

WCTRS/WCTR Current Operating Practices 2021



6 WCTR Host Site Selection & Obligations of Organisers

6. WCTR Host Site Selection and Obligations of Organisers

The host site of a WCTR is formally announced during the closing session of the previous conference. Given the three year cycle for conferences, the procedure of selecting a host site, out of candidate sites, starts about five years, and ends three and a half years, before the conference to be hosted is held. This practice is adopted by the STC to give enough time for the candidates to prepare, and later enhance their bids responding to comments of the STC, and to ensure careful and fair selection, in view of the large size of WCTRS and the obligations of the STC to provide high quality conferences.

It should always be made clear that the WCTR is a conference of the WCTRS. It is, therefore, not a conference of the host site institution(s), city and/or country.

The STC of WCTRS forms a Site Selection Sub Committee (SSSC) of three of its members, naming the chair, to organise and carry out the process of site selection on its behalf. The SSSC starts by launching ‘Invitation for Bids to Host a WCTR and the Process of Bidding and Site Selection of the Conference Host’ to be posted on the Website of WCTRS nearly five and half years before the date of that WCTR. This includes, in addition to other information, site selection criteria, notes on the preparation of the bid submission file, timeframe of the steps in the Process of Site Selection, note on confidentiality, However, prior to posting this Invitation, the SSSC posts on the society Website a “Call for Expression of Interest (EOI) to Bid to Host the WCTR”. The aim is to ensure that all potential bidders are from academic/research entities (University, University Department, University Institute, or Research Institute) and that if short listed they will respond to the above mentioned Invitation when it is posted on the Website of the society.

The Steps in the Process of Site Selection include, among many other details, six important timely milestones:

- Submission of EOIs to bid to host WCTR to the chair of SSSC for short listing for responding to the Invitation.
- Submission of Preliminary Bid proposals to the chair of SSSC for pre-qualification. This is to be submitted by the proposed CDT Chair and not any one from the Bid team.
- Presentation of the Preliminary Bid proposals of the qualified bidders to the STC for short listing.
- Submission of Final Bid proposals to the SSSC chair.
- Presentation of the Final Bid proposals to SSSC.
- Site visits by the SSSC to the final candidate sites decided by the STC upon the advice of the SSSC.

The EOI, the Preliminary Bid and the Final Bid of the entities interested to bid to host a WCTR must be submitted by the proposed CDT Chair, not by any other member of the Bid team. The same applies for the above mentioned presentations of the Preliminary and the Final Bids. Furthermore, the proposed CDT Chair of interested bidders must be a fully paid member of the WCTRS before submitting the EOI.

In all the above mentioned steps that follow ‘short listing the Preliminary Bids for preparing the Final Bids’, the SSSC will be supportive to all the remaining bidders by pointing out specific weaknesses and providing previous experiences to help the bidders to improve the proposal, keeping fairness among all, seeking the best feasible bids.

In the end of the process, SSSC makes a preliminary recommendation to be presented to the STC in its meeting 48 months before the conference date, which is responsible of taking the final decision on the selected Host of the WCTR during this meeting. In case the SSSC cannot reach a preliminary recommendation, the STC is responsible for reinvestigating the files in order to reach a final decision.

With its openness philosophy WCTRS has no frontiers. As the society is multi-modal, multi-disciplinary, and multi-sectoral, it is

also global. The society welcomes holding its triennial conference in any city of the world. However, as the WCTR is an academic research conference, the host entity should be exclusively an academic/research institution with a recognised international profile in transport research. Furthermore, with the obligations towards the transport community and the expectations of a quality conference and a unique event, Site Selection Criteria of a host site are set out below including important obligations. The above mentioned “Invitation for Bids to Host a WCTR and the Process of Bidding and Site Selection of the Conference Host” explicitly cover more details on Site Selection Criteria in addition to related essential Notes, e.g., CDT to provide Conference Management System (CMS) software,

Site Selection Criteria:

- Adequate conference facilities, within a centre or in remarkably close walking proximity, for a large (1000 + participants) multi-stream conference.
- Adequate quantity, quality, and price range of accommodation in the vicinity of the conference site.
- Sufficient and assured public 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 by the institutions that promise financing.
- An organisation and sufficient individuals to assure managerial support for the conference.
- Prior experience of members of the proposed CDT with WCTRs and with large multi-stream conferences.
- Diversity, over time, among continental and national locations, including the opportunity to hold conferences in parts of the world which have not been represented in previous conferences.

- 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 the under-represented countries/regions, clearly demonstrating how this can be practically achieved if the host site is selected.
- A site with particular interests for transportation researchers.
- A location consistent with multi-purpose conference for technical and tourist trips.
- Good international transportation connections.
- 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 CD and the principal local team of the CDT over the above time period.
- 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 host site CDT is to guarantee some finance to support a number of authors of papers to attend the conference. The nominations should be agreed by the SCC and the STC as mentioned in Chapter 5. They, in addition, should preferably prepare for offering a reasonable number of Bursaries with a minimum of five for authors of good papers from developing and low income countries in oral and poster sessions.
- The CDT should fund a half time post in support of the SCC Vice Chair Conference (SCC-VC Conference). This should start 24 months before the date of WCTR and should, therefore, be informed by the CD to the President of the WCTRS, the SCC Chair and the SCC-VC Conference for approval, at least two months prior to contracting. The appointment should be a

- transport academic with fluency in English; could be young, but well experienced active transport academic.
- The host site CDT is to guarantee sponsoring the WCTRS Young Prize (see Chapter 5).
 - It should also be in full co-operation with WCTRS President, STC and Secretariat and the WCTR SCC and be prepared to give regular update of activities related to the conference preparation progress for inclusion in WCTRS newsletter and Website.
 - Host site organisers should be in full support of the WCTRS cause and spirit, adhering with the various guidelines of the “WCTRS/WCTR Current Operating Practices” given in its most recent version.

As mentioned earlier the SSSC shall visit the short listed candidate host site(s) for “on-site” inspection of the suggested conference facilities and getting acquainted with the potential CDT Chair and the local team before writing its final report to the STC. In this case the visited site hosts should bear the cost of accommodation, meals, and internal transport of the visiting three members of SSSC as part of their bid expenses. WCTRS shall bear the cost of air transport, visa, and travel insurance of the SSSC members. However, the hosts shall not be asked to organise, or bear any cost of organising, special parties, dinners and/or receptions for the SSSC or offering its members gifts of any kind or price whatsoever.

Upon authorization by the STC of the selection of a host site for a future WCTR, two documents will be signed between WCTRS (represented by its President) and the WCTR host site organisers (represented by the CDT Chair, i.e., the CD).

The first document is a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which indicates the site specific additional requirements for guaranteeing a successful conference, as advised by the SSSC. The MOU is to be prepared by the WCTRS President in cooperation with the CD and with support of the SSSC based on their Site Selection Report and other observations they will have noted in

their site visit. The MOU is to be signed, between the President of WCTRS and the CD of the said WCTR, at the most 42 months (three and a half years) before the conference date (at, or little after, the January STC meeting in the year of previous WCTR).

The second document is an Agreement which ensures that the selected host site will adhere to the general rules of WCTRS conferences management and procedures. Accordingly, the latest version of the “WCTRS/WCTR Current Operating Practices” is to be considered as an Appendix to the Agreement and as an integral part of it. In this Agreement the WCTRS President and the WCTR CD both will declare their commitment to follow the latest “WCTRS/WCTR Current Operating Practices” document. For Model Agreement see Chapter 10.

In one part of the “Closing Ceremony” of each WCTR the chair of SSSC announces the Host Site and location, of the next WCTR, briefly informing the selection process and main strengths of the selected host site. Signature of the Agreement would also take place, and the agreement be exchanged formally and publicly in this session. The CDT Chair of the next WCTR will be invited to introduce the host site and city of the conference in a few minutes show (film/video/DVD) and welcome the audience to attend. Further details on the ‘Protocol’ of this part (and other parts) of the Closing Ceremony are given in Chapter 5. In case the CDT Chair of the next WCTR cannot attend the above mentioned Closing Session, for any reason(s), an authorized representative should attend and sign the Agreement holding authorization letter from the host site entity. The WCTRS President must be formally notified and approve the representative’s name, who should be of a leading position in the CDT of that WCTR, well in advance of the conference.

The STC may decide whenever it sees necessary, to send a limited delegation of its members on selected time span(s) during the three years of preparations, before the conference date, to visit the chosen host site in order to follow up, on the ground, the progress of

conference preparations and to give first hand advice. In this case the cost of travel and accommodation shall be borne by the host site.