

Environmental Education Association of Southern Africa (EEASA) Conference Guidelines

1. Importance of EEASA Conferences

EEASA conferences are a very important feature of the Association because they provide a face-to-face working event where researchers and practitioners share and learn together, provide a space for proposing and supporting campaigns that strengthen environment and sustainability education; c) work as a tool to strengthen awareness, political buy-in, and e) are a tool for membership-drive in the countries where they are held. For this reason, attempts are made to encourage most of the southern African countries to host the conference.

These conferences also are a key fundraising activity for EEASA and for environment and sustainability education projects in the country where they are hosted. Additionally, the EEASA publications committee source the papers from the presentations and papers produced for the conference.

It is therefore important that the host country takes note of these guidelines in their preparation and conducting of the conference. They form the baseline from which the hosts can innovate to contribute to continuous improvement in the quality of the conferences.

2. Scope and Purpose of the Guidelines

Environmental Education Association of Southern Africa (EEASA) Council seeks to strengthen and harmonise the standard of conference hosting. The need to harmonise stems from the expectations of the conference participants as raised at the various Annual General Meetings. The sources of inconsistency have been attributed to the lack of guidance for people hosting such conferences, particularly with regards to costs, type of venue and accommodation, conference theme, length of the conference, expected membership and dates. This has not only retarded the growth of the association, but has deprived EE/ESD practitioners and researchers from all levels the incentives and motivation to attend the conference and countries to see the possibilities of hosting this conference. This document, therefore seeks to give guidance to hosting organisations or willing to host the annual EEASA conference.

3. Bidding to host the conference

3.1 Paid up members of the Association may show their interest to host the annual EEASA conference.

3.2 Hosting institution or individuals in the institution should be members of EEASA

3.3 The hosting should be embedded within a legal (entity) institution

3.4 The interest to host should be in the form of a written formal request that includes

3.4.1 the motivation of why they want to host

3.4.2 how they intend to host

3.4.3 where they intend to host and

3.4.4 a feasibility plan and a preliminary budget.

3.5 This intention to host must be submitted to the EEASA Council two years in advance.

3.6 Similarly, if the hosting institution wishes to withdraw from hosting the EEASA conference due to circumstances beyond their control, a written letter of withdrawal

should be written to the Honorary Secretary no later than 6 months of the proposed date of the conference.

- 3.7 The proposers make a presentation at the EEASA conference of how they are going to host
- 3.8 To promote networking and co-operation at country level, EEASA encourages a multi-stakeholder process that includes existing national or regional environmental education networks or groupings with experience on environmental matters.
- 3.9 The hosting institution should demonstrate to the EEASA Council a potential to raise at least 20% of the conference cost. This will be based on the written proposal and preliminary budget for hosting the conference. The other 80% should be covered by the conference fees.
- 3.10 Conference hosting is similar to implementing a project, and therefore the hosting institution should demonstrate administrative, events management, and financial ability to ensure delivery on the agreed upon outputs, ensure smooth running of the conference, as well as timely reporting.

4. Use of guidelines

The document shall be read together with the EEASA Constitution and the memorandum of understanding entered into between the hosting institution and EEASA. This document is not a legally binding document, but should be used to guide the bidding for and hosting of EEASA conferences.

5. Timing and the Venue of the Conference

- 5.1 The conference should be held each year preferably between the months of May and September. However the exact date of the conference shall be decided upon in consultation with the EEASA Council. It is advisable to consider the availability of the potential and active membership.
- 5.2 The venue of conference should be chosen with full consideration to transport connectivity and affordability for the EEASA membership. The venue should have appropriate rooms for plenary and parallel sessions, e.g. workshops, roundtables, presentations and videos.
- 5.3 Venue should be suitable for exhibitions and posters
- 5.4 The venue should be equipped with suitable technology and equipment for different forms presentations

6. The conference Registration

- 6.1 All EEASA conference participants should be incentivised to register with the hosting institution at least one month before the day of the conference.
- 6.2 All conference registration will include membership enrolment. Therefore membership fees should be included in ALL the conference fees.
- 6.3 The hosting institution must keep an up-to date registration data base detailing those who have shown interest to attend and those who have paid
- 6.4 The host institution must ensure that the abstracts and full papers are submitted before the conference on the officially designated dates.

7. Conference Programme

- 7.1 The host institution must ensure a quality programme that is cutting edge, and responds to the basic tenets raised in section one. The theme and sub-themes must show forward thinking, be contextually situated but with a regional/ sub-regional flavour.
- 7.2 The EEASA conference must have an official opening, culture night and a closing ceremony as part of its full programme.
- 7.3 The hosting institution should make information on the range of accommodation options available.
- 7.4 Teas and at least one meal, preferably lunch, should be made available for all registered conference participants.

8. Conference communication

8.1 Advertising

- 8.1.1 Hosting institution should communicate the information about the event (advertising, raising awareness, calling for registration and calling for papers as well as enticing information about the venue and the conference) as soon as the hosting has been confirmed by Council.
- 8.1.2 Hosting institution should regularly communicate about the conference to the EEASA database and other networks. The EEASA Council will provide the most current database.
- 8.1.3 It is advisable that the hosting institution sets up a website or web page for the conference and link it to the EEASA website
- 8.1.4 The hosting institution should also provide information on alternative accommodation and other essential services for participants.

8.2 Communication with council

- 8.2.1 The hosting institution should set up a clear communication channel between the host and the Council, especially the EEASA Council President and the Conference Portfolio Chair.
- 8.2.2 Minutes, notes or points of action must be shared with Conference Portfolio Chair at the latest one week after the meeting

8.3 Administrative communication

- 8.3.1 Council should have access to database during the Conference

8.4 Conference communication

- 8.4.1 Hosting institution must ensure clear information of any changes prior to and during the event.
- 8.4.2 The LOC will consistently communicate progress of the conference with the conferences chair

9. Conference outputs

- 9.1 Hosting institution will produce conference proceedings. (report, full papers, final programme after incorporating any changes during the conference) and avail them to the participants at most six (6) months after the conference.
- 9.2 Proceedings are a property of EEASA and therefore hosting institution must ensure an acceptable quality and standard.
- 9.3 The format (electronic / hardcopy) of the proceedings should be negotiated with council as part of the hosting agreement.
- 9.4 Hosting institution will provide a database of funders for the conference

9.5 Hosting institution will provide a composite database of registered and paid delegates, invited guests, and those who registered but did not pay and attend (showed interest).

10. Conference Fees

- 10.1 Conference fees should be contextually affordable.
- 10.2 The council will advance the hosting institution an amount of Twenty Thousand South African Rands (R20 000), payable within sixty (60) days of the last day of the conference in South African Rand.
- 10.3 The hosting institution should inform the EEASA administrative office within two weeks of receiving monetary donations for the purpose of the conference.
- 10.4 The hosting institution should use the money and all other materials received only for the purpose set up in the approved conference proposal: any deviation from the aforementioned approved conference proposal must be done with the consent of the council.
- 10.5 The hosting institution will transfer at least twenty five (25) % of all excess funds, after satisfying liabilities, including membership fees and start-up loan to the EEASA council account. The remaining of excess funds should be used for legacy EE/ESD activities for EEASA by the hosting institution.
- 10.6 The hosting institution should satisfy Council that the use of remaining excess funds will pertain to EE related projects.

11. Financial reporting

- 11.1 The hosting institution should submit to Council professionally audited income and expenditure report not more than 6 months after the last day of the conference
- 11.2 The hosting institution should appoint a professional external auditor who will be responsible for auditing conference and post conference accounts.
- 11.3 The hosting institution should submit to Council a brief narrative report attributable to the audited expenditure report not more than 6 months after the last day of the conference
- 11.4 The names and the address of the auditors should be submitted to the EEASA council before the conference.
- 11.5 The EEASA council can request for additional, specific reports prior, during and/or after the conference.

12. Examination of Records

- 12.1 The council and especially the Honorary Treasurer of the Council or the Council's Administrative office should have unlimited access to all documents, or records pertaining to the conference until such a time that all conference reporting procedures outlined in this guidelines have been completed and accepted by the EEASA council as having wound up the business of the conference.

13. Environmental Policy

- 13.1 The hosting institution should ensure to follow environmentally prudent practices in planning and implementing the conference.
- 13.2 All materials used during the conference comply with acceptable international environmental standards and should further the sustainability agenda.

The hosting institution should ensure that all conference facilities are accessible and safe for all participants