

CHAPTER VIII

RULES AND GUIDELINES FOR IAU SCIENTIFIC MEETINGS

Updated post General Assembly Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, August 2009

1. INTRODUCTION

The program of IAU scientific meetings is one of the most important means by which the IAU pursues its goal of promoting astronomy through international collaboration. A large fraction of the Union's budget is devoted to the support of these IAU scientific meetings. The IAU Executive Committee (EC) places great emphasis on maintaining high scientific standards, coverage of a balanced spectrum of topics, and an appropriately broad and international flavour for the program of IAU meetings. In that respect, the ICSU rules on non-discrimination in the access of qualified scientists from all parts of the world to any IAU meeting apply. The ICSU rules on non-discrimination are described in the document "Freedom, Responsibility and Universality of Science", available on <http://www.icsu.org/Gestion/img/ICSU_DOC_DOWNLOAD/2205_DD_FILE_Freedom_Responsibility_Universality_of_Science_booklet.pdf>

The number of meetings that the IAU supports financially is restricted to nine IAU Symposia per year (19,000 EUR each); one Regional IAU Meeting (19,000 EUR) per year in the years between General Assemblies; and two co-Sponsored Meetings per year (up to 5,000 EUR each). Accordingly, not all meeting proposals worthy of support can be awarded IAU sponsorship.

The IAU Colloquium Series (usually three per year) was terminated after IAU Colloquium No. 200 (October 2005), to the benefit of the IAU Symposium Series (now nine per year).

Regular contact with the organizers during the preparation and conduct of IAU scientific meetings is maintained by the IAU Assistant General Secretary (AGS) and the President of the Coordinating Division (see below).

2. IAU SYMPOSIA / IAU GA SYMPOSIA

The IAU Symposium Series is the scientific flagship of the IAU. Symposia are organized on suitably broad, yet well-defined, scientific themes of considerable general interest, and normally last 5 days. IAU Symposia are intended to significantly advance the field by seeking answers to current key questions and/or clarify emerging concepts in invited reviews, invited papers, contributed papers and poster papers. Therefore their programs should consist of reviews and previews and should provide ample time for discussion.

Proposals for IAU Symposia in a certain calendar year, backed by a coordinating IAU Division and endorsed by a reasonable number of supporting IAU Divisions, IAU Commissions, and/or IAU Working Groups, have to be submitted to the IAU Proposal Web Server, before 1 December of the year two years before the intended Symposium.

The scientific merit of each IAU Symposium proposal will be evaluated by the twelve IAU Division Presidents (DPs), taking into consideration comments and advice received from the Organizing Committees of their IAU Divisions, and from IAU Commissions and/or IAU Working Groups. The DPs will communicate their recommendation for selection to the IAU Executive Committee (EC). The EC will decide on and announce the final selection of the nine IAU Symposia to be held in a certain year, in Spring of the year before. The decision on the selection, including conditions to be fulfilled before final approval, will be communicated to the proposers by the Assistant General Secretary (AGS) in a letter of award, accompanied by an official form listing the essential facts of the meeting as approved by the EC. Any revision of the details recorded on this form will require prior approval by the AGS.

The Assistant General Secretary (AGS), in consultation with the organizers of the individual Symposia, decides on the distribution of the financial support to each Symposium.

IAU Symposium Proceedings are published in the IAU Proceedings' Series by the IAU Publisher, Cambridge University Press (CUP). In the year of an IAU General Assembly, six of the nine IAU Symposia of that year will be scheduled as GA Symposia within the scientific program of the GA and held at the GA venue. A GA Symposium normally lasts 3.5 days. For GA Symposia, the GA Local Organizing Committee (GA NOC/LOC) will handle the local organization. The General Secretary (GS), in consultation with the organizers of the individual GA Symposia, coordinates the financial support to be allocated to each of the GA Symposia.

In the year of a GA, the three IAU Symposia not associated with that GA should not be scheduled within three months before or after the dates of that GA. The Executive Committee may, in exceptional circumstances, decide to support a Symposium within 3 months of GA. All IAU Symposium proposals have to be submitted to the IAU Proposal Web Server.

2.1. SELECTION CRITERIA FOR IAU SPONSORSHIP OF SYMPOSIA

The following guidelines for obtaining IAU sponsorship should be observed by prospective proposers:

(a) An IAU Symposium should have a well-defined and scientifically relevant theme, should be scheduled at a propitious time for significant progress in the field, and should be of interest to young researchers as well as senior experts.

(b) While the IAU embraces all fields in astronomy, a proposed IAU Symposium program should maintain a broad and balanced scope and cover the main active fields at appropriate intervals. Accordingly, even scientifically strong proposals in the same or largely overlapping fields can only be approved at some intervals. While some themes have developed series of IAU Symposia with intervals of 3-5 years, approval for those is not automatically guaranteed, since each proposal will be judged on its own scientific merits.

(c) Scientific programs of proposed IAU Symposia should be well balanced, to be demonstrated by the proposed draft program and the proposed draft list of key speakers.

(d) Given the international nature of the Union, IAU Symposia are by definition internationally oriented. This requires a well-balanced geographical and gender distribution of both the proposed Scientific Organizing Committee (SOC) and the proposed key speakers. Normally, substantially less than half of the SOC membership and of the key speakers should come from a single country. As a matter of course, the SOC membership should reflect in a balanced way the current activity in the field.

(e) Presentation of scientific results at an IAU Symposium is by invitation of the SOC chairperson. Suitably qualified scientists working in the field may seek invitations. It is the policy of the IAU to promote the full participation of astronomers worldwide in its Symposium program.

(f) It is essential that no restriction based on gender, race, colour, nationality, and religious or political affiliation be imposed on the full participation of all bona fide scientists in any aspect of the organization and conduct of IAU Symposia, either by its organizers or by the authorities of the host country. Approval of a proposal for an IAU meeting requires explicit guarantees that this principle will be respected. The statement that the ICSU rules on non-discrimination in open access to the meeting will be strictly observed must be explicitly confirmed before a proposal will receive final approval by the EC. A summary of the measures taken to ensure this should be given; the signatures of both the SOC and LOC chairpersons are required.

(g) In association with IAU meetings, educational activities may be organized, like International Schools for Young Astronomers (ISYAs) and Teachers' Workshops. By taking advantage of the presence of many expert national and foreign scientists, 1-day or 2-day events may be organized for the benefit of university and high-school educators in the country hosting the meeting. In the past, such initiatives have generally been well received and successful. While the scientific quality of the proposed Symposium will remain the primary selection criterion for IAU sponsorship, a good parallel educational program will certainly add to the overall merit of a proposal.

2.2. PROPOSAL PREPARATION FOR IAU SYMPOSIA

2.2.1. GENERALITIES

Normally, the initiative to propose a scientific meeting for IAU sponsorship originates from a group of scientists in a certain field. In collaboration with colleagues worldwide, they prepare a draft scientific program and nominations for the members of a candidate Scientific Organizing Committee, who will be responsible for the scientific aspects of the meeting from its inception to its conclusion. Responsibility for the preparation and timely submission of the final proposal rests with the chairperson of the candidate SOC.

Prospective meeting organizers should contact the AGS well in advance of their intended proposal submission, by sending a Letter of Intent (LoI, section 2.2.2).

An electronic application form and procedures have been designed so as to ensure that the information necessary for the evaluation of the proposals by the IAU Division Presidents and the IAU EC will be complete and in a uniform format, allowing objective comparison between proposals as far as possible. Therefore proposals with all entries properly answered have to be submitted electronically to the IAU Proposal Web Server.

2.2.2. LETTER OF INTENT FOR AN IAU SYMPOSIUM TO BE PROPOSED

Before submitting a proposal for an IAU Symposium, proposers must submit a Letter of Intent (LoI) via the IAU Proposal Web Server where it will be sent to the AGS, with a copy to the president of the desired Coordinating IAU Division associated with the scientific field of the meeting. The LoI format is given on the web page and should state:

- (a) the title of the intended IAU Symposium;
- (b) the full name(s) of the proposed SOC chairperson(s);
- (c) the desired Coordinating IAU Division for the intended IAU Symposium;
- (d) the Symposium venue and the preferred Symposium dates; and
- (e) a short list of topics to be addressed at the Symposium (about 10 topics).

The deadline for the submission of Letters of Intent is 15 September. Letters of Intent received will be posted and updated on the IAU web site, informing prospective proposers

of other existing plans for IAU Symposium proposals. This is in order to avoid unnecessary competition between proposals and to stimulate possible collaborations between otherwise competing groups.

2.2.3. *TOPIC AND TITLE OF PROPOSED IAU SYMPOSIUM*

The title of a Symposium should state the topic of the meeting as concisely and succinctly as possible. Long and detailed titles do not catch the eye, and are cumbersome for the announcement of a Symposium as well as on the cover of its subsequent Proceedings. Symposium titles should be no longer than 10 words (or 70 characters including spaces) in total. The AGS may request the proposers to modify their title to meet this requirement.

Any change of title or date of an IAU Symposium, after it has been accepted by the EC, requires the prior approval of the AGS.

2.2.4. *COORDINATING IAU DIVISION; SUPPORTING IAU DIVISIONS, IAU COMMISSIONS AND/OR IAU WORKING GROUPS*

An IAU Symposium can be proposed by individual members of the IAU, by an IAU Working Group, or by an IAU Commission. An IAU Division should accept the coordinating responsibilities for an IAU Symposium proposal as Coordinating Division.

When supporting Divisions, Commissions, and/or Working Groups are listed in the proposal, a report of the communication between the proposers and the above should be submitted together with the proposal.

Proposals must be submitted electronically to the IAU Proposal Web Server before the posted deadline. Normally, this deadline will be 1 December, two years before the year of the proposed Symposium.

2.2.5. *SCIENTIFIC ORGANIZING COMMITTEE*

The composition of the proposed SOC is a key element in assessing the scientific value of a proposal. The SOC of a Symposium has the overall responsibility for its scientific standards and should make sure to cover the principal topics of the field to be covered.

The SOC should normally not be larger than sixteen persons and should represent an optimum scientific, gender, and geographic distribution. Normally, an institution should not be represented on the SOC by more than one person. It is customary, but not required, that SOC members are members of the IAU. The composition of the SOC should reflect in a positive way the intent of the ICSU Statement on Freedom in the Conduct of Science.

SOC membership is subject to approval by the IAU EC, as part of the approval process. Any change of SOC membership, after a Symposium has been accepted by the EC, requires the prior approval of the IAU AGS.

The SOC is responsible for the scientific, gender, and geographical balance of the meeting in five main aspects:

- before the Symposium:

(a) in the definition of the scientific program of the Symposium, including the choice and distribution of topics for individual sessions, and the selection of invited reviews, invited papers, contributed papers and poster papers;

(b) in the choice of key speakers for invited reviews, and of session chairs;

(c) in providing in the proposal a list of about 10 preliminary scientific program topics, for announcement in the IAU Information Bulletin;

- after approval of the Symposium:

(d) in providing a list of individuals qualifying for IAU Travel Grants, with amounts recommended (for criteria, see below). That list must be submitted for approval to the AGS at least 5 months before the start of the Symposium;

- after the Symposium:

(e) within 1 month after a Symposium, the SOC chair person must send to the AGS the Post Meeting Report of the Symposium.

2.2.6. POST MEETING REPORT

The Symposium Post Meeting Report must contain:

(i) a copy of the final scientific program, listing invited review speakers and session chairs;

(ii) a list of participants, including their distribution on gender (this does not apply to GA Symposia)

(iii) a list of recipients of IAU grants, stating amount, country, and gender; (this does not apply to GA Symposia)

(iv) receipts signed by the recipients of IAU Grants; (this does not apply to GA Symposia)

(v) a report to the IAU EC summarizing the scientific highlights of the meeting (1-2 pages).

The Post Meeting Report form is available here <link >.

That site links also to compilations of previous years' IAU Post Meeting Reports.

The Symposium Post Meeting Report must be send to the AGS within one month after the Symposium.

2.2.7. LOCAL ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

The Symposium LOC, to be identified in the proposal, is responsible for all aspect of the local arrangements associated with the Symposium. Those tasks include booking and preparation of meeting rooms, provisions for modern audio-visual facilities, for coffee and tea breaks, arranging for necessary transportation for meeting participants, for ensuring that accommodation within reasonable price levels is available, for providing assistance to meeting participants with their bookings, and for providing or offering advice on access to affordable, reliable child care. In addition, the LOC should prepare and schedule social events as appropriate.

IAU Symposia hosted by an IAU General Assembly do not have their own LOCs.

2.2.8. EDITORS OF THE PROCEEDINGS

It speaks for itself that the success of a Symposium and its Proceedings depends in the first place on arranging for the best possible scientific program and on selecting the best possible speakers, keeping in mind the need for a balanced distribution of gender and geographical origin. It is of paramount importance that the Proceedings of an IAU Symposium will be published timely, i.e., **within 6 months after the Symposium**, as a valuable record of the Symposium for future reference. Arrangements for Authors and Editors for the publication of Proceedings of IAU Symposia are summarized in the <README >files in the directories below:

<...static/scientific_meetings/authors_2009/>

<.../static/scientific_meetings/editors_2009/>

Arrangements for Authors and Editors for the publication of Proceedings of IAU GA Symposia are summarized in the <README >files in the directories below:

<.../static/scientific_meetings/authors_ga2009/>

<.../static/scientific_meetings/editors_ga2009/>

Full names and addresses of the proposed Editors must be given in the proposal. One of the proposed Editors should be marked as Chief Editor, with prime responsibility for contact with the IAU AGS and with the IAU Publisher, Cambridge University Press.

The contract between the IAU and CUP stipulates that the Proceedings of an IAU Symposium will be published within 6 months after that Symposium. Since CUP needs three months for its processing and publishing of a complete Proceedings' volume, **Editors must complete their editing task within the first 3 months after their Symposium**. This requires that all Authors have to deliver their completed manuscripts to the Chief Editor before or during the Symposium. Authors may be allowed to submit a revised version of their manuscript to the Chief Editor within four weeks after the Symposium.

Thus, Editors are committed to submit the final complete manuscript of the Proceedings of their IAU Symposium to CUP within 3 months after their IAU Symposium. Editors should realize that editing an IAU Symposium Proceedings volume can be a full time job for three months. Any change of Editors, after a Symposium has been accepted by the EC, requires the prior approval of the IAU AGS.

2.2.8.1 IAU EDITORIAL BOARD

In order to ensure the quality of the IAU Symposium Proceedings Series, to strengthen the working relation among the IAU Proceedings' Editors and the IAU AGS, and to provide a platform for communication, the EC has established the IAU Editorial Board (EB) for the Series.

The EB serves as a communication and support platform for the Chief Editors of all IAU Symposium Proceedings, where they can exchange experience and ask for advice, whenever necessary, in their efforts to ensure that all papers published in their Proceedings are of the highest quality and that their Proceedings are published on time, i.e., within 6 months after their Symposium.

Members of the IAU EB for the Proceedings of IAU Symposia held in a certain year are:

- (a) all Chief Editors of the Proceedings of IAU Symposia of that year (the working members);
- (b) the IAU AGS (chair); and
- (c) the IAU GS plus three or four members appointed by the EC for a period of at least three years (advisory members).

The constitution of the EB of a certain year will be listed in all nine IAU Symposium Proceedings volumes of that year. EB members of a certain year will receive copies of all nine IAU Symposium Proceedings volumes of that year.

2.2.9. REGISTRATION FEE

2.2.9.1 REGISTRATION FEE FOR IAU SYMPOSIA NOT ASSOCIATED WITH AN IAU GENERAL ASSEMBLY

A determined effort must be made to keep the Symposium registration fee affordable to all. Such effort should include the use of low-cost meeting facilities and finding local sponsorship. Proposers should carefully specify what services the registration fee will cover. The current upper limit of the registration fee for IAU Symposia is US\$ 325.- including the price of the Proceedings (2009 participant's price: 48.- GBP, 2010 49.- GBP).

2.2.9.2 REGISTRATION FEE FOR IAU SYMPOSIA HOSTED BY AN IAU GENERAL ASSEMBLY

For IAU Symposia held as part of an IAU GA, participants are required to pay the full registration fee for that GA.

2.2.10. VENUE AND ACCOMMODATION

The proposed venue should be reasonably accessible and affordable. The venue should have modern audio-visual facilities, and ensure that all poster presentations will be on display during the whole duration of the Symposium, preferably in the tea/coffee break areas.

In order to enable interested and qualified colleagues from all countries around the world to attend a Symposium, affordable accommodation should be available. It is recognized that some resorts offer conference room, board and lodging together in one location, which is most favourable for all scientific interactions during a Symposium. In case such a resort is expensive, efforts should be made to secure additional financial sponsoring, in order to keep the participants' costs affordable. Access to nearby, affordable child care is important, and the need for support for such services should be taken into account in the distribution of the IAU grant to attendees of the meeting.

2.2.11. SUBMITTING THE PROPOSAL

When all above requirements are observed, a completed proposal for an IAU Symposium should be submitted electronically to the IAU Proposal Web Server, before the posted deadline: December 1 of the year two years before the intended Symposium.

2.3. IAU GRANTS FOR IAU SYMPOSIA

2.3.1. IAU GRANTS FOR IAU SYMPOSIA NOT ASSOCIATED WITH AN IAU GENERAL ASSEMBLY

IAU Grants are intended to cover in part expenses associated with attendance of participants at the Symposium. Symposium organizers will receive IAU Grant funds to a maximum of 19,000 EUR per Symposium.

Participants of IAU Symposia may apply for an IAU Grant, using the form available on <.../static/meetings/GrantSymposiumRIM.pdf >.

A proposal for the distribution of IAU Grants to individual participants will be drafted by the SOC chairperson and sent to the AGS for approval. The IAU wishes to support qualified scientists to whom only limited means of support are available, e.g., colleagues from economically less privileged countries and young scientists. An IAU Grant should be the seed money in ensuring the participation of a selected beneficiary, including participants with young children, rather than adding comfort for colleagues whose attendance is already assured. In addition, a reasonable gender and geographical distribution is expected in the IAU Grant distribution proposal. Normally, no more than 1/3 of the IAU Grant funds for a Symposium should be allocated to a single country.

Within these general guidelines, it is left to the judgment of the SOC how to formulate its proposal for IAU Grant distribution, maintaining the overall scientific standard of the conference as the primary criterion. The recommendation for the distribution of the IAU Grants shall be sent by the SOC chairperson to the AGS, specifying for each person: name, nationality, full mailing and e-mail address, amount of proposed grant (in EUR), any amount reserved for child care, and title and nature of contribution (invited

review, invited paper, contributed paper, poster paper). The recommendation of the SOC should reach the AGS no later than 5 months before the Symposium. This deadline is necessary in order to ensure timely notification to grant beneficiaries and completion of visa formalities.

After approval by the AGS of the IAU Grant distribution proposal of the SOC, individual IAU Grant notification letters will be mailed by the AGS to the recipients, with a copy to the SOC chair and LOC chair. Any disagreement between the SOC and the AGS on the award of grants shall be referred to the IAU General Secretary, whose decision shall be final.

Normally, the LOC will open a bank account in the name of the Symposium (or use a bank account of its institute or university) to which the IAU Secretariat will transfer the allocated IAU Grant funds. Individual IAU Grants will be paid by the LOC chairperson to recipients, upon their arrival and registration at the Symposium, against a signature of receipt.

2.3.2. *IAU GRANTS FOR IAU SYMPOSIA HOSTED BY AN IAU GENERAL ASSEMBLY*

In case of IAU Symposia hosted by a GA, IAU GA Grants are intended to cover in part expenses associated with the participant's attendance of the entire GA. Requests for financial support for attending a GA must use the electronic Application Form for an IAU Grant available at <...../grants_prizes/iau_grants/ga_events/ >.

Full completion of the Application Form is mandatory, including submission of an Abstract if relevant. The deadline for receiving these applications will be such, that enough time is left to the IAU Secretariat to prepare relevant summaries of applications, to be sent to the SOCs of the different scientific meetings for ranking, before a final selection is made by the IAU GS. Successful applicants will receive their allocated grant upon arrival and registration at the GA.

2.4. *WEB SITE FOR AN IAU SYMPOSIUM*

As soon as a successful applicant has been informed by the AGS of the approval of her/his proposed IAU Symposium, the SOC and LOC are kindly requested to create a website for that Symposium, containing, inter alia, all those parts of the information given above which are essential to know for the participants of that IAU meeting. The URL of the Symposium website should be communicated to the IAU AGS as soon as available.

2.5. *IAU GENERAL ASSEMBLY JOINT DISCUSSIONS AND SPECIAL SESSIONS*

A Joint Discussion (JD) held at an IAU General Assembly addresses scientific themes of interest to two or more IAU Commissions. A JD normally lasts 0.5 - 1.5 days during the GA.

A Special Session (SpS) held at IAU General Assemblies addresses important topics that concern the IAU, and is more specialized than a JD. A SpS may focus on timely issues ranging from recent scientific events to educational activities. A SpS normally lasts 0.5 - 3.0 days during the GA. JDs and SpSs may be proposed by individual IAU members through two or more IAU Commissions.

Proposals for IAU GA JDs and SpSs, backed by a coordinating IAU Division and endorsed by a reasonable number of IAU Divisions, IAU Commissions and IAU Working Groups, have to be submitted to the IAU Proposal Web Server:

<...../science/meetings/proposals/lop/ >, before 1 December of the year two years before the General Assembly.

The scientific merit of each IAU GA JD and SpS proposal will be evaluated by the twelve IAU Division Presidents (DPs), taking into consideration comments and advice received from the Organizing Committees of their IAU Divisions, and from IAU Commissions and/or IAU Working Groups. The DPs will communicate their recommendation for selection to the IAU Executive Committee (EC). The EC will decide on and announce the final selection of the nine IAU Symposia to be held in a certain year, in Spring of the year before. The decision on the selection, including conditions to be fulfilled before final approval, will be communicated to the proposers by the Assistant General Secretary (AGS) in a letter of award, accompanied by an official form listing the essential facts of the meeting as approved by the EC. Any revision of the details recorded on this form will require prior approval by the AGS.

The IAU General Secretary (GS), in consultation with the organizers of the individual JDs and SpSs, will coordinate the financial support to be allocated to each of the GA JDs and SpS. Participants in JDs and SpS may apply for IAU GA Grants. (The application form for a GA Travel Grant is available here <link >)

The local organization of all JDs and SpSs is in the hands of the GA Local Organizing Committee (GA NOC/LOC).

The proceedings of JDs and SpSs will be published in the IAU series Highlights of Astronomy by the IAU Publisher, Cambridge University Press, and edited by the IAU General Secretary (GS).

All IAU GA JD and SpS proposals have to be submitted to the IAU Proposal Web Server

2.6. SELECTION CRITERIA FOR IAU SPONSORSHIP OF A GA JOINT DISCUSSION OR A GA SPECIAL SESSION

The following guidelines for obtaining IAU sponsorship should be observed by prospective proposers:

(a) Each JD and SpS should have a well-defined and scientifically relevant theme, should be scheduled at a propitious time for significant progress in the field, and should be of interest to young researchers as well as senior experts.

(b) The proposed scientific program of a JD or SpS should be well balanced, to be demonstrated by the proposed draft program and the proposed draft list of key speakers.

(c) Given the international nature of the IAU, JDs and SpSs are by definition internationally oriented. This requires a well-balanced geographical and gender distribution of both the proposed Scientific Organizing Committee (SOC) and the proposed key speakers. Normally, substantially less than half of the SOC membership and of the key speakers should come from a single country. As a matter of course, the SOC membership should reflect in a balanced way the current activity in the field.

2.7. PROPOSAL PREPARATION FOR A GA JOINT DISCUSSION OR A SPECIAL SESSION

2.7.1. GENERALITIES

Normally, the initiative to propose an IAU GA JD or SpS originates from a group of scientists in a certain field. In collaboration with colleagues worldwide, they should prepare a draft scientific program and nominations for the members of a candidate Scientific Organizing Committee (SOC), which will be responsible for the scientific aspects of the meeting from its inception (the proposal) to its conclusion (the proceedings). Responsibility for the preparation and timely submission of the final proposal rests with the chairperson of the candidate SOC. Prospective meeting organizers should inform the IAU well in advance of their intended proposal submission by submitting a Letter of

Intent (LoI, section 3.2.2) before 15 September via the IAU Proposal Web Server to the AGS.

An electronic application form and procedures have been designed to ensure that the information necessary for the evaluation of the proposals by the IAU Division Presidents and the IAU EC will be complete and in a uniform format, allowing objective comparison between proposals as far as possible. Proposals, with all entries properly completed, have to be submitted electronically to the IAU Proposal Web Server.

2.7.2. *LETTER OF INTENT FOR A JOINT DISCUSSION OR A SPECIAL SESSION*

Before submitting a proposal for a Joint Discussion or Special Session, proposers must submit a Letter of Intent (LoI) via the IAU Proposal Web Server to the AGS, also copied to the President of the desired Coordinating IAU Division associated with the scientific field of the meeting. The LoI should state:

- (a) the title of the intended JD or SpS;
- (b) the full name(s) of the proposed SOC chairperson(s);
- (c) the desired Coordinating IAU Division for the intended JD or SpS; and
- (d) a short list of topics to be addressed at the intended JD or SpS (about 10 topics).

A list of received Letters of Intent will be posted and updated on the IAU website, informing prospective proposers of other existing plans for intended IAU GA Symposium, JD and SpS proposals. This, in order to avoid unnecessary competition between proposals and to stimulate possibly collaboration between otherwise competing groups.

2.8. *TOPIC AND TITLE OF A JOINT DISCUSSION OR A SPECIAL SESSION*

The title of a Joint Discussion or Special Session should state the topic of the meeting as concisely and succinctly as possible. JD/SpS titles should be no longer than 10 words (or 70 characters including spaces) in total.

Any change of title of a JD or SpS, after it has been accepted by the EC, requires the prior approval of the AGS.

2.8.1. *COORDINATING IAU DIVISION; SUPPORTING IAU DIVISIONS, IAU COMMISSIONS, AND/OR IAU WORKING GROUPS*

Joint Discussions and Special Sessions can be proposed by individual members of the IAU, by an IAU Working Group, or by an IAU Commission. An IAU Division should accept the coordinating responsibilities for a JD/SpS proposal as Coordinating Division.

When supporting Divisions, Commissions, and/or Working Groups are listed in the proposal, a report of the communication between the proposers and the above should be submitted together with the proposal.

Proposals must be submitted electronically to the IAU Proposal Web Server before the posted deadline. Normally, this deadline will be 1 December two years before the year of the General Assembly.

2.8.2. *SCIENTIFIC ORGANIZING COMMITTEE*

The composition of the proposed JD/SpS SOC is a key element in assessing the scientific value of a proposal. The SOC of a JD or SpS has the overall responsibility for its scientific standards and should make sure that the principal topics of the field of the JD/SpS will be covered. The SOC should normally not be larger than sixteen persons and should represent an optimum scientific, geographic and gender distribution. Normally, an institution should not be represented on the SOC by more than one person. It is customary, but not required, that SOC members are members of the IAU. The composition

of the SOC should reflect in a positive way the intent of the ICSU Statement on Freedom in the Conduct of Science.

SOC membership is subject to approval by the IAU EC, as part of the approval process. Any change of SOC membership, after a JD/SpS has been accepted by the EC, requires the prior approval of the IAU AGS.

The JD/SpS SOC is responsible for the scientific, gender, and geographical balance of the meeting in three main aspects:

(a) in the definition of the scientific program, including the choice and distribution of topics for individual sessions, and the selection of invited reviews, invited papers, contributed papers, and poster papers;

(b) in the choice of key speakers for invited reviews and of session chairs; and

(c) in providing in the proposal a list of about 10 preliminary scientific program topics, for announcement in the IAU Information Bulletin.

2.8.3. EDITORS OF PROCEEDINGS

It speaks for itself that the success of a Joint Discussion or Special Session and its proceedings depends in the first place on arranging for the best possible scientific program and on selecting the best possible speakers.

The proceedings will be published in the IAU series Highlights of Astronomy by Cambridge University Press, with the GS as the Editor-in-Chief. It is of paramount importance that the proceedings of all JDs and SpS will be published timely, i.e., within 6 months after the GA, as a valuable record of the General Assembly for future reference.

Arrangements for JD/SpS Authors and JD/SpS Editors for the publication of the JD proceedings are summarized in the <README >files on the links below:

<http://www.iau.org/static/scientific_meetings/authors_proceedings/ >

<http://www.iau.org/static/scientific_meetings/editors_proceedings/ >

Full names and addresses of the proposed JD/SpS Editors must be given in the proposal. In the proposal form, one of the proposed JD/SpS Editors should be marked as Chief Editor, with prime responsibility for contact with the IAU GS, who will act as Editor-in-Chief for the Highlights of Astronomy volume.

In the contract between the IAU and CUP it is stipulated that the Highlight of Astronomy will be published within 6 months after the GA. Since CUP needs three months for its processing and publishing of a complete proceedings' manuscript, the Editors must complete their editing task within the first 3 months after the GA. This requires that all JD/SpS Authors have to deliver their completed manuscripts to the JD Editor before or during the JD/SpS. Authors may be allowed to submit a revised version of their manuscript to their JD/SpS Editor within four weeks after the GA.

Thus, JD/SpS Editors are committed to submit the final complete manuscript of the proceedings of their JD to the IAU GS within three months after the IAU GA.

Any change of Editors, after a JD or SpS has been accepted, requires the prior approval of the IAU AGS.

2.8.4. REGISTRATION FEE FOR THE GA

To attend a Joint Discussion or Special Session held as part of an IAU GA, participants are required to pay the full registration fee for that GA.

2.8.5. SUBMITTING THE PROPOSAL

When all above requirements are observed, completed proposals for IAU JDs and SpS should be submitted electronically to the IAU Proposal Web Server, before 1 December of the year two years before the General Assembly.

2.9. TRAVEL GRANTS FOR GA JOINT DISCUSSIONS AND SPECIAL SESSIONS

IAU GA Travel Grants are intended to cover in part expenses associated with the participant's attendance during the entire GA, including support for child care if needed. Requests for financial support for attending a GA should complete the electronic Application Form for an IAU Travel Grant available at:

<http://www.iau.org/grants_prizes/iau_grants/ga_events/>

Full completion of the Application Form is mandatory, including submission of an Abstract if relevant. The deadline for receiving these applications will be such, that enough time is left to the IAU Secretariat to prepare relevant summaries of applications, to be sent to the SOCs of the different scientific meetings for ranking, before a final selection is made by the IAU GS. Successful applicants will receive their allocated grant upon arrival and registration at the GA.

2.10. WEBSITE FOR A GA JOINT DISCUSSION OR SPECIAL SESSION

As soon as a successful applicant has been informed by the AGS of the approval of her/his proposed IAU JD or SpS, the SOC is kindly requested to create a website for that IAU meeting, containing, inter alia, those parts of the above information which are essential for the participants of that IAU JD or SpS. The URL of the website should be communicated to the IAU AGS as soon as available.

3. REGIONAL IAU MEETINGS (RIMs)

The IAU sponsors two series of Regional IAU Meetings (RIMs): a series of triennial meetings in the Asian-Pacific region (APRIM, since 1978), and a series of triennial meetings in the Latin-American region (LARIM, since 1978). A past series of twelve European Regional IAU Meetings (1974-1990) has effectively been succeeded by the series of Joint European and National Astronomy Meetings (JENAM), under the auspices of the European Astronomical Society.

APRIMs and LARIMs are held by invitation of a national astronomical society in, respectively, the Asian-Pacific region and the Latin-American region, in years between GAs. Their purpose, in addition to the discussion of specific scientific topics, is to promote contacts between scientists in the regions concerned, especially young astronomers, including those with young children. Therefore, a much wider range of scientific topics, a larger SOC, and a larger total attendance are expected for RIMs than for IAU Symposia. The Proceedings of RIMs are usually published by a regional publisher or in a regional astronomical publication series.

4. EDUCATIONAL ASPECTS OF IAU SCIENTIFIC MEETINGS

At IAU meetings, International Schools for Young Astronomers (ISYAs), Teachers' Workshops, or similar educational activities may be organized adjacent to the scientific meeting. By taking advantage of the presence of distinguished national and foreign scientists, one- or two-day events may be organized for the benefit of university and high-school

astronomy educators in the country hosting the meeting. In the past, such initiatives have been generally very successful and well received by their audiences. Stimulating and improving the teaching of science, and of astronomy in particular, is becoming increasingly urgent, and parallel educational activities of the type described above, in connection with IAU scientific meetings, are encouraged. While the quality of the proposed scientific program will remain the primary selection criterion for IAU sponsorship, a good parallel education program will certainly add to the overall merit of a proposal.

5. CO-SPONSORING OF MEETINGS

The IAU may decide to co-sponsor meetings that are organized by other scientific unions. Main organizational and financial responsibility for such meetings rests with the main sponsoring union. The IAU expects to be represented in the Scientific Organizing Committee concerned and to be consulted about publication of the proceedings and other major issues. The IAU may make a financial contribution to that meeting.