

Guidelines for the session organisers

The session organisers are responsible for the content and quality of their sessions. To assist them in their task, the Executive Committee of the International Economic History Association (IEHA) suggests a number of guidelines to be followed.

The congress will last for five days. Each day will be divided into four time blocks of 90 minutes (two before lunch and two after lunch). Each session organiser will be given two time blocks (in the morning or in the afternoon). The 90-minute blocks will be followed by 30-minute coffee breaks in the mornings and afternoons.

Please note that the deadline for paper submissions is **31 May 2006**. It is the session organiser's responsibility to ensure that paper presenters deliver their papers in time.

The IEHA wishes to enhance the quality of the congress proceedings as far as possible, and therefore encourages session organisers and chairpersons to plan their sessions carefully and well in advance. We would like you to think about the following issues.

Golden Rules for enhancing the quality of a session

1. Make a balanced plan of the session, including a clear timetable: how much time you will allocate to the presentation of papers, how much to comments, how much to questions from the audience and to general discussion. Discuss the plan with your co-organisers, chairpersons and paper presenters.
2. It is a good idea to organise a pre-conference session before the congress. In any case, you should ask the participants (including the chairpersons and commentators) to meet in advance, for example during lunch or dinner on the day before the session is due to take place. All papers should be distributed in advance, according to the arrangements offered by the congress organisation. We suggest that each paper be given at least 15 minutes for presentation and a quarter of the total time should be devoted to discussion.
3. Carry out your plan, and stick to it. Announce at the beginning of the session what schedule will be followed: paper presentations, comments and discussion. It would be a good idea to distribute a timetable at the session.
4. See that all involved obey the rules; it is not unknown for people to try to take more time for presenting their papers than is allocated to them. Think of ways of dealing with this problem in a flexible and friendly way. The congress organisers will distribute three cards to help you in carrying out the necessary symbolic acts when scholars go beyond their time limits: a yellow card (FIVE MINUTES), an orange card (ONE MINUTE) and a red card (STOP NOW).
5. Think of ways of dealing with language problems: not all participants will necessarily be fluent in English, which will be the language most often spoken in the congress. Find out well in advance who may have problems communicating in

English. Make sure that the chairperson is fluent in all of the languages that might be used in the session, and that he or she could help to translate questions or answers. The best way to overcome language problems may be to follow the procedure that is used to make presentations generally easier to digest and more enjoyable to follow: encourage the use of summaries containing the most important points of the presentation, plus relevant graphs and tables, distributed as handouts or (preferably) as overhead or pc-presentation slides.

6. Think of ways of creating a positive incentive structure and of stimulating the kind of international scientific exchange that is vital to these congresses. It is especially important to encourage young scholars: give them detailed comments on their papers (and on their presentation style), bring them into contact with 'established' colleagues who are present, give them advice about the possible publication of their paper (for example, about submission to a specific journal you know well).

7. Do not forget to ask the contributors what technical aides they need in their presentation, and check that they are to be found in the venue reserved for your session. You would be well advised to gather together in advance the power-point presentations of the paper presenters in order to ensure swift and smooth changeovers. There will be technical assistants on duty at all locations, who will give assistance if needed.

Please note that all Macintosh files should be converted into MS-Office format. It will not be possible to use any Macintosh equipment at the university.