



international *stillbirth* alliance

ISA Conferences Protocol Revised November 2014

1. Introduction

According to the by-laws, ISA undertakes meetings/conferences to further its objectives as defined in the ISA Strategy. The Board has decided that a large conference may not be possible every year but, where this is not possible, a smaller meeting should be held. These smaller meetings may be in the form of a working meeting addressing specific ISA activities which are under way. ISA conferences/meetings are usually hosted by member organizations. In order to further global collaboration addressing stillbirth, conferences in partnership with other organizations, particularly large global organizations, are encouraged.

2. Purpose of the protocol

This protocol has been prepared to ensure that all ISA conferences:

- are conducted in a manner consistent with ISA philosophy and in accordance with the by-laws;
- address the ISA Strategic Plan;
- result in furthering the collaborative work of ISA by ensuring that relationships with member organizations and other external agencies are undertaken in good will and within a framework of true collaboration;
- ensure consistency with the ISA brand; and
- generate sufficient funds to cover all costs incurred for the organization and conduct of the conference.

3. Objectives of this protocol

The main objectives of this protocol are to:

- detail the principles of ISA conferences;
- provide clear instructions to the conference organizing committee to assist them in undertaking a successful conference;
- ensure all parties involved have a clear understanding of responsibilities and expectations;
- serve as a point of reference for future enhancement of ISA conferences.

4. Principles of ISA conferences

- The process of planning a conference should be open and transparent (i.e. available on the web and disseminated to member organizations);
- A call for bids should be made 3 years prior to the planned conference (using October as a baseline) and will be managed by the ISA Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC);
- The call for bids will take into consideration ISA priority areas at that time against the objectives of the Strategic Plan;
- The SAC will make a recommendation to the ISA Board based on the outcome of the call for bids and a decision about host organization will be made by the

Annual General Assembly. With the aim of this occurring 2 years prior to the conference.

- Only ISA member organizations are eligible to submit a bid
- Aim to hold a conference in a low or middle income country every 2 years
- Aim for a wide geographic coverage over time
- Ensure the program accommodates the needs of parents, health practitioners and researchers
- Ensure conferences address ISA's mission including having a program with a substantial focus on stillbirth including: prevention, awareness, education and bereavement

5. Organisational structure

5.1 The ISA Conference Committee

ISA Conferences shall be overseen by a Conference Committee the management of which will be the responsibility of the host organisation/s. Membership of the Committee is approved by the ISA Board and consists of host organisation members as well as representatives of the ISA Board, Scientific and Communications Committee.

5.1.1 Life of the Conference Committee

The committee will be established and maintained from the outset of planning until the final Conference report is submitted to the Board.

5.1.2 Membership

Members are key representatives of the host organization and/or chosen on the basis of individual skills. All members are required to make a commitment to undertake the work required to ensure the success of the conference. In addition to members invited for their individual skills by the Committee Chair, the following representation is required:

- Representatives of the ISA member organisation co-convening the Conference (where relevant)
- Chair of the immediate past Conference
- Chair of the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) or delegate
- Chair of the Communications Committee or delegate
- ISA Treasurer
- Membership should include two bereaved parents from ISA Board or committees.

In addition, individuals with experience in organising conferences, marketing and fundraising are essential.

The chair of the Conference Committee is decided by the membership.

5.1.3 Roles and responsibilities

The Conference Committee has overall responsibility for the Conference including:

- Planning the program;
- Identifying and inviting speakers;
- Fundraising;
- Marketing including announcements and website;
- Evaluations;

- The budget (management of which may be delegated to a conference organising company or host organisations).

5.1.4 Reporting requirements

The Conference Committee reports to the ISA Board via the ISA Board representatives at each meeting of the Board. A written report the Conference plan and general program themes should be provided ideally twelve months prior to the Conference.

5.1.5 Role of ISA SAC

The ISA SAC will provide input into the Conference program and assist with review of submitted abstracts including investigator awards and placement of same within the program.

6. Partnership agreements

A memorandum of understanding about the working relationship between ISA and the member organization/other external agencies as required should be developed by the Conference Committee Chair as soon as possible after establishment of the Committee. This MOU requires approval by the ISA Board.

7. Program development

The Conference Committee is responsible for defining the themes of the Conferences seeking approval for same from the ISA Board

7.1 Invited speakers

The invited speakers should include utilisation of local experts and also speakers from developing countries as much as possible. The invitees list should ideally be finalised 12 months prior to the Conference. All reasonable expenses of key note speakers (and ideally all other invited speakers) should be covered by the conference including: registration fee, conference dinner, economy airfares, and accommodation and breakfasts during the Conference.

7.2 Call for abstracts and notifications

The aim is that a call for abstracts will be made at 6-9 months before the conference and final announcement of acceptance will be undertaken at least 4 months prior.

7.3 Declaration of conflicts of interest

All presenters at ISA Conferences and meetings will be required to include a statement of conflict of interest in their presentations.

8. Marketing/branding

All promotional materials regarding the Conference must clearly identify ISA as the Conference presenters.

The initial notice for the Conference should be made available and announced prior to the end of the current Conference program. Further announcements, invitations and reminders should be distributed to relevant organisations and individuals at regular intervals of at least three monthly and made available on the website.

Local media coverage is encouraged for all ISA conferences and should be overseen by the Conference Committee in collaboration with the Communications committee.

9. Fundraising and Sponsorship

All fundraising and sponsorship activity is the responsibility of the Conference Committee.

10. Financial management

The Conference Committee is responsible for the Conference budget ensuring that all expenses incurred as a result of the Conference are met.

11. Board members attendance and support

Board members are encouraged to seek support from their member organisations to attend all ISA conferences. ISA will aim to provide funds to assist Board members to attend where this is required. The amount of funds provided will be considered and approved by the Board 6 months prior to the Conference.

Due to financial constraints, the aim of support provided by ISA is to offset costs sufficiently to enable all Board members to attend and not to cover all costs associated with attendance.

It is an expectation that conference registration fees will be waived for all ISA Board members.

12. Review of this protocol

This protocol will be reviewed every two years. The next review is due November 2016