

within the framework of the ESF Research Conferences Scheme

The **ESF Research Conferences Scheme** provides the opportunity for leading scientists and younger researchers to meet for discussions on the most recent developments in their fields of research. It acts as a catalyst for creating new synergistic contacts throughout Europe and the rest of the world. It develops principally through the establishment of long-term partnerships between the ESF and national and international organizations, including universities. **ESF Research Conferences** are open to scientists world-wide, whether from academia or industry. Conferences may be single events, or series, usually with a biennial meeting focusing on specific aspects of the same general topic. They generally last for four or five days and up to 150 participants and invited speakers may attend. Chairs select participants from applications received as a result of publicizing the Conferences. A conference fee is charged to participants.

ESF-EMBO Symposia Guidelines

European Science Foundation

<http://www.esf.org>

The **European Science Foundation (ESF)**, with its headquarters located in Strasbourg, France, provides a common platform for its Member Organisations in order to advance European research and to explore new directions for research at the European level. Through its activities, the ESF serves the needs of the European research community in a global context.

European Molecular Biology Organization

<http://www.embo.org>

The **European Molecular Biology Organization (EMBO)** aims to promote biosciences in Europe. The Organization is funded by contributions from 24 Member States, which together form the European Molecular Biology Conference (EMBC), and is composed of more than 1100 scientists who have been selected by existing members on the basis of their excellence in research in the many different areas of molecular biology.

ESF/EMBO Symposia

The European Science Foundation (ESF) and the European Molecular Biology Organization (EMBO), within the framework of the ESF Research Conferences Scheme and the EMBO Courses and Workshops Programme, have agreed to co-sponsor a series of meetings, to be known as **ESF-EMBO Symposia**, which will be at the highest scientific level with respect to topics and choice of participants. The Symposia will bring together participants and experts from the Life Sciences and other science disciplines to discuss topics that are of major importance to the scientific community in Europe.

Topics

The topics should be at the forefront of scientific research and should be **interdisciplinary**. ESF-EMBO Symposia will concentrate on those topics that are at the **interface between Life Sciences (ensuring that 'molecular aspects' are covered) and other related science disciplines**, such as: Molecular Biology + Chemistry, Physics, Computer Sciences, Mathematical Modelling, Space Science, Clinical Medicine, Engineering, Environmental Science, Humanities and Social Sciences.

Venue and Dates

A limited number of venues, each linked to a certain scientific disciplinary area, are being established in order to create a clear 'brand-name' for ESF Research Conferences, and a predictable relation for the scientific community. ESF-EMBO Symposia will initially take place at **Hotel Eden Roc, Sant Feliu de Guixols (near Barcelona), Spain**. Starting in 2012, ESF-EMBO Symposia will take place in Pultusk near Warsaw, Poland. The Symposia may be held between March and December. However, the summer months of July and August are not recommended. The typical duration of a Symposium is 5 nights, and 4 full conference days. Participants will normally arrive on a Saturday afternoon, and depart on Thursday after breakfast. When submitting a Proposal for a Symposium, the desired **dates** should be indicated.

Scientific Programme

The Chair (or the Co-chairpersons) will be responsible for developing the scientific programme for the Symposium, and a small Organizing Committee may assist him/her.

Profile and Format of the Symposia

The core activities of the Symposia will be based on **lectures by invited scientists**, who are leaders in their respective fields, followed by **extensive discussion periods** e.g. 30-minute lecture followed by an extended discussion period. An informal exchange of ideas, both inside and outside the lecture room will be encouraged, and the number of sessions in the daily timetable will be limited in order to allow sufficient time for interaction between the participants. In addition to the 5-6 hours per day of lecture room activities, poster sessions, round-table discussions or discussion groups will be organized. Either one afternoon or extended lunch periods will be usually kept free of lectures in order to allow time for free time activities.

One evening should be reserved for a **'Forward Look Plenary Discussion'** about future developments in the field. The format of this discussion can be provided by ESF¹.

In order to encourage speakers to present their latest results and ideas, which may not yet be fully explored and ripe for publication, no written papers will be requested. The publication, as proceedings, of selected papers prepared after the Conferences may be approved by the Chair, subject to the agreement of the speakers concerned.

Participants will take all their meals together to encourage further contact and networking, which will be particularly beneficial to younger researchers who may be less outspoken in the more formal lecture room setting. In order to gain optimum benefit from the Symposium, both the speakers and the participants are expected to stay for the whole duration.

Poster Sessions

Poster sessions will be a very important feature of ESF-EMBO Symposia. Ideally, the venue for the poster session will be located close to the main meeting room and will be large and light enough to host such an event. Moreover, a **social event** may be incorporated into the meeting. The following factors should also be considered:

¹ (The ESF Forward Look is a new instrument, which will enable Europe's scientific community to develop medium to long term views and analyses of future research developments in multidisciplinary topics, and interact with the policy makers from ESF Member Organisations. The aim is to bring together scientific foresight and national and European planning for research funding. See <http://www.esf.org/flooks>).

- each participant should give a one-slide presentation about the contents of his/her poster contribution at the beginning of the scheduled poster discussion sessions;
- sufficient time should be allowed for posters to be viewed, ideally throughout the entire meeting.

(2) Organization

In order to encourage leading scientists within Europe to chair ESF-EMBO Symposia, only the **scientific** aspects of the meeting organization (including any decisions on financial support for invited speakers and other participants) will be undertaken by the Chair and the Organizing Committee. However, it is recommended that Chairs seek **additional sponsorship** from other sources, and they should advise ESF which organization(s) they intend to approach. All other organizational tasks and logistics will be the responsibility of the ESF Conferences Unit, working in close co-operation with EMBO, and an ESF Conference Officer will be assigned to each Symposium. His/her tasks will include all the administrative arrangements at the venues, publicizing the Symposium, financial and budgetary matters, the processing of applications, communicating with participants and speakers, making payments and collecting fees. The ESF Conferences Unit is well equipped to manage the organization of the Symposia in a standardized, streamlined manner, in close co-operation with the Chairs.

Grant

The Grant available from ESF and EMBO will normally be used to meet the expenses of the invited speakers and selected young scientists. Travel should be by rail or by economy air. Experience shows that it is often possible for speakers to obtain some of their travel costs from other sources, if the sponsor offers partial support. The Grant provided by the co-sponsors will be **EUR 30 000** per Symposium on an equal share basis. It is expected that participants (other than the speakers and selected young scientists) will pay their own travel and subsistence costs, and the registration fee.

Management of the Grant

The ESF Conferences Unit, in close consultation with EMBO and the Chair, will manage the Grant. ESF will be responsible for all payments.

Registration Fee

A **registration fee**, in the order of EUR 200-300, will be levied, in order to cover the costs of organizing and administering the Symposium. This levy will be in addition to the subsistence costs. The Symposium fees (subsistence + registration) will be all-inclusive i.e. full board & lodging, meeting facilities for the duration of the meeting, a social programme, and group bus transfers. All fees will be paid to ESF, and an online fee payment facility will be available. A higher fee will be levied for participants from industry (see section on 'Additional Sponsorship - Industry' below).

Additional Sponsorship - Industry

The Symposia will be advertised as "ESF-EMBO Symposia on...." in whatever flexible constellation. Additional sponsorship may be acknowledged in publicity material in terms such as "With major support from..." or "With additional sponsoring from...". If the third-party sponsor wishes to have its logo included in advertising material, the Chairs should advise ESF accordingly. ESF and EMBO do not usually favour co-sponsorship that requires proceedings to be published. There should be no confidential information. Eventual IPR or copyright are the property of all participants contributing financially or intellectually to the Symposium.

Using the above criteria, scientists working for **private industry** should be judged on an equal footing with those from universities. However, if a participant from industry is accepted, his/her company is expected to pay ESF-EMBO a fee of **EUR 500**, in addition to their travel and subsistence costs.

If scientists working for industry are invited as speakers, the additional fee will not be levied.

Editorial staff of scientific journals may attend the Symposium without paying the higher fee, provided that the Organizer(s) agree to their participation, and they guarantee to publish a report of the Symposium in their journal (subject to the prior agreement of the Chair).

Publicity

ESF and EMBO will publicize the Symposia in appropriate scientific journals, *The EMBO Journal*, in **EMBO reports** and on their respective web sites. ESF and EMBO will be responsible for the publicity of each Symposium, and for disseminating information to potential applicants.

The identity of a Symposium will be promoted through a standardized, graphical presentation of all its documents, which will include the logos of both ESF and EMBO. The Symposium will be advertised to **EMBO Members** and other **appropriate individuals and laboratories**, to **ESF Member Organizations** and to a **network of scientists**. Whenever possible, individual advertisements and calendar entries will also be placed free-of-charge in the scientific press, and in other appropriate journals and newsletters, according to the associated science disciplines.

In addition, it is very important that Chairs provide a comprehensive **emailing list** for poster circulation.

As soon as it is agreed to go ahead with the Symposium, Chairs will be expected to email the ESF Conferences Unit with the following documents in order to advertise the event:

- the **preliminary scientific programme**, including a paragraph about the scope of the Symposium, the list of topics to be covered, the list of confirmed invited speakers with their affiliations and the titles of their lectures;
- the full address and email list of the **invited speakers**;
- a **comprehensive, geographically-balanced email list** of all potentially interested scientists;
- a **list of scientific journals** or reviews and their websites for publicity and free inserts in calendars of events.

Applications to attend the Symposia and Deadlines for Application

An online **application facility** is available via the ESF Conferences website (<http://www.esf.org/conferences>). The deadline for applications should normally be 3 months before the event. The ESF Conferences Unit will process all applications and email them to the Chair for decision, together with each applicant's one-page abstract and list of publications.

Participation

Chairs will select participants from applications received as a result of ESF and EMBO publicizing the Conferences. The basic criteria for accepting participants will be their scientific merit and their scientific needs. Participants, including speakers, may be accepted from any country, although there should normally be a high proportion of Europeans. Without compromising scientific standards, organizers should aim for a wide geographical representation of scientists, with a recommended ratio of **about two-thirds European participation to one-third non-European**. Special attention should also be paid to the involvement of **younger applicants** and those from developing countries, and over-representation of scientists from the host country should be avoided. Moreover, the gender balance should be taken into consideration. ESF Research Conferences are expected to be large conferences of up to 150 participants. The attendance should generally be at least 80 participants.

Final Selection, Programmes & Invitations

The Chair should decide on the participation **within 3 weeks** of receiving the applications. At this stage he/she should finalize the scientific programme and email it to ESF, together with the list of participants and the allocation of financial support. A formal invitation will be sent by post to each invited speaker and participant. The Final Programme and Practical Information Guide will be emailed to them, as well as the invitation, and will also be available on the ESF Conferences website.

On-site Administrative Arrangements

The ESF Conferences Unit will finalize all on-site administrative arrangements. A **Conference Officer** will be present for the duration of the Symposium to take care of registration, travel payments and to oversee the local administrative organization. Owing to the size of the events, Chairs are encouraged to provide an **assistant or young researcher** to help at the registration desk, and to be responsible for the organization of the poster sessions and/or other on-site scientific aspects.

Questionnaires

Participants will be required to complete a **questionnaire** on various aspects of the Symposium. The completed questionnaires should be returned to the on-site secretariat during the event.

Report on the Symposium

The Chair is expected to write a **symposium report**, as it is a condition of sponsorship that a scientific report be submitted after every **Symposium**. The **symposium report** should have the following format:

1. An **introduction** (up to two pages) on the topic in non-specialist terms (especially for highly technical subjects);
2. **Scientific content** of the symposium:
 - a. a summary of the symposium sessions focusing on the scientific highlights
 - b. an assessment of the results and their potential impact on future research or applications
3. **'Forward Look ²Plenary Discussion'**:
 - a. State-of-the-art in the field;
 - b. Emerging topics;
 - c. Visions for the future of the research field – identification of issues in the 5-10 years+ timeframe;
 - d. Is there a need for a foresight-type initiative?
4. The **reaction of the participants** to the location and the organization, including networking, and any other relevant comments.

The reports should be sent to ESF **no later than six weeks** after the end of the Symposium. 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. The **Introduction** may be posted on a **'Conference Highlights'** page within the ESF Conferences website (subject to the explicit authorization of the Author).

Enquiries and Further Information

For all enquiries and/or for further information concerning the Symposium, please contact conferences-proposals@esf.org.

² See <http://www.esf.org/flooks>