Guidelines for organising an ERS Research Seminar

**Introduction**

Research seminars are scientific research-oriented events, the programme of which includes *cutting-edge and basic science, unpublished data and research in progress*. The main aim of these seminars is to gather a limited number (20 to 100) of well-established and young investigators, with a view to addressing scientific topics in depth and breaking new ground.

Research seminars must have well-defined outcomes, such as writing an article for publication in an ERS journal, completion of a grant application or creation of a European network. They usually last up to two days and take place in an easily accessible European city in low cost venues.

The ERS provides up to €35,000 of funding for research seminars and provides the organisers with administrative and logistical support.

Research seminar organisers are expected to comply with the following rules and procedures.

1. **APPLICATION AND SELECTION**

   **1.1. How to apply**

   A proposal can be submitted by an ERS member who is an expert in the particular topic of the research seminar. The ERS Science Council can also identify topics to be covered and suggest an expert to be in charge of the application.

   Application form can either be obtained from the ERS office or downloaded from the ERS website ([http://www.ersnet.org/congresses/research-seminars.html](http://www.ersnet.org/congresses/research-seminars.html)). Application forms are to be sent to the ERS Headquarters, Scientific department, by e-mail ([scientific@ersnet.org](mailto:scientific@ersnet.org)). The deadline for submitting a research seminar proposal is 15 October of each year. Notification of selection or non-selection will be sent in February of the following year.

   **1.2. Selection**

   Research seminar proposals will be reviewed by three reviewers appointed by the ERS Conferences and Seminars Director. Upon completion of the reviewing process, the application will be submitted to the ERS Science Council for selection. The research seminar organisers will be notified of the society’s decision and comments on their application will be shared.

   **1.3. Kick-off teleconference**

   Upon approval of the proposal by the Science Council, a kick-off teleconference will be organised with the research seminar organisers, the ERS Conferences and Seminars Director and ERS staff.
2. GENERAL ORGANISATION

2.1. Duration and programme structure
Research seminars are two-day events with scientific plenary sessions and break-out sessions (left to the discretion of the organisers). If appropriate to the aim of the seminar, short presentations from young scientists or a poster session may be included into the programme. The selection of posters and short presentations will be the responsibility of the research seminar organisers.

2.2. Language
All presentations must be in English.

2.3. Promotion
The ERS research seminars will be announced in the European Respiratory Weekly (the weekly e-mail newsletter from the ERS) and on the ERS website. Targeted mailing can also be sent by the ERS office to the members of the assembly related to the topic of the seminar.

The research seminar’s organisers are encouraged to provide the ERS office with a list of contacts for the promotion of the seminar (e.g. other societies or research groups).

2.4. Handouts
In order to provide the best possible scientific support to the participants, the ERS office will produce an official handout that contains summaries of the presentations (based on material provided by speakers). Handouts are distributed to participants onsite on the first day of the seminar.

2.5. E-learning
The ERS believes that ERS members who cannot attend research seminars should be able to benefit from these events. Therefore, the ERS requests that presentations given during research seminars and/or the documents provided for the handout are made available on the ERS website. Speakers will be individually requested for approval for their presentations to be posted on the ERS website. Speakers must ensure that they have sought permission from the copyright holder if they have included figures or material from previously published sources in their handout material.

2.6. Post-seminar report
Within 6 months of the end of the research seminar, a report should be sent to the relevant Assembly Head and ERS Conferences and Seminars Director (with a copy to the ERS office) for reporting to the ERS Science Council and Executive Committee.

3. PARTICIPANTS

3.1. Faculty
“Faculty” includes all persons who will make a presentation or chair a session during the seminar. The number of faculty members is limited to 10.
3.2. Participants

- Number of participants of research seminars is limited to 100, with 50% participation by ERS members.
- Attendance must be representative of at least 4 countries.
- Attendance recruitment should be 50% selected and invited by the research seminar organisers (names to be provided in the application form), plus 50% applications received by individual online registrations.
- Except for representatives of any medical business company, participation at the seminar is free, as are the lunches and coffee breaks during the event. According the budget and to the organisers’ recommendations, participants can either be:
  - Fully covered by the research seminar budget.
  - Partially funded. Either the participant’s accommodation or travel is covered by the ERS.
  - Self-funded. The participant pays for his/her travel and accommodation.

3.3. Industry participants

Representatives of a medical business company can attend the seminar; however, such participants cannot account for more than 20% of the attendees. Industry representatives applying to join the seminar are asked to indicate their status in the online application form. They can only be selected as self-funded participants and an administrative registration fee will apply. Exceptions can be made for representatives of a company supporting the seminar by the means of an unrestricted grant.

4. LOGISTICS

4.1. Duration

The duration of a research seminar is two days.

4.2. Venue and date

The organisers can propose a preferred date and venue. Both will be considered, but the ERS reserves the right to change them in order to meet the ERS guidelines for research seminars.

A suitable venue must meet the following three criteria:

- **Accessibility**: a major international airport within a distance of 30 km; the location must have access by public transportation;
- **Price**: affordable and within the budget;
- **Low season**: further confirmation can be provided by the ERS office.

If no venue is suggested by the research seminar organisers, the ERS suggests the following central locations: Berlin (institution), Barcelona (hotel) and Prague (hotel).

Any contracts with the venue must be signed by the ERS office.
5. ERS OFFICE SUPPORT

The ERS office can provide support to organisers of research seminars. As the ERS has its own professional Congress and Events department, appointing an external conference organiser is not recommended. Adjustments will be made for any constraints, financial or otherwise.

5.1. Support provided by the Congress and Events department

- Sending the invitation for travel and accommodation to the participants according to their status and if applicable (fully funded, partially funded, self-funded);
- Organising flights for the fully funded participants/faculty or the designated participants by the organisers;
- Signing all contracts with the venue;
- Arranging the final bookings of meeting rooms needed, timings, catering, audio-visual (AV) for the meeting;
- Communicating meeting venue, schedule and agenda to participants, providing practical information;
- Sending hotel confirmations;
- Organising a seminar dinner, if requested and if budget allows it;
- Adjusting to any last-minute changes, cancellations and requests;
- Coordinating and supervising the event onsite: liaising with the hotel, pre-event meeting with the contact person and staff involved, checking signage, catering times and locations, equipment ordered and AV, set up of the room, etc.;
- Welcoming participants and accommodating any specific needs;
- Helping with the welcome desk and handing out the badges to the participants at the beginning of the seminar;
- Checking participants’ reimbursement requests for expenses (if applicable);
- Checking the accommodation and meeting invoices;
- Arranging the necessary payment.

5.2. Support provided by the Scientific department

- Finalising the scientific programme of the seminar in collaboration with the organisers;
- Inviting the faculty;
- Collecting the faculty and participants’ conflict of interest forms;
- Collecting the participants’ application/registration (through an application form available online on the ERS website) and informing them of their selection/non-selection;
- Ensuring promotion of the seminar;
- Setting up an official handout based on material provided by the speakers;
- Requesting CME credits and issuing the CME certificates to participants;
- Creating badges, attendance lists, evaluation forms, certificates of participation and certificates of presentation for speakers;
- Producing an evaluation report after the seminar.
6. BUDGET AND EXTERNAL FINANCIAL SUPPORT

6.1. Global budget

1. The maximum budget that can be allocated by the ERS for a research seminar is €35 000.

2. The budget allocated to a seminar is calculated based on the number of faculty members (maximum of 10) and participants (from 20 to 100). On average, €1000 must be budgeted per Faculty member and €650 per European fully covered participant.

3. Other costs (e.g. venue, audio-visual, handouts printing, CME request) are also covered by the research seminar budget.

6.2. External support

Research seminars are, essentially, funded by the ERS, but the organisers are encouraged to find external support from sponsors in the form of an unrestricted grant. In return, the ERS offers recognition of the support in the official handout (not directly in the programme).

Funds from sponsors can be used to cover faculty travel expenses and/or to allow more participants to take part in the meeting. There is no restriction regarding the number of sponsors. However, in order to comply with UEMS (European Union of Medical Specialist) rules, it is recommended that at least two sponsors are confirmed. Screening for sponsorship is done individually by the organisers. Once a sponsor has been identified, the ERS office will liaise for the administrative matters. Approval by the Treasurer might be requested. The ERS will not accept industry sponsoring via exhibition or satellite symposia.

6.3. Budget policy

The ERS budget policy is settled by the Treasurer and can vary for faculty and participants. Below are a few points for your information:

- The budget is intended to cover the travel and accommodation expenses of faculty and fully/partially-covered participants, and logistical expenses such as meeting room location, audio-visual facilities, local bus transfers, and handouts. The budget will also cover lunch, coffee breaks and breakfast.

- If the budget allows, remaining funds can be used to cover group dinners or welcome cocktails. The budget cannot be used for entertainment or tours.

- The budget is the responsibility of the ERS office, who will liaise with the research seminar organisers to decide on the best options to ensure the scientific quality and a smooth running of the meeting. Promotion of the seminar will be provided, at no cost, by the ERS. No secretarial costs will be reimbursed to the research seminar organisers who should use the ERS office as support.

- The ERS requires that participants and faculty take advantage of economy fares to attend meetings. The ERS requires participants to use the travel agency recommended
by the office. Tickets bought through other agencies will not be reimbursed unless approved by the office.

- Personal vehicle transportation to the nearest train station or airport will be reimbursed on a basis of €0.45 per kilometre (to a maximum of 120 km each way). Parking fees are limited to €80. A maximum of €80 each way will be reimbursed for private hire transport or taxi to the nearest train station or airport.

- Travel by car to the meeting destination is allowed; however the participant or faculty will NOT be reimbursed per kilometre. Reimbursement will be on the basis of the cost of a first-class return train ticket from the hometown to the meeting destination.

- Where possible, hotel accommodation and breakfast will be prepaid by the ERS directly. Expenses such as mini-bar, room service, cleaning and laundry will not be paid by the ERS.

- The ERS will not cover the cost of any personal telephone calls.

- If meals are not provided by ERS during the seminar, expenses cannot exceed €50 per day. Reimbursement will only occur upon supplying original receipts. A missed organised meal will not be reimbursed.

- All expenses should be reported and all original receipts and bills sent with the adequate travel expense form.

7. RESEARCH SEMINAR OUTCOMES

The outcome of the research seminar must be clearly defined at the time of the application. Below is a list of possible outcomes. Combinations of several of the below outcomes can be planned:

- **Publication in an ERS journal**
  After a research seminar has taken place, it is required that an article is submitted for publication in an ERS journal. The article could either be in the format of an editorial, a perspective paper, a seminar report, a “back-to-basics” or stand-alone review article, or a series of consecutive reviews to be published either in the European Respiratory Journal or the European Respiratory Review, depending on the topic and the discussions between the Editor(s) and the ERS Conferences and Seminars Director. On occasion, it can entail some combination of the preceding options.

  The submission of an article does not guarantee publication and the Editor(s) reserve the right to review the submitted manuscripts as for any other scientific publication. Final decision for publication is the sole responsibility of the relevant editorial board. In addition, the format of the related articles, and their dates of publication, will be decided by the relevant Chief Editor(s) and discussed with the main organisers of the seminar.

  A copy of the article must be submitted to the ERS Office and at the same time of its submission for publication in an ERS journal.
- **Session at the ERS International Congress**
Organisers are encouraged to submit a session proposal for the scientific programme of the ERS International Congress. Proposals for a session (symposium, hot topic or lunchtime session) can be made through the usual submission process. Please refer at the congress website for timeline and forms.

The decision of acceptance of the session proposal will be the sole responsibility of the Programme Committee.

- **Set up an European network or working group**
The creation of a European network or a working group can result from a research seminar. The objectives of the group/network, and how a research seminar can contribute to its creation, are to be explained in the application.

- **Application for an ERS task force**
Research seminars can result to the submission of proposal for an ERS task force aiming to produce a clinical practice guideline, a statement, or a technical standard assessment. Further information on the type of document that can be developed by a task force and on the application process is available through the following link: [http://www.ersnet.org/ers-funding/task-forces.html](http://www.ersnet.org/ers-funding/task-forces.html)

- **Application for a grant**
A research seminar can aim to gather a group of experts in order to prepare a grant application.

**8. POST-SEMINAR MEETING**

If required for the outcome’s completion, a post-seminar meeting can take place at the ERS Headquarters (Lausanne, Switzerland) with the research seminar organisers and a limited number of key faculty (maximum of 8 participants) who attended the seminar. An official request must be submitted to the ERS Conferences and Seminars Director who will assess if the post-seminar meeting is necessary. Financial contribution may be provided by ERS for one post-seminar meeting (not included in the research seminar budget).

A post-seminar meeting can also take place at the ERS International Congress where a room can be offered for free to the organisers (pending rooms for scientific private meetings are still available at the time of the request). No financial support or congress registration for the participants will be provided for post-seminar meetings held at the ERS International Congress.

**9. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The ERS requires that the research seminar organisers, faculty and participants to disclose all relationships that could be viewed as presenting a potential conflict of interest. Conflicts of interest exist when research seminar organisers, faculty or participants have financial or personal relationships that may be perceived to bias someone’s actions. Examples of conflicts of interest include employment, consultancies, stock ownership, honoraria, paid expert
testimony, patent applications and travel grants, all within 5 years previous to the research seminar taking place.

The ERS does not view the existence of these interests or commitments as necessarily implying bias or decreasing the value of the faculty/organiser’s participation. It remains for audience members to determine whether the faculty/organiser's interests or relationships may influence the event.

The ERS does not accept faculty who are receiving funding from the tobacco industry. In the case of disclosure of a conflict of interest any time after 1/1/2000 by the person concerned, there is a 5-year ban from the date of disclosure before that person is allowed to participate actively in an ERS activity again.

Where a conflict of interest with the tobacco-industry is discovered and not disclosed, there is a ban for life from participating in any ERS activity. The same ban applies to any undisclosed other real or perceived, direct or indirect links with the tobacco industry, such as the holding of shares, speaking at or attending meetings organised by the tobacco industry.

Where any person is found to be maintaining a relationship with, or receiving funding from, the tobacco industry after 1/1/2013 there will be a ban for life from involvement in any ERS activity.

The research seminar organisers will be requested to sign a conflict of interest form and will have to submit these forms along with their research seminar application. Faculty and participants will also be required to fill in and sign similar conflict of interest form prior to the research seminar taking place.

If you wish to receive more information or details about a research seminar application, do not hesitate to contact:

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