

Policy on the IFOAM Organic World Congress (IFOAM OWC) and / General Assembly (GA)

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Purpose & Scope of this Policy

1. Set out the criteria and outline decision-making processes for hosting the IFOAM Organic World Congress (IFOAM OWC)/ IFOAM – Organics International General Assembly (GA).
2. Provide a framework for cooperation with the host organization(s).

Introduction

IFOAM–Organics International owns the brand of the ‘IFOAM Organic World Congress’(IFOAM OWC) and has been enjoying stakeholders’ trust since 1977. The IFOAM OWC and The General Assembly (GA) takes place every three years. The GA decides on the location and the host of the next IFOAM OWC/GA three years before the event. In exceptional circumstances, the World Board reserves the right to alter this decision.

The overall objective of the IFOAM OWC is to lead, unite and assist the organic movement in its full diversity to foster the adoption of ecologically, socially and economically sound systems based on the Principles of Organic Agriculture.¹

Other objectives include:

- Uniting the organic world to achieve IFOAM - Organics International’s mission and creating a platform for the organic movement
- Gaining public and media attention for the organic cause in general and IFOAM - Organics International campaigns specifically
- Boosting the organic sector and organic scientific research in the host country and region

Event Concept

The IFOAM OWC (3 days) includes three components: Conference, Fair and Festival. A strong emphasis is placed on the first component. The second and third components may be entrusted to a partner. The conference includes a variety of methodologies (e.g. presentations, discussions, posters, open space etc.) in order to ensure adequate interaction and attract various groups (e.g. members of the organic movement, scientist, farmers, private sector and government representatives,). Plenary speakers give keynote speeches and provide a conference digest. Official ceremonies, social events and special performances or sub-events create an engaging and distinctive atmosphere. The event should be inclusive and partnerships with like-minded movements/institutions are encouraged. Pre-conferences (1-2 days) attract groups with specialized interests and provide opportunities to deepen specific topics. Organizers are expected to attract between 1.500 and 2.000 participants (for the conference only), with a minimum of 50% national and neighboring country participation.

The GA (1-2 days) is the highest governing body of the global organic movement. The consortium provides all logistical arrangements for this event, while IFOAM–Organics International is in charge of the agenda and

¹ See www.ifoam.org/principles

the implementation of the Assembly itself. The GA also includes a Motions Bazaar and social events. About 250–400 attendees can be expected for the GA.

Requirements for Host Organization(s)

- Willingness and commitment to organize and host a successful IFOAM - Organics International -branded IFOAM OWC/GA for the organic world, and to carry the risks and benefits in line with this IFOAM - Organics International policy 15 and the contract with IFOAM - Organics International;
- Demonstrated experience or ability to organize and host an international event of the dimension (ca. 2.000 participants) of the IFOAM OWC/ GA;
- Proven capacity to manage finances and risks in the context of the successful organization of an IFOAM OWC/ GA;
- Capacity for strategic and operational management of the events, including program and message development;
- Readiness to collaborate with a Congress Steering Committee (CSC) that takes binding strategic decisions and provides guidance;
- Capacity and commitment to involve IFOAM - Organics International's local membership in the planning and implementation of the IFOAM OWC;
- Competencies in event communication at all levels, before and during the events (e.g. promotion, management of information flows, creation of an excellent event atmosphere);
- Capacity to provide logistics, including professional simultaneous interpretation of key events into at least three languages;
- Commitment to a green event, including but not limited to organic foods and beverages (preferably locally sourced); recycling, composting and separation of waste; offsetting the events' carbon footprint including participants travels and environmentally friendly sourcing;
- Assistance to participants with their logistics (including visa assistance) and sponsorship of the attendance of financially challenged participants

Financial framework: Funding, sponsorship and risk

- The host organization is responsible for the congress budget. It takes the financial risks and benefits. During preparations, the budget development is regularly reported to the CSC, for information and feedback.
- Sponsorship may be financial or in-kind. The fees, the sponsorship packages and the sponsorship acceptance criteria are subject to approval by the CSC.
- Local sponsorship shall be acquired by Organizer.
- International sponsorship shall be acquired by both parties and divided between Organizer and IFOAM Organics International. International and regional sponsorship will be shared according to ratio to be defined by the World Board each time. The fee and sponsor possibilities should be agreed on when the contract is signed.
- Up to five strategic partners of IFOAM - Organics International have the right to be promoted as sponsors without further payment to the organizer.
- Organizer shall pay to IFOAM Organic International flat fee. The fee consists of an operational fee and a fee for international communication and promotion. Any local VAT if applicable is to be paid by the Organizer. The flat fee grants the organizer the right to use the IFOAM - Organics International name and logo and the brand "*IFOAM Organic World Congress*" as well as support in communicating and promoting the congress.
- The World Board will decide for each IFOAM OWC on the flat fee. It may define a mechanism for adjusting the flat fee for countries with less financial capacities.
- The payment could be discussed with the organizer according to their own capacities/legislation from their country.
- Host retains all income from ticket sales.
- Host retains all income from own sponsorship acquisition
- Host retains all income from exhibition where applicable.
- IFOAM - Organics International affiliates receive a discount of 20% on registration fees (all categories).

- Host budgets for and covers travel and accommodation as well as congress tickets for 10 World Board members, 11 staff members and 30 guests as well as meeting/travel costs for any preparatory meetings.

Bidding, approval and contract

Bids for hosting the *“The IFOAM Organic World Congress and the IFOAM - Organics International General Assembly* are called for by the IFOAM - Organics International Office through a special announcement to affiliates latest 10 months prior to the previous ordinary IFOAM - Organics International General Assembly. The deadline is set out in the call for bids.

Only IFOAM - Organics International members or a consortium led by an IFOAM - Organics International member is eligible to bid. The bidders present an event concept note including descriptions of the partners and their qualifications, the event objectives, themes and tracks, event highlights, communication, logistics and budget. The bid also responds to the requirements set out in this policy 15. The concept, including annexes and visuals, has a minimum of four and a maximum of eight A4 pages. Bidders shall also submit, together with their application, a signed statement accepting all conditions as outlined in this policy and pledging to implement all conditions upon approval.

The IFOAM - Organics International World Board assesses before the General Assembly if the requirements are fulfilled and whether the bid qualifies to be presented to the General Assembly. The abstracts of all qualified proposals are published and distributed to members prior to the General Assembly. The General Assembly decides by single majority vote.

After the bid approval by the General Assembly, the host prepares a comprehensive written proposal and budget to be approved by the IFOAM - Organics International World Board. This concept is part of a written contract between IFOAM - Organics International and the host that is signed within six months following the General Assembly decision.

Miscellaneous regulations

Congress Steering Committee (CSC): The CSC is set up after signing the contract with mutually agreed upon roles, responsibilities and representation e.g., one representative from the World Board of IFOAM - Organics International, one independent representative, and up to two organizer representatives, and one representative from IFOAM – Organics International.

The Congress Steering Committee approves by majority the concepts including the (inter)national marketing/ communications plan, the price schemes, the program, the logistical concept and the Gantt chart. The CSC receives quarterly updated budgets and financial reports for information and feedback and provides half-yearly progress reports to the World Board. Elaborated by the Congress Management Committee, the CSC submits to the World Board for approval the following elements:

- event concept including an (inter)national marketing/ communications plan;
- price schemes;
- budget;
- logistical concept;
- Gantt chart; and
- Program.

The Congress Management Committee (CMC): A CMC could be created if necessary. The CMC reports to the Congress Steering Committee (CSC). The CMC is responsible for the overall management of the congress. It hires and supervises the secretariat staff, depending on the local legal needs for procurement and organizational set-up. It appoints and supervises a Congress Director (or coordinator, as appropriate). It sets up the sub- committees that in turn report to the CMC. The CMC ensures the development, implementation and updating of the logistical concept and project management tools with the input of the specialist committees.

The Conference Director(CD): The CD will be appointed by the CSC, although she/he can also be mandated to fulfill this role via an event organizing company. The conference director (CD) reports to the CMC, if

created or to the CSC. She/he acts as the Secretary of the CSC, is present at all meetings and reports to the CSC on behalf of all the operational structures. The Conference Director does not hold any voting right in the CSC.

The Conference Organizer: The conference organizer is a professional entity responsible for on-the-ground organization and logistics, including the venue, food, transport, visa facilitation, tourist information, accommodation offers etc. The conference organizer may be part of the event organiser, participating in the risk/benefit of the event organization, or it may act as an external service provider to event organiser.

Reporting and ownership: The host submits complete activity and financial reports at the latest three months after the event. IFOAM - Organics International reserves the right to audit the financial records. IFOAM - Organics International has the right to use the congress preparation materials for future Organic World Congresses. The host assures that all papers and presentations are published and are made available to the public.

Cancellation: In case the IFOAM OWC does not take place and/or Organizer cancels the contract for whatever reason, the flat fee will not be reimbursed.

If the congress host fails to adhere to this or other relevant IFOAM - Organics International policies, IFOAM - Organics International reserves the right to cancel the event outright or assume responsibility for the organization of the event. In this case, the flat fee will not be reimbursed.