

SECTION 10

MEETINGS

NUMBER 10.1 MEETINGS COMMITTEE

EFFECTIVE: April 2009; Amended November 2014; 2018 Summer Board Meeting; 2019 Spring Board Meeting; 2019 Fall Board Meeting; 2024 Fall Board Meeting

POLICY

The Meetings Committee is established for the purpose of overseeing policy and for proposing to the Board strategic directions for INFORMS meetings in order to accomplish the overall mission of INFORMS. In doing so, they work closely with the Director of Meetings and INFORMS Staff to ensure policies and directions are feasible and follow best practices.

The Director of Meetings reports to the Executive Director of INFORMS and, together with the Meetings Department and other INFORMS staff, oversees the scheduling, contracting and administration of the meetings in order to accomplish the overall mission of INFORMS.

The Vice President of Meetings (VP of Meetings) is elected for a two-year term by the membership of INFORMS. Candidates for the position should have demonstrated experience in meetings leadership along with active participation in the functions of the Institute. The VP may run unopposed for a second two-year term.

PROCEDURES

Committee Members

The Meetings Committee should consist of 4 to 8 members, plus the Chair, typically the VP of Meetings, who is a voting member of the Committee. Members serve two-year terms and may serve a maximum of two consecutive terms before stepping off the committee. Members' terms are staggered so that each year there are vacant positions to be filled. New members are appointed by the VP of Meetings, in accordance with Policies and Procedures Section 2.1. Members of the Meetings Committee are encouraged to make recommendations to the VP of Meetings regarding the appointment of new members.

Functions

The Committee's primary function is to develop policies that support the strategic plan for INFORMS meetings. In addition, the Committee, in conjunction with INFORMS staff, reviews meeting statistics, meeting evaluations, meeting finances and recommends to the Board policies that in the view of the Committee will improve efficiency, technical content, member experience

and value, general operations of meetings, and financial performance. This includes informing the Board of trends in attendance, cost of producing meetings, and challenges facing INFORMS meetings, INFORMS staff develops and maintains meeting manuals for INFORMS and subdivision meeting with oversight of the Meetings Committee. In addition, the Committee develops and supervises meeting policies.

Budgeting

The Director of Meetings will prepare draft budgets for review with the VP of Meetings, taking into account program objectives and priorities. Any significant modifications of the draft budgets recommended through the normal budget process, including the Finance Committee, will be communicated to the VP of Meetings prior to presentation to the INFORMS Board for approval.

See INFORMS Policies and Procedure Manual Section 15.2, Subdivisions, Procedures sections, for procedures related to expenditure approval of subdivision and special interest meetings.

Changes in meeting registration rates for INFORMS meetings are submitted by the VP of Meetings to the Board for approval.

Appointment of Organizing Meeting Chairs

The VP of Meetings, with the consultation of the Meetings Committee and the Director of Meetings, recommends future Chairs of INFORMS Meetings to the Board for review and approval.

For the Analytics Conference, the Practice Strategy Committee recommends the Chair and the Organizing Committee to the VP of Meetings.

Meeting Locations

The VP of Meetings and the Director of Meetings recommend the locations for INFORMS Meetings based on consideration of member convenience, cost and experience, geographic diversity and site feasibility as determined by the Meetings staff which compiles, reviews and analyzes data for future meeting locations.

The VP of Meetings regularly informs the Board of future meeting location through reports. If a proposed location has significant budget implications or could have strategic or controversial

ramifications, the VP of Meetings shall present the decision to the Board for discussion. The VP of Meetings, in consultation with the President, will determine if a Board vote is necessary.

Locations are approved by the Meetings Committee (and Board in rare circumstances), while the logistics of venue selection is under the purview of the Director of Meetings.

Relation to Meetings Organizing Chairs

Meetings Organizing Chairs will report on the status of their meetings at least once each year for review at a Meetings Committee meeting. The report should be written and describe progress relative to the planning and scheduling of their meeting and identify current or potential problem areas. Summaries of these reports will be included in the Meetings Committee reports to the Board.

Selection of Organizing Meeting Chairs and Program Committees

If a local chapter exists near the site of a future Annual Meeting or other INFORMS meetings, the Meetings Committee is strongly encouraged to consult with the local chapter officers prior to selecting the General Chair of the meeting and similarly to encourage the General Chair to consult with the local chapter officers as the General Chair forms the organizing committee and plans the meeting.

Relation to the Board

The VP of Meetings, as the committee's Board Liaison, will report to the Board through semi-annual written reports prepared before the annual national meeting and the spring Board meeting. The reports will describe planning for and status of future meetings, including meeting times and locations, and progress on specific subjects requested by the Board.

Meetings Committee Meetings

The Meetings Committee should meet at least four times each year. A quorum is a simple majority of Meetings Committee members.

RELATED DOCUMENTS:

INFORMS Policies and Procedure Manual, Section 2, General Procedures

INFORMS Policies and Procedures Manual, Section 4.3 Nominations and Elections for the Board
INFORMS Policies and Procedure Manual, Section 10.2 Meetings Planning
INFORMS Policies and Procedure Manual, Section 10.1.1, Joint Organization and Co-Sponsorship of External Conferences
INFORMS Policies and Procedure Manual Section 15.2, Subdivisions, procedures, Subdivision Meetings

NUMBER 10.2 INFORMS LEVEL MEETINGS

EFFECTIVE: November 2014 (Editorial Changes November 2016); 2019 Spring Board Meeting; 2024 Fall Board Meeting

POLICY

INFORMS currently conducts three to five Institute-level meetings per year. These meetings include the Annual Meeting, the Analytics Conference, the International Conference,

and topical conferences. The topical conferences focus on specific areas of strength within INFORMS, for example Healthcare, or Security. The International Conference is not held in years when the International Federation of Operational Research Societies (IFORS) holds a meeting.

- The Annual Meeting focus is on research and scholarship. Many opportunities to speak are offered.
- The International Conference is similar to the Annual meeting in format. Each International Meeting may have some unique characteristics due to location and local OR society.
- The Analytics Conference focus is on application of techniques and is heavily focused on practice. The Analytics Conference format offers fewer, carefully selected and longer-format talks.
- Topical conferences may follow either model, or a different approach, depending on the needs and interests of anticipated attendees.

Adding or eliminating an INFORMS-Level meeting requires INFORMS Board approval. Prior to the Board's review of adding or eliminating an INFORMS-level meeting, any proposal should be discussed by the Meetings Committee, with a recommendation submitted to the Board through the VP of Meetings.

RELATED DOCUMENTS:

INFORMS Policies and Procedure Manual, Section 10.2.5, Refunds of Registration
INFORMS Policies and Procedure Manual Section 15.2, Subdivisions, Procedures, Subdivision Meetings

NUMBER 10.2.1 JOINT ORGANIZATION AND CO SPONSORSHIP OF EXTERNAL CONFERENCES

EFFECTIVE: April 2009; Amended November 2014; 2019 Spring Board Meeting; 2024 Fall Board Meeting

POLICY

Jointly Organized Conferences

Agreements by which INFORMS organizes a conference in conjunction with an external organization must adhere to certain practices to ensure that INFORMS's logo, finances and reputation are adequately safeguarded.

Conference agreements between INFORMS and external organizations must explicitly specify the method(s) of:

- Distributing the financial liability and potential gains of the conference;
- Sharing management responsibilities for the conference, including site selection, content development, executing contracts, marketing, meeting logistics, collecting revenue, paying invoices, etc.;
- Ensuring that all revenue, expenses, surplus and liabilities are properly reported and all required Form 990's are completed and filed;
- Distributing licensing and created intellectual property;
- Ensuring use of the INFORMS logo and branding must be explicitly addressed.

All conference agreements must be signed by the Executive Director of INFORMS after seeking legal counsel if they deem necessary, reported to the Executive Committee, and stored in a central depository in the INFORMS business office.

Co-Sponsorship of External Conferences

INFORMS may be asked to co-sponsor an external conference, without taking a major role in the organization of the conference. Typically, the organizing entity requests that the INFORMS name appear as a co-sponsor and that the meeting be publicized among INFORMS membership.

- Requests to co-sponsor external meetings will be directed to the VP of Meetings and INFORMS Executive Director.

- Depending on the complexity of each request, the approval will be made by the VP of Meetings and INFORMS Executive Director. Complexity relates to risk, benefits, location, etc. If complex, the VP of Meetings shall select the most appropriate governing body, which may be the Executive Committee, Board of Directors, or the Meetings Committee, to engage.
- INFORMS prefers to have little or no financial risk. If the sponsorship involves significant financial exposure, the Meetings Committee will forward its recommendations to the Finance Committee for review and the Executive Committee for final decision.
- The basic criteria for co-sponsorship to guide the decisions are:
    - the meeting does not directly conflict with an INFORMS meeting (Annual, International, Analytics, or Topical Meetings) and
    - *one or more INFORMS members be significantly involved in the planning and execution of the meeting or be a highlighted speaker at the meeting, and*
    - the meeting content and quality are such that they support INFORMS Mission and reputation and would appeal to multiple members.
    - A direct conflict happens when an external meeting is within a two-week window of an INFORMS meeting (i.e., any portion of the external meeting occurs in the interval between two weeks prior to the start of the INFORMS meeting, and two weeks after the end of the INFORMS meeting) **and** there is concern that either INFORMS resources will be strained or there may be overlap in the target audiences which may negatively impact attendance at the INFORMS meeting. Co-sponsors should check the meetings calendar online for conflicting dates before confirming the dates of their meeting. Once the dates are confirmed, the co-sponsors should contact the INFORMS meetings department staff with the dates and title of the meeting and staff will enter information into the calendar.
- If the co-sponsorship involves an INFORMS subdivision, the VP of Meetings will work with the appropriate subdivision VP to determine if the Subdivisions Council is required to review the proposal.
- Communities of INFORMS may co-sponsor meetings without INFORMS approval when:
    - There is no conflict with the INFORMS meetings calendar.
    - Marketing of the conference will make it clear that co-sponsorship is provided by the community, not the Institute.
    - The VP of Meetings in consultation with the Executive Director, must approve the co-sponsorship if:
        - The community logo will be used in any fashion.
        - If the marketing of the conference includes "INFORMS," or the full Institute name in the community's name.
        - If any potential financial obligation will be incurred.

RELATED DOCUMENTS:

INFORMS Policies and Procedure Manual, Section 10.2 Meetings Planning
INFORMS Policies and Procedure Manual, Section 10.2.2 Policy on Alleviating INFORMS Meetings Conflicts
INFORMS Policies and Procedure Manual Section 15.2, Subdivisions, Procedures, Subdivision Meetings

NUMBER 10.2.2 POLICY ON ALLEVIATING INFORMS MEETINGS CONFLICTS

EFFECTIVE: APRIL 2007; Revised November 2014; 2018 Summer Board Meeting; 2020 Summer Board Meeting; 2020 Fall Board Meeting 2024 Fall Board Meeting

POLICY

In addition to the Annual, International, Analytics, and Topical meetings organized by INFORMS, INFORMS subdivisions/communities organize meetings targeted primarily to their members. To ensure robust participation in all INFORMS events, it is important that the timings of INFORMS meetings do not conflict with one another. This policy seeks to minimize conflict among all INFORMS meetings through informed decisions.

INFORMS subdivisions/communities may not schedule meetings in direct conflict with an INFORMS meeting (Annual, International, Analytics, or Topical Meetings). A direct conflict occurs when a subdivision/community meeting is within a two-week window of an INFORMS meeting (i.e., any portion of the subdivision/community meeting occurs in the interval between two weeks prior to the start of the INFORMS meeting, and two weeks after the end of the INFORMS meeting). Consideration should be given to whether INFORMS resources will be strained or there may be overlap in the target audiences which may negatively impact INFORMS. Exceptions to this requirement may be granted by the VP of Meetings.

Subdivisions face competing goals and conflicts, often in their efforts to serve as interfaces between INFORMS and other societies. INFORMS staff will help subdivisions make good scheduling decisions by providing a central online calendar for all meetings organized by INFORMS and its subdivisions. INFORMS and the subdivisions should all participate in this process by providing information on future conferences to the meetings department staff as soon as these are scheduled so that all decisions can be made with a full understanding of any conflicts that may arise.

To alleviate timing conflicts among INFORMS meetings and subdivision meetings, all INFORMS meeting organizers should follow this process:

- INFORMS meetings department will maintain an on-line viewable meetings calendar with the broadest possible listing of conferences in fields relevant to our mission. Subdivisions are encouraged to inform the Meetings Department of all known future conferences offered by sister societies that may be of interest to INFORMS members for posting on the calendar.
- All INFORMS meeting organizers should consult the INFORMS calendar to determine the dates of other INFORMS meetings prior to selecting dates for

their meeting. This should be done for all meetings independent of whether the meeting will be utilizing INFORMS office resources or not.

- The date for a proposed meeting should be reported to the INFORMS Meetings Department as soon as it is proposed. Best efforts should be made to avoid conflicts with other meetings that have overlapping interests. Should conflicts occur the Meetings Department will bring it to the attention of the Meetings Committee.
- For the protection of meeting organizers and INFORMS, all contracts and agreements must be reviewed by the INFORMS Director of Meetings and approved and signed by the Executive Director.
- Meeting organizers must review the online calendar of meetings to be sure there isn't a conflict with another meeting. If there isn't a conflict, meeting organizers should contact Meetings Department staff and provide the conference information to be posted online. Meetings department staff will post the information.
- Here, a Workshop is defined to be a professional event organized by an INFORMS-affiliated entity (e.g., subdivision, special interest group, meeting exhibitor) held in conjunction with (immediately before or after, and co-located in the same city with) an INFORMS meeting (Annual, International, Analytics, or Topical).
- While Workshops, as specified in Section 10.2.4, are allowed to be linked to an INFORMS meeting (Annual, International, Analytics, or Topical Meetings), no Workshop at any of the INFORMS meetings may overlap with the respective INFORMS meeting.

RELATED DOCUMENTS:

INFORMS Policies and Procedure Manual, Section 10.2 Meetings Planning

NUMBER 10.2.3 SCHEDULING THE PROGRAM FOR THE ANNUAL MEETING

EFFECTIVE: April 2009; amended November 2014; 2017 Spring Board Meeting; 2018 Summer Board Meeting; 2020 Summer Board Meeting

POLICY

- Each Invited and Sponsored track will be scheduled to "wrap around," i.e., one track/room will be scheduled from Sunday through Wednesday before a parallel track can be scheduled.
- Each Invited and Sponsored cluster must have an average of at least 4 papers per session (a norm of 5 papers is highly encouraged). The abstract system provides a mechanism for cluster chairs to search for appropriate Contributed papers to add to their sessions to meet the average goal. If the 4 average is not achieved, sessions with less than 4 papers will be given lower priority, combined or will have contributed papers added when scheduling the program. In addition, sponsored clusters not meeting the minimum average may be allocated a restricted number of sessions in future years depending on space availability.
- Wednesday will be a full or partial day depending on the venue capacity, demand and site logistics, with all the normal activities of the meeting.
- Each registrant may be listed as presenting author for only one paper at the conference. Presentations and contributions identified on the exemption list, which is maintained in the Annual Meeting Manual, do not count towards the one paper limit.

Number 10.2.4 WORKSHOPS AT INFORMS MEETINGS

Effective: April 2009, amended November 2014; 2018 Summer Board Meeting; 2020 Summer Board Meeting; 2020 Fall Board Meeting; 2024 Fall Board Meeting

POLICY

Basic Requirements

- A workshop cannot compete with an INFORMS meeting (Annual, International, Analytics, or Topical Meetings); it must be held before or after the Meeting.
- Workshops must be a minimum of 2 hours and expect a minimum of 25 participants.
- Workshops registrants and speakers must register for the respective INFORMS meeting. Exceptions may be granted by the VP of Meetings.
- For registration, workshops will appear as an add-on option on the respective INFORMS meeting registration form. Registration processing will be handled by INFORMS staff.
- The number of workshop opportunities at each INFORMS meeting will be determined by the available space and time.
- Organizers must submit a proposal to the VP of Meetings through the Director of Meetings with the following: organizer background; topic and outline of workshop content; budget with attendance projections. Proposal deadline: seven months prior to the meeting.
- Organizers will be notified of acceptance within 15 days. However, the organizers need to agree with the fee to cover INFORMS staff services before they may proceed with the workshop.
- The INFORMS Meetings Committee has authority to approve or disapprove requests and will evaluate all proposals relative to their added value to meeting attendees.
- Business meetings, such as CIEADH, ACORD, RoundTable, Ambassador Program, Analytics Program Directors are not considered to be workshops.

Who can organize a workshop?

- INFORMS subdivisions/communities.
- Companies in INFORMS-related fields – publishers, software vendors, consulting services who are exhibiting at the affiliated INFORMS meeting.
- Other entities in INFORMS-related fields (universities, professors, nonprofit initiatives in the field such as COIN-OR).

Financial Requirements

- The workshop must not cause a financial loss to INFORMS, including staff time.
- The workshop may be offered free or may charge a fee.
- Any costs, such as registration services through INFORMS staff, materials, AV, and food & beverage (if offered), must be assumed by the workshop organizer/sponsor.
- Workshop rooms on the day before, or on the day after the INFORMS meeting will be provided free of charge (as part of the INFORMS facility contract). A workshop running longer than one day, whether before or after the INFORMS meeting, will be charged an appropriate facility fee (whatever the INFORMS staff can negotiate).
- Registration for the workshop must be handled by INFORMS staff. INFORMS staff can also provide assistance with logistical planning, management, and marketing. Workshop organizers will be required to pay a fee to cover INFORMS services. The fee amount will be developed by the INFORMS Director of Meetings. Workshop organizers will be required to agree to the fee as part of workshop planning.
- INFORMS reserves the right to cancel the workshop if a mutually agreed upon minimum number of registrations are not received by a negotiated date.
- In the case of any net profit being realized, that profit will go to INFORMS. The exception would be when the workshop is organized by an INFORMS subdivision/community. In that case, any net profit would go to the subdivision/community, as long as all costs (including INFORMS staff labor) are covered.

NUMBER 10.2.5 REFUNDS OF REGISTRATION

EFFECTIVE: APRIL 2009, amended November 2014; 2024 Fall Board Meeting

POLICY

An INFORMS meeting registrant who requests a refund by the cancellation deadline will receive a refund of the registration fee less a processing charge. Refunds will not be allowed for cancellations made after the deadline. The deadline and processing charge will be established by the Director of Meetings.

Exceptions to this policy will be considered in the case of emergency, hospitalization or serious illness of the registrant or a close family member. In these cases, the requester may be required to submit documentation verifying the situation. With verification, these people will receive a refund of the registration fee less the processing fee. The Director of Meetings has the authority to grant exceptions to this policy.

Number 10.2.6 INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS

Effective: April 2009, amended November 2014; 2018 Summer Board Meeting; 2024 Fall Board Meeting

Excluding the years when IFORS hosts its Triennial meeting, INFORMS aims to hold international meetings on a regular basis.

- If there is a local OR society in the location, INFORMS will discuss the opportunity with the local society. If the local OR society and INFORMS decide to collaborate:
    - INFORMS will develop a written agreement with the local OR society.
    - Each agreement will be written on a one-time basis, i.e., for one year or one meeting only. A basic protocol can be set that might be applied in multiple years, but each agreement will be for one meeting only.
- In all agreements, INFORMS strongly prefers to:
    - Have responsibility for budgeting/financial management and contracts.
    - Manage registration. In some countries, registration for in-country attendees may be handled by a local service to allow people to pay in that currency.
    - Manage most other aspects of the meeting, including marketing, abstract processing, logistics and exhibits management.