

Guidelines for Organizing a DEMHIST Annual Conference

DEMHIST, founded in 1999, is an International Committee of ICOM focusing on the conservation and management of House Museums. Its name is an abbreviation of the French term "demeures historiques". House Museums range from cottage to castle, from antiquity to our days. The interpretation of House Museums includes historic, architectural, cultural, artistic and social information just as aspects of intangible heritage.

1. Frequency

By ICOM-Statutes every International and National Committee has to hold an annual General Assembly. An annual Board Meeting is compulsory to manage the committee just as for financial support by ICOM. DEMHIST has chosen to combine the annual General Assembly regularly with a professional conference. Moreover the conference enables raising and discussing professional issues and is a good platform for Board and host to encourage new membership, especially among local attendants and professionals.

2. Host and Theme of the Annual Conference

In choosing a host the Board of DEMHIST should consider, as a priority, the need to address the worldwide reach of ICOM. Over a period, hosts should be seen to accommodate a variety of professional issues as well as geographical, socio-political and cultural settings and locations.

When hosts are proposed as options by DEMHIST they should be considered in the light of the above overall commitment to DEMHIST and ICOM. They should also accommodate the commitment of DEMHIST to attend the triennial General Assembly of ICOM.

The Board should decide three years in advance in favour of a possible host and host country.

The Conference theme should be proposed by the host after close consultation with the Board two years in advance; it should be announced at the General Assembly. The theme should encourage a variety of topics in all papers though respecting the theme proposed.

The following themes have already been addressed by DEMHIST:

2000	Genoa	Historic House Museums Speak to the Public: Spectacular Exhibits <i>versus</i> A Philological Interpretation of History
2001	Barcelona	New Forms of Management for Historic House Museums
2002	Amsterdam	Historic House Museums as Witnesses of National and Local Identities
2003	Lenzburg	Facing and Solving the Problems of Historic House Museums: Examples and Models
2004	Berlin	"Rooms with a View" – Historic House Museums and their surroundings"
2005	Lisbon	Safekeepers of Memory - Conservation of buildings and their collections
2006	Malta	"Managing the Past for the Future"- Sustaining Historic House Museums in the 21 st Century
2007	Vienna	A Kingdom for a House! Historic Houses as Local, Regional and Universal Heritage
2008	Bogota	Historic House Museums as a Bridge between the Individual and the Community
2009	Stavanger	Historic Houses as Documents of Social Life and Traditional Skills
2010	Shanghai	From Silk Road to Container Ship. Cultural Transfer between East and West, West and East

2011 Antwerp

Catching the Spirit. Managing and Communicating the Theatrical Assets/Aspects of Historic Houses and their different Approaches in reinventing the Past

3. Programme

The theme should be presented within plenary sessions just as discussed within working groups, the members of the working groups being determined by the profile of historic house museum represented by delegates.

Excursions are an integral component of the annual conference. Proposed tours/visits should have a close relationship to the conference theme. They should take place half way through the conference. The impressions gained from the excursion and the issues raised should be discussed in a „feedback“ session, either as part of the excursion or as a separate section of the conference.

The host can offer an additional post-conference tour to be costed separately.

4. Benefits for the Host

The DEMHIST Conference provides a focus in the host country (city or region) for a gathering of international experts in the field of historic house museums. Each conference establishes a professional and personal network which will last far beyond the single conference. International experts provide fresh ideas feedback and options on developments in the host country. The conference may raise the international profile of the host's house museum through its participation in worldwide networking from the point of view of business and tourism. The conference provides a platform for VIP or government representatives of the host.

5. Responsibility of Host and Board

The host of a Conference and General Assembly should:

- define the Conference theme in detail,
- develop the Call for Papers,
- organize the programme in accordance with the procedure detailed below,
- provide venues for General Assembly and Conference, and for the Board meeting (including the following dinner of the Board),
- provide support facilities for General Assembly and Conference,
- propose a variety of suitable accommodation,
- send out invitations to the main speakers (enclosing a letter from the Chair),organise tours appropriate to the theme of the Conference.

The Board should be only involved in the organisation as far as the co-ordination of the conference is concerned.

The host can consult the Chair, but only for feedback about decision making.

6. Organizing an Annual Conference

Call for Paper/Final Programme:

The host presents the Call for Paper as just as the Final Programme to the Chair who makes the confirmation after consulting the Board.

After reception of all proposals, these should be appreciated by the host together with the Chair. Papers must respect the theme given and be scientifically relevant. A minimum of papers by local professionals is desirable.

Board Meeting:

The Board Meeting is an integral part of the annual conference. A significant portion of time (at least half a day) on the day preceding the conference needs to be set aside for Board business. The host should provide a suitable meeting venue (for 12 people) along

with administrative infrastructure. The host should also arrange a joint dinner/lunch as integral part of the Board meeting.

Conference Venue:

Ideally the host organisation will be in a position to provide the conference venue (at no/or greatly reduced charge). The venue should be within reasonable access of accommodation and transport. The conference venue should have a suitably large meeting room (for minimum 60-80 people), with all reasonable technical support. In the past a separate adjoining space for coffee and tea breaks has proved useful. Lunch/dinner should be provided on site or nearby.

Languages:

ICOM is an international organisation and has three official languages, therefore it should be possible to provide all information concerning the conference in English, French and Spanish. This also concerns the abstracts which should be distributed at the beginning of the conference. There should always be provided simultaneous translation from one or two of these languages into/from the local idiom, whenever none of the three is locally adopted.

Fees:

The Conference registration fees must cover all costs of the event. The fees have to be calculated on a realistic basis; DEMHIST will not cover any deficit. .

The host is responsible, that the registration fee adequately covers all costs and meet the conference requirements, including rent, receptions, coffee/tea breaks, technical support, bank commission fees¹, tours, travel and accommodation of key-speakers (no speaker's fee!).

In general the host is well advised to seek additional support by sponsors or local authorities (e.g. receptions, tours etc. by local historic houses, partner museums or municipalities etc.) . Fundraising activities have to agree with ICOMrules; DEMHIST is glad to assist the host in their fundraising activities.

The fees should make a clear distinction between DEMHIST and non-DEMHIST members and ICOM and non-ICOM members. Board members pay the regular registration fees. The following people are excepted from the payment of a registration fee:

- Host organisation/organiser,
- Chair and Secretary of DEMHIST,
- Key speakers, if specially invited.

Accommodation:

In general accommodation arrangements should be settled between the participants and hotels directly, in order to reduce the amount of paperwork and bureaucracy for the host. In advance the host should however arrange for special conditions with a range of three or four hotels at different price levels. In addition a list of available hotels in the city/region or appropriate website or tourist/accommodation office email address/website should be distributed/sent out as early as possible.

Invitations:

Board and host have to be aware, that the participation in the conference may serve primarily as a means to gain entrance visas for host or transit countries. The host should therefore examine participation requests carefully on the grounds of an ICOM-membership or via the diplomatic representatives of the host country. Use common sense! If a letter of invitation is required for the visa, Chair and host should sign the letters of invitation jointly after careful examination of the circumstances.

¹ Bank commission fees (currency conversions fees) should not be underestimated. A lot of people subtract the commission from the registration fee and do not pay the full amount, which may leave the host with a loss. The host is advised to consider this possibility when determining the fees.

Informations:

The Call for Papers should be sent out as soon as possible (preferably straight after the annual conference) via email by the Secretary/Treasurer. The Call for Papers should parallelly be published on the websites of the host, its partner organisations, the organisations of the Board members, the national ICOM-Committees and the ICOM-Bulletin.

An Information Sheet including place, date, theme, provisional programme and fees should be sent out in the same way 9-12 months in advance.

Registration form should be sent out 6-4 months in advance and include:

- § Final programme,
- § Address of the conference site and associated functions such as reception, starting point of tours etc.,
- § A street map, or simplified street map, of the conference site area and/or additional locations (reception/meetings etc.),
- § Contact details and contact person for the site (phone, fax, email, etc.),
- § Airport and indication of buses, taxis to city/venue,
- § Sea Ferry Port (where applicable) and indication of buses, trains, taxis to city of venue,
- § Train and Bus stations as appropriate,
- § Ground Transport arrangements in city/region,
- § Likely weather conditions for the conference period and associated advice to delegates.

Publications:

The summaries and results of the Conference will be published on the DEMHIST website. The author is designated by the Board before the Conference begins.

Reporting and Feedback:

After the conference the host should give a written report including names of all participants, sponsors and other institutions/persons involved and any other relevant information.

The conference will be evaluated by the Board together with the host on the basis of a questionnaire filled in by the participants.

(Daniela Ball/Hartmut Dorgerloh, September 2010)