

THE ASSOCIATION OF EXPLORATION GEOCHEMISTS

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Guidelines for International Geochemical Exploration Symposia

Compiled by Symposium Committee
Stephen Amor, Chairman
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1. Scope

The following guidelines apply specifically to the biennial plenary congress of the Association of Exploration Geochemists (AEG), otherwise known as the International Geochemical Exploration Symposium (IGES). The IGES is the most important event organized by the AEG, which shall encourage all members to attend, particularly those in the host and neighbouring countries.

At the discretion of the AEG Symposia Committee, the guidelines may be utilized, with or without necessary amendments, for other symposia sponsored or co-sponsored by the AEG.

It is emphasized that rigid adherence to the guidelines is not mandatory and Council and the Symposium Committee will consider, on its merits, any proposal or policy that departs from them. The Council and Symposium Committee of the AEG also reserve the right to amend these guidelines at any time, or to depart from these guidelines if found necessary.

The guidelines shall be reviewed by the Symposium Committee, from the point of view of relevance and applicability, within six months of the end of each IGES.

2. Symposium Title

The official title of the shall be “The ..th International Geochemical Exploration Symposium (IGES)”. A subsidiary title describing the theme of the Symposium may be added, but is not mandatory.

3. Proposals

The AEG shall request proposals to hold a Symposium via the AEG’s newsletter EXPLORE, and through other formal and informal channels. Any geosciences institute, association, institution of learning or unofficial association of geoscientists may apply to host the Symposium.

Proposals should be submitted to AEG Council via the Chairperson of the Symposium Committee. The deadline for proposals shall be March 31st, three years preceding the year of the conference (e.g. January-March 2000 for a meeting to be held in 2003).

The AEG Council and Symposium Committee shall consider all proposals received before the published deadline and render its decision to the applicants within two months of the deadline for receipt of proposals; that is, by May 31st, by e-mail and ordinary mail.

The basis for selection shall include the quality of the proposed scientific program, the time and location of the meeting, the preliminary budget, and any other factors that Council and the Symposium Committee may deem appropriate. Before rendering final approval, Council may ask for clarification or amendments to proposals. The AEG and Symposium Committee reserve the right to reject all proposals, or to decide not to hold a biennial meeting in a given year.

The proposal should include the following:

- Executive Summary
- Introduction
- Description of City or Town of Choice, and surrounding region
- Experience and Expertise of the Organizing Committee
- Description of Proposed Technical Program
- Field Trips
- Social Program
- Proposed Dates, and
- Budget (Specimen Budget is attached)

4. Organizing Committee

The Organizing Committee shall consist preferably of members with the following mandates:

- Chairperson
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Facilities Organizer
- Technical Program Organizer
- Short Course Organizer
- Field Trip Organizer
- Trade Show Organizer
- Social Program Organizer
- Publicity Organizer
- Registration Organizer, and
- Member without portfolio

Council acknowledges the difficulty of recruiting volunteers and the need to manage with a smaller committee, involving the doubling up of certain functions. In this case the availability of “members without portfolio” assumes increased importance.

An Executive comprising two committee members, who shall be Fellows of the AEG, plus one ex-officio Council representative (normally the Chairperson of the Symposium Committee) shall be appointed. The role of the Executive members shall be to take decisions on matters whose urgency precludes their discussion by the Organizing Committee as a whole, and to act as a conduit between the Organizing Committee and Council.

5. Council Involvement

As stated above, one Council member shall sit on the Executive of the Organizing Committee. The Symposium Organizers shall report by e-mail to the Chairperson of the Symposium Committee of the AEG at intervals not exceeding four months, until twelve months before the Symposium, at intervals not exceeding two months, until six months before the Symposium, and at intervals not exceeding one month, until the Symposium. Reports should include minutes of any meetings of the Organizing Committee. The Chairperson of the Symposium Committee shall pass on relevant details of such reports to council within 24 hours of receipt.

Aspects to be covered in the reports shall include, but not necessarily be restricted to, the following:

- Selection of Venue
- Adherence to Budget
- Competitive Bids from Professional Conference Organizers
- Recruitment of Abstract Review Committee
- Subject matter, quality and quantity of abstracts
- Proposed registration fees
- Travel, accommodation and catering arrangements
- Numbers of Advance Registrants for Symposia and Short Courses
- Short Course Topics, Course Leaders and Organization

6. Financing

Profit and Loss

If a single institution, such as a University or Government Survey, is charged with the organization of the Symposium, then any profit, or loss, shall be split 50:50 with the AEG. Otherwise, the Symposium shall be self-financed by the Organizing Committee through registration fees and sponsorship. Any surplus funds resulting from the Symposium shall accrue to the AEG, which will also be responsible for making up any shortfall in Symposium finances.

At the time of submission of the proposal, the Organizing Committee may request seed money of up to US\$10,000 from the AEG, to be repaid when the Symposium's financial affairs are reconciled. Such seed money will not be granted until the initial proposal, and budget, have been submitted. The AEG shall levy no interest on this loan, but its approval shall depend upon the financial resources of the Association. Furthermore, if the host nation has foreign currency restrictions that would prevent repayment, no seed money will be granted.

Reporting

A final financial report shall be presented to the Chairman of the Symposium Committee not more than 6 months after the end of the Symposium.

In addition the following statistics should be presented:

- Total Number of Registrants
- AEG Members Registering
- Non-AEG Members Registering
- Pre-registrants
- Walk-In Registrants
- Number of Accompanying Guests
- Registrants by Country of Origin
- Short Course Registration
- Field Trip registration, and
- Attendance at lunches, Official Dinner and other social events

Finally, a summary shall be compiled of the important technical and administrative issues raised during the Symposium.

Insurance

The cost of necessary insurance coverage for the Symposium, particularly cancellation insurance, shall be investigated early in the organization process and budgeted accordingly. Personal liability insurance is likely to be either impossible to obtain, or prohibitively expensive. Therefore, it is recommended that delegates be asked to sign a waiver releasing the Organizing Committee, the Symposium Committee, Council and the AEG from liability from Personal Injury or other misfortune that may befall them during the Symposium or Field Trips.

Tax

If the jurisdiction in which a Symposium is to be held imposes a Value-Added Tax, or other tax for which non-residents are not liable, international delegates may be tax-exempt or entitled to a rebate. The Organizers shall seek the advice of a professional, resident tax expert in this regard.

Pricing

The balance of expenditure between events for which admission is included in the cost of registration (e.g. Icebreaker) and for which an additional charge is levied (specifically, the Symposium Dinner) shall reflect the desirability that the cost of attending the latter should be affordable to the majority of Symposium delegates.

Registration Fees

The Organizers may set higher charges for delegates who register after a certain date.

The Organizers may levy all or part of the registration fees of delegates who cancel their registration at short notice.

AEG Members shall be offered a discount on the registration fee that makes membership of the AEG an attractive option. At the discretion of the Organizers, concessionary registration fees may also be set for students.

Sponsorship

The possibility of sponsorship for certain materials, such as briefcases, or individual events, such as lunches (including Short Course lunches) and coffee breaks, shall be investigated. Offers to sponsor combination technical/social events, such as a barbecue at a local geochemical lab or prep facility, shall also be welcomed and encouraged. However, the soliciting of sponsorship of overall symposia, in return for display of the sponsoring company's name in publicity announcements, is not encouraged.

7. Other Symposia

The Organizers shall investigate the possibility of scheduling the Symposium immediately before or after related symposia in the same city, so that out-of-town or international delegates may attend both events for the price of a single round-trip air ticket.

8. Publicity

Publicity material shall be prepared and released simultaneously as a mailed brochure, in the AEG newsletter EXPLORE and on the AEG Web Site. Council encourages the Organizers to send out the First and Second Circulars, accompanied by the Call for Papers, at least two years and 18 months respectively before the meeting date. These should then be followed by reminders.

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The Chairperson of the Symposium Committee shall facilitate liaison with the AEG's Publicity Committee, who will assist in circulating the publicity material by providing an updated digital membership mailing list, especially e-mail addresses, as well as other lists of exploration companies, analytical labs and other potentially interested parties, that may be useful. Such material will remain the property of the Association, and shall not be used for any purposes other than those directly related to the Symposium.

The AEG will also provide free advertising space in EXPLORE, and on the Web Site. Paid advertisements may be placed in other publications and media, at the discretion of the Organizing Committee, in which case appropriate funds should be set aside in the Symposium Budget.

The Organizers shall make use of the best available reduced-rate mail service.

Any publicity circulars shall include the following information:

- Access to Host City (airlines and other public transportation) from major world centres, including cost estimates
- Accommodation available, with estimated cost ranges
- Historical, geographical and cultural background information
- Weather to be expected at time of Symposium
- Visa requirements
- Contact person or organization for more information
- Other anticipated expenses that symposium participants should plan for

Details of technical sessions, oral presentations and posters shall be made available to delegates at least one month before the Symposium, via the Association's Web Site and mailed circulars.

If applicable, the Organizers will advise symposium delegates that high inflation rates, and other circumstances they may not be accustomed to, may be a factor in the countries hosting the Symposium and Field Trips. Organizers will also advise the Symposium Committee at once if a situation of high inflation, or other adverse economic or political circumstances, develops.

The limits of the Organizers' responsibilities, as regards the financial needs, chaperonage and entertainment of delegates, shall be clearly defined in any advance publicity material. In particular, the word "invitation" should be used with circumspection.

9. Logistics

If professional conference organizers are available in the city where the symposium is to be held, their use is strongly encouraged. At least two competitive bids shall be considered and reported to the Symposium Committee.

10. Travel and Accommodation

Potential air carriers and hotels shall be requested to make seats and rooms available at a reduced "Conference Rate". However, care shall be taken, in budgeting, not to rely overly on discounts that are dependent on the number of airline passengers, or hotel room registrations. This may require certain restrictions on delegates' lodging options. Nevertheless, some options should be offered in terms of hotel (or other) accommodations of varying cost.

11. Venue

Any city chosen as the venue for a Symposium shall be within two hours travel of a major airport, and possess reliable telephone, fax and e-mail links.

That the venue be a large hotel in a major city is not obligatory or even desirable, and the Symposium Committee shall consider on its merits the proposal of any city or town with suitable conference facilities and an adequate number of hotel or residential beds, such as a University town.

12. Enrolment of New Members

All Symposium Registrants who are not members shall be handed an AEG information package that includes a membership application form.

"Walk-In" registrants shall be given the opportunity to become members of AEG at once, and thereby qualify for the Members' registration discount.

13. Social Events and Catering

The Organizers shall bear in mind that the Symposium dinner is the most important social event of the Symposium, and devote financial resources to it accordingly. During the symposium dinner, AEG retains the right to make such presentations as are appropriate to this event. The AEG Council representative will inform the Organizing Committee, or the Chairperson of the Symposium Committee, of any such intent early in the planning stages.

14. Annual General Meeting & Council Meeting

During the symposium an appropriate time (at least two hours) shall be set aside for the AEG Annual General Meeting, with a short Council meeting to follow the AGM. This should be scheduled so that there are no conflicting activities, or major breaks between other scheduled events and the meetings. An example of an appropriate time for such meetings would be following an afternoon technical session.

15. Accompanying Persons' Program

The organization of an Accompanying Persons' Program is not obligatory, but the Symposium Committee will treat any proposals for such programs on their merits. If any events are planned and announced, the possibility that they will be cancelled in the event of inadequate support should be clearly stated in the registration package, and in all advance publicity material.

16. Program with Abstracts

Not less than 18 months prior to the conference, the Organizers shall submit the members' names of an Editorial committee, to review and/or referee all abstracts or manuscripts submitted for the Symposium, for the approval of the Symposium Committee. All committee members shall be familiar with written, technical English but it is not necessary that they be resident in the country or region where the symposium is to be held, provided that they can be reliably reached by e-mail.

To facilitate the editing and compilation process, the call for abstracts and manuscripts shall include specifications of acceptable word-processing format, font size, layout and length.

The production of parallel hard-copy and digital versions of the Abstracts Volume is encouraged. For the latter medium in particular, authors may exercise the option of submitting extended, illustrated abstracts up to a maximum of six printed pages.

In general, abstracts and manuscripts shall comply with the requirements of the *Guide to Authors* of the Journal of Geochemical Exploration and of Geochemistry: Exploration, Environment, Analysis.

In the Abstracts Volume, abstracts for Oral and Poster presentations shall be printed and indexed in a single alphabetic sequence by the first author's last name.

17. Proceedings Volume

The Association of Exploration Geochemists considers that the Proceedings, of any Symposia organized under its auspices, constitute an important component of its official journal "*Geochemistry: Exploration, Environment, Analysis*" (*GEEA*). Consequently, the AEG retains the right of first refusal on the publication of these Proceedings. If this right is exercised, the production and editing of the post-Symposium Proceedings volume shall be the administrative and financial responsibility of the AEG. The editors of *GEEA* may engage the services of a qualified Special Editor (or Editors) for the Proceedings Volume if they consider that it will expedite the Volume's publication.

The above does not preclude members of the Organizing Committee, or their nominees, from participating in this task if they wish.

Time is of the essence in the publication of the Proceedings Volume and the deadline for the submission of manuscripts shall be no later than one month after the end of the Symposium.

In general, submitted manuscripts shall comply with the requirements of the *Guide to Authors* of Geochemistry: Exploration, Environment, Analysis.

18. Workshops and Short Courses

The Organizers shall solicit suggestions for Short Course and Workshop Topics from Council, via the Symposium Committee, and from the AEG membership, via the pages of EXPLORE and the AEG Web Site.

The language of presentation of the Short Courses shall be English. However, inasmuch as a significant number of delegates at Short Courses will be host nationals, in approving topics for Short Courses the Symposium Committee shall be cognizant of prevailing moods and preferences in the country's mining, exploration and environmental sectors.

The Organizers shall appoint a Short Course Chairperson, resident in the country or region where the symposium is to be held, not less than two years in advance of the meeting. This person shall liaise with the Chairperson of the AEG Short Course Committee, and shall finalize and submit details of the Short Courses, including themes, topics, proposed Course Leaders and individual presentations, no later than 18 months before the Symposium. The Short Course Chairperson shall be responsible for the production of course notes at least two weeks before the Symposium.

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The Symposium Committee will favourably consider requests from Short Course Organizers for funds to bring in "world expert" speakers, who would otherwise not attend the Symposium.

Short Course organizers shall attempt to provide, or at least organize, lunch for all course participants, to encourage discussion outside of the presentation sessions.

Short Course organizers shall produce copies of the notes for the all participants, for the authors of the presentations, and an additional 20 copies for purchase by Symposium delegates who did not attend the Short Course. Proceeds from the sale of these copies shall accrue to the Symposium. In the event of unexpected demand for notes, the facility to produce additional copies in digital form shall be preserved. Subsequently, sale of Short Course notes shall be the responsibility of the AEG. The notes may also be posted on the AEG's Web Site for password-protected access for an initial period of 12 months. Revenue from the post-Symposium sale of Course Notes, and of those downloaded from the Web Site, shall accrue directly to the AEG.

19. Technical Presentations

Oral Presentations

The Symposium Committee shall consider favourably the inclusion in the budget of a certain amount of funds toward the bringing in of guest and keynote speakers.

The practicality of simultaneous translation from English into the vernacular shall be investigated for symposia held in non-Anglophone countries.

Each session Chairperson shall be a recognized authority in the field dealt with by the Session. Chairpersons shall be rigorous in their enforcement of allotted times for oral presentations and questions. During Question Time, contributions from the floor shall be restricted to questions directly related to the paper just presented.

Scheduling

Concurrent technical sessions shall not be organized.

Presentational Aids

Unless they are unavailable in the host city, audiovisual aids shall consist, at the minimum, of radio clip-on microphones for speakers and session chairmen, two screens, and three projectors with carousel attachments. If it can be hired at reasonable cost, and if significant demand is anticipated, one LCD projector for PowerPoint™-type presentations is also recommended. The use of overhead projectors should be discouraged.

Poster Sessions

A two-hour time slot will be scheduled for poster viewing each day of the technical sessions. At least one author of each poster will be required to be available for questions and discussion for at least one of those two hours, for every day while the poster is on display. The Organizers will establish a system whereby questions can be put to poster authors by interested observers, and answered, for the periods when no author is in attendance.

20. Field Trips

Each field trip should have two leaders: one whose primary responsibilities are as Technical Leader, and another whose primary responsibilities are administrative. However, in the event of indisposition of one leader, the other shall be sufficiently familiar with his or her responsibilities to take them over.

Each field trip must have at least one leader or participant who is resident in or thoroughly familiar with the locale, in order to deal with emergencies.

Because many delegates will have to meet the schedules of international flights, the dates of the beginning and ending of Field Trips shall not be changed later than two months before the Symposium.

If a Field Trip is cancelled for any reason, participants shall be notified not later than one month before the Symposium, and their payments refunded in full.

The Symposium Committee will evaluate the choices of Field Trips simultaneously, for acceptability based on criteria including but not limited to adequacy of technical content, and variety of scope. If a Field Trip takes place in an area with locations of exceptional non-geochemical interest (for example, world-famous archeological sites), not more than 20% (that is, one day in five) may be allocated to visits to such locations.

For field trips that are distant from the city in which the Symposium is being held, and where it is not possible to negotiate a good concessionary rate for air tickets, participants shall be given an opportunity to proceed independently to and from the rendezvous point.