

Memorandum of Understanding
between the European Astronomical Society, the Scientific Organising
Committee and the EWASS Hosting Committee

for the organisation
of the EWASS conference 2019

This document describes the roles and responsibilities of the entities involved in the organisation of the European Week of Astronomy and Space Science (EWASS). The signing of this document follows the selection of the hosting city by the Council of the European Astronomical Society (EAS) through the procedure of the EWASS Request for Proposal (RfP).

1. Introduction

The EWASS conference is held every year in a different European country. Its main goal is to promote European astronomy, to facilitate scientific exchange and to motivate new collaborations at an international level. The diversity of venues recognises the national heterogeneity within Europe. It allows the involvement of national societies in the organisation and to strengthen the link between them and the EAS. To ensure each year a conference of equally high standard the EAS takes a leading role in the organisation of the EWASS with the support of a professional conference organiser. This is essential given the large number of sessions and participants. It avoids restarting each year from scratch by having common utilities and reusing and adapting them from year to year. It also allows a better continuity in the contact with large European organisations such as ESO, ESA, ASTRONET, and with long-standing exhibitors and sponsors.

The EWASS conference aims to attract 1000 participants or more with a very rich scientific programme. Based on the experience from previous years, this programme typically consists of:

- 8–16 EAS Symposia of 2 days duration (in parallel sessions);
- 10–20 Special Sessions of 1 day duration (in parallel sessions);
- Optionally, 3–6 Special Meetings of 0.5–1 day duration (in parallel sessions);
- The EAS General Assembly (plenary session);
- The EAS Prize ceremonies and talks (Tycho Brahe Prize, Lodewijk Woltjer Lecture and the three MERAC Prizes; plenary sessions);
- 6–10 additional Plenary talks, including the annual ESA and ESO reports.

2. Organising entities

The EWASS conference is organised by the EAS in collaboration with the EWASS Hosting Committee (EHC) and with the support of a Professional Conference Organiser (PCO). Together with the Scientific Organising Committee (SOC), there are actually five different entities working together in the organisation. The definition and the role of each of them are described below.

2.1. The EAS Council

Members

The members of the EAS Council are elected by the EAS members at the EAS General Assembly. One Council member is in charge of following the EWASS organisation and is the primary link between the EAS Council and the EWASS Board. Given the financial responsibility of the EAS, the EAS Treasurer must also be closely informed at all key stages.

Roles & responsibilities

- The EAS Council selects the destination city of the future EWASS based on a letter of intent and a complete response to the RfP.
- The EAS Council selects the Chair or co-Chairs of the SOC.
- The EAS carries the financial responsibility for the EWASS conference.
- The EAS Council approves the budget presented by the EWASS Board.

2.2. The EWASS Board

Members

The EWASS Board is composed of the EAS Council member responsible for the EWASS (Chair), the EAS treasurer, the EAS administrative and financial officer, at least one representative of the PCO and, when relevant and on invitation, the EAS president, the EAS webmaster and/or the chair of the EHC.

Roles & responsibilities

- The EWASS Board is responsible for the overall organisation of the EWASS conference. It coordinates and follows the work of the various entities. It defines the registration fees, presents the baseline budget to the EAS Council, and monitors the evolution of the budget.
- The EWASS Board makes the final decision about any divergence from the original budget reported by the PCO. For substantial changes potentially affecting the EAS accounts the EWASS Board must inform the EAS Council prior to taking a decision.

2.3. The EWASS Hosting Committee

Members

The core of the EHC is selected by the EAS Council following a proposal made in the RfP, and consists of the Chair and either two co-chairs or two senior members of the EHC. The Chair should expand this core into a small team of 4–8 people from the host country involved in the organisation of EWASS. It should not include volunteers just helping during the conference, but rather local experienced astronomers advising on and leading local organisational aspects.

Roles & responsibilities

- The EHC has a very important role in shaping the conference and giving it a local flavour. This is done by proposing a suitable venue (in response to the RfP), and by closely interacting with the PCO to choose the catering, the social programme, the hotels, etc.

- The EHC designs the web banner and the poster, and involves the national academic and political authorities, the general public (e.g. via a public lecture), as well as local media.
- The EHC shall identify the 15-25 volunteers who will help during the conference, and who in return will get their registration fee waved. With the help of volunteers, it is recommended to be active in social networks (e.g. Twitter, Facebook), to provide press information, etc.
- The EHC will endeavour to find suitable alternative low-cost accommodations (e.g., in a campus, youth hostel, etc.) for participants.
- The EHC is not responsible for the finances of the conference and is not expected to advance funds. It also cannot place orders or incur expenditures to be charged to the EWASS budget, without the explicit pre-authorization from the PCO. However, it is vital for the EAS and the success of the EWASS that there is an active participation of the EHC in providing a high-quality conference at best cost.
- The EHC shall identify and contact potential local exhibitors and sponsors. It shall try to obtain financial support and/or in-kind contributions from local academic, institutional or commercial organisations to increase the income, lower the registration fees, and thus increase the success of the EWASS conference.
- The EHC Chair should expect to devote a considerable amount of his/her time to EWASS, and to be readily available as the contact person for many organisational aspects of the conference. He/she is expected to be pro-active in suggesting ideas and proposing solutions both on logistical and more scientific aspects of the conference.

2.4. The Professional Conference Organiser

Members

The PCO is, since EWASS 2014, the company KUONI Congress Geneva. It provides a small team working on the organisation of the EWASS conference, which is led by a dedicated project manager.

Roles & responsibilities

- The PCO is the executive body of the EWASS organisation. All its activities and its associated fees are defined in a contractual agreement signed by the head of the company and both the EAS president and the EAS treasurer. The PCO remuneration is part of the EWASS budget.
- The PCO is responsible for the registration and abstract handling via web interfaces. It also manages all the primary contacts with the participants and issues the main announcements of the conference.
- The PCO prepares, updates and executes the budget as laid out by the EAS Council. It maintains the bookkeeping and presents the final financial report.
- The PCO collects the registration fees. All payments and financial matters including sponsoring are handled by the PCO.

2.5. The Scientific Organising Committee

Members

The Chair or co-Chairs of the SOC are selected by the EAS Council. Often there is one co-chair from the host country and a second co-chair from elsewhere in Europe.

SOC (co-)chairs should be senior astronomers with a broad experience that is not limited to their own specific field of scientific interest. The SOC should be composed of 10–15 astronomers including, among others, at least one member of the EAS Council and one from the EHC. In choosing the additional members, the SOC Chair(s) should make sure to reflect geographical and gender diversity, as well as the diversity of research topics in the European astronomical community. The final composition of the SOC should be approved by the EWASS Board.

Roles & responsibilities

- The SOC is responsible for the scientific programme of the EWASS conference. It issues the call for, and then evaluates, the proposals to organise Symposia and Special Sessions at EWASS. Based on this, it may further interact with the proposers (e.g. to propose the merging of sessions on similar topics) and then prepares the scientific programme. The programme should be balanced and reflect the wide range of interests within the European astronomical community. It shall take into account the constraints of the number of rooms available at the venue for parallel sessions.
- The SOC, in conjunction with EAS Council, will identify and invite plenary speakers.
- The SOC, in conjunction with the EAS Council, can identify European institutes and networks and encourage them to participate in the organisation of sessions, including Special Meetings.
- The SOC shall endeavour that the Diversity Policy of the EAS is followed by the overall SOC, as well as the organisers of the individual Symposia and Special Sessions.

3. Other organisational aspects

In addition to the above-named general organisation entities, the individual **session organisers** play an important role in the success of the conference. They are responsible for reviewing the abstracts submitted to their Symposium or Special Session and for preparing a scientific programme that is expected to cover the topic with a high level of international expertise. The session organisers are also expected to promote their particular session on the EAS website and via targeted e-mail announcements.

The **EWASS website** is hosted by the EAS. It links to external pages – for registration, abstract submission, fee payment, etc. – provided by the PCO. The EAS webmaster is also responsible for the EWASS website. However, the update of the content relies entirely on input received from all the organisational entities listed above. This requires an efficient flow of information to be announced on-line. Organisers of Symposia and Special Sessions shall edit their own webpage directly on the EWASS site via a dedicated interface.

There are typically no general **EWASS proceedings**. The decision to have proceedings for each Symposium and Special Sessions is taken by the SOC of the individual sessions, upon



approval by the EWASS Board. Any proceedings, as all other EAS publications, are usually published in the EAS/EDP Science Series.

The EAS provides a limited number of **EAS student grants** to facilitate the participation at EWASS of students and post-docs who are EAS members. The full process from application to the distribution of grants is the responsibility of the EAS.

No further **financial support** is granted to individuals, with the exception of waived registration fees for invited plenary speakers and the SOC (co-)chair(s). Invited plenary speakers can also be offered reimbursement of reasonable travel and subsistence costs but only if this is vital to ensure their presence and upon pre-authorisation by the PCO. Travel costs of EAS Prize winners are paid directly by the EAS and do not form part of the EWASS budget.

Acronyms

EAS	European Astronomical Society
EHC	EWASS Hosting Committee
ESA	European Space Agency
ESO	European Southern Observatory
EWASS	European Week of Astronomy and Space Science
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
PCO	Professional Conference Organiser
RfP	Request for Proposal
SOC	Scientific Organising Committee



This Memorandum of Understanding is done and signed in three (3) originals, one for the EAS, one for the EHC, and one for the SOC.

On behalf of the **European Astronomical Society:**

Place and date:

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Thierry Courvoisier
EAS President

On behalf of the **EWASS Host Committee:**

Place and date:

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Name:

Chair of the EHC

On behalf of the **Scientific Organising Committee:**

Place and date:

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Name:

Chair of the SOC