

Updated Guidelines and Expectations Governing the Application to Host the Mineralogy and Museums Conference

Introduction

The Mineralogy and Museums Conference series has been a prominent feature on the calendar of mineral museum curators since the first conference in London in 1988. Since then, the series continued every four years in cities around the world (including Toronto 1992, Budapest 1996, Melbourne 2000, Paris 2004, Golden 2008 and Dresden 2012) until disruption in 2016 and the Global COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-2021, resulting in M&M9 being a hybrid conference in Sofia, Bulgaria and online in 2021.

For the next Mineralogy and Museums conference we would like to return to the 4 yearly cycle, which is 2024, 2028, 2032 to correlate with the 4-yearly major IMA-meeting. After the 2016 cancellation of M&M8 it was decided by the office bearers of the International Mineralogical Association Commission on Museums (IMA-CM), that a set of guidelines and expectations should be drawn up to regulate the applications to host M&M conferences in the future to ensure that all potential applicants are clear as to their obligations and commitments.

Guidelines & Expectations

Above all else, it is imperative to stress that this conference is for Museum and Collections Professionals (Curators, Conservators, Museum-based Researchers, and others in related museum-relevant roles, including those in Universities or Research Institutes). Interdisciplinary sessions or individual presentations are welcomed but must retain a clear and dominant connection to the mineral and geological sciences or the study, management, exhibition or promotion of mineral-bearing specimens in museums.

1. The conference must be primarily organised by museum professionals from a single museum, university collection or group of museums/collections.
2. The physical conference venue should be centred in one city and suitable accommodation and travel links to and from this city must be available. The organising committee may, if required, call on professional help and advice from non-museum organisations for other aspects of delivering a conference (for example: accommodation, venues, catering and travel).
3. None of the organising committee can have a personal connection with the commercial side of collecting geological objects or organising conferences in a way that might be perceived as having a personal conflict of interest (For example: Dealerships, Show organisation, Preparation services, Conference management).

4. Prior to a proposal coming to the Commission for voting, the relevant IMA-CM national representative must be consulted.
5. The conference must not be organised in conjunction with, or by a mineral show organisation. The conference must be organised as a stand-alone event. Though it may take place at approximately the same time (e.g., in 2008, co-occurrence of the Golden M&M6 conference and Denver Show 2008) there should be no direct connection.
6. Every effort should be made by the organisers to schedule the meeting so as to reduce overlap with the busiest University teaching periods. Previously the conference has been in July/August/September, but it is acknowledged that different countries have different schedules.
7. The proposal must come with a well-thought out and clear museum/collections relevant programme. We would advise that any proposal should be submitted to the IMA-CM ideally four years in advance. So that proposals can be discussed at the IMA-CM business M&M meeting (*An exception is made for the 2024 conference, due to the COVID pandemic of 2020/2021*)
8. The proposal should outline plans and timescales for the unexpected cancellation of the conference at short notice including information on the fees that are refundable and how delegates process refunds.
9. Although not mandatory, the organisers should try to offer conference related field trips. These may occur during the conference, or immediately preceding and/or after the conference aspect.
10. Private meeting space must be available for the IMA business meetings, which must have telephone or online conferencing capability. So that members of IMA commissions and working groups unable to join the conference in person can attend the meeting virtually.
11. The organisers of the conference need to show that they have a clear, robust organisational structure (we recommend establishing a small organising committee).
12. There must be clear points of contact for all enquiries connected with the conference. Delegates, or potential delegates, must be confident that they are contacting the right person and that any enquiry will be dealt with quickly and efficiently.
13. The costs of the conference, accommodation, field trips etc must be set out well in advance. They must be clear and easy to understand.
14. The organising committee must create an official M&M website where new items can be communicated. First circulars and calls for papers should be well in advance of the conference, and in all communications, it must be clear that the conference is that of the IMA-CM, including the display of the IMA logo.
15. It is strongly suggested that the conference offers a 'hybrid' element, (so that it can be delivered both online and attended in person). The online platform used needs to be readily accessible and simple to use. A social aspect for the online delegates must also be included within the structure

of the event and the costing of online vs physical attendance clearly communicated.

Rules for voting.

The Commission will set a closing date for notifications of interest and applications (with the exception of calls for 2024) about six years in advance of the respective conference. The full proposal should be submitted before the IMA-CM Business meeting at the M&M Conference prior, ready for discussion – presentation and voting.

After the closing date has passed, all the applications will be evaluated by the Commission. In the event of two or more valid applications being received, the members of the Commission will be required to cast a vote on behalf of their Mineralogical/Geological societies. The Office-bearers will give sufficient time for all the member societies to consider their vote and set a reasonable closing date for voting.

It is recognised that a large population of smaller museum curators with responsibility of mineral and geological collections are not members of the Societies that form the IMA and therefore these potential delegates have no 'voice' on this decision-making process. To combat this, it is recommended that the largest of these groups, the Society of Mineral Museum Professionals (SMMP) be given a vote, cast by the chair of that society.

If a National Representative or IMA-CM board member is involved in the organising committee of the M&M conference proposal, that individual will not get to cast votes as there is a clear conflict of interests.

There has been a tradition that alternate conferences have been held within Europe and then out-side of Europe - Although this will be taken into consideration by the voting members of the IMA-CM, it will not be considered a pre-requisite for approval.

The officers of the IMA-CM are requested to inform the IMA Council about the winning bidder. The winning bidder will then be contacted by e-mail and an announcement will be made to all the National Representatives of the Mineralogical Societies that form the IMA and to the SMMP.

- **All responsibility for the conference will then pass to the organising committee.**

Thus: *(From 2022 onward, excepting the voting and proposals for 2024, which due to the Coronavirus pandemic will be on a much reduced timescale)*

Date	Action
Five to six years in advance of conference.	IMA-CM to begin seeking notes of interest in holding the conference. Announcements will be made by the Members to their national societies and also by members of the board through relevant interest groups, e.g SMMP.
Four and a half to five years in advance of conference	The IMA-CM will be looking for full proposals from interested parties. Late notes of interest will be accepted in certain exceptional cases.
At the IMA-CM business meeting of the Conference prior.	All proposals received will be presented, discussed, and evaluated by the members of the commission.
For a period of time 2-4 months after the M&M meeting (<i>flexible time to accommodate National Society meetings</i>)	Members of the commission are encouraged to discuss the proposals within their national society and seek consensus on preferred proposal.
End of this review period	Members of the commission will be asked to submit votes.
After Voting (approx. 3.5 years before next conference)	The successful proposal will be announced, national representatives communicate this to their societies and the board will announce to larger interest groups such as the SMMP. From this point all responsibility for the conference will pass to the winning organising committee.

The Office Bearers (Board) of the IMA-CM

Mike Rumsey – Chairman
Stuart Mills – Vice-chairman
Kim Tait – Secretary

2nd October 2021, edited 13th December 2021

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