



INSTITUTE OF BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE CONGRESS 2017

INVITATION TO TENDER

November 2015

INSTITUTE OF BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE CONGRESS

The Institute of Biomedical Science (the Institute) (<https://www.ibms.org/>) is seeking proposals from professional conference organisers to partner with us for the delivery of our biennial congress. We are looking for an organisation to maintain and develop our extremely successful conference track record and to advise us on how we could make it even more successful going forward. We are seeking an initial 2-year partnership to run from January 2016 to December 2017 to cover the planning and delivery of our next Congress in September 2017 with the potential to extend for our 2019 event.

We are seeking to partner a professional conference organiser with strong experience of conferences and exhibition organisation who will provide us with professional support for the following areas of our congress planning and delivery:

- Event management and logistics, including venue management and all contract and supplies management
- Exhibition, including design, sales, contracts, build, venue liaison and all health and safety issues
- Delegate bookings, registration, invoicing and pursuit of outstanding payments
- Management of hotel accommodation contract
- Identification and promotion of sponsorship opportunities
- Design and production of publicity and promotional material – with Institute approval
- Management of the evening social programme

The Institute will manage the following directly:

- Lecture programme content and speakers
- Speaker booking and arrangements
- Website management
- Targeted member communications (to complement organiser publicity campaign)

Our aim for the event is to maintain or increase the success of Congress 2015 in respect of delegate numbers, exhibition space sales and uptake of sponsorship opportunities, while meeting our agreed financial targets. This is to be achieved in parallel with maintaining our high level of delegate and exhibitor satisfaction.

This document is being sent out in confidence: the contents of this document and any subsequent discussions should not be disclosed to any person or organisation without prior agreement from the Institute.

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1. About the Institute

i. Background

The Institute is the UK professional body for biomedical science. Its purpose is to promote the study and development of biomedical science, which it fulfils through its role as a standard setting organisation and the professional body for biomedical science professionals working primarily in the UK, but also overseas. Our biennial congress is a key learning event for our members and for the fulfilment of our corporate objectives.

ii. Membership

The Institute has a membership of 20,000, primarily in the UK. The majority of them are employed as registered biomedical scientists in the NHS and private pathology laboratories, NHS Blood and Transplant, research, industry and higher education. The biomedical scientist sector of the biomedical science workforce comprises the majority of those attending Congress.

There are approximately 800 members in 63 overseas countries, the major ones being Hong Kong followed by the Republic of Ireland.

2. About Congress

i. Background

Congress is a biennial conference held in the last week of September and runs over three consecutive days (Monday to Wednesday). It is the Institute's flagship educational event and is strategically important to the Institute in respect of both reputation and income. It is recognised as the premier UK biomedical science conference and is one of the leading, if not *the* leading, biomedical science event in the world. It has a strong scientific programme and exhibition that is attractive to delegates and exhibitors alike. The event is funded in total by the combination of delegate fees, exhibition stand sales and sponsorship and generates a large surplus for the Institute to assist us with our charitable work. It has almost doubled in number of delegates since it first began in 1995 and has significantly increased its profitability.

The purpose of Congress is to provide a primary learning opportunity for both members and non-members and to establish the Institute as the voice of the profession. It is a uniting event – uniting a diverse workforce from the four UK countries with industry, with the Institute's governing Council, with the Institute office and with respected speakers from other professional backgrounds. Congress plays an important role in reinforcing professionalism and professional status in the biomedical science profession and has political importance to the Institute as an organisation through its sheer size, scope and professional delivery.

The sustainability and future of Congress depends upon it maintaining its position as a flagship biomedical science event. This is both in respect of lecture content and its integral exhibition, which fulfils a scientific, educational, developmental and professional need for all levels of the profession.

ii. Venue and accommodation

The International Conference Centre (ICC) Birmingham has been used since 1995 and will be the venue for Congress 2017, which will run from Monday 25th to Wednesday 27th September. All of the ICC lecture and exhibition halls, plus additional lecture accommodation in the adjacent Austin Court, are used for the full three day duration in order to deliver the nine parallel lecture programmes and the extensive exhibition. We are acknowledged by the ICC as having one of their most complex and challenging events by virtue of its scale and space usage.

Birmingham is popular with both delegates and speakers due to its ease of access from most parts of the UK and its central location in respect of hotels, bars and restaurants and venues for the evening social programme.

Jury's Inn on Broad Street is the Institute's Council and speaker hotel, with block bookings of 80 – 120 rooms per night. This has been our hotel of choice since 1997 due to the combination of proximity to the ICC, quality and cost package. We expect our PCO to negotiate the most advantageous rates with the hotel, or with a comparable alternative. Delegate accommodation is not organised as part of the booking package, and it is the responsibility of the individual delegates to make their own hotel arrangements.

iii. Lecture programme

Congress has a comprehensive programme of nine parallel lecture sessions that run over three days with additional, less formal, seminars taking place within an exhibition hall. This is a total of around 250 lectures over the three days. The lectures all follow a common time table and run from 9.00 am to 5.00 pm and incorporate standard break times for lunch and tea/coffee. The lecture programme is compiled by the Institute through our panels of experts and advisors, who identify the topics to be featured and the speakers. The Congress is in English and we do not provide an interpretation facility. As Congress is regarded as a valuable learning opportunity we would like to make some lecture content available after the event. We would welcome proposals for how technology could be used to best enable this additional feature but without discouraging delegate attendance. All communications and arrangements with lecturers and speakers are handled by the Institute office.

iv. Delegates

Delegates are primarily biomedical scientists who deliver the UK pathology services, with the ratio of members to non-members in the region of 5:1. Delegate booking patterns are a mixture of single and multiple day attendees. We offer a financial discount for full three-day bookings but would welcome ideas for increasing delegate attendance whilst maintaining delegate income. The majority of delegates have attended previous congresses but around one third in 2015 were first time attendees. Around 2,300 delegates attend over the three

days of Congress with approximately 50 coming from overseas. We would welcome suggestions for how we might raise the profile of Congress as a major event with international appeal and hence increase the number of overseas delegates.

v. Exhibition and sponsorship

For the past five Congresses all our available exhibition space at the ICC has been sold (Halls 3 & 4 and Hall 1 Foyer plus the ten executive suites). The maximum stand size available is 42m², of which there are 18 of these size stands, the remainder ranging in size down to 1.5 x 1.5m according to the floor plan. Additional exhibition space is provided within the registration area for invited organisations (usually professional, quality or educational organisations). Congress 2015 featured 140 exhibitors with additional companies taking advantage of specific sponsorship opportunities.

The strong relationship between the Institute and the laboratory diagnostics industry is central to the success of the Congress exhibition. The Institute offer of company membership is valued by the industry; a major benefit of this is the preferential exhibition rates offered to company members, along with priority booking ahead of the general release of exhibition space. It is essential that our conference organisers recognise and respect this relationship and ensure that exhibitors have a highly positive experience of Congress in respect of organisation, planning and communication. Exhibition build up has its own challenges due to the complex floor plans necessary to utilise all available space within the exhibition halls, and the number of exhibitors, many of whom bring large items of equipment as part of their display. We would need to be confident that our PCO has experience of organising large and complex exhibitions with multiple exhibitors within the challenging timeframe of our hall tenancy agreement.

In addition to the exhibition there is a wide range of sponsorship opportunities open to both company members and non-members. These are key to generating additional revenue and also for the provision of essential Congress value items such as a quality delegate bag, notepad and pens. The uptake of sponsorship opportunities is dependent very much upon the relationship between the PCO and the exhibitors, which requires an understanding of the needs and interests of our exhibitors and sponsors to identify those opportunities that will give them the profile they desire at Congress. These opportunities include sponsorship of lectures, bag inserts, banners, delegate information, social events, coffee points to name but a few.

vi. Poster display and specialist seminars

Congress provides an important opportunity for biomedical scientists to showcase their research. Hall 4, in addition to being key exhibition space, is also used as the location for our poster display (approximately 50+ poster boards) and also a programme of semi-informal interactive seminars in a partitioned area within the exhibition hall. This is a challenging area requiring a good relationship with exhibitors, speakers and poster presenters to ensure expectations are managed and met.

vii. Evening social programme

The Institute provides three evening social events for delegates (Sunday to Tuesday), the cost of which is included in the delegate fee on the day(s) they have paid to attend. These traditionally comprise an informal 'welcome' evening, a more formal President's Reception with buffet, and a night club evening. We would be amenable to suggestions for alternative venues to those we currently use but the constraints would be the need for walking distance venues (from the ICC) with a capacity for 500 people.

viii. Lecture programme and delegate information

The lecture programme and branding is agreed and finalised by the end of the year before Congress. The programme is launched and bookings commence on the 1st February in the Congress year. The representation of our extensive and complex programme of nine parallel lecture programmes over the three days and the accompanying delegate booking form is a complex piece of design work. We would welcome seeing examples of similarly complex programmes that you have produced.

We have an agreed schedule of delegate information production that includes the production of an updated version of the programme in June and regular editorial pieces in our professional magazine that serve to highlight specific elements of the lecture programme and other congress features. This is supplemented by targeted marketing conducted by our own marketing department.

Strong clear promotion of the event is important to highlight specific areas of the programme and the benefits of attending to specific sectors of the profession. We would be looking to work closely with our PCO to develop and deliver an integrated multi-channel marketing strategy.

ix. Planning arrangements

The planning of Congress is conducted through the Institute's Congress Committee that meets twice a year. The Committee comprises members of the Institute's Council, scientific advisors, executive team, company member representatives and our PCO. Between meetings all work is conducted between the PCO and the Congress lead within the Institute's executive team.

3. Proposals

If you are interesting in tendering for this Congress please send your proposal to us at the below address (electronic copy plus 4 hard copies). **Please note:** The Tenderer shall bear all costs in connection with the preparation and submission of his tender and shall bear all future costs incurred prior to Contract award.

Proposals should include:

- Details of the size, number of staff, turnover, demonstrate financial stability and years of trading
- Details of membership of trade associations
- The resource your company would dedicate to this project including the experience of the Manager who will be leading on our event and the staff supporting him/her.
- Your experience of managing similar events (please include samples of printed literature , website etc)
- Other concurrent commitments and your capacity to manage multiple events
- A clear charging structure and fees for your services. The Institute is willing to consider innovative approaches to the charging structure. Please indicate, with indicative costs, any additional extra services you may provide that are not specified within this document
- How your organisation might develop our current offer to exhibitors and delegates and examples of where you have demonstrated innovation at other events of this nature.
- If external agency staff are used, for what purpose and how they will be managed? Please specify if these costs are included in your tender and if not, please provide an estimate of costs, as far as possible.
- How your organisation would launch and manage the sale of the exhibition space sale to company members
- How your company would manage the logistics of exhibition build and break down, while ensuring compliance with tenancy terms and the management of multiple contractors
- How your organisation would manage delegate bookings, payments, invoicing and the credit control functions associated with a large and complex event.
- Please specify what would NOT be included in your tender, as far as is possible.
- References from two recent customers

4. Confidentiality

All information supplied by the IBMS in connection with this ITT shall be treated as confidential by Tenderers. All Information provided to the Institute by Tenderers will be treated as confidential.

5. Indicative Timeline

The Institute proposes the following timetable for the award of the contract:

27 th November 2015	Issue tender
18 th December 2015	Deadline for submissions
06 th January 2016	Notification of shortlisting
19 th January 2016	Interviews and selection of preferred partner
February 2016	Commencement of contract

6. Submission

Interested suppliers are requested to provide the following documentation:

Any questions about this invitation to tender should be submitted in writing via email to Sarah May at the below address.

- Tender in required format
- 3 years audited annual accounts
- Public and employers insurance certificate
- 2 client references (GB and Ireland only)

7. Selection determinants

Selection choice will be a combination of both financial and non-financial factors and will take in to consideration Tenderer economic and financial standing, Tenderer track record and experience of combined conference and exhibition events and Tenderer capacity and capability to undertake an event of the size and complexity of the Institute's Congress. The Institute shall not be bound to accept the lowest price of any tender submitted.

8. Summary of responsibilities – indicative, not absolute

IBMS	PCO	General
X		Agree date, duration and venue
X	X	Agree critical dates timetable and deadlines for action
X	X	Agree event budget including expenditure and income
		Contracts
	X	Arrange and manage sub-contractor contracts
	X	Manage social programme venue contracts
	X	Manage any additional venue contracts
	X	Manage hotel accommodation contract
		Finance management
	X	Code and pass invoices to IBMS for payment
X		Payment of all contractor and supplier invoices

	X	Management of delegate bookings and issue of invoices
	X	Management of delegate credit notes and issue of refunds
	X	Management of credit control processes
		Delegate Bookings
	X	Manage the delegate booking process including confirmation
		Venue
	X	Evaluate venue contract, advise IBMS and negotiate best terms
	X	Negotiate and manage venue catering contract
	X	Evaluate and negotiate AV contract
	X	Liaise with venue on H&S and security issues
		Exhibition
X	X	Devise and agree exhibition floor plan with IBMS and Congress venue
	X	Promote and manage exhibition sales
	X	Manage all furniture and equipment orders
	X	Ensure exhibition build and breakdown is conducted according to agreed schedule
		Sponsorship and promotion
	X	Identify and promote sponsorship opportunities
	X	Arrange and manage sponsorship contracts
		Lecture programmes
X		Compilation of lecture programme
X		Organisation of additional Hall 4 seminar activities
X		Lecturer correspondence and accommodation arrangements
X		Advertisement for and selection of scientific posters
		Social programme
X	X	Oversee the organisation of the social programme
X	X	Be on site throughout the social programme
		Branding, designs and printing
X	X	Event branding and promotional designs
	X	Design, Printing and distribution of programme and promotional material
X	X	Electronic promotion
	X	Design and printing of Congress handbook
		Staffing
X	X	Ensure sufficient staff are present throughout to manage the event

9. Contact details

Submission of tenders and any other communication should be to:

Sarah May
Deputy Chief Executive
Institute of Biomedical Science
12 Coldbath Square
London
EC1R 5HL

Tel: 020 7713 0214 ext 143