



Call for Proposals to Host IAF Conference of the Americas 2021

WHO ARE WE?

The International Association of Facilitators (IAF) is a participatory organization with members in more than 65 countries. As a professional association, we set internationally accepted industry standards, provide accreditation, support a community of practice, advocate and educate on the power of facilitation and embrace the diversity of facilitators.

Every year the IAF hosts a range of national and regional conferences to provide a gathering place for facilitators to learn, engage and grow as a profession.

The prime objective of IAF conferences at any level is to provide IAF members, other interested individuals and related organizations with state of the art information, case studies, research and exhibits to assist in the advancement of facilitation as a profession, benefit the practice of facilitators as well as create and enhance the relationships between our members and professionals who use facilitation in their practice.

Conferences are hosted and organized by volunteers with some support from the IAF. We are looking for a team to organize the next Conference of the Americas, which will take place in 2021.

WHO CAN HOST?

Any team of IAF members who share the values and goals of our association, along with a commitment to arrange an important event to advance our profession, may apply to host our 2021 Conference of the Americas. The team should be comprised of at least two co-chairs and enough other members to fulfill the necessary roles to organize a conference. These members will become the Local Organizing Team (LOT) and will need to have the strategic means (mostly human resources and available locations) to organize a 3-4 day conference for 150-250 participants. Officially recognized Chapters and Special Interest Groups are specially encouraged to host. While the organizing committee does not need to be entirely US based, the evaluation criteria for these host proposals will give preference to US based teams. At the same time, the selected LOT will be encouraged to seek volunteers from all three regions in the Americas: USA, Canada and Latin America and the Caribbean.

WHAT SUPPORT WILL WE PROVIDE?

We have developed a Conference Manual to assist with the most common questions and practical issues and to help harmonize our different events. The successful LOT will have the support of the Regional Director for the USA and the Director of Conferences and Events, who will be available to the LOT for consultation, but will not be members of the LOT.

For the conference itself, the IAF can provide seed funds that are recovered at the end of the event if the LOT's plan calls for them. The IAF can also offer web support, including an automated registration solution and Conference website. However, the LOT is not obligated to use IAF web resources. The IAF also works with a management company that has a conference planning department. The LOT can use those services, but must account for those services in the conference budget.

SOME CONSIDERATIONS

The conference is a non-profit event. As such, the money that derives from the conference registration revenue is re-invested to offer to our participants the best opportunities and experiences for research and professional advancement. Because of this, we encourage conference hosts to mobilize local resources to support the conference costs and enrich the conference experiences of our members. Examples of local resources include university provisions for discounted on-campus housing, local government and charitable organization grants to support conference programming, discounts at local restaurants, sponsorship of social events for conference attendees, etc.

The IAF Conference of the Americas takes place over 3-4 days. Most IAF regional conferences take place over 3 days; however, if you have a compelling reason for adding a day (or a portion of a day), the conference selection committee is open to the possibility of extending the meeting into a fourth day. Also, historically IAF conferences have been scheduled Friday-Sunday as our core participant constituency are independent contractors who are more likely to have free weekends than weekdays. Compelling arguments as to why a weekday dates would work better will be considered.



CONFERENCE TIMELINE

1. Save the Date, which should include venue information, will be available to the membership in August 2020
2. Registration open before, but no later than, October 29, 2020 at the Global Summit
3. The conference itself in June of 2021.

If a proposing team has a different timeline, particularly dates in 2021 for the conference that aren't in June, their proposal must include a justification for this difference. The committee will take this into account. Please contact rep.usa@iaf-world.org for a list of dates to avoid if scheduling outside of June.

Please see the current policy regarding IAF Regional Conferences for specific policies and procedures regarding all IAF conferences.

The official language of the event is English. As this is the Conference of the Americas, preference will be given to proposals that include Spanish language elements to the Conference, at least a Spanish language track during break-out sessions. Simultaneous translation in plenary session would garner additional evaluation points. Preference will also be given to teams who can demonstrate an ability to build teams across our three regions: USA, Canada and Latin America and the Caribbean.

Before and during the event the following activities are expected to happen: Facilitation Impact Awards Ceremony, CPF Assessment and pre and/or post conference sessions. Additional evaluation points are available for local facilitation events for conference participants to take part in.

PROPOSAL PROCESS AND DEADLINE

The deadline for submitting proposals is 11:59pm CDT Friday, April 3, 2020

Send all proposals to: office@iaf-world.org with the subject "2021 Conference of the Americas Proposal".

Send all questions to rep.usa@iaf-world.org with the subject "2021 Conference of the Americas Questions".

A Selection Committee will carefully review each proposal and communicate their decision to Candidate teams by Monday, May 4, 2020. The Selection Committee will be made up of Jonathan Bell, Regional Director for the USA; Paul Nunesdea, Director for Conferences and Events; and Barb Sweazey, Ottawa 2018 co-chair. Candidate teams may be contacted by the Selection Committee for more information

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING PROPOSALS

Understanding that Candidate teams will likely not have complete answers to all of the criteria, the IAF Conference Steering Committee will use the following criteria in evaluating proposals:

Conference organizers – Local Team

- Have they been active and contributing members of the IAF community?
- Do they have all the important roles covered? And enough people involved to make it manageable?
- What experience does the team have with large project, event or conference organizing?
- How many volunteers does the local team have to provide support to the event?
- How strong does the support of local institutions appear to be?
- Do they have an inter-regional network to represent all of the Americas in the Conference planning process?

Location

- Is the proposed location desirable and accessible for IAF members?
- How convenient and affordable is travel for US, Canadian, Latin American and Caribbean participants, as well as overseas participants?
- Does it bring the conference to a new location?
- Is the place likely to attract new participants to the conference?

Facilities (information not indispensable but recommended)

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- Is inexpensive housing available for graduate students and others with limited budgets?
- Are there sites or opportunities for special conference events (banquets, social events) that have special appeal?
- Is the proposed venue suited to host up to 4-8 simultaneous workshop sessions in an appropriate environment for facilitated sessions?
- Does the proposed venue and the organizing team have accessibility plans in place?

Program

- Spanish language opportunities
 - Session track
 - Simultaneous translation
- Conference theme or process by which a conference theme will be shaped
- Session tracks

Dates

- Are the recommended dates within the acceptable range for the conference?
- Have the organizers checked for potential conflicts with other competing conferences?
- If the dates are outside the range, is the organizers' argument for those dates compelling?

Finances

- Are the proposed price points (member/non-member, early/regular) for conference fees cost effective for members and other potential participants?
- Do the organizers have a tentative plan for pursuing local resources and sponsors to support expenses and enrich the conference experience?
- Do the organizers have a tentative budget and plan to develop a final budget that will break even or make a moderate profit?