

Guidelines for Organizing and Bidding to Host ICDAR

1 Introduction

The International Conference on Document Analysis and Recognition (ICDAR) is the most important IAPR event in the field of Document Analysis and Recognition. The aim of this conference is to bring together international experts to share their experiences and to promote research and development in all areas of Document Analysis and Recognition.

ICDAR is the major conference of TC11 (Reading Systems) and TC10 (Graphics Recognition). It is also one of the most visible IAPR conferences.

Any consortium (see below) interested in making a proposal to host an ICDAR must proceed according to the rules outlined below. It is expected that Proposers familiarise themselves with the guidelines for organising ICDARs first, to fully plan their bid. The submission of a bid implies full agreement with the rules and procedures for organising the conference.

A call for bids to host an ICDAR will be distributed by TC10 and TC11 about six months before each ICDAR. Bids can then be made to host the ICDAR that will take place four years from then.

2 General Information

2.1 Timing and Location

The conference is held every two years (in odd-numbered years, thus interleaving with ICPR), on different continents, preferably with a rotation from one continent to another. ICDAR usually takes place sometime between mid-August to mid-September but slight deviations may occur depending on climatic conditions, for instance. Information on previous ICDARs can be found on the TC10 and TC11 websites (www.iapr-tc10.org and www.iapr-tc11.org respectively).

2.2 Hosts

An ICDAR shall be hosted by a consortium of researchers that in its most basic form will include Conference Chair(s) and a Local Organising Committee. The Hosts are responsible for all local arrangements and must be well connected to the location of the proposed ICDAR. The Local Organising Committee must consist of a suitable number of fixed staff at the proposed location.

2.3 Scientific Program Organisation

The scientific program is organised mainly by three *Program Committee Chairs*, appointed and assisted by the Conference Chair(s). Each PC Chair should represent

one of the following three broad geographic areas: *Americas*, *Europe/Africa* and *Asia/Oceania*. The PC Chairs are responsible for the assignment of manuscripts to reviewers, making accept/reject decisions for manuscripts and for organising the structure of the scientific program.

The Hosts are expected to provide assistance to the PC Chairs such as the management of paper submissions and collection/dissemination of reviews. In addition, the Hosts will organise a face-to-face meeting of the PC-Chairs to finalise decisions and construct the scientific program.

2.4 Officials

In addition to the Conference Chair(s) and Program Committee Chairs, a number of officials are usually appointed to facilitate the smooth organisation and running of ICDAR. It is customary to appoint a Publications Chair (to look after the proceedings and other publications such as the programme booklet), a Tutorials Chair (to facilitate the organisation of tutorials) and a Workshops Chair (to facilitate the organisation of satellite workshops). Note that the post of Publicity Chair is not as necessary as it used to be in the pre-web era. It is now common practice for Hosts to undertake the dissemination of CFPs, posters and other materials to raise awareness of ICDAR (primarily through email and the conference website).

Note: It is considered good practice to appoint researchers with previous ICDAR organising experience to some of the official positions to ensure continuity of organisation.

2.5 Financial Responsibility

The Hosts are responsible for all financial arrangements and associated risks. As ICDAR is an IAPR conference, a loan can be requested from the IAPR to cover initial expenses. Further details can be found at the IAPR website or by contacting the *Treasurer* of the IAPR.

2.6 Relationship with TC10, TC11 and the IAPR

ICDAR is the main conference in the fields of TC10 and TC11 and it is the flagship event of these two technical committees. While the Hosts are responsible for most of the organisation of a given ICDAR, the IAPR needs to ensure the continuation and growth of the conference series in terms of quality and scientific impact. The Hosts must formally apply as soon as their bid is successful to the *IAPR Conferences & Meetings (C&M) Committee* for “IAPR Sponsorship” — see the *IAPR website for details* on the application process. It should also be noted that with IAPR Sponsorship it is possible to use funds (otherwise payable to the IAPR) to cover the cost of activities organised in the name of the IAPR (see the Budget section below).

2.7 ICDAR Advisory Board

Hosts must closely work together with the ICDAR Advisory Board, providing regular brief progress reports and responding to requests for information. Hosts should also work together with the Chairs of TC10 and TC11 for the organisation of the various prizes/awards that are associated with ICDAR (see below).

2.7.1 Constitution

The ICDAR Advisory Board has five members. These are three *ex officio* members (the Chairs of TC10 & TC11 and the Chair of the IAPR C&M committee), plus two experienced members of the scientific community who have been involved in the organisation of a previous ICDAR.

The latter two members are nominated by the TC10 and TC11 Chairs and are expected to be Chairs of previous ICDARs. Their term of membership is two years but they could be nominated again by the TC Chairs.

2.7.2 Role

The role of the ICDAR Advisory Board is to:

- Readily provide information and support with any organisational aspect of ICDAR;
- Ensure continuity and oversee/ensure progress during the preparatory organisation process;
- Assist with any possible problems and take over responsibilities as necessary;
- Solicit and assess bids for hosting ICDAR, ensuring that a number (more than one) of quality proposals are input to the selection process.

3 ICDAR Organisation

3.1 Budget and other financial matters

Upon request, the IAPR Conferences & Meetings Committee will issue a spreadsheet which can be used to draft the budget for an ICDAR as well as to report the accounts after the end of the conference. When presenting the budget, the following points must be addressed.

3.1.1 Income

- Registration (early/late fees, IAPR member/non-member fees, student fees);
- Expected grants, loans, and sponsorships;
- IAPR and other loans;
- Exhibits and demonstrations;
- Excess page charges (if any).

3.1.2 Expenditure

- Venue hire and other infra-structure (e.g., audio-visual equipment);
- Insurance and security;
- Production and shipping of proceedings;
- Secretariat, publicity, communication, mailing;
- Conference banquet, coffee breaks;
- Expenses of Outstanding Achievements Award recipient (economy airfare, registrations fees and reasonable hotel accommodation and subsistence);
- Invited speakers (part subsidy of attendance costs e.g. registration fee waiver);
- Various awards (cost of token gifts and/or certificates);
- IAPR levy (US\$ 20 per registered participant);
- Refund of loans;

NOTE: IAPR Sponsored events can use part or all of the levy payable to the IAPR to organise specifically identified activities in the name of IAPR such as IAPR Travel Stipends, IAPR Distinguished Speaker, IAPR Best Paper Prize, etc. Organisers must apply for this specifically to the IAPR C&M (see the IAPR website for more information). Specifically for ICDAR, part of the IAPR levy can be used towards the expenses related to the IAPR/ICDAR Awards.

3.1.3 Other costs borne by the organizers and other parties

The organizers shall bear the cost of travel and accommodation support for the Program Committee Chairs, if a meeting is necessary (it usually is) to discuss and decide the final structure of the scientific program. This meeting is usually held at the location of the conference (or of the Hosts, if nearby). Support should cover economy return airfare and reasonable costs of accommodation, meals and taxis for the duration of the meeting.

Costs for hire of meeting rooms and for catering of meetings shall be borne by the party requesting the meeting, apart from the joint TC10/TC11 meeting.

Notes:

1. Full registration shall include proceedings and banquet;
2. Discount on registration fee for IAPR members shall be at least 5%;
3. There shall be a reduced student fee, which must include proceedings and banquet.

3.2 Conference Schedule

There is no fixed format for the number of tracks and sessions of ICDAR. The Hosts and the PC Chairs decide on the scientific schedule so as to include suitable opportunities for quality presentations, plenary sessions, keynote speeches and poster sessions. The ICDAR Advisory Board can help with information on previous ICDAR schedules and advise on quality and organisation matters (see also the “Good Practice” section below).

The only requirement for the program is that the first keynote speech (morning of the first day of ICDAR) is given by the recipient of the *Outstanding Achievements Award* (see “Awards” below). Hosts must reserve this session while the award selection process takes place. Once complete, the ICDAR Advisory Board will inform the Hosts of the name of the recipient so that they can publicise the final conference schedule.

When preparing the schedule for an ICDAR, it should be taken into account that traditionally a number of events and meetings take place, which must be accommodated. It is the responsibility of the Hosts to ensure rooms are reserved for these events and meetings, although the Hosts do not incur the costs of the facilities (except for the joint TC10/TC11 meeting). Most of the meetings take place during lunchtime breaks or after the end of regular sessions. The more regular events/meetings associated with ICDAR are:

- Joint TC10/TC11 meeting. Usually takes place on the second day of ICDAR, after the regular sessions and before the Conference Banquet. The Hosts are responsible for organising the room and necessary facilities.
- IJDAR editorial board meeting. IJDAR is responsible for organising.
- Future ICDAR organisers’ meeting. The organisers of the following ICDAR are responsible for organising this.
- Future ICFHR organisers’ meeting. The organisers of the following ICFHR are responsible for organising this.
- Future DAS organisers’ meeting. The organisers of the following DAS are responsible for organising this.
- Various other committees and editorial boards may require rooms for meetings. Requests should be made to the Hosts.

3.3 ICDAR doctoral consortium

Piloted in 2011, this is planned to be an integral event of ICDAR to create an opportunity for PhD students to test their research ideas, present their current progress and future plans, and receive constructive criticism and insights related to their future work and career perspectives.

Potential Hosts should plan in their bids for a half-day session immediately preceding the main conference. This is intended to be a financially self-supported (or sponsored) session, organised by a committee set up by the ICDAR Advisory Board. More detailed organisation information will be included in this section following the running and evaluation of the first event.

3.4 Other co-located events

It is usual for a number of satellite events to take place just before ICDAR. These are 1-day workshops and tutorials that are not organised by the Hosts. These events are independent from ICDAR in terms of financial and quality considerations. However, for the convenience of ICDAR attendees, tutorials/workshops are usually located at the same venue as ICDAR and the Hosts are expected to plan for the facilitation of the running of these satellite events.

When choosing/booking a venue for ICDAR, Hosts are expected to take into consideration the availability of facilities for satellite events. Hosts, via the Tutorials/Workshops Chair(s), must provide contacts at the ICDAR venue to the satellite event organisers for booking the necessary facilities. In addition, Hosts should provide facilities for registration (at least on-line) for these satellite events (possibly at a cost to the organisers of the satellite events).

The above necessitate close interaction between organisers proposing satellite events and ICDAR Hosts. This is where the Workshops/Tutorials Chair(s) must act by providing help and information to satellite event organisers and co-ordinate requests to ensure availability of facilities. If necessary, Hosts can impose quota on how many satellite events can take place and, in consultation with the Tutorials/Workshops Chair(s) and the ICDAR Advisory Committee, can refuse to associate a given satellite event with ICDAR. That may happen also if the association of a proposed satellite event is thought to be counter-productive or damaging to the reputation of ICDAR.

3.5 ICDAR Competitions

It is usual (and indeed desirable) for a number of competitions to be associated with ICDAR. These are independently organised processes but need to co-ordinate efforts with the Hosts in a number of aspects. A Competitions Chair may be appointed by the Hosts to approve and oversee the organisation of the competitions as well as to specify the requirements of the competitions (as far as ICDAR is concerned) to the Hosts.

The competitions may run before or during ICDAR. In either case, the results are announced during a plenary session. The Hosts should be aware that they will need to plan for such a plenary session and for a separate section in the Proceedings. For the latter, it may be necessary to reserve the space in advance as the papers that describe the competition results may not be ready in time for the normal reviewing process. In that case the competition results paper(s) can be reviewed by the Program Chairs separately.

3.6 ICDAR Prizes/Awards

A number of awards are usually associated with ICDAR. There are two awards that originate from TC10 and TC11 and are presented during ICDAR. These are the *IAPR/ICDAR Young Investigator Award* and the *IAPR/ICDAR Outstanding Achievements Award*. The recipient of the Outstanding Achievements Award is to be invited to give the opening key note speech at ICDAR, ideally introduced by the recipient from the previous ICDAR. An *ICDAR Awards Committee* is set up by the Chairs of TC10 and TC11. This committee is responsible for the advertisement and selection of these awards. Typically, the ICDAR Awards Committee will comprise the TC10 and TC11 Chairs, past recipients of these awards and other representatives from TC10 and TC11. More information can be found on the TC10 and TC11 websites.

In addition to the above there can be a number of other awards which are handled by the Hosts. Examples include: *Best Paper Award* and *Best Poster Award*. These awards comprise a certificate and a nominal monetary award. Responsibility for advertisement, selection and financing of these awards rests with the Hosts (the Program Chairs should also be involved in the selection process).

Finally, it is customary for the Hosts to provide certificates for the winners of any competitions held in connection with ICDAR. The Hosts should liaise with the competition(s) organiser(s) (or with the Competitions Chair, if there is one) to assess requirements.

All awards are presented during the Conference Banquet.

The information provided within the Call for Papers should identify the paper-related awards to be made (i.e., *Best Paper* and *Best Poster*). An appropriate reviewing strategy (e.g., specific questions on the reviewing form and subsequent ranking for *Best Paper*) is undertaken to establish award winners.

3.7 Paper Review Protocol

The use of a web-based paper submission and review management system (such as EasyChair or PaperCept) is essential. It is recommended that the specification of the format and length of papers submitted is as close as possible to that of the final papers to be included in the proceedings. This practice enables the review of a more representative (of the final) version of the papers and enables early checking for adherence to formatting guidelines.

It must be noted that the members of the Program Committee are chosen to be prominent experts in their field and are expected to be the primary pool of reviewers. Each PC member will be allocated a number of papers by the PC Chairs for which they are responsible for producing reviews. If, at their discretion, PC members can identify competent reviewers outside the PC, they can delegate some papers (that are possibly not entirely within their field of expertise). PC members are, however, still responsible for the quality and timeliness of the reviews allocated originally to them. Accordingly, the paper/review management system must support the delegation of reviews, at the initiation of PC members.

Typically, the protocol for the paper review should be as follows:

1. Conference Secretariat makes full papers available to PC Chairs;
2. PC Chairs assign three PC members to each paper (see below);
3. Conference Secretariat makes available to each PC member their allocation of full papers along with review forms; PC members act as reviewers or, if

- appropriate, appoint competent additional reviewers and delegate some papers to them;
4. Reviewers return reviews to PC Chairs via the manuscript management system;
 5. PC Chairs accept/reject papers and assign them to sessions, constructing thus the scientific program (a meeting of PC Chairs may take place as outlined earlier) – in setting the acceptance threshold, PC Chairs should refer to the Quality section under “Good Practice” below;
 6. Notification concerning acceptance distributed to authors along with reviewers’ comments. Reviewers must remain anonymous.

3.7.1 Automated Reviewer Allocation

Web-based paper submission and review management systems usually allow for automated reviewer allocation to papers, based on keywords selected by PC members and by authors of papers. A core set of such keywords must be defined in advance by the PC Chairs and both PC members and authors select sets of keywords that are applicable to their expertise (PC members) or the topics of their paper (authors). Care must be taken to avoid conflicts of interest – PC members must declare those in advance. It is strongly recommended that PC Chairs thoroughly check the reviewer allocations produced by the system and reassign reviewers based on their own judgement as necessary (e.g. due to missed conflicts of interest, better matching of reviewer expertise to papers etc.)

3.7.2 Manual Reviewer Allocation

In the absence of an automated reviewer allocation facility, it is recommended that Hosts and PC Chairs pursue the following steps in allocating papers to PC members:

1. Hosts request and compile a set of keywords outlining the expertise of each PC member (when PC members are appointed).
2. Each of the three PC Chairs is allocated a third of the papers submitted (taking care to remove from a PC Chair’s allocation those papers whose author is that PC Chair).
3. Each PC Chair assigns the papers in their allocation to PC members (only PC members are sent papers at this step) making sure that:
 - Each paper is assigned to three PC members.
 - Papers are evenly distributed (while taking into account the area of expertise of each PC member, the load must be balanced, therefore some papers will be assigned to PC members whose expertise may be in the periphery of the paper’s topic).
 - Conflicts of interest do not arise.

3.8 Proceedings

Proceedings should be published by a major publisher under an ISBN number. The publisher will store copies of the proceedings and will issue copies on request to libraries and other requesting parties. The publisher should ensure that ICDAR papers are listed in major engineering and science databases such as INSPEC. The Hosts must ensure that ICDAR papers are listed in major electronic digital libraries, such as DBLP and CiteSeer.

It is strongly recommended that the proceedings are available in electronic form in addition to, or instead of, the printed form. The electronic form can be CDs or (see also *Visibility* – Section 4.3 below) a free access website (at least for registered participants). The publisher may allow the latter, so the Hosts are encouraged to take advantage of this.

3.9 After the conference

After the conference, a financial account shall be submitted to the *IAPR Conferences & Meetings (C&M) Committee*.

A report for inclusion in the IAPR Newsletter should be submitted to the Newsletter Editor. The same report should be sent to the Chairs of TC10 and TC11 for inclusion in the corresponding websites.

3.10 Timetable

The following table provides the guidelines for the timing of strategic actions:

	Months prior to conference
Selection of Conference Chair(s), Local Organising Committee, Program Chairs	54
Proposal to ICDAR Advisory Board	51
Selection of venue by vote at joint TC10/TC11 meeting	48
Approaching industry, government and other parties for donations	36
Initial progress report to ICDAR Advisory Board	26 (or 2 months before preceding ICDAR)
First call for papers (email, IAPR website, IAPR Newsletter, IEEE calendar, etc.), poster of conference	24
Second call for papers	18
Final call for papers	12
Deadline for paper submission	8
PC Chairs' meeting	5
Notification to authors concerning acceptance	5
Publication of authors and titles of accepted papers on website	5
Detailed program on website	4
Deadline for camera-ready paper	3
	Months after conference
Report for inclusion in Newsletter due	1
Financial report due	6
Return of IAPR loan (if any) and payment of IAPR levy	6

4 Good Practice

ICDAR is the premier conference in the field of Document Analysis and Recognition, providing a unique overview of research directions in a wide variety of subfields. It is also the venue which is most important for the development of the next generation of researchers.

The inclusive ethos of ICDAR and its traditions must be maintained and enhanced wherever possible. The following are some objectives that ICDAR organisers must adopt as far as possible.

4.1 Quality

Ensuring the quality of the ICDAR series is paramount to maintaining and enhancing the significance of ICDAR to its participants and its reputation in the wider community.

The most important aspect of quality is that of papers presented at the conference. Care must be taken not to allow other factors (e.g., budget balance or contract with venue) to dilute this by accepting more papers than the professional judgement of the PC Chairs dictates.

4.2 Low Participation Cost

One of the foremost facilitating factors for achieving and enhancing inclusiveness and accessibility is the cost effectiveness of participation. The Hosts are strongly encouraged to achieve this through:

- **Controlling costs.** The Hosts are expected to make cost-effective arrangements for hosting ICDAR. The desirability factor of the conference location and social program (e.g. banquet) should be seen as a bonus that is affordable only if there is sufficient sponsorship/subsidy (see below). It is not seen as good practice to pass on the majority of the cost of such secondary items to the participants. Organisation expenses should be minimised by using reliable volunteers as far as possible and keeping the number of non-fee paying participants to an absolute minimum (keynote speakers only). Finally, it is recommended to set up conference bank accounts with “non-profit” or “charity” status so as to minimise (or avoid) paying bank fees and taxes. To that effect, an academic institution associated with the Hosts may be able to handle these accounts within its financial system.
- **Sponsorship.** The Hosts are encouraged to actively seek as high levels of sponsorship/subsidies from external organisations as possible. These can be funds from grant-awarding bodies (e.g., national research councils) as well as from other commercial and governmental/non-profit organisations. Ideas, contact names and advice can be sought from the ICDAR Advisory Committee.
- **Student incentives.** Discounted registration fees and provision of inexpensive accommodation for students is essential. Furthermore, the provision of a limited number of student grants (a fixed amount covering part of participation expenses) is highly recommended.

4.3 Visibility

It is the responsibility of the Hosts to ensure the high visibility of ICDAR. This can be achieved by judicious advertisement in quality publications as well as mailing lists. It must be noted that conscious effort must be made not to over-advertise in mailing lists; the three suggested occasions are listed in the Timetable above. The best channels will be the TC10 and TC11 mailing lists and the list from the previous ICDAR. Advertisement in the IAPR newsletter is essential and this is another important reason to apply for IAPR sponsorship very early (see Timetable). The possibility of advertising ICDAR in IEEE Computer and in various journals must be investigated (bearing in mind it has to be cost-effective). Conference posters can also be produced, ready from distribution at relevant events attended by members of the wider research community.

The visibility and availability of the proceedings papers is an important issue that it is not only functional but it enhances the visibility of ICDAR. Negotiations with the IEEE-CS press (publishers of several previous ICDAR proceedings) concluded that the

whole of the proceedings can be hosted on-line at the Conference website and that authors can list/distribute their own papers, provided the IEEE-CS copyright notice was included in each paper (the IEEE-CS can provide the papers with that notice).

4.4 Accessibility

Participants must be able to attend the conference without any restriction of nationality (in terms of refused entry to the country), political situation etc. This is also one of the requirements for IAPR sponsorship. If Hosts discover any problems of that sort at a later stage, they must inform the ICDAR Advisory Committee immediately.

4.5 Professionalism

It goes without saying that ICDAR and any associated activity of the Hosts is expected to adhere to and project high standards of professionalism. On a higher level, the best practice on as outlined by professional societies (e.g., IEEE) must be followed. On a daily organisational level, it is expected that the Hosts will fulfil their duties as outlined in this document and other applicable duties as described on the IAPR website. In particular, Hosts must be responsive to requests for information by the ICDAR Advisory Committee and the relevant IAPR officers.

4.6 Ethics and Non-Attendance Policy

Authors of papers submitted to ICDAR must agree to abide by the **IAPR Statement on Ethics** (see IAPR website). In addition, authors must agree that by submitting a paper they commit themselves to their **paper being presented at ICDAR by one of its co-authors**. Authors must acknowledge their agreement to the above at the time of submission of their paper (original and/or camera-ready). Failure to comply with the above agreements will most likely result in withdrawal of the corresponding paper(s) from the official proceedings (e.g. IEEE Xplore / IEEE-CS Digital Library).

5 Bid Submission/Selection

5.1 Selection Procedure

- A consortium considering to organize an ICDAR must inform the ICDAR Advisory Board of such intention as soon as their plans take a definitive form; the Board will then inform the Proposers if other consortia have announced similar plans;
- A proposal for an ICDAR must be submitted to the ICDAR Advisory Board, no later than three months before the ICDAR at which the venue will be selected (i.e., roughly four years and three months in advance);
- Any question concerning the organization of an ICDAR should be addressed to the ICDAR Advisory Board;
- The ICDAR Advisory Board will evaluate each submitted proposal and, if necessary, give feedback to the corresponding proposing consortium for any amendments required. Each bid that passes the scrutiny of the ICDAR Advisory Board will be presented by the corresponding consortium to the joint TC10 and TC11 meeting held during ICDAR and a vote will take place.
- Unless further consultation is required, the selected conference location/consortium will be announced at the same joint TC10 and TC11 meeting and at the banquet during that ICDAR; it will also be announced in the TC10 and TC11 newsletters;

5.2 Proposal

The proposal must provide as detailed information as possible about the conference location, the group of organizers in charge of the event, the scientific program and the financial arrangements. It is essential that the proposing consortium familiarise themselves with the requirements and procedures of ICDAR outlined in this document before submitting a proposal. The proposal must reflect this fact.

Specifically, the following points must be addressed in the proposal:

1. **Venue** (facilities, meeting rooms and other accommodation) and **date**. The date does not need to be exact and could be given as a range of up to one month because the proposal will be made far in advance, and there may be reasons to adjust the date as the conference draws closer (for example, to avoid clashes with other major conferences).
2. **Accessibility** (transportation and visa requirements) to all members of IAPR societies;
3. Tentative conference program and key milestones **schedule**; Satellite workshops usually held during ICDAR should be taken into account.
4. Names of members of the **organizing committee**, as outlined in Sections 2.3 and 2.4 (including Conference Chair(s), Program Chairs, Local Organisation Committee, Treasurer and Conference Secretariat).
5. **Accommodation** information for participants (regular delegates and students), including indication of costs;
6. **Budget**, as detailed in Section 3.1 above;
7. Outline of the **experience** of the Proposers in hosting scientific conferences.

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