Rules and recommendations for organizing the annual ESAFORM conference

Introduction

The European Scientific Association of Material Forming (ESAFORM) holds an annual conference that is organized in a different country each year by a local Organizing Committee. After a large number of conferences, the Association has built up a lot of experience and developed also a particular conference format, easily recognized by the participants. To support Organizers in using the experience and maintaining the desired format, the following 'Rules and Recommendations' are defined by the Board of Directors (BoD) of ESAFORM. These 'Rules and Recommendations' represent therefore a set of good practices, developed over the years. Some rules may seem arbitrary, but they are indeed necessary to maintain continuity in what participants expect from 'an ESAFORM conference'.

A Conference Organizer is supposed to follow the Rules completely. If it is considered to be not possible or unreasonable to follow a given 'Rule', then it should be discussed timely in the Board of Directors. The Recommendations, on the other hand, are intended to be seen as guidelines, accounting for issues that should not be forgotten. The Organizer has therefore the freedom to deviate from the Recommendations, without compromising the legacy and tradition of ESAFORM conferences.

The BoD expects that these 'Rules and Recommendations' will be respected by future organizers when they accept the nomination to organize an ESAFORM conference. The 'Rules and Recommendations' do not represent a legal contract that has to be signed by authorized persons and it is expected that issues that arise between Organizers and the BoD will be solved in a friendly atmosphere. It is well understood that local organizers should have the freedom to give the conference a local flavour.

Rules

Conference programme

1. The ESAFORM Conference has a duration of three days.
2. During the opening ceremony, the President of the ESAFORM Association will shortly address the participants, in conjunction with the local Organizers. If Board elections will take place, the President also explains the voting procedure and introduces the candidates.
3. The Conference should be scheduled preferentially in the second half of April, without overlapping the SheMet conference.
4. The Conference consists of plenary lectures, parallel mini-symposia and, possibly, general sessions.
5. One hour is programmed for plenary presentations of the Esaform prize winners. If the jury selected more than two prize winners, the presentation time per prize winner is reduced.
6. At least one and at most two plenary keynote presentations are programmed on each day of the conference, excluding the presentations by the prize-winners.
7. The largest part of the conference is organized as mini-symposia. Each mini-symposium (MS) is organized by a small group of experts in the field. Each mini-symposium is led by a mini-symposium co-ordinator. The Conference Organizers communicate primarily with these co-ordinators.
8. One year before the conference, the list of mini-symposia must be approved by the Board of Directors. A proposal, especially for new mini-symposia, must be sent to the President of ESAFORM two weeks before the meeting of the Board of Directors.
9. Every two years (the even years), elections are organized for the Board of Directors. The election is organized on the first day of the conference. On the second day, the new board assembles to choose the Steering Committee. The Conference Organizers are responsible to facilitate the elections and provide a suitable meeting room.
10. At the end of the second day, the ESAFORM General Assembly (GA) is programmed. All members (i.e. all participants of the Conference) can join. At least 45 minutes have to be scheduled for the GA. The Conference Organizers are responsible to provide the room for the meeting.
11. Lunches and coffee breaks are included in the conference fee.
12. A conference dinner is included in the conference, which fee is recommended to be included in the conference fee. Participants should be able to return to their hotels at a time that does not affect their participation in the early sessions on the next day.
13. Only one presentation per registered participant is allowed (not counting plenary lectures).
14. No presentations are allowed without an accepted conference paper (except for the invited plenary lectures).
15. Within the Mini-Symposia, all presentations have equal length and no keynote presentations are designated.
16. The maximum number of presentations within a mini-symposium is equal to the available time slots in the conference. Sessions for a mini-symposium should not be held in parallel. If more papers are accepted for presentation, some of the papers should be transferred to other mini-symposia.

17. Dedicated poster sessions can be organized. Papers related to posters qualify according to the same reviewing standards as oral presentations and are included in the proceedings, and therefore there is no reduced fee for poster presenters.
18. If there is a poster session it should be organized in a prominent time slot. A 2-slide appetizer may be presented in a session (1 minute per poster).

Communication and administration

19. In public communications (flyers, website, etc.) the Organizers will use the official ESAFORM Association logo and refer to the ESAFORM website www.esaform.org .
20. The Conference Organizers are responsible to send the list of all MS-organizers to the President of the Association before September 1st preceding the conference. The President will take care that the ESAFORM website is properly updated, with the MS-organizers being included in the Scientific Committee.
21. All conference participants automatically become members of the ESAFORM Association for one year and receive the International Journal of Material Forming (Springer) for this year. The membership fee of € 50 as well as the journal subscription fee of € 75 are included in the conference fee for all participants. The Conference Organizers are responsible to provide the list of participants, with postal and e-mail addresses, to the ESAFORM Association and to Springer and to pay these fees directly to the ESAFORM Association and Springer, respectively.
22. If a conference ends with a financial deficit, caused by unforeseen circumstances beyond control of the organizers, the BoD can decide to offer the organizers a full or partial financial compensation.
23. Board members and MS-organizers are not offered a reduced fee.
24. Prize winners and invited plenary keynote speakers are exempted from the conference fee.
25. The Conference Organizers decide whether the Organizers cover travel and accommodation expenses for invited plenary keynote speakers or not. The organizers should be aware of usual practice and ask former organizers.
26. A list of participants that did not pay the conference fee and authors of accepted and published papers for which not at least one of the authors paid the conference fee is compiled by the organizers and sent to the BoD. After approval by the BoD the Secretary maintains this list and provides it to organizers of future ESAFORM conferences who can decide on acceptance of a new registration by these persons. This rule will be published on the conference website.

Proceedings

27. Papers for the parallel sessions should have a maximum of 4 double column or 6 single column pages (*this number holds for the usual formats*). The maximum is imposed to enforce focus in the article and to limit the reviewing efforts.
28. Proceedings should be published in such a way that articles become visible in at least one of the relevant indexing standards, preferably Web of Science. It is preferred to have permanent web-access to the articles, possibly even with Open Access. A hardware digital version of the proceedings should be supplied on USB stick. It is not required to distribute

     printed proceedings or a book of abstracts. Former conference organizers can advise on the choice of a publisher.

29. The reviewing procedure for papers must be supported by a suitable web-application.

30. Conference organizers supply a template for the articles in the proceedings (possibly imposed by the publisher). MS-organizers must also check the correct format of the paper. Conference Organizers can reject papers e.g. based on mal-formatting, even if the MS-organizers accepted it (after informing the MS-organizers).

Presentations at meetings of the Board of Directors

31. Future (candidate) Conference Organizers should be present in person at the BoD meeting where the nominations are discussed (usually 3 to 5 years before the conference) and at the meeting one year before the conference. These BoD meetings take place just before a conference. Furthermore, they have to be present in person at the BoD meeting in Paris half a year before the conference and half a year after the conference for reporting. Reporting after the conference can possibly be done using on-line meeting software if personal attendance is not possible. The organizers that are not BoD members only participate in the part of the meeting that discusses past and future conferences.

32. The approximate fee should be part of a given conference proposal. At the BoD meeting where the nomination is discussed, the BoD decides whether the proposed fee is acceptable or how it could be modified.

33. Two years in advance of the conference, the dates should be fixed and an indication of the fee should be given in relation to organizational issues (dinner, proceedings, etc.). Options for 'Invited plenary speakers' should be presented to the BoD one year in advance.

34. The day before the conference a BoD meeting is organized by the BoD. The Conference Organizers facilitate this meeting with a suitable meeting room and arrange the conference registration of the Board members during this meeting. The starting time will be decided depending on the expected agenda. The Conference Organizers offer the BoD a dinner after the meeting.

Recommendations

35. If there are only a small number of presentations out of the scope of the defined mini-symposia, they should be placed in the best-fitting mini-symposium. If there are a large number of presentations out of the scope of the mini-symposia, separate parallel sessions can be programmed, preferably with a specific name. However, the name 'general session' should be avoided.
36. Internet access during the conference is highly appreciated.
37. If possible, the Organizers should facilitate on-site registrations and credit card as well as cash payments. This may be subject to local legislation.
38. If possible, an 'early registration' period should be organized during the evening before the conference's first day. This takes some pressure from massive registration just before the opening session.
39. A welcome reception should be organized at the end of the first day.
40. Some effort should be made to respect common diet wishes.
41. The selection of keynote speakers should not solely be based on sponsorship of the conference, they should not only be from the organizing country, should represent scientific and industrial backgrounds and there should be a balance of topics.
42. The recommended maximum number of parallel sessions is 6 and a time slot for a presentation plus discussion should be at least 20 minutes.
43. Documents to be supplied to participants include:
    a. List of participants
    b. Program
    c. Map
    d. Digital version of proceedings
    e. Confirmation of participation
44. Late paper submissions (after the deadline) can only be allowed if Organizers and MS-organizers agree (because the MS-organizers have to handle the reviewing process in a shorter time).