

IUGA Regional Symposia

IUGA REGIONAL SYMPOSIUM GUIDELINES

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IUGA REGIONAL SYMPOSIUM GUIDELINES

1. Introduction

IUGA Regional Symposia are educational programs designed to provide knowledge in both basic and advanced urogynecology to clinicians in selected regions around the globe. IUGA focuses on organizing Regional Symposia in regions where there are no current plans to organize an IUGA Annual Meeting.

Each Regional Symposium aims to address the educational needs of clinicians within a specific region of the world (e.g., group of countries or continent). By facilitating the exchange of knowledge, fostering collaborations, and developing connections among attendees, each Regional Symposium builds understanding of the urogynecology subspecialty within the respective region.

If you and a group of colleagues are interested in hosting an IUGA Regional Symposium, please review these IUGA Regional Symposium Guidelines to gain an understanding of what is expected of the host group and how an IUGA Regional Symposium is organized and conducted. If, after reviewing these guidelines, you are still interested in organizing an IUGA Regional Symposium, please let us know by contacting the IUGA Association Manager at office@iuga.org. If organizing a symposium in your region is in line with the strategic directions of IUGA, we will assist you with preparing a proposal to be presented to the Education Committee and IUGA Board for approval.

We look forward to working together to spread urogynecological education around the world!

2. Main Objectives

The main objectives of IUGA Regional Symposia are to:

1. Provide educational opportunities in both basic and advanced urogynecology to clinicians in the identified geographic region.
2. Facilitate the exchange of urogynecological knowledge among attendees.
3. Address areas of urogynecological educational needs specific to the region in which the symposium will be held.
4. Build the understanding of the urogynecology specialty in the region.
5. Increase collaboration in the region among healthcare providers regarding urogynecology.
6. Expose a broader audience to IUGA.

3. Geographic Locations

Regional Symposia will be held in:

1. Countries where there is a urogynecological society or defined group that can serve as the host and planning partner for the symposium.
2. Geographic regions where urogynecological educational opportunities would benefit clinicians.
3. Geographic regions where urogynecological clinical services are currently available.
4. Countries where there are no current plans to hold an IUGA Annual Meeting.

4. Submission of Proposals

The IUGA Board, in alignment with the IUGA strategic plan, will identify priority regions in which to offer symposia. Members of the International Advisory Board (IAB) are encouraged to work with their Regional Advisory Boards and Affiliate Societies are encouraged to develop proposals in keeping with this strategy.

Those who are considering developing a proposal to organize an IUGA Regional Symposium should first contact the IUGA Association Manager at office@iuga.org. It is important to do this early in the planning/consideration process to ensure there is a mutual interest and to align coordination with other symposia that have been proposed and other projects being planned and implemented.

To allow for ample time for planning and promotion, proposals must be submitted a minimum of 12 months prior to the proposed date of the Regional Symposium. For reasons of budgeting and improved funding opportunities, Regional Symposium proposals are more likely to be approved if submitted before June 1 of the year *prior* to the year in which the symposium will be held.

The IUGA Association Manager will provide guidance and assistance in determining the symposium format (virtual or in-person) as well as developing your proposal and budget. The IUGA Association Manager will also connect you with the IUGA Program Subcommittee of the Education Committee to develop the program. Once a full and complete proposal (including a budget and program) has been developed, it will then be sent to the IUGA Board for consideration and approval.

5. Local Organizing Committee (LOC)

All proposals are to be submitted by a group of local organizers called the Local Organizing Committee (LOC). The Chair of the LOC must be an IUGA member. The majority (+50%) of LOC members must also be IUGA members. The LOC for the proposed Regional Symposium will be notified whether the proposal is either accepted or declined and/or whether additional information is required. Once approved, the LOC will begin to discuss the organization of the symposium with representatives from the IUGA Office and the Education Committee via teleconference. Future teleconferences will also be organized at defined intervals to provide updates on the progress of the planning and may be initiated by the LOC, the IUGA Office, or the Education Committee. The LOC must identify an LOC Chair and an LOC Vice Chair as well as a local person who will be responsible for liaising with IUGA Office regarding symposium logistics (this person must speak/write/understand English). The LOC is encouraged to assign specific roles/tasks/responsibilities to individual LOC members, e.g., members responsible for scientific program development, for meeting promotion, for local sponsorship, etc. The registration fee for the LOC Chair and Vice Chair (not for other members of the LOC) will be waived.

6. Language

The official language of IUGA Regional Symposia is expected to be English, but in special circumstances the IUGA Board can approve a symposium to be held in a language other than English. If any translation services are necessary, the cost of such services must be built into the symposium budget. Translation must be organized by the LOC, and approval of translation funding is at the discretion of the IUGA Board on an individual symposium basis.

7. Frequency of Meetings and Dates

IUGA aims to organize at least one Regional Symposium per year. Symposia should not be scheduled within one month of another IUGA educational meeting (Annual Meeting, Regional Symposium, International Symposium, online course, etc.), and should not overlap with other scheduled key IUGA and/or urogynecological-related international meetings or other significant gatherings such as conferences of national obstetrics-gynecology societies in the proposed region. It is preferred for the symposium to be held over a weekend or part of a weekend.

8. Target Audience and Number of Participants

Potential attendees include gynecologists, urologists, physical therapists, nurses, urogynecological specialists including residents, fellows, and other levels of trainees, as well as any other healthcare professional with a professional interest in treating women with pelvic floor disorders (e.g., colorectal surgeons, geriatric specialists, etc.). The promotion of the event may be targeted to a wider audience depending on the region. The number of attendees should be targeted at 200-300 individuals, however, this may vary per region.

9. Finances: Budget, Revenues, and Expenses

Although an IUGA Regional Symposium is organized in collaboration with local hosts and suppliers, IUGA is ultimately responsible for its coordination and organization. IUGA will work with the LOC to prepare a feasible budget to be presented to and approved by the IUGA Board. The IUGA Office will work with the organizers of the symposium to manage the expenses and oversee the established budget. **All expenses need to be reviewed and approved by the IUGA Office.**

Meeting-related revenues include, but are not limited to, local/regional/international registration fees, international and regional/domestic sponsor revenues, and any other revenue generated directly or indirectly by the event (e.g., educational grants, support from local convention bureau, hotel commission, etc.). The meeting-related expenses include, but are not limited to, all costs related to program development, syllabus printing and other marketing material printing, venue fees/deposits, lunch and breaks during an in-person meeting, virtual meeting platform (if applicable), registration process, international (and in some cases regional) speaker travel and accommodations, local suppliers, and any other expenses related to the symposium.

The budget will need to provide a complete and detailed overview of all revenues and expenses, including the costs of IUGA staff support (which will be indicated by the IUGA Association Manager). Organizational expenses must also include fees for IUGA staff and systems (estimated 200-250 hours on average, to be indicated by the IUGA Association Manager) as well as any local organizing fees up for a local PCO, staff and administrative/secretarial support. All costs for organization support from both IUGA and the local organizer must be detailed in the budget for the symposium and will be paid upon completion of the program. Based on the division of tasks as outlined in Section 26 Roles and Responsibilities, the amount that should be included for the IUGA office is between \$30,000 and \$35,000 in 2027 (and will be indexed every year thereafter) and will ultimately be indicated by the IUGA Association Manager. Should the tasks be divided differently than is outlined in section 26 Roles and Responsibilities, the associated costs will be adjusted to reflect the actual situation.

IUGA aims to wrap up the symposium and to prepare a financial report regarding a regional symposium within 60 days after an in-person event. However, it is not unusual for some revenues/expenses, such as travel reimbursements and/or grants, to exceed this 60-day period. For a virtual event, the financial reporting will take up to 120 days to account for any revenue received through the sale of on-demand access to the symposium for up to 3 months following the event.

The goal is for the meeting to break even financially and the budget must reflect this. If there is any profit or loss, it will be shared with the LOC (see Section 27. Profit allocation).

10. Venue, Meeting Room Requirements, Audiovisual & Catering

Venue

It is strongly preferred for an in-person IUGA Regional Symposium to be held at a local university or hospital to keep the logistical expenses to a minimum. However, if such facilities are not available to provide a quality location for holding a symposium, an alternative (such as a hotel venue) may be considered. The choice of the venue will be a joint recommendation made by the LOC in collaboration with IUGA. The venue will need to be approved by IUGA

and can only be confirmed following review of a written agreement that clearly stipulates exact contact details (name/institution, address, phone/email) and documents all fees and costs, including payment and cancellation clauses. All agreements must be reviewed and approved by the IUGA Office, even those signed by the local organizer. A venue contact must be provided to the IUGA Office at the time of confirmation of a specific venue and this person must be able to communicate in English. Venue fees should include the audiovisual support. At a minimum, one large room, theater style, with auditorium capacity for approximately 200-250 attendees (depending on target) will be required. Additionally, smaller rooms may be required for workshops or concurrent sessions organized as part of the symposium.

If a virtual delivery format is chosen instead of an in-person meeting, the IUGA Office will work with the LOC to recommend and decide upon the most appropriate virtual platform. Contracting of the virtual platform will be done by the IUGA Office.

Audiovisual requirements (only applicable for in-person meetings)

Audiovisual requirements include appropriate equipment for scientific sessions such as speakers, microphones (speaker, moderator(s), audience), lights, LCD projector, screen, and a dedicated computer (desktop or laptop).

Registration Area (only applicable for in-person meetings)

Space for the registration area which can accommodate 2 people and two 5- or 6-foot tables must be available. The registration area must include laptop computer, Wi-Fi, and printer. Internet access must be available in order to accommodate on-site registration.

Foyer for Coffee/Tea and Exhibit Tables (only applicable for in-person meetings)

An area for coffee/lunch breaks to accommodate up to 250 people will be required and should be adjacent to the main meeting room. Coffee/tea breaks should be planned in the morning and afternoon. Continued water stations are recommended. There should also be sufficient space for a modest exhibit area of five to seven display tables. One of these will be an IUGA display table.

Symposium Lunches/Breaks (only applicable for in-person meetings)

The budget for the symposium will cover lunch and breaks (2 per day) for the duration of the symposium. Lunch and break menus must fit within the approved budget. Breakfast is usually not included in the meeting delegate package. Welcome coffee/tea/juice may be provided in the morning of each day (depending on venue).

11. Accommodations (only applicable for in-person meetings)

Accommodations for the international speakers and regional/local speakers, if they are traveling from more than 50 miles/75 km away, must be covered within the meeting budget. The LOC are encouraged to help in identifying reasonably priced hotels close to the meeting venue.

12. Marketing & Promotion

Each IUGA Regional Symposium will be promoted via the IUGA website, by email to IUGA members within the respective region, on IUGA social media channels, in the *International Urogynecology Journal (IJU)* (when possible), and through avenues of the local host society and other appropriate avenues as determined by IUGA and the LOC. Any related fees, including printing and postage for any marketing material, must be included in the symposium budget. The LOC will be responsible for marketing the Regional Symposium locally and should include local and national gynecology, urology and urogynecology societies, as well as local hospitals and institutions, and should utilize the journals, newsletters, websites and social media of these societies and organizations. The IUGA Office will provide the LOC with advertising material to print as brochures and/or posters to distribute locally and can assist in developing material in the local language(s). This material should also be used for emailings and web advertising.

13. Registration Process and Fees

Registration for all Regional Symposia will be arranged by the local organizer and the system reviewed and approved by the IUGA Office. Registration fees (noted below in US dollars) are approximate (may be subject to change, depending on each region):

In-person Regional Symposia

\$250.00 for IUGA Members

\$350.00 for Non-IUGA Members

\$100.00 for Residents/Fellows/Trainees/Nurses/Physiotherapists

Virtual Regional Symposia

\$75.00 for IUGA Members

\$105.00 for Non-IUGA Members

\$55.00 for Residents/Fellows/Trainees/Nurses/Physiotherapists

If necessary, a one-day registration rate may be implemented. A one-day rate is expected to be approximately 70-75% of the rate for the full symposium.

Workshops can be built into the core symposium, or may be outside of it, clustered on a single day, depending on local practice. If they are on a single separate day, then there will be a separate fee for each workshop.

All fees are in U.S. dollars, but may be offered in equivalent amounts of local currency. The exact amount will be established in collaboration with the LOC and the IUGA Office. All registration fees will be collected by the local organizing committee/local organization. On-site registration will be coordinated by the local organizer with at least one IUGA staff member attending each Regional Symposium. One local individual will be required to assist in the registration area each day (and possibly two for the first morning), and will be paid a reasonable fee, which must be included in the symposium budget.

14. Membership Promotion

Delegates of each symposium who wish to become IUGA members will be offered a special discounted rate of \$75 USD. This only applies to NEW IUGA members and not to existing IUGA members. The promotional rate is valid for 1 year. After 1 year, the membership renewal will be at the regular fee.

15. Social Program (only applicable for in-person meetings)

Opening Reception

An opening reception may be held on the evening of day 1 (for all symposium participants) if this is culturally acceptable and fits within the budget.

Faculty Dinner

A faculty dinner may be organized by the LOC in collaboration with the IUGA Office if this fits within the symposium budget.

16. Industry Sponsorship

The LOC is encouraged to assist the IUGA Office in seeking industry support. Strategies for securing support, such as which companies should be approached, by whom, the amounts to be requested, and the recognition that will be provided in return for financial support, will be determined collaboratively by the LOC and the IUGA Office. The IUGA Office will prepare a Corporate Support Prospectus for each Regional Symposium. The local organizers will work closely with the IUGA Office to identify potential sponsors and will assist with the outreach. They will use their knowledge of the local environment to maximize sponsorships for the symposium. The IUGA Office will be responsible for contracting and managing the sponsorships. All industry support must be declared to the IUGA Office, will be allocated to the meeting symposium/budget, and cannot be allocated to any activities that are kept outside of the meeting/budget.

17. Length and Structure of Program

The IUGA Regional Symposium program normally covers two full days, but in certain occasions it may be extended into a third day (separate paid workshop day).

The program will be structured as a BASIC or ADVANCED UROGYNECOLOGY program, or if appropriate, it may incorporate both basic and advanced training. Didactic sessions and case presentations will be given as well. Each presentation should be approximately 30 – 45 minutes. Question and answer sessions should be related to each presentation and moderators assigned. In the case of a virtual regional symposium, one international moderator per session is strongly recommended. Interactive sessions, hands on sessions/workshops, video sessions, and other types of presentations are encouraged.

18. Program Content

The program content for each Regional Symposium will be determined by the LOC working in collaboration with the Program Subcommittee of the IUGA Education Committee, relating to both basic and advanced urogynecology needs in the region. This will include evaluation of a wide range of urogynecological topics, as well as existing and emerging technology for treatment of urogynecological-related diseases and disorders. The LOC may suggest topics for discussion that they have deemed relevant and important in their region.

19. Speakers/Faculty

The program faculty should include the following:

- 1 or 2 international speakers (depending on location) who must be IUGA members and one of whom is preferably a member of the IUGA Board or IUGA Education Committee
- 2-3 regional speakers (from surrounding countries) who must be IUGA members and one of whom is preferably a member of the IUGA Education Committee
- Up to 8 local speakers who are preferably all IUGA members

The final faculty list needs to be agreed on by the IUGA Education Committee, and reviewed and approved by the IUGA Board. Expenses for international and regional speakers will be funded through the approved symposium budget and will adhere to the IUGA Travel Policy (latest version: see IUGA website). Travel expenses for speakers from the host country who must travel a considerable distance to the symposium venue will also be supported

through the budget for the event, also in keeping with the IUGA Travel Policy. Speaker travel and accommodation expenses must be appropriately built into the budget for the proposed symposium. All Regional Symposium speakers (including local speakers) will be issued formal invitations and travel/funding information by the IUGA Office. Reimbursement for travel will be organized through the IUGA Office. Honoraria will not be provided by IUGA to any speakers or to the local host/LOC. Faculty/invited speakers will not be required to pay a registration fee. Aside from invited faculty, the LOC Chair, and LOC Vice Chair, all other participants/attendees will need to pay regular registration fees.

20. Presentations, Notes, and Attendee Items

For in-person meetings,

- All speakers must provide their presentation (notes) no later than 1 week prior to the start of the symposium (usually in PowerPoint or PDF form) for each talk according to the specific instructions provided by the IUGA staff coordinator or the LOC,
- The IUGA Office will provide each participant with handouts of all meeting presentations via a link sent to their email,
- Pens and writing material should be provided to attendees and may be sponsored by industry or funded by IUGA. If available, IUGA will provide IUGA pens.

For virtual meetings, all speakers must provide their pre-recorded presentation in MP4 format no later than 2 weeks prior to the start of the symposium for each talk according to the specific instructions provided by the IUGA staff coordinator or the LOC.

21. Connection with Patient Organizations

The presence of international leaders in the field can provide an excellent opportunity to reach out to patient organizations related to urogynecology. Local organizers are asked to consider how, in the context of the Regional Symposium, they can connect with patient groups and to bring any advice or suggestions to the IUGA Office for consideration. The IUGA Office will connect local organizers with the IUGA Patient Advisory Council where appropriate.

22. Certificates and Name Badges

All Regional Symposium attendees will receive a certificate of attendance at the completion of the symposium. Certificates will be given to delegates in exchange for a completed online evaluations form (see Section 24). All faculty members will receive certificates of participation. Name badge templates will be provided by the IUGA Office. The certificates of attendance for delegates and certificates of participation for the faculty will be created and distributed by the IUGA Office.

23. Continuing Professional Development Credits

Many countries have continuing professional development requirements for physicians and other healthcare providers. The LOC will be responsible for making arrangements for the symposium to receive the necessary approval for such credits and will be responsible for managing the process of providing participants with documentation regarding the credits they have earned. If there is a cost for offering credits, it must be included in the approved symposium budget.

24. Evaluation Forms

An electronic evaluation form for the symposium will be developed by the IUGA Office with input from the LOC. The evaluation form must be completed by each participant in exchange for the certificate of attendance. Evaluation data will be compiled, and a report will be generated for each Regional Symposium by the IUGA Office to provide information to be included in the final report provided by the LOC.

25. Reports

The LOC will be responsible for providing a final written report of the Regional Symposium to the IUGA Office within 30 days of the completion of the symposium. The IUGA Office will use this report to create a summary of the Regional Symposium for inclusion in IUGA publications which may include the website and/or newsletter.

26. Roles and Responsibilities

Local Organizing Committee (LOC)

The LOC is responsible for the following tasks:

1. Work directly with the IUGA Office in all aspects of meeting organization;
2. Work with the Program Subcommittee of the IUGA Education Committee to finalize the program, including speakers;
3. Work with the IUGA Office to finalize the proposed budget;
4. Develop a specific task list defining deadlines and responsible persons from the LOC;
5. Identify an LOC Chair and Vice Chair who will work with the IUGA Office to handle any local logistics that will be needed;
6. Manage, and finalize all financial matters including, but not limited to revenue (including registration fees, sponsorships, etc.) as well as all expenses;
7. Assign a local representative to assist in planning where needed. If there are costs associated these must be included in the symposium budget;
8. Assign a local representative to assist on-site registrations (*only applicable for in-person meetings*);
9. Identify key local stakeholders who should be invited/involved;
10. Develop an electronic registration form and collect registration fees in compliance with local laws and regulations (to be approved by the IUGA office);
11. Develop an initial budget and work with the IUGA Office to adjust it as needed for approval by the IUGA Board;
12. Prepare Corporate Support Prospectus and distribute to local and regional contacts;
13. Sign and manage all contracts related to the symposium (following approval from the IUGA office);
14. Identify and, in coordination with the IUGA Office, assist with securing (local) industry support;
15. Using materials provided by the IUGA Office, carry out promotion of the Regional Symposium within the respective region and neighboring countries to encourage attendance;
16. Recommend, if applicable, options/locations for faculty dinner and opening reception (*only applicable for in-person meetings*);
17. Work with the IUGA office to finalize all financial matters and other aspects/matters within max. 60 days of the completion of an in-person symposium or within 120 days of a virtual symposium (due to sales of the recordings for up to 90 days after the meeting)
18. Provide a final written report of the Regional Symposium to the IUGA Office within 30 days of the completion of the symposium.

Important note: The LOC may only sign contracts on behalf of IUGA once written approval from the IUGA office has been received.

IUGA

The IUGA Office is responsible for the following tasks:

1. Assign an IUGA staff member to serve as the lead contact;
2. Work directly with LOC Chair, Vice Chair and other members of the LOC;
3. Help to finalize proposed budget;
4. Approve registration fees and sponsor fees;
5. Approve registration system;
6. Distribute Corporate Support Prospectus to international industry partners;
7. Approve and contract venue or virtual platform (depending on the format of the meeting) and appropriate vendors/suppliers as needed;
8. Approve all financial matters including, but not limited to revenue (including registration fees, sponsorships, etc.) as well as all expenses;
9. Assign an IUGA staff member to assist with on-site registration;
10. Invite and confirm speakers and gather presentations in advance;
11. Prepare promotional materials and advertise the Regional Symposium to IUGA members;
12. Approve all contracts related to the symposium;
13. Develop, with input from the LOC, the evaluation form all attendees must complete in order to receive their certificate of attendance;
14. Use the post symposium report provided by the LOC, along with evaluation data, to create a summary to be used on the IUGA website and in other promotions;
15. Develop certificates of attendance and distribute among participants;

A designated staff member from the IUGA Office will attend each Regional Symposium for overall coordination and on-site registration. Please note that in some cases a local conference organizer may be sourced to assist the LOC and IUGA Office. This expense must be included in the approved symposium budget.

Role of IUGA Education Committee

The responsible person(s) from the Education Committee, likely the chair and members of the Program Subcommittee, will:

1. Initiate a conference call with the LOC at the proposal stage to gain an understanding of the local/regional state of urogynecology and target audience in order to assist with development of the program;
2. Suggest suitable topics and speakers in collaboration with the LOC (all international speakers must be IUGA members);
3. Provide additional clinical and educational assistance that may be requested.

27. Profit Allocation

The financial result for the symposium, whether positive or negative, will be shared 50/50 between the LOC and IUGA. The LOC must represent a nonprofit entity, e.g., the local urogynecological society. This organization must be identified in the Regional Symposium proposal. The costs of planning a Regional Symposium are not included in the Association Management contract and will be charged separately.