

WCTR-18, in 2029

The Processes of Bidding and Site Selection of the Conference Host (Bid Preparation File)

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WCTRS now invites the academic institutions who submitted Expression of Interest (EOI) and received confirmation mail of satisfying its requirements from the Chair of SSSC, and wish to be considered as prospective organisers of the 18th WCTR to be held in 2029, to submit the Preliminary Bids to host this conference.

When preparing the Bids, **it is absolutely essential to strictly abide** with the current document which gives in detail the “ Processes of Bidding and Site Selection of the Conference Host ”. This comes in six Sections as listed below and detailed hereinafter.

- Section I: Rational and Introduction.
- Section II: Mandatory Notes to Bidders.
- Section III: Site Selection Criteria.
- Section IV: Timeframe of the Steps in the Process of Site Selection for WCTR-18, 2029.
- Section V: Note on the Preparation of the Bid Submission File.
- Section VI: Note on Confidentiality.
- Section VII: Method of Correspondence.

I. Rational and Introduction

The World Conference on Transport Research (WCTR) is the premier event of WCTRS. It is held every three years. WCTR traditionally moves around the world and is hosted by a leading academic/research institute that is well known among the world transport research community. Over the last decade the World Conferences on Transport Research (WCTRs) were held in Rio de Janeiro (2013), Shanghai (2016), Mumbai (2019) and Montreal (2023). WCTR-17 will be held in Toulouse (2026). These are large conferences which require considerable advance planning, organisational capabilities and sustained commitment on the part of the host institution, and which should work closely with WCTRS to ensure a high quality conference.

The Steering Committee (STC) of WCTRS assigns all matters regarding selection of the Host Site (place) and host institution of the conference to a Site Selection Sub-Committee (SSSC) composed of three of its members. However, the decision of choosing a Host Site of a WCTR is in hand of the STC after receiving reasoned recommendations from the SSSC.

II. Mandatory Notes to Bidders

1. The organisers of a WCTR should be prepared, and commit, to keep the traditions of WCTRS and the practice of running a WCTR; with the freedom to make each conference an event showing the uniqueness of the host site. Accordingly, the bidders to host a WCTR should be **fully aware of the full content** of the “WCTRS/WCTR Current Operating Practice 2021” (**COP 2021**), ([link](#)), in order to be acquainted with all the responsibilities and duties of organising the conference and the traditions and practice of the society. **Please see point 7 below.**
2. As the WCTR is an academic research conference, bids should be submitted by a University, or a University Department, University Institute, or a research institute with a recognised international profile in transport research. Bids submitted by entities different than those mentioned above (e.g., Professional Conference Organiser (PCO), travel agency, conference tourism agency, convention bureau, etc.), will not be taken into consideration. **Please see point 4 below.**
3. The Host Site representative ‘professor’, who communicated the EOI Form for the 2029 WCTR, must be a fully paid member of WCTRS. If not, he/she should join before submission of the Preliminary Bid and inform the SSSC Chair about this.
4. Should a bidder wish to involve a PCO, or a similar entity, as supporting agency and, hence, be part of their team, they can do so and indicate this in the Bid. However, the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and the Agreement of hosting the WCTR with the winning Host Site, will only be signed between WCTRS and an appropriate internationally recognised University or transport research institute as mentioned above in item 3 and indicated in “Chapter 10 of the COP 2021” ([link](#)), which shall bear all the related responsibilities in front of the society and cannot delegate those to any other person or supporting agency.
5. Any bidder who submitted unsuccessful bid to host any previous WCTR(s) is entitled to submit bid for WCTR-18, 2029. However, it should be stressed that this bid shall be treated as fresh submission, with neither privileges nor disadvantages, over the new bidders.
6. Although reference is made in this document to some particular chapters of the COP 2021; bidders should be fully aware of all its Chapters to get acquainted with WCTRS, its traditions and practice, and the responsibilities of organising a WCTR, before preparing the bid proposal. **See item 1 above.**
7. As WCTRS is always updating its practices and procedures, the COP document is subject to change over time (that is why it is called “Current” OP). The most recent version of COP is for 2021 (COP 2021) which might be subject to some updates later. Along the progress of the process of site selection, bidders are advised to refer to the latest COP version available at the time, and that will be posted on the WCTRS Website. The changes to the COP document, nevertheless, are customary not in the core.

8. Bidders must propose a Conference Management Service (CMS) which they will use to manage the WCTR logistics (to include: paper submission, paper review, registration and how this will relate to systems which might be used for other elements such as hotel bookings). They will show in the Bid File key features of such system. Bidders should include the costs of providing such a system and the support to adapt it to the needs of the conference in their Business Plan. Bidders should explain their previous experiences with using the proposed CMS. For the 2026 WCTR, the proposed main system will be Conference Maker. Whilst there may be benefits to continuing with the same system for the 2029 WCTR this is not a requirement on bidders, and is subject to WCTRS assessment after the end of WCTR 2026. When the winning bidder of hosting WCTR 2029 will be decided, the proposed CMS should be finally approved by the STC of WCTRS in consultation with the winning bidder.
9. Answer(s) and question(s) related to this bidding that SSSC will receive from one bidder shall be sent to all other bidders in **bcc**. See Section VII for correspondence method.

III. Site Selection Criteria

The Site Selection criteria of the host of a WCTR are given below and will be strictly followed by the SSSC in the evaluation of the bids. Those are based on Chapter 6 of the COP 2021 ([link](#)). Nonetheless, further elaborated important details are given hereinafter, and should be strictly observed during preparation of the Bid. Details of how a WCTR is run are in Chapter 5 of the same document ([link](#)).

1. Adequate conference facilities, within a conference centre, or in remarkably close walking proximity, for a huge multi-stream conference involving more than 1,000 participants.
 - About 30 rooms are required: 3 to 4 of about 100 seating capacity, 8 to 10 of about 75 seating capacity, 5 to 6 of about 50 seating capacity and 12 to 15 of about 20 seating capacity. This is in addition to about 8 meeting rooms of reasonable size for the WCTRS/WCTR Committees and WCTRS Secretariat.
 - Lecture theatre of 1000+ capacity for the Opening Plenary.
 - Lecture theatre of 500+ capacity for the meeting of the General Assembly of the WCTRS, and the Closing Sessions.
 - Ample space for:
 - Conference registration desk and Participants' Secretariat to be operated by the CDT (Conference Directorate) and/or the CMS Provider. In addition to room(s) for Speakers' Lounge(s) to prepare for the presentations, to meet Sessions Chairs, etc.
 - Poster Sessions allowing presenters and participants to move and interact freely.
 - Exhibition space and booths/desks, if needed, preferably to be located on the way leading to, or around, the lunch break space.
 - Spaces for Coffee Breaks distributed carefully near sessions' rooms.
 - Lunch Break spaces which eliminate queuing possibilities and offer good seating, etc. In addition, lunch Menu should include possibility for special international diets.
 - If the conference is to be organised in rooms in different buildings they should be within comfortable walking distance from each other; the bidder should show on a map the approximate distance (mt.) and walking times (min) of the different buildings from the conference hub (main building). Walking time should not in any case be more than 5 min; door to door of the conference rooms devoted to sessions.

2. Adequate quantity, quality, and price range, of hotel accommodation in the vicinity of the conference site, including the possibility of quality dormitory, or youth hostel, rooms. Approximate distance (mt.) of hotels, and dormitory/youth hostels, from conference site should be indicated as follows:
 - On a **map** and,
 - In a **tabular** form by hotel category (number of stars) and expected price per night (US \$) at the time of the conference.
3. Sufficient and assured 'promised' public and/or private financial support to guarantee the viability of the conference. This means that:
 - The organising institution, of which the proposed Chair of the CDT and the proposed CDT team belong, should commit in writing to bear the costs that fail to be covered by the promised financial support.
 - Authorised, and signed, letters of financial support must be provided in the Bid by the institutions that promise financing.
4. An organisation and sufficient individuals, to assure managerial and institutional support for the conference.
 - Authorised and signed letters of this institutional support must be provided in the Bid.
5. Prior experience of members of the proposed CDT with previous WCTRS and/or with other large conferences.
 - Tabulated list of names of CDT Chair, and CDT members, active participation in organising previous large scale multi-stream conferences; by name, date and city of conference, size (number of participants) of the conference, and number of parallel sessions. The organisational responsibility of each person in that conference, must be precisely indicated.
6. Sufficient national/regional WCTRS membership and interest in WCTRS to ensure good base attendance, including the capability and potential of the organisers of widely expanding the society membership not only in their region, but also globally and, particularly, in developing countries and the under-represented countries/regions, clearly demonstrating how this can be practically achieved if the host site is selected. Current membership size per region/country is available through the WCTRS secretariat: wctrs@ucdavis.edu
7. A site with particular interest for transportation researchers.
 - This means to demonstrate how the proposed city is of interest to the international transport research community (e.g., the challenges faced by the transport system, how the city has been, and is currently coping with, those challenges and the related future plans for 2029 and beyond and innovative transport technologies and transport research carried out in your institution and in the country, etc.).
8. A location consistent with a multi-purpose conference offering professional and technical appeal and attractive tourist tours to the conference participants.

9. Good international air transport connections.
 - Indication of the scheduled daily direct (and connecting) flights to the host city from major parts of all continents of the world.
 - If the host city has no major airlines hub, the potential arrangements for connection to the proposed conference site should be indicated.
10. Stability of arrangements over a three-year time horizon. This includes, not only guaranteeing sustained financial and institutional support, but also formal written commitment of the host institution(s) to take the financial risk should, for any unexpected reason(s), registration to the conference unexpectedly drops, and ensuring the continued commitment of the host site CDT Chair and the principal local team over the above time period. This letter should be submitted in a separate **pdf** file and attached to the Bid document, in addition of being copied in the Bid.
11. The host site CDT is to guarantee keeping the general style and logo of WCTRS on all its “soft” and “hard” publications and correspondence material related to the conference. The motto being, WCTR is a conference of the WCTRS that is jointly organised with an institution in a Host Site.
 - Though this being guaranteed, the host organisation is encouraged to develop individual elements which make the event unique.
12. Finance to support a number of authors of papers to attend the conference. The host site CDT is to guarantee:
 - To seek finance to support a number of authors of papers who cannot have self or other financing to attend the conference; the names to be approved by the Scientific Committee of the conference, SCC, and the STC (see Section 5.2 of Chapter 5 and Chapter 6, COP 2021).
 - To sponsor the WCTRS Young Prize (see Sections 5.2 and 5.6 of Chapter 5, COP 2021), which is US\$ 1,000 in previous WCTRS. The nominations should be agreed by the SCC and the STC.
 - Finance of the WCTRS Young Prize. The nomination will be decided by the WCTRS Prize Sub-Committee and approved by the STC.
 - To prepare for offering a reasonable number of Bursaries for authors of good papers from developing and low income countries in oral and poster session.
13. The host site CDT is to guarantee funds for a half time post in support of the SCC Vice Chair Conference (SSC-VC Conference). This job should start 24 months before the date of WCTR scheduled beginning; the CDT should inform the President of the WCTRS, the SCC chair and the SCC-VC Conference for approval, at least two months prior to contracting, as mentioned in “Chapter 5 of the COP 2021” ([link](#)).
14. The host site CDT should also commit to be in full co-operation with WCTRS President, STC, and the WCTR Secretariat and the SCC and be prepared to give regular update of activities related to the conference preparation progress to the STC and also for inclusion in WCTRS social media dissemination material.

IV. Timeframe of the Steps in the Process of Site Selection of the Host Site of WCTR 18, 2029

SSSC reserves the right to change dates below if the need arises, keeping the marginal inter-steps periods as much as possible, and informing bidders in advance.

	Step	Date	Notes
1	Submission of EOI to bid to host WCTR 2029	10 Nov 2024	To SSSC Chair and members
2	Invitation to Bid to host WCTR-18, 2029	≈ 20 Nov 2024	By SSSC Chair to bidders who satisfied EOI requirements
3	Submission* of Preliminary Bids	1 Feb 2025	To SSSC Chair and members
4	Presentation of Preliminary Bids of eligible bidders to the SSSC + STC	≈ mid Apr 2025	SSSC decides eligible Preliminary Bids that are compliant with main Host Site requirements and invites them for presentation
5	Possible elimination of bidders	late Apr 2025	Short list decided by STC and informed to bidders by SSSC Chair
6	STC & SSSC comments to remaining bidders	late Apr 2025	To be sent by SSSC Chair
7	Submission* of Final Bids	15 Jun 2025	To SSSC Chair and members
8	Presentation of Final Bids	Sep / Oct 2025	To SSSC
9	STC decision on the short-listed candidates as proposed by the SSSC	Sep / Oct 2025	SSSC Chair to inform STC decision
10	SSSC Site visits to the shortlisted candidates	Oct / Dec 2025	Dates to be agreed between SSSC and Candidate Site Teams
11	STC decides the winning bidder to host the 2029 WCTR-18	Jan / Feb 2026	SSSC presents full report on the most preferred candidate to the STC and after approval, WCTRS President informs the decision to Bidders
12	Draft MOU with the winning bidder	Mar / Apr 2026	WCTRS President to prepare the MOU based on comments of the SSSC
13	Signing the MOU with the winning bidder as approved by STC	≈ May 2025	WCTRS President & the winning Bidder CDT Chair after approval of the STC
14	Signing the Agreement to hold WCTR-18	July 2026 Toulouse	WCTRS President & the winning Bidder CDT Chair in the Closing Ceremony of WCTR-17

* See Section V below.

V. Note on the Preparation of the Bid Submission File

V.1 Bid File Organisation and Contents

It is obligatory that all bids include the following Sections**:

- **Section 1:**

Introduction: on the host institution and the city of the Bid submitters.

- **Section 2:**

Conference Directorate (CDT): composition of the “proposed CDT of WCTR-18: naming the Chair and Members of the CDT”. The section should focus on the capabilities of the CDT chair and core Team and tabulate the proposed role of each in preparing for the conference, during the conference,

- **Section 3:**

Capabilities of the host institution: why and how is the host institution capable of organising a huge conference like WCTR ?

- **Section 4:**

Reason of submitting a bid: why is the submitter proposing to host WCTR-18, 2029 ?

- **Section 5:**

Opportunity of a unique conference: Why are the host site and city capable of offering a unique conference ?

- **Section 6:**

Satisfying the Site Selection Criteria: How does the bid respond to the site selection criteria given in **Section III** above; **one by one**.

- **Section 7:**

Business Plan of the conference: Provisional Business Plan (PBP) to be submitted with the Preliminary Bid and the Final Business Plan (FBP) to be submitted with the Final Bid after the first cycle of selection (see Timeframe in **Section IV**).

- **Appendixes:**

- Formal signed letters of financial and institutional support. These letters must have concrete statement of promised support and **not** just a ‘curtsy’ type of letter.
- **Short** profile CV’s of CDT Chair and Members.

- **Attachements:**

- A formal signed letter in **pdf** to SSSC Chair, from the organising institution, of which the proposed Chair of the CDT and the proposed CDT team belong, to commit to bear the costs that fail to be covered by the promised financial support of the conference.
- A formal signed letter in **pdf** to SSSC Chair, from the organising institution, of which the proposed Chair of the CDT and the proposed CDT team belong, to guarantee stability of arrangements over the period till WCTR 2029. This includes, not only guaranteeing sustained financial and institutional support, but also commitment to take the financial risk should, for any unexpected reason(s), registration to the conference unexpectedly drops, and ensuring the continued commitment of the host site CDT and the principal local team over the above time period.

** **Note:**

- Bidders may include additional Sections and/or Appendixes in the Bid Proposal.
- However, the above` mentioned seven Sections and two Appendixes are obligatory.

V.2 Bid File Format

- Soft file in **pdf** only; no hard copies of Bids are requested.
- Maximum 20 pages, A4 size, excluding the Appendixes and the Attachments.
- Font Times New Roman; size 12, single line spacing, margins: top and bottom 2 cm, left 3 cm and right 2 cm.
- Page numbering bottom centred.
- Photos and Plats are not requested, unless absolutely necessary.

VI. Note on Confidentiality

WCTRS maintains a policy of transparency and openness, but recognises that in a competitive process there is a need for confidentiality. During the Site Selection Process all information of, Bidders and bilateral correspondence with SSSC, will be confidential to the SSSC only. Information of one bidder will not be disclosed to other bidders in the bidding process. SSSC answers to questions of one bidder will be sent to all bidders keeping anonymity. Information provided by the selected Final Bidders in this competitive process will only be made available to members of the STC of WCTRS in the appropriate time, who will respect its confidentiality. If at any stage in the process of Site Selection of the Host Site for WCTR-18, 2029, there are elements of bids which proposers may wish to keep more confidential, this should be clearly indicated to the Chair of the SSSC who will convey 'in confidence' to the President of WCTRS. However, since decisions on site selection are to be taken by the STC, the President of WCTRS and the Chair of SSSC will normally wish to discuss such elements with proposers with the intention of allowing any decisions to be taken on a fully informed basis.

VII. Method of Correspondence***

- All correspondence related to this Bid are to be addressed by e-mail to:
Professor Ali Huzayyin, SSSC Chair [ali_huzayyin@yahoo.com], with 'cc' to SSSC members Professor Sergio Jara-Diaz [jaradiaz@uchile.cl] and Professor Antonio Musso [antonio.musso@fondazione.uniroma1.it].
- All the e-mails should be sent by the proposed CDT Chair (formally authorised as indicated in the EOI Form of the bidder) with 'cc' to a colleague who belongs to the same academic institution and is a potential senior member of the proposed CDT.
- The SSSC Chair will copy the above colleague in all the e-mails to the proposed CDT Chair.

***** Notes**

- All the e-mails sent from SSSC Chair to bidders should be **confirmed by reply e-mail** to the Chair with cc SSSC Members.
- As stated earlier, all questions sent by any one bidder, and the related SSSC answers, will be transmitted (in blind cc) to all bidders in the process.