

Guidelines for the ENTOG annual program; Exchange and meeting

Since 2008 the ENTOG exchange and program take place in spring. In the European congress years, our meeting is incorporated in the congress as an ENTOG session. In the non-European congress years, our meetings will take place in connection with the EBCOG spring council meeting. This structure exists to facilitate and encourage the EBCOG Executive and Council members to attend our meetings. EBCOG on their side have so far agreed to accept our suggestions for the venue of their council meetings, something that incredibly facilitates the organisation of the events for us.

THE EXCHANGE PROGRAMME

The exchange programme is organised in connection with - and prior to - the annual meeting.

The aim

The aim of the exchange programme is to enable the trainees to gain insight into the training system and dilemmas of the host country. Exchange of ideas, knowledge and experience is encouraged. It is encouraged to host people from different countries in the same hospital to foment the discussion. The program usually runs during weekdays but depending on the country's health care system the local organising committee (LOC) may deem it beneficial to have it (partially) run over the weekend. A social program will surely add to the full experience of the trainees' life in the host country and is encouraged by ENTOG.

Organisation

The exchange programme is organised by the LOC. Support from the national society (consultant level society) will be very beneficial and is encouraged. As the exchange is usually organised in (bigger) hospitals all over the country, it is in general very beneficial to have trainees locally to function as the local spokesman. They will be able to organise lodging, local social program and solve minor problems in the program as it runs in their hospital. Expenses for the exchange participants should be as low as possible. The receiving hospitals should provide lodging and lunch at no cost for the exchange participant. The participants on their side are expected to organise and finance the journeys from their home country to the hospital arranged for them, as well as from the exchange hospital to the city where the meeting will be held. Efforts should be made that all the receiving hospitals are training hospitals and representative for the host country.

Each ENTOG member country is advised to send 2 exchange trainees. If the hosting country is able to provide more exchange slots, the number of exchange trainees per country may be increased. The same is applicable when countries do not occupy the two slots available to them; the then available slots can be used by countries with more interested trainees for the program. However, as registration tends to be rather later it is advisable to be careful before giving these vacancies away.

It may be advisable to draft guidelines for the exchange in order to facilitate all trainees to be

exposed to a broad variety of activities in the various hospitals.

Evaluation

The exchange trainees are asked to fill in an Exchange evaluation form after their stay at the exchange hospital. Standard evaluation forms are available on our website and can be adjusted after agreement by the ENTOG executive. The evaluations are given to the participants at the beginning of the exchange and collected at the end either locally or at the following meeting. The LOC will make a report of the evaluations.

Certificates

Each participant will receive a certificate of attendance and confirmation of payment signed by the presidents of local organising committee and ENTOG president. Certificates should be prepared by local organising committee in collaboration with and agreed on by the ENTOG executive. An example of previous certificates can be downloaded from the ENTOG site.

Circulation of information

On registering it is expected that trainees will receive confirmation by email.

The exchange trainees should be personally informed of the name and address of the exchange hospital two weeks after the application deadline or at least 5 weeks before the exchange visit or order to book travel arrangements. Ideally, name and email address or telephone number of a trainee who will act as local contact person should be provided at the same time. The exchange trainee should also be informed about the kind of accommodation that has been arranged for him/her, so that, if required, the trainee has the possibility to organise something individually. ENTOG stimulates trainees to be hosted with local trainees as this will add to the experience and provide opportunities for discussion and interaction on both sides. Trainees may never have been in the host country and not be fluent in the local language. Therefore local travel information is usually highly appreciated as well as other practical advice.

The addresses of other exchange trainees staying in the same hospitals should be circulated prior to arrival. This encourages communication and may facilitate local travel arrangements.

The LOC may be requested to send letters of invitation for trainees as they may be a formal requirement in some countries before a trainee can participate in the exchange

THE MEETING

Organisation

The ENTOG meeting is organised by the trainees in the host country, the LOC, in cooperation with the ENTOG executive

The LOC organises the venues for both the meeting and council meeting and the social program surrounding them. The LOC should enquire with the ENTOG executive regarding the size of the venues needed. As trainees will most likely not be familiar with the local geography and venue of the meeting the LOC is requested to suggest some hotels near the venue. Often it is possible to get cheaper deals with hotels when it is likely many booking will be done with them. This route should be explored.

The EBCOG secretary Mrs Mercer may also enquire with the LOC regarding hotel and venue for the EBCOG council. The LOC is kindly requested to help with these practical arrangements. It goes without saying that the LOC is not involved in any financial aspects of the EBCOG council meeting.

Chairpersons

Two trainees will jointly chair each session, likely this will be one trainee proposed by the LOC and one by ENTOG executive. Other formats are possible. The chairs are expected to respect the timetable and fuel discussions. Especially equal participation of *trainees* in the discussion should be stimulated.

Exchange experiences

The exchange program is an important part of the ENTOG philosophy. It stimulates thinking without borders and stimulates interaction between trainees from different countries. It is therefore important to feed any experiences back to the audience. In congress years this is done at our council meeting to provide a safe environment to discuss experiences. In the non congress years this forms the first session of our meeting.

Three exchange participants are invited to present exchange experiences. To facilitate their preparations they receive the invitation prior to the exchange. Each presentation lasts maximum ten minutes, followed by a five minute discussion. The content of the presentation is left free to the speaker. Suggestions are comparisons/ contrasts between the home and host training system, a specific training aspect, (social) life in the host country, possible improvements Etc. Ideally trainees from different countries are invited or trainees attending different types of hospitals. The LOC chooses the three trainees and gives them guidance.

Social life

Coffee breaks, lunch, and dinner are arranged for all the participants of the meeting. These form important opportunities to exchange opinions. Ideally these are all paid from the LOC budget and therefore included in the standard registration fee. If needed a (small) fee can be requested for the dinner after discussing with ENTOG executive.

Content of the meeting

ENTOG executive organises the various speakers during the meeting. Discussion regarding the content and possible speakers will take place with the LOC and their input is appreciated. The final decision lies with the ENTOG executive. The aim is to have predominantly local speakers, as well as trainees and EBCOG members. This saves costs and gives diversity as we rotate our venues. One key note speaker can be invited (not necessarily from the host country).

Certificates

Each participant will receive a certificate of attendance and confirmation of payment signed by the presidents of local organising committee and ENTOG president. Certificates should be prepared by local organising committee in collaboration with and agreed on by the ENTOG executive. An example of previous certificates can be downloaded from the ENTOG site.

Evaluation

All participants of the ENTOG meeting are asked to fill in an evaluation form after the meeting. Standard evaluation forms can be downloaded from the ENTOG website and adjusted for the local situation after agreement by the ENTOG executive. The forms are distributed at the start of the meeting and actively collected afterwards. ENTOG executive will make a report of this evaluation.

Publishing

The proceedings from the meeting are published on the ENTOG website alongside photos from the event. ENTOG executive aims to publish a report from the meeting in a scientific journal.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE EXCHANGE AND MEETING

Announcements of the ENTOG meeting and exchange programme as well as (preliminary programs) are distributed to the ENTOG members (i.e. national trainees' committees) and EBCOG members (national societies for obstetrics and gynaecology) through the ENTOG executive's mailing list and the EBCOG secretary Mrs Mercer. They will also be published on the ENTOG website and outlined in the regular ENTOG newsletters.

The LOC committee is encouraged to have a link on the ENTOG website and publish information (in English) on their own homepage, accessible through the link.

The invitation to the meeting is issued jointly by ENTOG and the local organisation committee and therefore the logos of ENTOG, the LOC as well as EBCOG and UEMS should be clearly visible.

The deadline for circulating the first announcement is 6 months before the event.

Each member country is advised in the announcements to send national representatives to the meeting and council. It is also highlighted that exchange participants are expected to attend the meeting. They are also allowed to attend the councilmeeting.

The final programme, including information on the exchange programme, should be published 1-2 months prior to the event, in a separate announcement and distributed among the ENTOG representatives. It is accepted that until the last moment minor changes to the program are being applied. These changes will be highlighted on the website but not sent out in separate mailings unless deemed necessary.

FINANCE AND REGISTRATION

The Registration fee for the meeting has been set at 50 Euros for early booking to increase to 60 euro after a certain date limit. This fee includes coffee breaks, lunch, dinner. It strickly does not

include accommodation for the trainees during the meeting.

Various payment systems are possible including bank transfers and PayPal.

The latter is an easy to set up system. However it has the disadvantage of costing money for the recipient (a fee per transaction) as well as suffering from temporary technical problems as encountered on various occasions. With the improved financial cooperation between most European countries bank transfers can result to be a practical and reliable option. Requirement is that the LOC sets up a special account for the meeting. Some countries do have high fees still for bank transfers and individual solutions would then be encouraged.

The benefits of early registration for the logistics of the meeting are clear. In spite of encouragements from the ENTOG executive side, registration tends to be later rather than sooner with registrations until the last week prior to the exchange. A satisfactory solution for this problem (related to on calls and local hospital situations often) has so far not been found.

The ENTOG Executive Committee and speakers don't pay for their registration for the ENTOG meeting, but EBCOG members (if only attending) should be kindly asked to pay in consideration of the tight budget.

Regarding speakers, any travelcosts are paid for by the meeting budget. Often there is one 'key note speaker', possibly attending from abroad. This speaker is offered travel expenses (flight/train) and a hotel accomodation (usually one night).

As speakers are not paid for their contribution a small sign of appreciation should be considered if the budget allows.

Other sources of income (e.g. commercial sponsorships excluding political parties, or any other form of conflict of interests) should be explored.

In order to support the LOC in the financial organisation, a financial plan should be sent to the ENTOG executivel before the first announcement. The registration fees will form part of the budget. The acquisition of other sources of income from e.g. commercial sponsorships (excluding political parties, or any other form of conflict of interests) should be explored.

Financial risks are for the LOC and therefore any surplus will be split in favour of the LOC as well; 70:30 (local organizers: ENTOG).

The aim of the meeting is to stay even and not to generate money.

REPORT

In order to improve the ENTOG meetings, an thorough evaluation is very important.

We expect the LOC to write a report after the meeting, including

- A list of participants in the exchange and meeting
- An organisational report, focussing on the various aspects of the organisation and the collaboration with ENTOG.
- A financial report.

Author: Erica Werner, ENTOG president

The report should be sent to the ENTOG executive in its final form within 4 months of the meeting. It will be discussed there and conclusions drawn from the report may be discussed in the next ENTOG council meeting after which the meeting will be formally closed. Reports from previous LOC's can be found on our website for consultation.