



ICSU
International Council for Science

network of african science academies

(nasac)



Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen



*The
British
Academy*



**KUNGL.
VETENSKAPSAKADEMIEN**
THE ROYAL SWEDISH ACADEMY OF SCIENCES



**THE ROYAL
SOCIETY**

CELEBRATING 350 YEARS



INSTITUT DE FRANCE
Académie des sciences

EUROPE-AFRICA FRONTIER RESEARCH CONFERENCE SERIES

within the framework of the
ESF Research Conferences Scheme

The **ESF Research Conferences Scheme** provides the opportunity for leading scientists and younger researchers to meet for discussions on the most recent developments in their fields of research. It acts as a catalyst for creating new synergistic contacts throughout Europe and the rest of the world. It develops principally through the establishment of long-term partnerships between the ESF and national and international organisations, including universities. **ESF Research Conferences** are open to scientists world-wide, whether from academia or industry. Conferences may be single events, or series, usually with a biennial meeting focusing on specific aspects of the same general topic. They generally last for four or five days and up to 150 participants and invited speakers may attend. Chairs select participants from applications received as a result of publicising the Conferences. A conference fee is charged to participants.

Conference Guidelines

European Science Foundation

<http://www.esf.org>

The **European Science Foundation (ESF)**, with its headquarters located in Strasbourg, France, provides a common platform for its Member Organisations in order to advance European research and to explore new directions for research at the European level. Through its activities, the ESF serves the needs of the European research community in a global context.

The International Council for Science (ICSU)

<http://www.icsu.org>

The **International Council for Science (ICSU)** is a non-governmental organisation representing a global membership that includes both national scientific bodies and international scientific unions. Through this

extensive international network, ICSU provides a forum for discussion of issues relevant to policy for international science and the importance of international science for policy issues.

The Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW)

<http://www.knaw.nl>

As the forum, conscience, and voice of the arts and sciences in the Netherlands, the Academy promotes the quality of scientific and scholarly work and strives to ensure that Dutch scholars and scientists make the best possible contribution to the cultural, social, and economic development of Dutch society.

The Royal Society

<http://www.royalsoc.ac.uk>

The Royal Society, the national academy of science of the UK and the Commonwealth, is at the cutting edge of scientific progress. It supports many top young scientists, engineers and technologists. It influences science policy, it debates scientific issues with the public and much more. It is an independent, charitable body which derives its authoritative status from its 1400 Fellows and Foreign Members.

The British Academy

<http://www.britac.ac.uk>

The British Academy is the national academy for the humanities and social sciences in the UK, with an elected Fellowship of 1200 members. It supports postdoctoral research in the humanities and social sciences through its research funding schemes, promoting relations between researchers in the UK and overseas, and recognising distinction in scholarship. It engages with and advises on major policy issues in the higher education sector.

The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences (RSAS)

http://www.kva.se/KVA_Root/index_eng.asp

The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, established in 1739, is an independent organisation whose overall objective is to promote the sciences and strengthen their influence in society. The Academy seeks chiefly: to be a forum where researchers can meet across subject borders; to offer unique research environments to support young researchers; to reward prominent contributions to research; to arrange international scientific contacts; to act as a voice of science and influence research policy priorities; to stimulate interest in mathematics and the natural sciences in schools; to disseminate scientific and popular-scientific information in various forms.

The French Academy of Sciences

http://www.academie-sciences.fr/actualites/nouvelles_gb.htm

The Academy of Sciences of the Institute of France brings together French scholars and forms associations with foreign scholars, where both the former and the latter are selected from among the most eminent. By their involvement, they contribute to the accomplishing of the missions of the Academy. The Academy of Sciences is independent and durable, it encourages scientific life, and contributes to progress in the sciences and in their applications.

The Network of African Science Academies (NASAC)

www.aasciences.org/nasac

The objective of NASAC is to act as an independent African forum that brings together the nine merit-based academies of science in the continent to discuss the scientific aspects of problems of common concern, to make common statements on major issues relevant to Africa and to provide mutual support to member academies. In pursuing this objective the Network, which was established in 2001, collaborates with other academies inside and outside the continent as well as with regional and international organizations concerned with African problems.

Europe-Africa Frontier Research Conference Series

The **European Science Foundation** (ESF) in partnership with the **International Council for Science** (ICSU), a consortium of European Academies (**The Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences**, **The Royal Society**, **The British Academy** and **The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences**), **The French Academy of Sciences** and the **Network of African Science Academies** (NASAC) have agreed to co-sponsor a series of Scientific Conferences, within the framework of the ESF Research Conferences Scheme. The Series will be known as '**Europe-Africa Frontier Research Conference Series**', and will be at the highest scientific level with respect to topics and choice of participants. The Conferences will bring together participants and experts in **Basic Science profiling African and European excellence** to discuss topics that are of major importance to the scientific community in Europe, Africa and beyond.

EUROPE-AFRICA CONFERENCE GUIDELINES

Topics

The topics should be at the forefront of scientific research and may be interdisciplinary when appropriate. The Conferences will concentrate on topics in **Basic Science**. Topics will be selected by mutual agreement between the participating organizations who will also identify the Conference Co-Chairs from the European and African sides.

Venue and Date

A limited number of venues, each linked to a certain scientific disciplinary area, is being established within the ESF Research Conferences Scheme in order to create a clear 'brand-name' for ESF Research Conferences, and a predictable relation for the scientific community. The Europe-Africa Frontier Research Conference Series will alternate between a venue in Europe and one in Africa.

The maximum capacity at the selected venue will be **150 participants**. The typical duration of a Conference is 4-5 days. Participants will normally arrive on a Friday or Saturday afternoon, and depart on Wednesday or Thursday after breakfast or lunch.

Scientific Programme

The Co-Chairs, possibly supported by one or two Vice-Chairs and a small Organising Committee, will be fully responsible for developing the **scientific programme** for the Conference.

Profile and Format of the Conferences

The core activities of the Conferences will be based on **lectures by invited scientists**, who are leaders in their respective fields, followed by **extensive discussion periods** e.g. 30-minute lecture followed by an extended discussion period. An informal exchange of ideas, both inside and outside the lecture room will be encouraged, and the number of sessions in the daily timetable will be limited in order to allow sufficient time for interaction between the participants. In addition to the 5-6 hours per day of lecture room activities, poster sessions, round-table discussions or discussion groups will be organised. Either one afternoon or extended lunch periods will be usually kept free of lectures in order to allow time for free time activities.

One evening should be reserved for a **'Forward Look Plenary Discussion'** about future developments in the field. The format of this discussion can be found below under the section 'Report on the Conference'.

In order to encourage speakers to present their latest results and ideas, which may not yet be fully explored and ripe for publication, no written papers will be requested. The publication, as proceedings, of selected papers prepared after the Conferences may be approved by the Chair, subject to the agreement of the speakers concerned.

Participants will take all their meals together to encourage further contact and networking, which will be particularly beneficial to **younger researchers** who may be less outspoken in the more formal lecture room setting. In order to gain optimum benefit from the Conference, both the speakers and the participants are expected to stay for the whole duration.

Poster Sessions

Poster sessions will be a very important feature of this series of conferences. Ideally, the venue for the poster session will be located close to the main meeting room and will be large and light enough to host such an event. Moreover, a **social event** may be incorporated into the meeting. The following factors should also be considered:

- each participant should give a one-slide presentation about the contents of his/her poster contribution at the beginning of the scheduled poster discussion sessions;
- sufficient time should be allowed for posters to be viewed, ideally throughout the entire meeting.

(2) Organisation

In order to encourage leading scientists within Europe and Africa to co-chair these conferences, only the **scientific** aspects of the meeting organisation (including any decisions on financial support for invited speakers and other participants) will be undertaken by the Co-chairs and the Organising Committee. If possible, it is recommended that Co-Chairs seek **additional sponsorship** from other sources, and they should advise ESF which organisation(s) they intend to approach. All other organisational tasks and logistics will be the responsibility of the ESF Conferences Unit, working in close co-operation with the venue, and an ESF Conference Officer will be assigned to each Conference. His/her tasks will include coordinating the administrative arrangements at the venue, publicising the Conference, financial and budgetary matters, the processing of applications, communicating with participants and speakers, making payments and collecting fees. The ESF Conferences Unit is equipped to manage the organisation of the Conferences in a standardised, streamlined manner and relies on the close and timely co-operation of the Co-Chairs.

Grant

The Grant available for the Conference will normally be used to meet the expenses of the invited speakers and selected young scientists. Travel should be by rail or by economy air. Experience shows that it is often possible for speakers to obtain some of their travel costs from other sources, if the sponsor offers partial support. The co-sponsoring organisations, will jointly provide a grant of ca **EUR 70.000** per Conference. It is expected that participants (other than the speakers and selected young scientists) will pay their own travel and subsistence costs, and a conference registration fee.

Management of the Grant

The ESF Conferences Unit, in consultation with the co-sponsoring organizations, will be responsible for all payments.

Registration Fee

A **registration fee**, in the order of EUR 200-300 will be levied, in order to cover the costs of organising and administering the Conference. This levy will be in addition to the subsistence costs. The Conference fees (subsistence + registration) will be all-inclusive i.e. full board and lodging, meeting facilities for the duration of the meeting, a social programme, and group bus transfers. All fees will be paid to ESF, and an online fee payment facility will be available. Part of the conference grant will be used to subsidise the fees of participants from Africa.

Additional Sponsorship

The Conference will be advertised as "Europe-Africa Frontier Research Conference on....". Additional sponsorship may be acknowledged in publicity material in terms such as "With major support from..." or "With additional sponsoring from...". If an external sponsor wishes to have its logo included in advertising material, the Co-Chairs should advise ESF accordingly. The co-sponsoring organisations do not usually favour co-sponsorship that requires formal proceedings to be published. There should be no confidential information. Eventual IPR or copyrights are the property of all participants contributing financially or intellectually to the Conference.

Publicity

ESF will publicise the Conference in appropriate scientific journals and on its **web site**. ESF will be responsible for the publicity of each Conference, and for disseminating information to potential applicants.

The identity of a Conference will be promoted through a standardised, graphical presentation of all its documents, which will include the logos or acknowledgements of ESF, ICSU, KNAW, The Royal Society, The British Academy, RSAS, The French Academy of Sciences and NASAC. The Conference will be advertised to **appropriate individuals and laboratories**, to **ESF Member Organisations** and to a **network of scientists world-wide, particularly in Europe and Africa**. Whenever possible, individual advertisements and calendar entries will also be placed free-of-charge in the scientific press, and in other appropriate journals and newsletters, according to the associated science disciplines.

In addition, it is very important that Chairs provide a **comprehensive, substantial emailing list** for circulation of an advertisement. (Important: this list of email addresses must be in the form of either a Word or an Excel document with all addresses listed in **one** column only and with a single address **per** row).

As soon as it is agreed to go ahead with the Conference, the Co-Chairs will be expected to email the ESF Conferences Unit with the following documents in order to advertise the event:

- the **preliminary scientific programme**, including a paragraph about the scope of the Conference, the list of topics to be covered, the list of confirmed invited speakers with their affiliations and the titles of their lectures;
- the full address and email list of the **invited speakers**;
- a **comprehensive, geographically-balanced email list** of all potentially interested scientists;
- a **list of scientific journals** or reviews and their websites for publicity and free inserts in calendars of events.

Applications to Attend the Conference and Deadlines for Application

An online **application facility** is available via the ESF Research Conferences website (<http://www.esf.org/conferences>). The deadline for applications is to be no later than 3 months before the event. The ESF Conferences Unit will process all applications and email them to the Co-Chairs for decision, together with each applicant's one-page abstract and list of publications.

Participation

The Co-Chairs will select participants from applications received as a result of ESF publicising the Conferences. The basic criteria for accepting participants will be their scientific merit and their scientific needs. Participants, including speakers, may be accepted from any country, although there should normally be a high proportion of Europeans and Africans. Without compromising scientific standards, organisers should aim for a wide geographical representation of scientists, with a recommended ratio of **about two-thirds European and African participation to one-third from other regions of the world**. Special attention should also be paid to the involvement of **younger applicants** and those from **developing countries**. Moreover, the gender balance should be taken into consideration. ESF Research Conferences are expected to large conferences of up to 150 participants. The attendance should generally be at least 80 participants.

Final Selection, Programmes & Invitations

The Co-Chairs should decide on the participation within **3 weeks** of receiving the applications. At this stage he/she should finalise the scientific programme and email it to ESF, together with the list of participants and the allocation of financial support. An invitation, the Final Programme and Practical Information Guide will be emailed to each invited speaker and participant. The Programme and Practical Information will also be available on the ESF Research Conferences website.

Book of Abstracts

If the Conference Co-Chairs wish to have the lecture abstracts and/or (extended) abstracts for posters assembled into a **Book of Abstracts**, the cost should be included in the conference budget or covered by the Co-Chair's own funds. The ESF Office cannot be involved in actually arranging for the production of this booklet and suggests that this task could be delegated to a young collaborator who could be offered a grant to cover his/her attendance at the conference.

On-site Administrative Arrangements

The ESF Conferences Unit will finalise all on-site administrative arrangements with the conference venue. A **Conference Officer** from ESF will be present for the duration of the Conference to take care of registration, any travel payments and to oversee the local administrative organisation. Owing to the size of the events, the Co-Chairs are encouraged to provide an **assistant or young researcher** to be responsible for the organisation of the poster sessions and/or other on-site scientific aspects and to help at the registration desk as required.

Questionnaires

Participants will be required to complete a **questionnaire** on various aspects of the Conference. The completed questionnaires should be returned to the on-site secretariat during the event.

Report on the Conference

The Co-Chairs are expected to write a **joint conference report**, as it is a condition of sponsorship that a scientific report be submitted after every Conference. The **conference report** should have the following format:

1. An **introduction** (up to two pages) on the topic in non-specialist terms (especially for highly technical subjects);
2. **Scientific content** of the conference:
 - a. a summary of the conference sessions focusing on the scientific highlights
 - b. an assessment of the results and their potential impact on future research or applications
3. **'Forward Look' 'Plenary Discussion'**:
 - a. State-of-the-art in the field;
 - b. Emerging topics;
 - c. Visions for the future of the research field – identification of issues in the 5-10 years+ timeframe;
 - d. Is there a need for a foresight-type initiative?
4. The **reaction of the participants** to the location and the organisation, including networking, and any other relevant comments.

The reports should be sent to ESF **no later than six weeks** after the end of the Conference. The reports will be forwarded to the appropriate ESF Standing Committees and Expert Committees for information and consideration in their science policy discussions and also to ESF's Partners in the ESF Research Conferences Scheme. The **Introduction** may be posted on a **'Conference Highlights'** page within the ESF Research Conferences website (subject to the explicit authorisation of the Author).

Enquiries and Further Information

For all enquiries and/or for further information concerning the Conference, please contact conferences@esf.org.

11/12/07

¹ See <http://www.esf.org/flooks>