



International Association for People-Environment Studies

Conference Guidelines

Short Version 2018

Sigrun Kabisch

in exchange with Karine Weiss and Tony Craig, November 2018

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Foreword

The iaps Conference Guidelines were first written by the iaps Conference Committee in 1988 and used for preparation for subsequent conferences. They have been revised and updated continuously by later committees using their experiences in iaps conference organisation (see long version).

This short version of the iaps conference guidelines is based on the experiences of the 25th iaps conference 2018 in Rome. It pays attention to essential points which have been changed and adopted to new conditions and which need to be adopted from now on without entirely replacing the long version.

These conference guidelines refer to two components of iaps initiatives:

- The biannual iaps conference
- The young researchers workshop

Furthermore, in-between the biannual iaps conference period, symposia that are based on the iaps network engagement and in its full responsibility can take place. These symposia act also according to the conference guidelines.

It is worth mentioning that within the iaps Board, selected members are particularly responsible for conference issues, network issues and young researchers' workshop affairs. In case of related questions they will give support.

A – iaps Conferences

An iaps-conference proposal has to be addressed to the iaps Board in due time after a respective call. As far as possible, it should consider all points mentioned in the Conference Guidelines.

1 – Conference Theme

The conference theme tackles a societal challenge of high and current relevance. This includes a systemic and comprehensive perspective. Therefore multi-disciplinary, inter-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary approaches are expected, acknowledging the basic scientific foundation provided by environmental psychology and urban planning. But representatives of many other disciplines and cross-disciplinary approaches are invited to bring knowledge, experiences and challenges into the iaps-family. It is the iaps policy to encourage the active participation of academics, professional practitioners and members of civil or public services as well as students. It is the openness that makes iaps conferences distinct from others.

It is mandatory to have the theme for an iaps conference endorsed by the iaps Board prior to any public announcement. Once approved, the theme needs to be re-appearing systematically while formulating the conference programme, especially while formulating sub-themes. Above all, the iaps conference is an international conference, pursuing high quality standards. Conference language is English.

2 – Conference Registration and Submission of Contributions

The conference organisers provide clear and simple instructions for registration and submission of contributions. It is their responsibility to elaborate these instructions with technical advices and quality criteria as well as a schedule. Conference participants are reminded to relate the content of their contribution as close as possible to the conference theme. All submissions are assessed by the Scientific Committee of the conference. This assessment leads to a selection and categorization of the proposals but it may also lead to a rejection. The submission assessment is handled according to clear and transparent criteria by the scientific committee. A template for decision making is provided through an online-procedure. The decisions must be communicated strictly according to the schedule.

3 – Conference Programme and Formats

The conference programme includes different types of sessions, resp. meetings to make the conference as vivid as possible. These types cover paper sessions, symposia, poster presentations, round table discussions, flash presentations, key note lectures with discussion, network meetings as well as side visits, “walkshops” or other formats in and outside the conference venue. The scientific program should be framed by social events demonstrating local particularities which can strengthen the iaps spirit. Furthermore, the AGM (Annual General Meeting) is part of the conference programme.

In case of not having the opportunity to be on site the conference location, a video conference connection should be offered in addition, to allow a virtual participation, at least for selected sessions.

In the following, selected formats which need particular attention are described.

Paper sessions are the major part of the conference. The organizers compile these sessions carefully to guarantee a focused scientific exchange among the presenters, to address the appropriate audience and to avoid misleading expectations. Each session is chaired by a well instructed person, appointed by the conference organisers, who guarantees equal chances for all presenters to present and discuss their studies. Attention should be paid to a vivid exchange between the presenter and the audience. In case of an unexpected absence of a chair, a substitute must be organised immediately. Each session should be supported by a technical assistant who takes care for technical issues in the lecture hall (slide presentations, light, microphone, silence, air condition).

Thematic symposia are a second major part of the conference. Conveners apply for a symposium by a thematic concept and respective speakers to be invited. The conveners are responsible for the content and the chairing of the entire symposium. Each symposium should be supported by a technical assistant.

Poster session and audio-visual presentation

The poster session is an important part of each iaps conference because it offers an intensive exchange between all conference participants about the variety of related subjects and methodological approaches. Therefore, the organisers should carefully include the poster session in the scientific programme, avoiding overlapping with sessions or other events. The posters should be on display until the end of the conference or at least for some days. In case of a very large number of posters and restricted exhibition capacity more than one poster session could be necessary. The same concerns audio-visual presentations.

Network meetings

In the iaps- networks are groups of scientists pursuing the same or similar scientific questions and approaches. They are constantly active in common projects or share scientific interests via social media and the iaps homepage. The network speakers invite the network members and conference participants who are interested in the respective topics to come together for a network meeting and exchange their work in progress and common initiatives. It is the responsibility of the conference organisers to include a time slot in the conference programme for these iaps network meetings (appr. 1 hour).

AGM - Annual General Meeting

Part of each iaps conference is the AGM. It is the meeting of the entire iaps membership. The iaps president and the board give an overview over the major iaps activities during the past two years. This includes the financial situation of iaps, the workforce composition of the board, international relations with institutions and sister organisations and future activities. Furthermore, a critical reflection about the ongoing and the planned iaps conferences is part of the discussion. To recommend iaps as a really democratic association and to invite conference participants to join iaps, a clear and understandable AGM-invitation should be expressed in the conference programme.

4 - Publication Strategy

All conference participants are encouraged to publish their paper in peer-reviewed high quality journals. The conference organisers and the iaps Board members support the edition of thematic issues in acknowledged journals and call for submissions by the conference participants. Having the difficulties of the past iaps conferences to collect high quality papers for a post-conference book in mind and knowing the low acknowledgement of books in contrast to peer-reviewed journal articles, the iaps board decided to stop publishing post-conference book by a publishing house. As a little niche, conference organisers can offer low-budget book publication for those participants who intend to use this offer.

5 – Provision with Conference Material

Each conference participant will be provided with an electronic device which contains all relevant conference materials: programme, abstracts, list of participants, additional useful information. At the conference it is preferred to offer a USB drive instead of a CD, because it is easy to handle and immediately usable on laptops.

In terms of sustainability targets, it is intended to organise future conferences as paper free as possible.

B - Young Researchers Workshop (YRW)

To promote students and young career scientists, iaps strongly supports the format of “Young Researchers Workshop” as important activity of iaps conferences and symposia. It provides an excellent opportunity to present and discuss the state of the art of their work with young colleagues and senior scientists who are recognised specialists in the field of interest.

1 – Organisation

YRW usually precedes the iaps conference. It takes place two days prior the official opening of the conference. The exact dates including the starting point should be communicated months before to give the young participants the chance to manage cheap travel and accommodation. Some of the potential participants apply for financial support for travelling. The decision of support must be communicated in advance of the YRW, in connection with the information about the acceptance of the paper.

Conference organisers are responsible to integrate the YRW as a special event of the entire conference. Thus an overlapping of the second day of the YRW and the first day of conference sessions should be avoided.

2 – Guidance

The YRW is guided by board members together with invited coordinators. They appoint mentors who are able to reflect the papers and oral presentations of the YRW participants in an appropriate manner. It is recommended to include experts as mentors who participated in YRWs in the past. The YRW should be composed in a way that each participant has at least 15 to 25 minutes speaking time. The mentors (two or three per session) as well as the YRW participants should interact with each other also for about 10 to 15 minutes. In case of a large number of participants, parallel sessions might be organised, regrouping students working in similar areas or with similar methodologies.

3 - Preparation of the actors

The young researcher should be well informed about the structure of the paper to be submitted as well as the content and the form of the oral presentation. This query should include information if the work presented is in initial or in advanced state.

It is highly expected that the chosen mentors are well prepared and engaged. As prerequisite all mentors must get the entire preparation material on time.

4 – Award

A prize for the best paper presented, *the Young Researchers Award*, is organised by the iaps Board. Furthermore, six participants can receive a special acknowledgement and a certificate for their excellent papers. All winners should be presented promptly, preferably at the opening ceremony of the conference. This ensures large audience and guarantees the presence of the YRW participants. Right after the YRW, the awarded persons should be announced with name, affiliation and paper title at the iaps homepage..