

Advice for Hosting Groups

Contacting your intended speaker:

Speakers are often booked some time ahead, and are less likely to be able to provide talks at short notice, especially where travel is involved. They may only give talks at certain times of year when they are less busy with other work. Contact them well in advance and provide them with information about:

1) Your group

(Details about your group; Interests; Region(s) serviced; Typical numbers attending; Website if available)

2) The possible date(s)/time(s)/length for the proposed presentation

3) What topics your group would be interested in hearing about

4) What facilities are available, or would be required of a speaker

(Projection facilities/Screen/Audio microphone)

5) Whether some form of handout/notes would be appreciated or required at the presentation

6) Whether you can provide food or accommodation for speakers travelling some distance

7) What sort of travel expenses you are able to cover

8) Contact details of a person/persons who will handle the planning

9) Let them know that you found their details on the IWGS list

This should be seen as an initial approach. If the speaker shows interest, then move on to the next stage and firm up the following details in writing, (and obtain a written confirmation from the speaker):

1) The exact date, time, and place of the presentation; how far in advance of the presentation the speaker should arrive to enable preparation; travel instructions e.g. include where to park for those travelling by car.

2) The presentation title and the length of presentation expected

3) Details of any question time or other items expected (e.g. advanced details/photos for publicity; handouts or notes and who is expected to print them; the sort of projection facilities and who is providing them; whether a panel discussion is involved (and who else will be on it); book-signing facilities if appropriate)

4) Full details of the negotiated fee and/or any expenses payable, and/or any meals/accommodation offered.

For larger events you may wish to have both parties sign a contract. You should make clear if you would like, or expect, to retain any rights to publish notes, photos, or videos from a presentation so that appropriate copyright consents are obtained and details of any payments made clear. Also make clear any process if one or other party was to cancel or postpone the event, and for what reasons e.g. severe weather, illness.

Always contact the speaker an appropriate length of time in advance of the event to re-confirm details, especially regarding any audio-visual requirements, and exchange mobile/cellphone numbers for emergency contact on the day.

At the event:

Ensure that a named person is ready to meet the speaker by the expected arrival time, and can show the speaker the details of the venue including washroom facilities. They should confirm details of the start/finish times and any other presentations or announcements that might be occurring before or after the speaker's slot.

Ensure that any projection or audio equipment is ready and tested at least 30 mins in advance of the presentation.

Ensure that drinking water is available for the speaker's use during the lecture.

Ensure that the person introducing the speaker is made known to the speaker in advance of the presentation, and confirms any necessary details that they will be using in the speaker's introduction. They should also make clear how long any expected question time might be, and how they might signal if the speaker needs to conclude their presentation to meet timetabling deadlines.

Introductions should not be unduly lengthy

After the event:

Ensure that any audio-visual equipment or data sticks/disks are returned to the appropriate persons.

Ensure that the speaker is guided to any meal/accommodation as required.

Ensure that any payment/expenses are dealt with.

It is appreciated if the speaker is thanked in writing after the event. If any particular part of the presentation was especially valued then let the speaker know, as positive feedback helps them in planning future events.

Consider filling in an IWGS feedback form from your event – this allows us to monitor how a speaker is doing.