

Memorandum of Understanding between the ALAN Steering Committee and the ALAN 2020 Local Hosts

General expectations for the conference:

- The conference will be 3 days
- There will be at least 5 invited speakers, one from each conference theme. More speakers can be added if finances allow
 - It is important that some speakers come from outside of CONTINENT, but finding "relatively local" speakers is also fiscally prudent
 - We aim for a rough gender balance in invited speakers. It is desirable to also identify potential speakers who come from other traditionally disadvantaged groups.
- Registration, accommodation, and conference dinner fees should be fairly similar to previous editions of the conference
- The session chairs should be divided equally among men and women
- Decisions affecting profitability will be mutual with the objective of achieving breakeven or profitability, while producing a quality event.
- Any profit will be evenly split, with the expectation that the share going back to the steering committee will go toward deposits and student/diversity support for future ALAN conferences.

Responsibilities of the international steering committee

- Choosing and inviting speakers for the conference (with input from the local organizer)
- Final approval of the proposed fees and location of the local organizer
- Canvassing previous conference attendees for advice on conference format, speakers, etc.
- Maintaining the conference website
- Making the final decision over the conference date and deadlines
- Publishing a call for abstracts
- Managing abstract review, making final decisions on invited speakers, and communication with authors
- If possible, assistance with fundraising (setting up a charitable foundation to provide grants to the local organizer, travel for invited speakers, or student travel grants)
- Managing a general ALAN email list, and emailing previous attendees to make them aware of the conference, deadlines, etc.
- Developing a preliminary conference schedule (in coordination with the local organizer)
 - In particular, making decisions regarding start and end times, length and number of talks in sessions, parallel vs plenary, etc.
 - Steering committee makes the final decision on total number of accepted oral abstracts,
- Developing the conference handbook (together with local organizer)
- Publicizing the conference, attracting abstracts and attendees
- Selecting and inviting session chairs
- Selecting the winner of the "best poster" prize
- Offering the local organizer advice based on past experience (e.g. conference materials, how many volunteers are needed, etc.)
- Making decisions regarding the awarding of financial aid requests (in conjunction with input from local committee on budget and risks).
- Publishing steering committee minutes and decisions in timely memos to the local committee

- Selecting the host for the next ALAN conference (ALAN 2022)
- Arranging and providing a platform for conference calls
- (optional) Arranging for publication of conference proceedings

Responsibilities of the local organizer

- Appointing one or two representatives from the local organizing team as temporary members of the international steering committee
- Finding a venue, hotel, caterer, etc., performing all negotiations with them, and handling all payments related to the conference
- Managing the conference budget, providing the steering committee updates as time goes on, and providing the steering committee a final budget table
- Fundraising to reduce the attendance fee, costs for invited speakers, and potentially provision of student travel grants
- Providing advice and suggestions for potential conference speakers
- Providing travel recommendations for speakers and attendees
- Arranging travel (or providing reimbursement) for invited speakers
- Running a web-based registration system and taking on-site payment
- Managing AV during the conference
 - Getting copies of all presentations
 - Getting a web-safe copy of presentations for publication on the conference website after the event (e.g. no copyright images, no sensitive unpublished material)
- Arranging a space and organizing boards for poster sessions
- Arranging social events during the conference
- Staffing a registration desk during the conference
- Assisting attendees with on-site problems (e.g. advice on travel/taxis, lost or stolen items, pharmacy location, etc.) unless otherwise provided by the hotel and conference facility.
- Obtaining and providing standard conference materials to attendees (e.g. bag, schedule, book of abstracts, notepaper, pen)
- Developing the conference handbook (together with steering committee)
- Responsibility for the final schedule and any last-minute changes
- Maintaining a list of conference attendees and emailing them location specific information
- Publicizing the conference, attracting abstracts and attendees
- Arranging for a meeting room for the international steering committee.
- Providing written monthly updates to the steering committee regarding finances and changes of local plans
- Handling dietary restrictions and ensuring there is food for everyone (e.g. identifying number of vegans)
- (optional) Attracting local/national press
 - Arranging times for press interviews with invited speakers and potentially other attendees
- (optional) Arranging an official excursion

Other general principles

- We aim for decisions to be made by consensus to the greatest extent possible.

- In the unusual case that a decision must be made by a vote, the decision will be made by the majority of steering committee members who vote
- The local organizer's active involvement through a temporary appointment to the steering committee is expected.
- Meetings should be limited to maximum one hour, with an exception when there are time sensitive or particularly difficult issues to discuss.
- Making a profit is not an aim of the conference. The local and international committees shall seek to establish a responsible balance between revenue and expenditures.
- Over the long term, the conference series aims to be budget neutral, with any profits spent in later years on increasing the conference's accessibility.
- Meals should include an option for vegetarians and vegans.
- It is desirable to have lunch provided as part of the conference, as it maximizes the time available for the scientific program.