ADVICE FOR SPEAKERS

Following an enquiry from a group seeking a speaker:

1) Acknowledge receipt

2) If you can't do the presentation or think that you are an inappropriate match for the audience, let them know.

3) Negotiate the most appropriate date(s)/time(s)/length for the proposed presentation

4) Find out which of your topics will be the best match for the audience, and what level of detail might be required e.g. is it a general/beginner audience or one requiring more technical information

5) Check what facilities are available, or would be required of a speaker

  (Projection facilities/Screen/Pointer/Audio microphone/Camera/Internet access)

6) If you offer a handout/note, let them know, and find out how many copies might be needed. For larger events, you might need to supply a file in advance, remember to make any copyright limitations clear.

7) For in-person events check whether the inviting group can provide food or accommodation and make clear to them the amount of time that you'll be setting aside for travelling. Some groups may not be fully aware of the distances involved.

7) Be up front about what travel expenses and fees you might require. Online presentations require just as much preparation, so don't be afraid to ask. Small groups may be unable to offer much in the way of fees and clearing this point up early will avoid wasted time on both sides if this is a breaking point.

8) Make sure that you have necessary contact details of all those who will be handling the planning

After these initial discussions be sure to get all the details confirmed **in writing.** e.g.:

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. including where to park if travelling by car.

For online presentations, we strongly recommend a short test run a few days ahead of the presentation, to iron out any issues.

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; full details of projection facilities and who is providing them; book-signing facilities if appropriate)

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

Updated: February 12, 2022

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For larger events you may wish to have both parties sign a contract. You should make clear if you expect to retain your rights to your notes and photos, and that you may need to negotiate further over any videography of the event. For online events, check if the presentation is to be recorded. It is your intellectual property and you may want to restrict where it is shown and for how long it will be made available e.g. one month. Make sure that you arrange appropriate copyright consents, and make clear the details of any payments due. 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.

If the organising group hasn't been back in touch an appropriate length of time in advance of the event, then contact them yourself to re-confirm details, especially regarding any audio-visual requirements. Exchange mobile/cellphone numbers for emergency contact on the day.

At the event (in person):

Ensure that you have the name of the person(s) that you are to contact on arrival. Do arrive in good time, it reduces stress for everyone involved! Sort out where the presentation will take place and re-confirm timings, find out where the washroom facilities are, and check that you will have some water during the presentation. Ideally speak to the person who will be introducing you and confirm details of the start/finish times and any other presentations or announcements that might be occurring before or after the speaker's slot. Check how long any question-time might take, or if you are prepared to stay after presentations to answer questions one-on-one, or sign books.

Ensure that any projection or audio equipment is ready **and tested** at least 30 mins in advance of the presentation. Keep a back-up of your presentation e.g. a thumb drive, for eventualities.

At the event (online):

Ideally you will have had a trial run a few days ahead, and already know the people handling the technical aspects of the event. Log on a suitable time ahead of the event and double-check any timings and what is happening before and after your section of the event. There are many helpful guides to be found online with hints for making presentations on Zoom and similar platforms. Make sure to minimise background noise or distracting room backgrounds; use a good quality camera/microphone and mount the camera so that you will be looking into it. Keep your computer and internet connection free of any unnecessary usage.

The Presentation:

Practice makes perfect. Run through your timings to check that everything fits.

Make sure that you have the necessary permissions to show pictures where you do not hold the copyright. Include Creative Commons signs and credits where appropriate.

Do keep a note of the time during your presentation, and when you need to finish by.

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Do not take too long introducing yourself or your business.

Do check that everyone in the room can hear you properly. Do turn off microphones when finished.

Do make sure that your handouts (if provided) are available at an appropriate point before or after the presentation.

Make clear whether you will take questions during the presentation (inadvisable if you have a strict timetable) or will answer questions afterwards (preferable).

If you are showing photos of private gardens, make clear if you do not want the audience to take/capture photos of these e.g. on their phones.

Good photos, and a reasonable pace of change of photos helps to keep audiences engaged.

If using PowerPoint or similar captions, make these large enough to be readable at a distance. Avoid more than four or five bullet points per slide. If you have a lot of complex plant names on the slides, consider putting these in your handout too.

If showing snippets of video in online presentations, remember that some platforms or internet connections may struggle to cope. Iron out these issues in your test run with the host's technical folk – you might need to provide video in advance.

Finally – please consider giving a plug to the IWGS in your talk or handout – thanks!

After the event:

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

Ensure that you know where to sit down or where to go next after the presentation.

Ensure that any payment/expenses are dealt with, especially if travel receipts are required.

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

Consider filling in an IWGS feedback form following your event – this allows us to monitor how host groups are doing.

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