellectual property.
- The use of the INFORMS logo must be explicitly addressed.

All conference agreements must be signed by the Executive Director of INFORMS after seeking legal council if he/she deems necessary, reported to the Executive Committee, and stored in a central depository in the INFORMS business office.

Co-Sponsorship of External Conferences
INFORMS may be asked to co-sponsor an external conference, without taking a major role in the organization of the conference. Typically the organizing entity requests that the INFORMS name appear as a co-sponsor and that the meeting be publicized among INFORMS membership.

- Requests to co-sponsor external meetings will be directed to the Vice President-Meetings. The Meetings Committee will discuss each case and will communicate its decision to the requesting party. The Meetings Committee will report to the Board all its decisions at the earliest Board meeting.
- The basic criteria for co-sponsorship to guide the Meetings Committee’s decisions are: (1) the meeting not directly conflict with an INFORMS meeting (Annual International, Practice Meetings), and (2) an INFORMS member be involved in the planning and execution of the meeting. Other considerations that will guide the decisions include: (a) benefit to INFORMS, (b) quality of the program.
- If the co-sponsorship involves an INFORMS subdivision, the Meetings Committee will have the Subdivisions Council review the proposal. The VP Sections/Societies will work with the VP Meetings to finalize the decision.
- INFORMS prefers to have little or no financial risk. If the sponsorship involves financial exposure, the Meetings Committee will forward its recommendations to the Executive Committee for final decision.
POLICY

In addition to the Annual, International, and Practice meetings organized by INFORMS national, INFORMS subdivisions/communities organize meetings targeted primarily to their members. In order to ensure robust participation in all INFORMS events, it is important that the timing of INFORMS meetings do not conflict with one another. This policy seeks to minimize conflict among all INFORMS meetings through informed decisions.

Subdivisions face competing goals and conflicts, often in their efforts to serve as interfaces between INFORMS and other societies. INFORMS will help subdivisions make good scheduling decisions by providing a central online repository for all meetings organized by INFORMS and its subdivisions. In addition, this repository will include meetings organized by sister societies of interest to INFORMS members. INFORMS and the subdivisions should all participate in this process by providing information on future conferences as soon as these are scheduled so that all decisions can be made with a full understanding of any conflicts that may arise.

To alleviate timing conflicts among INFORMS national and subdivision meetings, all INFORMS meeting organizers should follow this process:

1. INFORMS national will maintain a meetings calendar with the broadest possible listing of conferences in fields relevant to our mission by providing a website that allows the subdivisions, as well as our sister societies, to post future conferences that may be of interest to our members.

2. All INFORMS meeting organizers should consult the INFORMS calendar to determine the dates of other INFORMS meetings prior to selecting dates for their meeting. This should be done for all meetings independent of whether the meeting will be utilizing INFORMS office resources or not.

3. The date for a proposed meeting should be reported to the INFORMS Meetings Committee as soon as it is proposed, and if possible at least 6 months in advance of the proposed meeting. Best efforts should be made to avoid conflicts with other meetings that have overlapping interests.

4. For the protection of meeting organizers, all contracts and agreements must be reviewed by the INFORMS Director of Meetings and signed by the Executive Director.

5. Meeting organizers should enter their meeting dates in the INFORMS online calendar as soon as possible to facilitate coordination. This calendar is available on-line at http://meetings.informs.org/. The calendar will populate all meetings, including those of sister societies.
NUMBER 10.1.3  SCHEDULING THE PROGRAM FOR THE ANNUAL MEETING

EFFECTIVE: APRIL 2009

POLICY

- Each Invited and Sponsored track will be scheduled to “wrap around,” i.e., one track/room will be scheduled from Sunday through Wednesday before a parallel track can be scheduled.
- Each Invited and Sponsored cluster must have an average of 3.5 papers per session (an average of 4 papers is highly encouraged). The abstract system provides a mechanism for cluster chairs to search for appropriate Contributed papers to add to their sessions to meet the average goal. If the 3.5 average is not achieved, sessions with less than 4 papers will be given lower priority when scheduling the program.
- Wednesday will be a full day, with all the normal activities of the meeting.
Basic Requirements
- A workshop cannot compete with the INFORMS Annual Meeting; it must be held before or after the Meeting.
- Workshops must be a minimum of 2 hours.
- Workshops registrants and speakers must register for the Annual Meeting.
- For registration, workshops will appear as an add-on option on the Annual Meeting registration forms. Registration processing will be handled by INFORMS staff.
- The number of workshop opportunities at an Annual Meeting will be determined by the available space and time.
- Organizers must submit a proposal with the following: organizer background; topic and outline of workshop content; budget with attendance projections. Proposal deadline: seven months prior to the meeting. Organizers will be notified of acceptance within 15 days.
- The INFORMS Meetings Committee will evaluate all proposals relative to their added value to meeting attendees.

Who can organize a workshop?
- INFORMS subdivisions.
- Companies in the OR product field – publishers, software vendors, consulting services – that are exhibiting at the Annual Meeting.
- Other entities in the OR field (universities, professors, nonprofit initiatives in the field such as COIN).

Financial Requirements
- The workshop must be cost neutral to INFORMS, including staff time.
- The workshop can be offered free or can charge a fee.
- Any costs must be assumed by the workshop organizer/sponsor or a fee can be charged to cover costs.
- Typical costs include: registration services through INFORMS staff, materials, AV, food & beverage (if offered).
- Workshop rooms will be provided free (as part of the INFORMS facility contract).
- Registration must be handled by INFORMS staff; a fee will be charged. INFORMS staff can also provide assistance with logistical planning and management, and marketing.
- INFORMS reserves the right to cancel the workshop if a mutually agreed upon minimum number of registrations are not received by a negotiated date.
- In the case of any net profit being realized, that profit would go to INFORMS. The exception would be when the workshop is organized by an INFORMS subdivision. In that case, any net profit would go to the subdivision, as long as all costs (including INFORMS staff labor) are covered.
Refund requests made by the cancellation deadline for an INFORMS meetings will receive a refund of the registration fee less a processing charge. Refunds will not be allowed for cancellations made after the deadline. Exceptions to this policy will be considered in the case of emergency, hospitalization or serious illness of the registrant or a close family member. In these cases, the requester will be required to submit documentation verifying the situation. With verification, these people will be refunded less the processing fee.
NUMBER 10.1.6  INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS

EFFECTIVE: APRIL 2009

POLICY

- INFORMS goal is to produce international meetings on a regular basis and to not conflict with IFORS meetings.
- If there is a local OR society in the location, INFORMS will obtain the agreement and cooperation of the society before producing a meeting in that country.
  - INFORMS will develop a written agreement with the local OR society.
  - Each agreement will be written on a one-time basis, i.e., for one year or one meeting only. A basic protocol can be set that might be applied in multiple years, but each agreement will be for one meeting only.
- In all agreements, INFORMS strongly prefers to:
  - Have responsibility for budgeting/financial management and contracts.
  - Manage registration. In some countries, registration for in-country attendees may be handled by a local service to allow people to pay in that currency.
  - Manage most other aspects of the meeting, including marketing, abstract processing, logistics and exhibits management.