

Upon signing the Hosting Protocol, the Host approved by NAMES Board of Directors confirms abiding by the following Hosting Guidelines and Procedures:

NAMES Secretariat Office (SO) has established the guidelines and procedures to ensure the successful hosting of NAMES Conferences and General Assembly Meetings (GAMs). These guidelines, approved by the NAMES Board of Directors (BoD), are mandatory.

Potential hosts must understand that NAMES Network prioritizes high-quality standards for its events. To maintain this quality, NAMES SO and BoD reserve the right to be involved in all aspects of conference management.

As NAMES' regional and international reach expands, it is crucial to uphold and enhance the objectives of our conferences. A poorly executed conference can negatively reflect on the entire network, not just the host. Therefore, the program content, exhibition fair, services, catering, social activities, marketing, branding, and all other relevant factors are essential to a successful conference.

Scope of Work

- **Partnership:** The host of NAMES Conference and GAM is a partner with the network in delivering a successful event. The host must plan well in advance, understanding their obligations and responsibilities.
- **Financial Considerations:** This is not a profit-making venture. The host should aim to cover expenses through registration fees, exhibition booth rentals, and potential sponsorships or grants.
- **Registration and Booth Fees:** Fees should be reasonable to attract attendees. Registration fees should typically include conference sessions, refreshment breaks, lunches, and social events (gala dinner, nocturne, farewell lunch). Additional costs may vary based on the host's capabilities. The host is encouraged to offer flexible registration options, such as group rates or one-day passes, to increase attendance.

Host Selection

- 1) **Call for Hosting:** Upon the approval of NAMES BoD, the SO launches the Call for Hosting (24-18 months prior to the desired conference date);
 - The SO sets a deadline to receive Hosting Proposals (not less than a month and not more than 2 months from the opening of the call).
- 2) **Hosting Proposals:** Potential hosts have to submit their proposals to the SO before the set deadline; the proposal should include:
 - Reasons for believing they can host a successful conference and their plans
 - A preliminary budget outlining forecasted income and expenses
 - An estimated number of local participants
 - Suggested venues and their advantages

- 3) **Proposals Review and Approval:** The SO reviews proposals and provides feedback to the BoD within 2-4 weeks of the Call for Hosting deadline;
 - The SO may need to discuss proposals with potential hosts to suggest adjustments or clarifications.
 - The SO will inform potential hosts of the BoD's decision within 1 month of receiving the final proposals.

Third-Party Involvement

- **Responsibilities:** If the approved host chooses to hire an event management company or a third-party consultant to assist with hosting NAMES Conference and GAM, that company must fully adhere to these guidelines and procedures. The host is responsible for ensuring compliance.
- **Communication:** The host manages communication with the hired company. The SO deals directly with the host.
- **Coordination:** It is strongly recommended that the host appoint a specific Conference Coordinator to act as a liaison with the SO.

Hosting Obligations and Commitments

- **Understanding and Commitment:** Potential hosts must confirm in their proposals their understanding of and commitment to managing the following hosting responsibilities and budgetary obligations.
- **SO Involvement:** The host should be aware that the NAMES SO is appointed by the BoD to oversee the delivery of a high-quality conference and GAM. The SO will be actively involved in managing the conference and approving all relevant procedures.

Venue, Halls, Equipment, and Interpretation

- 1) **Venue:** The host provides a suitable venue with suitable halls for:
 - All conference sessions as outlined in the three-day conference program developed collaboratively by the SO, the NCPC, and the host, taking into account the diversity of formats (talks, discussions, presentations, demonstrations, workshops, hands-on activities, makerspace, and mini science festival).
 - An Exhibition Fair as described in the next section; the exhibition fair area should be suitable for serving all refreshment breaks.
 - Lunches: The area dedicated to serve lunches:
 - Needs to be easily accessible and close enough to conference halls;
 - Should accommodate enough tables for all conference participants;
 - Has to be well ventilated and acoustically suited to accommodate a large number of talking guests.
- The host is required to share detailed venue information, map, and photos with the SO within 3 months of signing the Hosting Protocol.

- Prior to the event, before finalizing and announcing the Tentative Program, the SO and host discuss and agree on the setup for each session; the host is henceforth responsible to act as agreed.
 - During the conference, the host is expected to make sure the halls are cleaned and set up as agreed before the start time of each session.
- 2) **Equipment:** All halls used for conference sessions must have adequate audiovisual equipment (screens, laptops, clickers, microphones, etc.), including all necessary software to display presentations and videos.
- Dedicated audiovisual staff proficient in Arabic and/or English must be available throughout the conference.
- 3) **Simultaneous interpretation:** Simultaneous English/Arabic/English interpretation is mandatory; other languages are optional at the host's discretion.
- Prior to the event, the host must share with the SO information regarding the handling of simultaneous interpretation during the event, so that the SO may share with registered participants in advance.

Exhibition Fair

- 1) **Arrangements:** The host provides necessary arrangements for an exhibition fair with a minimum of 15 booths. The host provides:
- Estimated number of booths, including a preliminary plan; to be presented to the BoD via the SO 12-9 months before the conference.
 - Booth details, including benefits, equipment, furniture, and advertising options; to be presented to the BoD via the SO 12-9 months before the conference.
 - Proposed booth rental fees in USD (10-15% discount for Full Members and 20-25% discount for Sustaining Members); to be finalized and approved by the BoD 9-6 months before the conference.
- 2) **Guidebook:** The host prepares a guidebook containing necessary information about the exhibition fair 12-9 months before the conference.
- The SO reviews and approves the guidebook before dissemination.
 - The SO publishes the guidebook, including the floor plan provided by the host, on the conference website 9-6 months before the conference.
- 3) **Booking Process:** Booth bookings are managed through the NAMES Conference Website, which is affiliated with the NAMES Website hosted by the SO.
- The SO initially handles bookings and then forwards them to the host for finalization and fee collection.
 - The host must designate a contact person for this purpose at least a year before the conference.
 - The host regularly informs the SO of booth rentals, cancellations, or issues.

- Both the host and SO seek exhibitors, coordinating efforts to avoid duplication.
 - The SO must be copied on all correspondence between the host and exhibitors.
- 4) **Complimentary Booth:** The host is obligated to provide NAMES with a standard booth free of charge if requested. Additional requests made by the SO will be accommodated based on the host's capabilities.

Program

- 1) **NAMES Conference Program Committee (NCPC):** In addition to the SO representatives (2-3 members), the NCPC comprises 4-6 members, including 1-2 host representatives.
- Upon signing the hosting protocol, the host announces one or two representatives to join the NCPC;
 - The SO recruits 2-3 members from among network member institutions;
 - The SO could seek to recruit external experts upon agreeing with the host on potential benefits to be offered to said experts.
- The NCPC should be formed as soon as the hosting protocol is signed; at least 15 months prior to the conference date.
 - The NCPC work is voluntary and takes place online:
 - The NCPC meets online (60-90 min) once a month; any extra meetings have to be agreed on by all NCPC members in advance.
 - The NCPC proposes theme(s), as well as session formats and other activities;
 - The SO seeks the approval of the BoD on the theme(s) and insights regarding proposed session formats and activities.
 - Once the theme(s), formats, and activities, are approved by the BoD, the NCPC provides the SO with insights to draft the Call for Contribution Proposals;
 - The SO finalizes, launches, and promotes the Call for Contribution Proposals.
 - NCPC members will be invited to share insights regarding the Call for Contribution Proposals via one or more online events to be agreed upon among all NCPC members.
 - The NCPC proposes and discusses potential Keynote Speakers;
 - The SO seeks the approval of the BoD on proposed keynote speakers.
 - Upon closing the Call for Contribution Proposals, NCPC members review received proposals and provide feedback via a mechanism that is proposed by the SO and approved by the NCPC in advance.
 - The NCPC decides on course of action regarding received proposals and continues to work with the SO until a Tentative Program is announced.

- 2) **Keynote Speakers:** NAMES conferences feature at least two keynote speakers.
 - Keynote Speaker Invitations: Upon the BoD's confirmation, the host drafts and sends official invitation letters to the selected keynote speakers at least a year before the conference. A digital scanned copy is sent to the SO.
 - The host and SO decide together how further communication with international keynote speakers will be conducted.
 - Keynote Speaker Expenses: The host covers the travel expenses of at least two international keynote speakers, including:
 - Business-class round-trip air tickets;
 - Meet-and-assist upon arrival;
 - Limousine or luxury car transportation from the airport to the hotel and back;
 - Half-board accommodation in a 5-star hotel (starting the night before the conference and ending the day after);
 - Limousine or luxury car transportation from the hotel to the venue and back.
- 3) **Master(s) of Ceremonies, Moderators, and Contributors**
 - Communication Channels: All communication with moderators and speakers is handled exclusively by the SO. Any other communication between the host and moderators/speakers must be approved in advance by the SO.
 - Travel Expenses: The host should be prepared to cover the travel expenses of one to two international speakers if requested. This helps ensure global representation, especially for significant speakers from financially challenged regions.
 - Requests received by the SO will be forwarded to both the host and BoD for deliberation and decision on whether to cover the travel expenses in full or in part.
 - All requests must be received, deliberated, and decided no later than three months before the conference.

Catering

- 1) **Mandatory Catering:** The host covers and accounts for the following:
 - At least 2 refreshment breaks for all attendees in the exhibition area on the first and second days of the conference;
 - At least 1 coffee break for all attendees in the exhibition area on the last day of the conference;
 - Lunches for all attendees on the first and second days of the conference;
 - A farewell brunch or lunch on the last day of the conference.
- 2) **Optional Catering:** The host may also consider providing:
 - A welcome reception at the venue or elsewhere for moderators and speakers before the conference opening;
 - A power breakfast for all attendees on the first day of the conference.

Social Program

- 1) **Nocturne:** The host organizes a tour of their premises, preferably as a nocturne, within the conference program;
 - If the conference venue is different or distant from the host's location, the host must cover the necessary transportation costs for all attendees.
- 2) **Gala Dinner:** The host organizes a gala dinner at a different location;
 - Costs should cover entertainment, catering, and transportation for all attendees to and from the conference venue.
- 3) **City Tour:** The host organizes a city tour on the last day of the conference or the following day;
 - Covering the cost of the tour is optional; if the host plans to charge an extra fee, they must specify this in their hosting proposal and obtain the BoD's approval.
 - Providing guided tours during historical visits would offer participants deeper insights and more comprehensive understanding.

Other Travel Costs

- 1) **Local Hosting Expenses:** The host covers local hosting expenses for all BoD and SO members, including:
 - Meet-and-assist upon arrival
 - Car transportation from the airport to the hotel and back
 - B&B accommodation in at least a 4-star hotel (starting the night before the conference and ending the day after)
 - Shuttle transportation from the hotel to the venue and back according to the conference program
- 2) **SO Prep Visit Expenses:** The host is required to cover travel expenses for 2-3 SO members to visit the venue within three months before the conference to review onsite arrangements. Expenses include:
 - Economy class round-trip air tickets
 - Meet-and-assist upon arrival
 - Car transportation from the airport to the hotel and back, as well as from the hotel to the venue and back according to the visit schedule
 - Half-board accommodation in at least a 4-star hotel (at least 3 nights or more depending on the visit schedule), or B&B accommodation with a suitable per-diem (according to the per-diem rates implemented by the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, host of the SO) to cover meal expenses.

Other Essential Costs

- 1) **Conference Branding:** The host ensures all conference venues are appropriately branded, including session halls and the exhibition fair.
- 2) **Conference Booklet:** The host and SO decide together at least a year in advance which party will be responsible for designing the conference booklet. Both parties collaborate on content and design; the host provides input on printing specifications.
 - The host is responsible for printing a sufficient number of conference booklets in English and preferably Arabic at their own expense.
- The host may opt to develop a conference application that is compatible with various mobile operating systems instead of a printed booklet. The host must consult the SO on all app development and management issues.
- 3) **Conference Pack:** The host provides a Welcome Pack to all registered participants and exhibitors; it includes (at least):
 - Conference Bag: The host must send the bag design or a sample photo to the SO for confirmation before production.
 - Conference Booklet (or app QR code card): And/or any other conference materials pre-approved by the SO.
 - Conference Nametag: This acts as a pass to all conference sessions, the exhibition fair, refreshment breaks, lunches, social events, and any other arranged activities.
 - Logistical Information: Social event locations, directions, shuttle bus hours, free visit locations, directions, opening hours, and Wi-Fi instructions.
 - Notepad and Pen.
 - Promotional Material or Gifts offered by the Host.
 - Exhibitors Promotional Material: Exhibitors should be able to place promotional material in the conference bag as specified by the host in the exhibition guide.

Registration

- 1) **Fee Categories and Benefits:** The host must propose estimated values for the proposed fee categories and the corresponding participant benefits no later than 15 months before the conference to obtain the BoD's approval, noting that:
 - All NAMES BoD and SO members, as well as the winner of the Mijbil Almutawa Award, are exempt from paying registration fees.
 - NAMES members and their staff should receive discounted registration fees.
 - Each Sister Network is entitled to one free registration.
- Within the same timeframe, the host must also specify accompanying person packages and fees, as well as any other items that would require additional charges.

- 2) **Registration Methods:** The host must be aware that, aside from onsite registration (open the day before the conference and closing at the end of the first conference day), only online registration through the conference website is applicable. The website is managed by the SO.
 - The host must specify payment methods, which the SO will announce on the conference website for online registration. Online registration should be open at least 6 months before the conference.
 - The host may accept payments via bank transfer or credit card. If offering online payments, the host must set up a secure online payment portal before opening online registration.
 - The SO will report the total number of participants registered online on a regular basis once registration is open.
 - Based on the final participants list provided by the SO (at least three days before the conference), the host provides the SO with the status of registered participants (paid and attended, paid but did not attend, not paid) based on registration desk and onsite registration data.
 - The SO is responsible for finalizing and distributing the "Participants List" during or after the conference.

Marketing, Promotion, and Evaluation

- 1) **Conference Branding:** The SO is responsible for developing the initial design of the conference's promotional material and its adaptations in coordination with the host. The design is based on the theme approved by the BoD.
 - The SO produces the digital version of the conference poster and flyer 15-12 months before the conference.
 - Further adaptations and printing of promotional material (flyers, posters, rollups, banners, backdrops, venue branding, etc.) are the responsibility of the host. However, the SO must review and approve all designs before public usage.
- 2) **Conference Website:** The SO is responsible for creating the conference website within 3 months of selecting the host, dates, and subtheme;
 - The conference website is affiliated to NAMES website and uses the same interface design.
 - All data entry and extraction are managed by the SO. The host is required to provide the SO with any necessary information upon request.

- 3) **Conference Documentation:** The host is responsible of creating a visually compelling and professionally documented conference that effectively showcases the event and its participants.
 - Professional Media: All conference events should be documented by professional photographers and videographers to ensure high-quality visual content.
 - Logos and Branding: Ensure that all photographs and videos prominently display the conference logo, brand colors, and any other relevant branding elements.
 - Branding Placement: Create a visually appealing backdrop and strategically place conference branding elements in the background of photos and videos for maximum visibility.
- 4) **Promotional Strategies:**
 - General Promotion: The SO prepares digital promotional designs and promotes the conference via emails and social media, as well as online or in-person events attended prior to the conference.
 - The host should repost any promotion shared by the SO; in case of creating their own version of promotional material, they need to be reviewed by the SO to make sure NAMES branding is appropriately visible.
 - Local Promotion: The host is responsible for local promotion of the conference in their own country. It is strongly advised that the host attract as many local participants as possible from universities, teachers, informal education, and science communication institutions.
 - International Advertising: The host is expected to cover the expenses of international advertising if deemed necessary. They also participate in regional and international promotion.
- 5) **Surveys and Evaluation:** The host is responsible for conducting two surveys—one among exhibitors and another among attendees—to gather feedback on the conference's effectiveness and benefits.
 - The SO provides the templates to be used. The host is responsible for collecting the data and including the results in their final detailed report (see below).

General Conference Management

- 1) **Transportation:** The host should provide the necessary information and signage;
 - Should the venue be difficult to reach due to distant location or lack of sufficient public transportation, the host should provide shuttle buses to transport participants from/to assembly points according to a pre-announced schedule.
- 2) **Onsite Registration:**
 - The host should have sufficient onsite registration desks to monitor actual versus registered attendees with a clear division of participants by name, for smoother participant flow and to avoid delay in the process.

- The host should maintain a contacts list of actual attendees and send it to the SO post-conference.
- 3) **Conference Staffing:**
 - The host should ensure the conference is well-staffed with ushers, registration desk teams, setup staff, etc.
 - The host should consider providing multilingual volunteers to improve communication with participants.
- 4) **Food and Menu Options:** The host is advised to offer a diverse set of food and menu options, considering vegetarian needs, as well as any other dietary requirements conveyed by the SO prior to the conference.
- 5) **Local Feel:** It is highly recommended that the host organize the conference with a local feel, incorporating its own country's traditional culture into social events.
- 6) **Cultural Performances:** The host is urged to ensure that any cultural performances presented at the conference or social events are culturally appropriate for all attendees and gender-sensitive.
- 7) **Post-Conference Reporting:** Within one month after the conference, the host is required to provide the SO and BoD with a detailed report, including the following:
 - Venue and Halls:
 - Brief description of the venue and its facilities
 - Number of halls used for plenary and/or parallel sessions
 - Size and capacity of each hall used
 - AV facilities provided
 - Simultaneous interpretation provided
 - Feedback from the host and participants regarding the above (with the SO adding their feedback and that received from other participants)
 - Participation:
 - Estimated number of participants by the host in advance
 - Host's implemented strategy to secure suitable participation
 - Actual number of participants and their contacts
 - Host's feedback regarding participation and the success of their strategy (with the SO adding their feedback)
 - Exhibition Fair:
 - Venue and necessary arrangements for the exhibition fair
 - Estimated number of exhibitors by the host in advance
 - Host's implemented strategy to secure suitable exhibitors
 - Number of actual exhibitors and their contacts
 - Host's feedback regarding exhibitors and the success of their strategy (with the SO adding their feedback)

- Catering and Social Events:
 - Details of catering and social events provided by the host
 - Feedback from both the host and participants regarding the above (with the SO adding their feedback and that received from other participants)
- Marketing and Fundraising:
 - Sponsors and partners
 - Impact of sponsors and partners on promotion
 - Media coverage
- Challenges Faced: Any problems the host encountered in organizing the conference
- Suggestions for the Next Conference and GAM

NAMES Conference & General Assembly Meeting Hosting Protocol

This Protocol is held between The North Africa and Middle East Science centers network (NAMES) and -----

in order to host and organize NAMES ----- Biennial Conference and General Assembly Meeting (NAMES -----), the date of which will be -----, in -----.

By signing this Protocol, the Host approved by NAMES Board of Directors, confirms abiding by the above Conference and General Assembly Meetings Hosting Guidelines and Regulations.

Agreed by the authorized officers of the parties:

By NAMES

By Host

Signature:

Signature:

Name:

Name:

Title:

Title:

Date:

Date: