

# HOST GUIDELINES FOR ORGANIZERS OF BIENNIAL SCAR MEETINGS

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## **Prologue**

This document will assist potential and designated hosts of the biennial SCAR meetings:

- to understand what hosting the meetings entails,
- to assess costs associated with hosting the meetings and plan accordingly, and
- to clarify the different responsibilities of the hosts and Local Organising Committee, (LOC), the International Scientific Organising Committee (ISOC), COMNAP, and the SCAR Secretariat.

## **Introduction**

The offer to host a SCAR meeting is made by a National Committee and demonstrates a country's commitment to SCAR and the international Antarctic science community to ensure that the meetings are successful. Hosting of the biennial SCAR meetings is a substantial pledge by the host country to provide the necessary financial and human resources to plan and stage the meetings. A well-organized meeting is most likely if the hosts have had experience in organizing meetings of similar size and complexity (attendance at Open Science Conferences is usually between 700 and 1200 participants). These guidelines have been prepared to inform National Committees when they are contemplating issuing an invitation to host the meetings and as a guide once an invitation is accepted by SCAR. A separate timeline will be agreed between the LOC and SCAR Secretariat.

## **Structure of the Meeting**

The biennial SCAR Meeting includes three sets of meetings that occur consecutively in even-numbered years. They are usually held in July/August. The first set of meetings consist of (i) the SCAR Standing Scientific Group (SSG) and Standing Committee (SC) Business Meetings and (ii) other "satellite meetings" consisting of SCAR Scientific Research Programmes (SRPs), SCAR subsidiary groups, workshops, and other entities that may want to take advantage of the opportunity to meet. It should be noted that although traditionally some rooms have been provided for these satellite meetings it is up to the host to decide how many rooms to provide. Previously these first set of Business and Satellite meetings have lasted two days. Some opportunities for satellite meetings during the evenings of the OSC may be considered. Meetings of non-SCAR groups should only be considered with prior agreement of the LOC and SCAR Secretariat.

following the Business and satellite meetings a four-day “Open Science Conference” analogous to other international scientific conferences is held. In recent meetings the SSGs have preferred to split their two days meetings with one day during the SCAR Business meetings and one day after the OSC (see below table). The SCs (only two of which, SCADM and SCAGI, are likely to meet) should be hosted prior to the SSGs. **No meetings should be scheduled in parallel with the SSG Business Meetings.** Finally there is the 3-day “SCAR Delegates’ Meeting”. The *suggested* sequence is outlined below. Variations from this configuration should be negotiated with the SCAR Secretariat.

### *SCAR Business Meetings and Open Science Conference*

	<i>DAY 1</i> (Sat)	<i>DAY 2</i> (Sun)	<i>DAY 3</i> (Mon)	<i>DAY 4</i> (Tues)	<i>DAY 5</i> (Wed)	<i>DAY 6</i> (Thurs)	<i>DAY 7</i> (Fri)	<i>DAY 8</i> (Sat)
Morning	SCAR SCs and Satellite Meetings	SCAR SCs and Satellite Meetings	SSG- PLENARY	<b>Open Science Conference</b>				SSG- PS,LS,GS
Afternoon	SCAR SCs and Satellite Meetings	SCAR SCs and Satellite Meetings	SSG- PS,LS,GS					SSG- PS,LS,GS
Evening	Registration - Business meetings (from previous evening)		Registration for OSC Ice-breaker party			Conference Dinner		

### *SCAR Delegates Meeting*

<i>DAY 9</i> (Sun)	<i>DAY 10</i> (Mon)	<i>DAY 11</i> (Tues)	<i>DAY 12</i> (Wed)
	Plenary	Plenary	Plenary
Registration (p.m.)	Plenary	Plenary	Elections & Plenary
Ice-breaker Party		SCAR Banquet	

Once an invitation is accepted by the SCAR Delegates a detailed timetable is prepared by the SCAR Secretariat in conjunction with the Local Organising Committee (LOC). The LOC is formed by the host and usually includes host country members and those familiar with the venue of the meetings. It is suggested that the LOC include the National SCAR Delegates, scientific experts, and appropriate members of the local SCAR National Committee. The size of the LOC is at the discretion of the hosts. The meetings schedule will explicitly plan for which groups are meeting and when and where they will meet. The final agreed version of the meeting schedule will inform further planning and it should be continuously revised, as circumstances change. This schedule should be provided in a timely manner to all participants involved, be made widely available during the meeting, and any changes should be widely circulated and posted on notice boards throughout the venue during the meetings.

It has been the custom that the Council of Managers of National Antarctic Programmes (COMNAP) holds its annual meeting in the same location as the SCAR biennial meetings and at about the same time. In recent years, to enable COMNAP representatives to attend the OSC, COMNAP has held its meetings close in time to the SCAR OSC (either before, after or in parallel). The COMNAP meeting involves around a 100 COMNAP delegates. For details on the staging and timing of the COMNAP meetings, the COMNAP Secretariat should be contacted (<https://www.comnap.aq/>). Planning for the COMNAP meetings is the responsibility of the LOC.

This latest edition of the guidelines is based on experiences from recent SCAR and other international meetings. Further information on previous Open Science Conferences, including lessons learned, are available on the SCAR web site (<http://www.scar.org/conferences/index.html>) and the LOC should become familiar with these materials.

### **Cost of the Meeting**

The cost of a biennial SCAR meeting should be the first consideration in deciding to offer to host the biennial SCAR meeting. A basic budget of ~USD \$300,000 in cash or 'in-kind' support is a reasonable starting point based on the budgets for recent SCAR meetings.

A major cost associated with the OSC is renting a large hall (e.g., accommodates ~1000 people) and a large number of smaller venues for various events. These costs are defrayed to

a large extent by the registration fee for Conference attendees. The host country bears the costs of hosting the SCAR Business Meetings and the Delegates' meeting.

The actual costs of hosting the SCAR meetings will depend to a large extent on the local cost of facilities, supporting staff, the rental of equipment, and what activities are planned and how they are paid for. If the chosen meeting venue; be it a hotel, university, conference centre, or otherwise; is relatively inexpensive, this will result in a cost saving. The host may be able to defray some of the costs by using its own facilities and/or equipment and administrative and secretarial staff. Commercial sponsorship, in cash or kind, may further reduce costs - especially for receptions. In addition, it has been customary to charge additional fees for some social events (e.g. Conference dinner) in addition to the registration fee. The host should clearly state which events are included in the registration fee and those for which there is a separate charge.

### **The SCAR Open Science Conference**

The first SCAR OSC was held in Bremen/Germany. Since then OSCs have been held in Hobart/Tasmania, St Petersburg/Russia, Buenos Aires/Argentina and Portland/Oregon. The number of registrations has varied between 700 and 1200 (for the joint Antarctic/Arctic conference in St Petersburg) with around 800-900 being the average number of attendees.

The lecture programme for the Conference is assembled by an International Scientific Organizing Committee (ISOC) that is appointed by the SCAR Secretariat and the SCAR Executive Committee. The programme begins with the ice-breaker in the evening before the OSC. This is also the opportunity for *short* welcome speeches by the host and dignitaries chosen by the LOC. Such speeches should not exceed 30 minutes *in total*.

There is the opportunity for some very brief introductory words at the opening of the OSC, which are followed by the named plenary keynote lectures (Weyprecht Lecture, Antarctic Science Lecture, possibly Martha T Muse Lecture and usually one other). This will be followed by the main science programme.

The science program and its format will be decided by the ISOC. Most of the participants will likely attend the opening sessions so a hall that will seat all registered participants is required. Registration should be available on the evening before the first day of the OSC.

The OSC is organized as parallel thematic sessions. The themes will be related to the interests of the three SSGs, and decided on by the ISOC. For recent conferences some of the morning sessions have been in plenary and consisted of focussed mini-symposia. The number of parallel sessions is kept at ~ 8. At some time during the OSC there will be poster sessions that will require a large open area. Ideally poster sessions should be in or close to the area where breaks are held so that participants can view posters during breaks. Time periods will be set aside when only poster viewing will be taking place and poster authors are present. Recent experience suggests that scheduling poster session directly after lunch up to the afternoon coffee break and prior to afternoon parallel oral session has optimized poster viewing.

Circulars for the Conference will be drafted by the LOC and reviewed by the ISOC and the SCAR Secretariat.

For the last conference the abstract submissions and process (including answering queries, working with the session chairs etc.) were handled by the SCAR Secretariat. It is envisaged that this will continue, but discussions should be held with the Secretariat on this issue well in advance of the meeting.

Two small rooms, one for the SCAR Secretariat and one for the LOC, should be provided during the OSC and the SCAR Business/Satellite Meetings.

*Additional requirements for the OSC - facilities, equipment and services*

1. *Secretariat Room:* A room for the SCAR Secretariat should be made available, in round table format that will seat up to 15 and ideally with a data projector.
2. *Computers:* A central facility (Internet “Café”) with internet connected computers and associated peripherals such as printers is needed. Nowadays if free WiFi is available this facility can be small.
3. *Data projectors:* Each meeting room should be equipped with a data projector for PowerPoint/Keynote presentations. Flipcharts and pens should also be provided to facilitate making notes or announcements. Presentations should be collected at a central location well in advance of the time of the sessions to ensure speakers are present and that the presentations are in a compatible format. Staff should be available to help speakers with any e.g. compatibility issues.

4. *Microphones:* should be provided in all meeting rooms, with loudspeakers positioned around the room ensuring speakers are easily heard by all in attendance. It is preferred that microphones be available in the audience during the Q&A and that those wishing to ask questions be directed to these microphones. If this is not possible, presenters should be instructed to repeat the question before answering.
5. *Refreshments:* these need to be provided in sufficient quantity for all participants to be able to have at least one serving of refreshment. Coffee and tea should be provided, along with fruit juice and/or mineral water as alternatives. Biscuits, fruit etc, are also welcome. There should be ready access to mineral water during the meetings and especially in the meeting rooms for presenters.
6. *Medical matters:* a local medical practice or hospital that will be prepared to take any medical emergency cases which may arise should be identified.
7. *Insurance:* it is advisable to check your liability as the organizer of the meeting in the case of a participant sustaining any injury while taking part in the meetings and associated activities.
8. *Security:* The degree of security will depend to a large extent on the location of the meeting and will be for the LOC to determine. Every participant should be issued with a badge, showing their name, nationality and affiliation. The badge should be colour-coded with each colour associated with affiliation. The LOC Staff should also have badges. Badges should be worn at all times.
9. *Notice board:* there should be one large notice board prominently located in or near the refreshment area. It is helpful if it is divided into separate headings (e.g. Social, General, etc). It is essential that someone is made responsible for regularly up-dating the board to remove redundant notices. Additional satellite notice boards are also recommended throughout the venue in order to keep participants informed about late changes in the schedule.
10. *Support staff:* local support must be readily available at all times, not least to ensure that projectors are always working or to resolve technical problems during the meetings. These people should be available by mobile phone in case of equipment malfunction during a presentation. It is important that all meeting events stay on schedule, as participants will be moving from one activity to another.
11. *Lunches:* In order to ensure retention of participants at the conference it is advisable to arrange for lunches to be served on site. Individuals pay for their own lunches.

12. *Poster boards*: Poster boards must be provided for the poster sessions. Ideally these should be in or near to the coffee area so people can browse during the breaks. Explicit instructions must be issued for poster preparation, outlining instructions on size and fixtures to ensure uniformity and ease of display at the meetings. A display area at the entrance to the venue should also be provided for display of SCAR posters.
13. *Abstracts volume and/or CD of abstracts*: An abstract volume should be made available either online or on a CD.

*Additional requirements for the OSC – social events*

1. *OSC Ice-breaker party*: On the evening prior to the OSC it is customary to hold an ice-breaker reception party for all the participants and accompanying persons. The ice breaker costs should be included in the registration fee and open to all registrants. Sponsors may be able to help with costs.  
  
During the ice-breaker, brief welcoming remarks by the host are expected. Remarks should be short (no more than 10 minutes) and delivered in English (or translation provided). An English transcript of each speech should be given to the SCAR Secretariat in advance so the President can prepare a brief response from SCAR. Experience suggests that alcoholic beverages should not be made available until after the welcoming remarks.
2. *Excursions*: these precede and/or follow the OSC. They may be whole day, half day or evening excursions at the discretion of the LOC. The cost of any such excursions is the responsibility of the participants.
3. *OSC banquet*: this should preferably be held in the evening of the penultimate day of the Open Science Conference and will be open to all participants and their partners. This is customarily charged as a separate fee. Sponsors may help with costs.
4. *Accompanying persons*: an appropriate programme of activities for those persons accompanying participants who will not be involved in the meetings during the day but who will expect to join any social functions during the evenings and weekends should be devised.
5. *News media*: the OSC provides an opportunity to attract the attention of national and international media for SCAR and for the local organizers to showcase their latest

Antarctic research and their programs. The SCAR officers are available for a press conference. Potential media questions should be identified well in advance of the meeting to allow the SCAR Executive and the LOC to identify the most appropriate people to give interviews and to allow interviewees time to prepare responses.

### **The SCAR Business and Satellite Meetings**

Directly before the OSC the three SSGs and SCs (Business Meetings) and other SCAR subsidiary and other groups (Satellite Meetings) will meet to report on and plan scientific activities, prepare final budget requests for SCAR, and finalise reports for the Delegates. Three sizeable rooms, holding up to 80 people each, are required to accommodate the three SSG meetings. These should be arranged in a U format (i.e. round table but with a space for projection on to a screen). In recent years the SSGs have met one day prior to the OSC and one day after (see above table). For the two SCs that may wish to meet (prior to the SSGs – there should be no meetings in parallel with the SSGs) two rooms holding about 20-30 people each are required. The set-up should be the same as for the SSGs. As mentioned in the previous section, two small rooms for the LOC and the SCAR Secretariat will be required.

In addition it would be useful (but not compulsory) to have a number of rooms holding about 20 people for meetings of the SCAR SRPs, Action and Expert Groups, workshops, and other satellite meetings (in Portland – 2012 - 15 rooms were used, including rooms for the SCAR Secretariat and LOC – see <http://www.scar.org/researchgroups/groupmeetings/> for details). Having a portion of the rooms available for an early evening sessions (5-7pm) also helps to keep the room requirements down. Meetings of other non-SCAR groups should only be hosted with prior agreement of the LOC and the SCAR Secretariat.

The Chief Officers of the SCAR groups will advise the SCAR Secretariat and the LOC of their requirements well in advance of the meetings (a deadline is set). There will need to be careful scheduling of the meetings to coordinate with the space available. For example, some groups may wish to meet for perhaps only half a day and some individuals will wish to attend more than one group meeting. No meetings shall be scheduled or allowed to be in conflict with the SSG Business Meetings. If there are more requests for meeting rooms than can be accommodated, certain groups will be encouraged to meet in the evening during the OSC. Late requests for meeting rooms cannot usually be accommodated and non-associated groups are responsible for any additional costs associated with requests for facilities to meet.

Registration for the SCAR Business meetings should be made available from the evening previous to the start of the meetings.

The LOC should also be aware of the separate requirements for the COMNAP meeting that may be held in parallel at this time. These needs are the responsibility of the LOC and COMNAP.

*Additional requirements for SCAR Business/Satellite meetings – facilities, equipment and services*

1. *Secretariat Room:* A room for the SCAR Secretariat should be made available, in round table format that will seat up to 15 and ideally with a data projector.
2. *Computers:* A central facility (Internet “Café”) with internet connected computers and associated peripherals such as printers is needed. If free WiFi is available this facility can be relatively small.
3. *Data projectors:* Each meeting room should be equipped with a data projector for PowerPoint presentations. Flipcharts and pens should also be provided to facilitate making notes or announcements.
4. *Microphones:* should be provided for speakers addressing large audiences, with loudspeakers positioned around the auditorium.
5. *Refreshments:* these need to be provided in sufficient quantity for all participants to be able to have at least one cup. Coffee and tea should be provided, along with fruit juice and/or mineral water as alternatives. Biscuits, fruit etc, are also often welcome. There should be ready access to mineral water during the meetings.
6. *Medical matters:* a local medical practice or hospital that will be prepared to take any medical emergency cases which may arise should be identified.
7. *Insurance:* it is advisable to check your liability as the organizer of the meeting in the case of a participant sustaining any injury while taking part in the meetings and associated activities.
8. *Security:* The degree of security will depend to a large extent on the location of the meeting and will be for the LOC to determine. *Every participant* should be issued with a badge, showing their name, nationality and affiliation. The LOC Staff should also have badges. Badges should be worn at all times.
9. *Notice board:* there should be one large notice board prominently located in or near the refreshment area. It is helpful if it is divided into separate headings (e.g. SSGs,

Social, General, etc). It is essential that someone is made responsible for regularly up-dating the board to remove redundant notices.

10. *Support staff*: it is very helpful if local support is readily available at all times, not least to ensure that projectors are always working. This person or persons should be contactable instantly by mobile phone in case of equipment breakdown during a presentation.
11. *Lunches*: In order to prevent people wandering off and getting stuck in restaurants for long periods it is advisable to arrange for snack lunches to be served on site. Individuals will pay for their own lunches.
12. *Photocopier*: A small photocopier for the use of SSGs and other groups should be made available.

### **The SCAR Delegates' Meeting**

The biennial SCAR Delegates' Meeting is held after the other meetings (see above table). This is a smaller meeting with a known number of Delegates. A single room with a "U" arrangement is required for the sessions. As of 2012, the table should seat up to 37 National Delegates and 9 Union representatives (though usually only 3 of the latter attend in their own right), the President, and 2 Secretariat staff. Full Members will require 2 spaces at the table (currently 31 members) and Associate members and Unions 1 space (currently 6 and 9, respectively) – see <http://www.scar.org/about/> for further information. Double-sided place markers (in large letters) are required for each country or union represented, and each place should have easy access to a microphone. Flags are discouraged because Delegates are representing national academies of science, not governments..

#### *Additional requirements for SCAR Delegates' meeting - facilities, equipment and services*

1. *WiFi*: It's useful to have WiFi available during the Delegates' meeting.
2. *Extension cords and multi-plugs*: these must be available at the Delegates' Meeting for people to plug their laptops into. It is better to have an excess of electrical outlets than to have a deficiency.
3. *Data projectors*: The meeting room should be equipped with a data projector for PowerPoint presentations. Screens must be available throughout the venue so all attendees can easily view projections. The lighting on the room must be such so that the screens are not washed out or hard to see. This is critical for non-native speaking

participants. Flipcharts and pens should also be provided to facilitate making notes or announcements.

4. *Microphones:* Each Delegate seat at the table should have either an individual microphone or share a microphone with an adjacent seat. There must be a system to allow speakers to individually indicate their desire to speak. Loudspeakers should be positioned around the room rather than providing Delegates with individual headsets. A room with good acoustics is essential for non-native English speakers to fully participate,
5. *Photocopier:* A small photocopier should be made available for rapid copying and distribution of new materials for Delegates.
6. *Refreshments:* these need to be provided in sufficient quantity for all participants to be able to have at least one serving. Coffee and tea should be provided, along with fruit juice and/or mineral water as alternatives. Biscuits, fruit etc, are also often welcome. There should be ready access to mineral water during the meetings.
7. *Medical matters:* a local medical practice or hospital that will be prepared to take any medical emergency cases which may arise should be identified.
8. *Insurance:* it is advisable to check your liability as the organizer of the meeting in the case of a participant sustaining any injury while taking part in the meetings and associated activities.
9. *Security:* The degree of security will depend to a large extent on the location of the meeting and will be for the LOC to determine. Every participant should be issued with a badge, showing their name, nationality and affiliation (e.g. Delegate, name of SSG, etc). The badge should be colour-coded with each colour associated with affiliation (e.g. SCAR Delegates might have badges with blue background and so on). The LOC Staff should also have badges. Badges should be worn at all times.
10. *Support staff:* it is very helpful if local support is readily available at all times, not least to ensure that projectors are always working. This person or persons should be contactable instantly by mobile phone in case of equipment breakdown during a presentation. The SCAR Delegates' Meeting should have a local support person always available.
11. *Lunches:* it is advisable to arrange for lunches to be served on site to ensure timely return to the meetings. Individuals pay for lunches unless arranged otherwise.

### *Additional requirements for SCAR Delegates' meeting – social events*

1. *Delegates' ice-breaker party*: this will be held on the evening preceding the SCAR Delegates' Meeting. During the ice-breaker there are normally brief welcoming remarks from the host. Speeches should be short (no more than 10 minutes) and delivered in English (or translation provided). An English transcript of each speech should be provided to the SCAR Secretariat in advance so that the President to prepare a brief response from SCAR. The cost of the icebreaker is the responsibility of the local host.
2. *SCAR Delegates' banquet*: The banquet should be scheduled for the evening preceding the last day of the SCAR Delegates meeting (usually Tuesday). All participants and their partners are invited along with local scientific representatives. The cost of this dinner is the responsibility of the local host.
3. *Accompanying persons*: it is a courtesy to provide a programme of activities for those persons accompanying participants who will not be involved in the meetings during the day. Accompanying persons are expected to be invited to all social functions during the evenings and weekends.

### **Publicity and administration**

A dedicated website from where registration and accommodation forms can be completed online will be established by the LOC. The Secretariat should have access to this website and/or a reliable contact point nominated by the LOC. The website should be constructed so that it is simple to use and is in a format that can be read by all the commonly used web browsers. The website will be linked from the SCAR website as soon as it is “live” but no later than 12 months in advance of the meeting.

The following list shows all the information that must eventually appear on the website, in an approximate chronological order. However, all the information must be on the website no later than 6 months before the start of the Open Science Conference.

1. Title, dates and venue of the SCAR Business meetings, Open Science Conference and the Delegates' Meeting. It should list the members of the LOC and any sponsors, etc.

2. There should be separate parts of the website for the SCAR Business/Satellite meetings, the Open Science Conference, and the Delegates' Meeting (restricted registration).
3. The section on the Business meetings should list all the SCAR groups that will be meeting. Eventually there should be a schedule of times and places where all these meetings and activities are taking place.
4. The section on the OSC should indicate the timetable and topics of the keynote addresses and parallel sessions. The names of the keynote speakers and the titles of their presentations can be added later.
5. The section on the OSC will continue with a call for papers, indicating the major subject areas being planned. The deadline for submission of abstracts should be around 6 months before the conference, indicating whether the abstract is for an oral presentation or a poster. Detailed instructions should be given for the abstract (word length, paper size, margins, etc) and the mechanism for submission.

For the posters the maximum dimensions (width and height) should be clearly stipulated and these will relate to the size of the display boards to be used. The length of oral presentations and instructions on preparation for representations must be stipulated at an early stage

6. List all the hotel and other accommodation that is available, showing the range of facilities provided and the relevant prices. The LOC should arrange a special Conference Rate at selected hotels for people attending the SCAR meetings. It is essential to include cheaper options for students on those on a tight budget. Details of the venue and each hotel should be given, including name, address, telephone, and fax numbers, and e-mail addresses.
7. Provide a street map showing the positions of all meeting rooms and hotels to help participants balance between costs of rooms, costs of necessary daily transport or distance to walk.
8. Participants will need information about international and local travel, i.e. where is the airport, how to travel from the airport to the hotel, and from the hotel to the meeting venue, and the typical prices charged for local transport, particularly taxi costs

9. The badge for members of the SCAR Executive Committee should give the name, SCAR position (e.g. SCAR President) and the nationality. For the SCAR Secretariat staff the nationality should be replaced by “SCAR Secretariat”.
10. Advice will be needed on the voltage of the local electricity supply and the type of plug that is used locally (e.g. by means of a picture of the plug type).