

ESF CONFERENCES UNIT

# Operational Guidelines for Chairs

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## Who we are

*The ESF Conference Unit is located in Brussels and is responsible for the management and development of the ESF Research Conferences Scheme. Additionally, the Unit runs the ESF World Conferences and provides organisational and logistical support to other ESF units.*

Head of Unit (Brussels)	Ms. Benita Lipps
Senior Conference Officer (Brussels)	Ms. Alessandra Piccolotto
Conference Officers (Brussels)	Ms. Allegra Roccato Ms. Caroline Nsenda Ms. Maja De Noyette
Conference Assistant (Brussels)	Ms. Laura Pizzamiglio

### Your Conference Officer

You will be assigned an ESF Conference Officer who will advise and support you on all procedures and take care of all logistical aspects of your conference.

## Our Responsibilities: Logistics and Support

*The ESF Conferences Unit is responsible for providing a high quality service in support of your conference.*

### In particular, we will:

- \* Take care of all administrative arrangements with the venue
- \* Provide information, guidelines and templates to the Chair
- \* Assist the Chair in publicising the Conference
- \* Manage the processing of applications
- \* Monitor the conference budget
- \* Provide logistical support to the Chair
- \* Liaise with the Chair, the invited speakers and the participants
- \* Provide an on-site conference secretariat
- \* Evaluate the operational quality of the Conference

**Should you have any questions concerning these responsibilities, please do not hesitate to contact your Conference Officer.**

## The ESF Research Conferences Format

Over **three to four full conference days**, up to 20 invited speakers (including chairs) present the most recent developments in their field of research. Short talks should be complemented by poster sessions, round-table discussions or discussion groups. **Parallel sessions are not permitted.** We encourage your ideas and suggestions on how to organise engaging and innovative interaction between the speakers and the participants. Depending on your preferences and your field, these could include moderated poster sessions, brainstorming groups, case studies, PechaKucha Presentations, 1-to-1 networking or mentoring meetings, themed dinner tables, etc. Your Conference Officer will be happy to assist you in finding the right format to ensure a lively interaction between all participants.

Usually, arrival and registration take place on the afternoon before the start of the conference, and departure the morning after the conference has finished (5 nights in total).

Up to 150 selected participants and invited speakers may attend. The ESF Conference Unit reserves the right to cancel the conference if there are fewer than 80 valid applications at the application deadline.

## Scientific Activities

The core activities of the conference will be based on the **lectures by invited speakers**, who are leaders in their respective fields, followed by extensive discussion periods. An **informal exchange of ideas**, both inside and outside the lecture room, should be encouraged, and the number of sessions in the daily timetable should be limited in order to allow sufficient time for interaction between the participants.

Time should be reserved for a '**Forward Look Plenary Discussion**' about future developments in the field. The format of this discussion will be provided by ESF.

In order to encourage speakers to present their latest results and ideas, which may not yet be fully explored and ready for publication, no written papers will be requested.

## Networking and Social Activities

Participants will take all their meals together to encourage further contact and networking, which can be particularly beneficial to early stage researchers who may be less outspoken in the formal lecture room setting. In order to qualify for funding, both the speakers and the participants are **expected to stay for the whole duration.** Additionally, we encourage the inclusion of a social programme, which usually includes a half-day excursion and a conference dinner.

## Conference Impact

Through supporting excellent research conferences, we aim to contribute to the strengthening of a globally competitive European Research Area as laid-out in the ESF-EUROHORCS Science Policy Briefing ‘EUROHORCS and ESF Vision on a Globally Competitive ERA and their Road Map for Actions.’ (see <http://www.esf.org/publications.html>). In particular, these conferences aim to:

1. Identify emerging and strategically important topics by addressing questions raised by the scientific community
2. Strengthen the link between science and society; foster exchanges with politics and the private sector
3. To develop the research careers of Young and Early Stage Researchers
4. Showcase regional excellence of European research, research performing organisations and universities through funding partnerships
5. Connecting European research to the world

Together with you, the Chair, we aim to:

1. translate these aims into clear objectives for your conference and scientific communities
2. ensure that the programme and selection of speakers/ participants reflects these objectives
3. design an onsite programme that allows addressing these objectives
4. organise a ‘foresight session’
  - a. to summarise the conference results in the light of these objectives
  - b. to agree on lessons-learned, action needed and next steps
5. in due follow-up with you on the medium- and long-term impact and on initiatives emerging from your conference.

### Foresight Session

Time should be reserved for a **Conference Foresight Session** towards the end of the conference. Here, the main outcomes of the conference should be summarised. Together, all participants discuss under the moderation of the chair or a programme committee member: (a) the lessons taken from the conference, (b) strategic action or policy needed to take the field/ initiatives further, (c) priority-setting and concrete action plans and stakeholders involved in follow-up activities, (d) means of ensuring continued dialogue and exchange. Concrete questions should be developed and circulated before the conference. The Conference Unit will provide you with a draft template as a basis for the **Foresight Discussion** and for the **Foresight Report**.

## Typical Conference Schedule

**Fig. 1: Typical ESF Research Conferences Schedule**

Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu
	<i>Breakfast</i>	<i>Breakfast</i>	<i>Breakfast</i>	<i>Breakfast</i>	<i>Breakfast</i>
	Morning Session 1	Morning Session 1	Morning Session 1	Morning Session 1	Departure
	<i>Coffee break</i>	<i>Coffee break – Group Photo</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>	
	Morning Session 2	Morning Session 2	Morning Session 2	Morning Session 2	
	<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Lunch</i>	
	Afternoon Session 1	<b>Excursion</b>	Afternoon Session 1	Afternoon Session 1	
Arrival/ Registration	<i>Coffee break</i>		<i>Coffee break</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>	
	Afternoon Session 2		Afternoon Session 2	Foresight Session	
	<i>Dinner</i>	<i>Dinner</i>	<i>Dinner</i>	<b>Conference Dinner</b>	
Reception/ Dinner		Poster Session			

Please note:

- While poster sessions, round-table discussions or discussion groups are encouraged, parallel sessions are not permitted
- ESF Research Conferences within the ESF-LIU Partnerships are one full day shorter (e.g., 4 nights, 3 full conference days)

## Designing Your Conference

*The ESF Research Conference Scheme aims to give you full responsibility and control over the scientific content of your conference while offering a well-established, effective organisational framework. For your conference to become a success, we ask you to work within this framework, adhere to the ESF values and strategic priorities and respect our working processes.*

### Conditions for Funding

By signing the Quality Level Agreement and accepting the role of ESF Research Conference Chair, you acknowledge our conditions for funding. These conditions define the scale, scope and format of ESF Research Conferences. Should these not be met at any stage of the organisational process, ESF reserves the right to cancel the conference.

- **Scale: Medium-sized research conferences**  
On the day of the application deadline, your conference must have received at least 80 valid applications
- **Scope: Pan-European events, promoting synergies between high-level and young talents**
  - at least 35% of the conference budget must be allocated to support the attendance of young scientists/early stage researchers (<36)
  - no more than 60% of the budget can be used to support chairs and speakers
  - no more than 20% of the invited speakers and no more than 20% of selected participants can come from one specific country
- **Format: plenary-style, discussion-based exchanges**  
The conference must adhere to the format described in the previous section: 4 full conference days (3 for ESF-LiU Conferences), up to 20 invited speakers, short talks and poster sessions, no parallel sessions. ESF will select the conference venue and set – jointly with the chair – the conference dates.

### Terms of the Grant

Through its Research Conferences, ESF tries to promote its values of equality and Pan-European collaboration. While the outcome of your conference will be chiefly evaluated in terms of its scientific excellence, we ask you to support these values by respecting the following terms:

- **Equality:** at least 40% of invited speakers and at least 40% of participants should be from the minority gender. This should be reflected in the allocation of grants.
- **Pan-Europeanness:** at least 70% of all those attending should be from [ESF Member Countries](#). This should be reflected in the allocation of grants.

# Your Responsibilities as Conference Chair

*The Chair is responsible for ensuring the quality of the scientific programme*

As the Chair you will be responsible for ensuring the quality of the scientific programme through the **selection and invitation of speakers**, and through the **selection of participants**. Additionally, you are expected to support ESF in advertising the Conference, and to raise further financial support for the Conference.

We expect you to operate within ESF rules, budgets, procedures and deadlines, and that you work in close cooperation with the ESF Conferences Unit at all times.

## **This includes the following responsibilities**

The timely selection and invitation and confirmation of relevant, high profile speakers

- Raising further financial support for the conference in general, and for young scientists grants in particular; managing and allocating these funds with the help of the ESF Conferences Unit
- Publicising the conference through all available channels
- Providing international contacts, addresses and mailing lists for announcement and advertisement purposes
- Selecting applicants and the allocating grants based on scientific merit, the promotion of young researchers, and the geographical and gender balance
- Cooperating closely with the ESF Conference Unit within the set framework and timelines. This includes:
  - Exchanging information regularly, in particular, with regard to progress, developments and changes
  - Operating within ESF rules, budgets, procedures and deadlines

**If a Booklet of Abstracts is desired, the Chair will be responsible for its creation, production and cost.**

**Your Conference Officer will provide you with information and templates for each of these tasks. Should you have any questions concerning these responsibilities, please do not hesitate to contact us.**



### Quality Assurance

In order to maintain the excellence of the ESF Research Conferences Scheme, the quality of the conference will be evaluated both internally and externally by the ESF Conference Unit,, you as Conference Chair and the participants.

The reports will be forwarded to the appropriate ESF Standing Committees and Expert Committees for information and consideration in their science policy discussions, and also to ESF’s Partners in the ESF Research Conferences Scheme.

### Selecting Participants and Allocating Grants

To maintain the highest scientific standards, the attendance of an ESF Research Conference is only possible after successful application. Therefore, one of your key tasks will be to select conference participants, assign short talks and posters and decide on the allocation of conference grants.

A few days after the application deadline, your Conference Officer will provide you with an overview of all applications (including research interests and abstracts) and a grant allocation spreadsheet. These documents will help you make your decision while adhering to the terms and conditions specified earlier.

The grant allocation spreadsheet will allow you to:

A. Applicant Information								L. Decision about Participation		
	Surname	Name	Age	Sex	City Code	Net Code	Scientific Standing of the applicant	Relevance of application to the conference	Accept/Reject Applicant?	
1	Doe	John	32	M	RU	IN	1 - Average or less	1 - Average or less	Reject	
2	Smith	Jane	29	F	FR	BE	2 - Good/Very Good	3 - Outstanding	Accept	

- \* Assign conference and travel grants to speakers
- \* accept/ reject applicants

A. Applicant Information								L. Decision about Short talk/ poster			B. Funding Decision			
	Surname	Name	Age	Sex	City Code	Net Code	Poster	Short talk	Novelty, originality & soundness of abstract	Short talk/ Poster Accepted?	Travel grant Requested	Conference Fee Requested	Conference Grant (€)	Travel Contribution (€)
1	Doe	John	32	M	RU	IN								
2	Smith	Jane	29	F	FR	BE	N	Y	2 - Good/Very Good	Short Talk	Y	Y	200	

- \* Assign conference and travel grants to participants
- \* Assign short talks or posters to participants
- \* Give you an overview of the current financial status and your compliance with the terms and conditions

**More information, supportive documents and advises are available on line in the Chair sResource Center on <http://www.esf.org/activities/esf-conferences/restricted-pages.html>. Username and password will be provided upon signature of the Quality Level of Agreemen**

# Conference Checklist

- 18-12 months

## 1 Agree on conference outline

The ESF Conferences will suggest a date, taking into consideration the preferences expressed by the Chair, availability of the venue and other ESF Research Conferences commitments. If this date is not viable, an alternative date will be identified. Any deviations from the standard ESF Research Conferences Format will be agreed in writing in the Quality Level Agreement. The Chair will provide the Conference Officer with the following in order to include the conference web page in the ESF calendar of events:

- a conference picture
- a paragraph about the scope and objectives of the conference
- a list of topics to be covered

- 12-9 months

## 2 Set up the working schedule with your Conference Officer

Your assigned Conference Officer will provide you with the necessary templates, give you access to the Chairs Resource Center, set the deadlines and discuss the next steps with you. **Please keep your Conference Officer informed at all times.**

## 3 Select, invite and confirm the conference speakers

The Chair will select and invite high-profile conference speakers in order to create a balanced scientific programme that reflects the most recent developments in the field of conference. The Chair will follow-up with invited speakers until confirmation of participation is received.

The Conference Officer will provide the Chair with a Letter of Invitation Template. The invitation needs to include but is not limited to the information provided in this template.

## 4 Raise/ apply for additional funds

The Chair is asked to seek additional sponsorship. These funds can either be transferred to the ESF Conferences Unit to be included in the overall budget or managed by the Chair.

Additional sponsorship will be acknowledged in conference materials and the website proportionate to the amount provided e.g. up to 1500EUR, name mentioned – over 1500EUR name and logo etc.

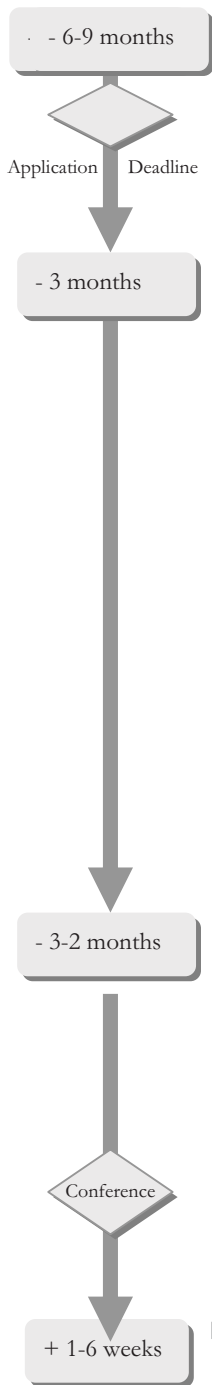
**Please visit our Sponsor Resource Center for information, advice and suggestions: <http://www.esf.org/activities/esf-conferences/sponsor-resource-center.html>**

## 5 Contribute to conference publicity & advertising

The Chair should advertise the conference through all available channels

In addition, the Chair should provide the following documents:

- the full address and email list of the invited speakers;
- a comprehensive, geographically-balanced email list of potential participants;
- Should a third party wish to display information material during the Conference, this will have to be seen and approved by ESF at least two weeks prior to the Conference



## 6 Compose the preliminary programme

The Conference Officer will ask the Chair for the following:

- a list of confirmed invited speakers with affiliations and the titles of their lectures;

## 7 Select the participants and conference grantees

The Chair, will select the participants from the list of conference applicants and allocate conference grants within the scope of the conference budget provided by the ESF Conference Officer

The Chair should send back the list of chosen participants and the allocation of financial support by the date agreed with the Conference Officer, which is normally **within 1 week** of receiving the applications

The following Selection Criteria apply:

- Scientific: Scientific merit of participants & scientific needs of the conference
- Geographical: Participants, including speakers, may be accepted from any country. Without compromising scientific standards, the aim should be for a wide geographical representation of scientists. Further Info see Terms and Conditions.
- Equality: Special attention should also be paid to the involvement of early stage applicants; an over-representation of scientists from the host country should be avoided. Moreover, the gender balance should be taken into consideration. Further Info see Terms and Conditions.

### Respect the Conference Budget

The Conference Unit will calculate the conference costs as tightly as possible in order to keep fees down. Therefore, no further financial contributions can be made once the conference budget has been allocated

## 8 Compose the final programme

The Conference Officer will provide the Chair with a Template for the Final Programme. The Chair will need to provide the following:

- Final Conference Structure and Timeline
- Names of Sessions and Session Chairs and Speakers

## 9 Manage ESF Conference

The Chair will be responsible for the implementation of the programme and the scientific quality of the Conference.

The Chair is encouraged to invite an assistant or young researcher to help with the organisation of the poster sessions and/or other on-site scientific aspects.

## 10 Write the scientific report

The Chair is expected to submit a conference report no later than 6 weeks after the Conference. The Conference Officer will provide a Template for the Scientific Report.

## QUALITY LEVEL AGREEMENT

### 1. Preamble

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This Quality Level Agreement (hereafter referred to as 'the agreement') is made in Brussels on the date of signature by and between the Conference Unit of the European Science Foundation (ESF) represented by its Head of Unit, Benita Lipps (hereafter referred to as 'Conference Unit'), and the chair of the following ESF Research Conference (see title below), [Title, Name, Affiliation] (hereafter referred to as 'chair');

WHEREAS the European Science Foundation (ESF) and its partners have selected the proposal [No, Title] to be hosted and funded within the framework of the ESF Research Conference Scheme. The proposal, as well as any conditions for funding or recommendations expressed by the ESF in its feedback are considered part of this agreement.

WHEREAS the chair is responsible for the scientific organisation of the conference and the Conference Unit is responsible for the logistical aspects of the organisation and administration of the conference.

This agreement aims to set out the specific rights and responsibilities of the two parties.

### 2. Subject of this Agreement

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This Agreement will cover the joint planning, organisation and controlling of the following conference:

Conference Title: [Title]  
Partnership: ESF-[Partner]  
Conference Officer: [Name]  
Location: [Location]  
On the following dates: Arrival: [11/11/1111]; Departure: [16/11/1111]; Conference: [12/11-15/11/1111]

### 3. Conference Outline

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#### Conference Objectives:

1. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Sed a malesuada dolor. Morbi nunc quam, feugiat id rhoncus eu, ullamcorper id eros.
2. Donec egestas nisl non lacus fermentum cursus. Cras facilisis, purus sed mattis bibendum, quam augue tincidunt turpis, ut eleifend purus risus id justo.
3. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Sed vehicula aliquet dictum. Phasellus in volutpat turpis.

#### Conference Description/ Scope:

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#### Core topics to be covered:

1. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit.
2. a malesuada dolor.
3. Morbi nunc quam, feugiat id rhoncus eu, ullamcorper id eros.
4. Donec egestas nisl non lacus fermentum cursus.
5. Cras facilisis, purus sed mattis bibendum, quam augue tincidunt turpis, ut eleifend purus risus id justo.
6. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit.
7. Sed vehicula aliquet dictum. Phasellus in volutpat turpis.

Keywords: Sed; vehicula aliquot; dictum; phasellus in volutpat; turpis

Conference Image: Description [attached]

#### **4. Responsibilities of the Chair**

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- a) The chair has the full responsibility for the scientific content of the conference, including, but not limited to:
  - Setting the conference objectives
  - The appointment of a organising committee, etc. if appropriate
  - the design of the programme, sessions, talks, discussions and poster sessions
  - the selection, invitation and briefing of session chairs and moderators
  - the selection, invitation and briefing of speakers and replacement speakers
  - scientific evaluation of abstracts and applications
  - the selection of participants, short talks and posters from the submitted application
  - the content of the conference website, programme and flyer
  - the submission of a scientific & foresight report, no later than 6 weeks after the event
- b) The chair will ensure that the conference objectives are reached and that necessary follow-up actions and activities are discussed and recorded in the Foresight session & report.
- c) The chair makes the final decision on the dates of the conference within the framework of the ESF Conference Series, bearing in mind similar meetings and the preferences of the conference community. This information is included in the MoU under Section 2. Any changes to these dates have to be agreed in writing by mutual consent.
- d) The chair has the responsibility for the identification of the most suited communication channels, media partners and exhibitors. In addition the chair will ensure the announcement and advertising of the conference through their own channels, using the official title, website and CI in their communication.
- e) The chair is asked to raise additional funds for the conference (co-funding) in line with the co-funding indicated in the proposal and the conditions for funding. The Conference Unit will provide guidelines and can – if desired – support the administration of co-funding.
- f) The chair is responsible for the allocation of grants and travel reimbursements to invited speakers and selected participants, in line with the guidelines and conditions of ESF and the Conference Unit. The Conference Unit will provide the necessary templates, guidelines and support.
- g) The chair and the Conference Unit shall jointly agree on the use of budget, deadlines, milestones and exchange information in regular intervals to discuss the status and progress. They agree to honour the set timeline and inform each other of possible deviations in good time.
- h) When it comes to the acceptance of participants, talks and allocation of support, the chair will honour the ESF Conference rules and recommendations concerning scientific excellence, regional balance, equality and the support for young and early stage researchers as set out in the Guidelines for Chairs. Any deviation from these will have to be agreed in writing.
- i) If desired, the chair may consider the publication of conference proceedings and the printing of a booklet of abstracts. The Conferences Unit will support the collection of abstracts but not contribute to the editing, printing or any costs related to these tasks or products.
- j) The Conference Unit will consider the chair as their sole contact when it comes to the responsibilities listed above. Nevertheless, the chair is free to fulfil these responsibilities in the way they deem the most effective, i.e. they can choose to enlist the help of a co-chair, a small steering committee or a student. The Conference Unit will not be accountable for costs related to the responsibilities of the chair listed above.
- k) When it comes to the structuring of the programme, the Conference Unit may offer their input and advice based on their experience as Conference Organiser.
- l) In order to inform participants about ESF, to increase the synergy with other initiatives, to support and evaluate the scientific quality of the conference and to ensure the exploration of a follow-up, ESF reserves the right to appoint a scientific rapporteur. For the duration of this initiative, they will act on a purely advisory capacity and will be available for scientific questions and support. This scientist will attend the conference and provide ESF with a rapporteur report.

#### **5. Responsibilities of the Conference Unit**

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- a) The Conference Unit will nominate a dedicated member (hereafter referred to as 'Conference Officer') as the primary point of contact for all enquiries in connection with the conference management (see Section 2). The Conference Officer or their representative shall be informed of all conference planning meetings.
- b) The Conference Officer will work with the chair in the realisation of the conference from the day of the QLA signature until the final report is handed in. The Conference Officer will be in attendance throughout the conference and will ensure that there is sufficient staff to manage delegate registrations, speaker requirements and onsite liaison with suppliers.
- c) The Conference Officer will provide regular updates for the entire duration of this collaboration and produce detailed statistical and financial reports no later than 3 months after the conference.

- d) The Conference Unit will be responsible for dealing with all written and verbal enquiries relating to the *administration* of the conference, receiving and processing abstracts and applications, for organising and distributing abstracts for evaluation and for communicating the results. Any enquiries relating to the scientific content of the school will be forwarded to the Chair.
- e) The Conference Unit will be responsible for the selection and booking of venues, using their experience to negotiate favourable rates.
- f) The Conference Unit will be responsible for the *technical* implementation of the conference website, the call for applications/papers, online applications, registrations and payments, the administration of grants and reimbursement of travel grants.
- g) The Conference Unit, in collaboration with the ESF Communications Unit, will support the chair in the communication and marketing of the conference by producing a conference website, a conference exchange platform, marketing materials, announcements in relevant journals and pdf flyers. The Conference Chair is encouraged to use these tools to announce the conference through their own channels. Any additional conference websites and publicity materials have to be cleared by the Conferences Unit in order to ensure full adherence to the corporate style, requirements of partners and sponsors. Any additional websites and materials are to refer to the ESF Conferences website for registration and practical information.
- h) Unless agreed otherwise in writing, the Conference Unit will enter into all contracts for the supply of products and services related to the conference, including but not limited to the contracts for the venue, accommodation, technical equipment, stands, catering, social programme, printing as well as agreements with delegates and the ongoing liaison with the contractors.
- i) The Conference Unit will be responsible for calculating the overall conference costs, the conference registration fee, and setting the attendance fees for speakers, grantees, and paying participants.
- j) The Conference Unit will suggest sponsorship and exhibition packages as well as support in raising additional funds.

## 6. Finances

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- a) The European Science Foundation will provide a grant of up to EUR xx.000 (hereafter referred to as 'ESF contribution to the conference budget'), to be used for participation and travel grants according to the submitted proposal, conditions for funding and guidelines for chairs. Receiving the full grant is subject to the correct use of funds and the financial budget approved by the ESF General Assembly in November 2011.
- b) The [PartnerA] will provide a grant of up to EUR xx.000 (hereafter referred to as 'partner contribution to the conference budget'), to be used for participation and travel grants according to the submitted proposal, conditions for funding and guidelines for chairs. Receiving the full grant is subject to the correct use of funds and the full transfer of the contribution by the Partner to ESF.
- c) The [PartnerB] will provide a grant of up to EUR xx.000 (hereafter referred to as 'partner contribution to the conference budget'), to be used for participation and travel grants according to the submitted proposal, conditions for funding and guidelines for chairs. Receiving the full grant is subject to the correct use of funds and the full transfer of the contribution by the Partner to ESF.
- d) The Chair will be responsible for the use of the conference budget, in particular the allocation of grants. The Conference Unit will be responsible for the administration of the conference budget.
- e) The Conference Unit will present and regularly update a draft budget, which will form the basis for the financial aims and expectations of the conference, all conference fees are without VAT, no VAT will be levied under any circumstances.

## 7. Cancellation

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In exceptional circumstances, wherein:

- the conference diverges significantly from presented draft programme, the conditions for funding and the ESF Conferences Scheme Framework, OR
- the call for applications attracts less than 80 scientifically valid applications, OR
- the conference competes with a similar event during the same period that the Conference Unit has not been made aware during the contract negotiations OR
- the chair does not fulfil the responsibilities laid out in this document in a professional and timely manner OR
- the ESF or its partner organisations decide to reduce their support for this event for financial reasons,

the Conference Unit reserves the right to reduce or withdraw the conference budget.

In cases where this clause applies, chairs will be informed least two weeks before the final decision is taken. ESF will not be liable for any financial commitments made to participants or speakers more than 3 months before the start date of the conference.

If the conference cannot take place by reason of strikes, fire, other action of the elements, accidents, government restrictions, war, terrorism or other causes beyond the control of either party (force majeure), the chair and the Conference Unit will jointly explore the options of rescheduling or partial refunding

## 8. Duration of the Agreement

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This MoU shall take effect on the date of signatures and shall remain valid until the reports have been officially accepted by the Conference Unit.

## 9. Applicable Law and Dispute Resolution

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The provisions of this agreement shall be interpreted in accordance with their true meaning and effect. Without prejudice to ESF's status as an independent non-governmental European association, reference shall be made to French substantive law where a matter is not specifically covered by this agreement or where a provision is ambiguous or unclear. Such reference shall be made exclusively for the matter or provision(s) concerned, and shall in no event apply to any other provision of this agreement.

Any dispute under this agreement which cannot be settled amicably shall be decided by arbitration, to be held in Strasbourg, France, in accordance with the procedure adopted by ESF by virtue of its status as an independent non-governmental European association.

## 10. Signatures

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### Conference Unit of the European Science Foundation

Place, Date

Benita Lipps, Head of ESF Conference Unit

### Conference Chair

Place, Date

[Title, Name]



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