OCEANS CONFERENCE OPERATIONAL POLICY MANUAL

OCEANS

CONFERENCE & EXPOSITION

How to Propose, Host and Conduct an OCEANS Conference & Exposition

Guidance for LOCs on Proposing and Planning an OCEANS

Version 10

22 September 2021

This OCOP Manual is also available at:

https://www.oceansconference.org

OES IEEE Oceanic Engineering Society

MTS marine technology society

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ACRONYMS

AdCom	OES Administrative Committee
CBA	Conference Bank Account
CEU	Continuing Education Units
COI	Conflict of Interest forms (submitted to IEEE & MTS)
CPP	IEEE Conference Publication Program
CPS	Co-participating Societies
EPC	OCEANS Exhibits and Patronage Chair
eCF	IEEE electronic copyright form (transfer of copyright to IEEE)
FC	OCEANS Finance Chair
GC	OCEANS General Chair
ICX	IEEE Conference Exchange (portal for conference registration)
IEEE	The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Inc.
IEEE-Legal	IEEE Legal & Compliance Dept
IEEE-MCE	IEEE Meetings, Conferences & Events Department
IEEE-OES	IEEE Oceanic Engineering Society (often just OES)
IEEE Xplorel	IEEE On-line Publications Database
JOAB	Joint OCEANS Administrative Board
LIAISON	OCEANS Conference Liaison(s)
LOA	Letter of Acquisition – publication agreement between OCEANS & IEEE.
LOI	Letter of Intent from LOC to hold an OCEANS
LOC	Local Organizing Committee for a given OCEANS
MCI-USA	PCO contracted for North American OCEANS
MMSA	Master Management Service Agreement
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTS	Marine Technology Society, Inc.
NA	North America
OCOP	OCEANS Conference Operational Policies Manual
ONR	Office of Naval Research
ONR-G	Office of Naval Research - Global
OSC	OCEANS Steering Committee
PC	OCEANS Publications Chair
PCC	MTS Professional Committee Chair
PCO	Professional Conference Organizer
PDF eXpress	IEEE online publication tool
PPAC	OCEANS Publicity, Promotion and Local Arrangements Chair
RECON	MTS/OES Reconnaissance Committee for prospective OCEANS
RFP	Request for Purchase
ROW	Rest of the World
SEM	Search Engine Marketing
SEO	Search Engine Optimization
SPC	OCEANS Student Poster Competition
SPCC	OCEANS Student Poster Competition Chair
SOW	Statement of Work

TCC	OES Technical Committee Chair
TPM	Veraprise Technical Program Module
TP	OCEANS Technical Program Committee
TPC	OCEANS Technical Program Chair
TWC	OCEANS Tutorial and Workshops Chair
VP B&F	MTS VP for Budgets and Finance (MTS)
VP OCEANS	OES Vice President for OCEANS

1 HOW TO PROPOSE AND PLAN AN OCEANS CONFERENCE

1.1 Introduction

This OCEANS Conference Operational Policy Manual (OCOP) provides guidelines for a Local Organizing Committee (LOC) in planning, operation, budgeting and scheduling to achieve a successful and well-attended event. All LOC members should read and adhere to these guideline as well as documents guiding Societies with regard to OCEANS that are on the OCEANS website:

https://www.oceansconference.org/planning

1.2 Joint Operation of OCEANS

The OCEANS Conference and Exposition (herein referred to as “OCEANS”) is wholly sponsored, and jointly operated, by the IEEE Oceanic Engineering Society (IEEE-OES) and the Marine Technology Society Inc. (MTS) who hold complete financial liability for the planning, organization and execution of the meeting. Henceforth, “the Societies” shall refer to IEEE-OES (normally just OES) and MTS. The Joint Operation Agreement and its Addenda can be seen at these links:

- [A1] OES-MTS_OCEANS Joint Ops 18_0625.pdf
  https://www.oceansconference.org/oes-mts_oceans-joint-ops-18_0625/
- [A2] OES-MTS_OCEANS Joint Ops Addendum-1-18_1107.pdf
  https://www.oceansconference.org/oes-mts_oceans-joint-ops-addendum-1-18_1107/
- [A3] OES-MTS_OCEANS Joint Ops Addendum 2-Exhibit A-20_0824.pdf
  https://www.oceansconference.org/oes-mts_oceans-joint-ops-addendum-2-exhibit-a-20_0824/

The Societies are the sole financial “co-sponsors” of OCEANS. Other co-participating societies (CPS) may be incorporated as desired by the LOC, IEEE-OES and MTS. Co-participating society involvement requires the approval of IEEE and MTS through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlining the responsibilities of all parties. Such co-participants are not financially obligated for any amount of any conference costs. An MOU template to cover the incorporation of co-participants is given in

- [A4] MOU co-Participating Society YYYY City_Template
  https://www.oceansconference.org/OCOP v10/MOU co-Participating Society Template

Other forms of support include Patrons, Supporters and Publicity. Such support can take the form of direct grants, services provided in exchange for brand exposure, underwriting a specific activity (breaks, lunch *etc*.), publicity in technical journals and magazines and providing attendee gifts. These supporters are acknowledged separately on the conference publicity material and website to distinguish them from the Financial Co-sponsors.

The following links to IEEE websites provide general guidance on how to propose and run an IEEE approved conference together with descriptions on approved types of sponsorship and how to obtain such sponsorship:

https://ieeemce.org
https://www.ieee.org/content/dam/ieee-org/ieee/web/org/about/corporate/ieee-policies.pdf
https://ieeemce.org/planning-basics/getting-started/obtaining-sponsorship/

1.3 OCEANS Functional and Management Structure

The Societies have established a functional and communication structure to work alongside LOCs and help them to propose, develop, plan and deliver the best possible OCEANS event. This structure comprises a series of committees and cognizant office bearers with responsibilities and specific roles in the progression through proposal, development and delivery of OCEANS.

The key committees and cognizant officers together with a short description of their roles and responsibilities is given below:

- OSC: Responsible for OCEANS strategy, policy, general oversight, oversight of RECON and JOAB and approval of the OCOP.
- RECON: Responsible for conference proposals and evaluation prior to recommendation to OSC and the Society Boards.
- JOAB: Oversee, coordinate and guide the activities of Liaisons and LOC General Chair/Co-Chairs for all approved OCEANS conferences.
- LOC: Responsible for planning, organizing and conducting the OCEANS conference in accordance with the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) co-signed by the Chair/Co-Chairs and the Societies.
- Conference Liaisons: Collect and report status, concerns and needs from the LOC to JOAB.
- Professional Conference Organizer (PCO): Support the LOC on a daily basis providing event management and development services according to the contracted Statement of Work (SOW) – see Sec 1.6.6.

Appendix [A3] above provides a fuller description of the OCEANS Management Structure.

1.4 Justice, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

The Societies' are committed to fair, just, and equitable practices, and to that end, commit to the consideration of identity, race, gender, and other elements of diversity shall be considered when selecting plenary speakers, judges, session chairs and panelist for townhalls and panels.

1.5 The OCEANS Conference and Exposition

OCEANS is a major international forum for scientists, engineers, innovators and end-users to present and discuss the latest research, ideas, technological developments and applications in all areas of oceanic engineering, marine science, technology and policy in a format of relaxed engagement and interaction with their peers. Papers accepted and presented in the Technical Program of an OCEANS conference are subsequently archived in the IEEE Xplore online publications database.

OCEANS is held twice-yearly: once in September or October in North America (NA), and once between March and June in the Rest of the World (ROW). ROW meetings alternate between Europe, on "odd" calendar years, and Asia/Pacific, on "even" years. Proposals from other regions outside Europe or Asia/Pacific which comply with the OCEANS strategic plan are also encouraged.

The technical program is held in parallel with a state-of-the-art exposition showcasing developments in marine technology from leading companies, academic and research institutions, government bodies, and non-governmental organizations.

In addition, each OCEANS incorporates plenary and keynote presentations, a student poster competition (SPC), professional tutorials, workshops, panel discussions, "town hall" meetings, technical demonstrations, off-venue technical tours, Society annual membership meetings, award ceremonies and other associated professional activities. Welcome (ice-breaker) and exhibit receptions, a conference social evening (*e.g.* Gala Dinner or Buffet) and other appropriate mixing activities are held at the discretion of the LOC.

The jointly-operated conference series shall be called "OCEANS". Individual OCEANS in the series shall be identified by the four-digit year and the name of the city in which OCEANS is held: "OCEANS YYYY City", where YYYY is the year of the conference, OCEANS always appears in uppercase letters; and the City is

lowercase with an initial capital *e.g.* OCEANS 2017 Aberdeen. The corresponding naming convention for the OCEANS website url is:

https://cityYY.oceansconference.org

e.g. https://aberdeen17.oceansconference.org

IEEE retains the rights to the conference title “OCEANS” and, as part of this, the Joint Agreement signed in 2018 (see above) between the Societies, gives MTS a non-exclusive royalty-free license to use the name for as long as the Agreement is in force. OES and MTS logos shall appear in conjunction with the above title on all materials and displays in any medium.

Each OCEANS must be branded according to the above agreement, but the LOC selects a unique theme to define the character of OCEANS and showcase specific local, national or global issues of a topical nature.

Up until the end of 2019, OCEANS has been an “in-person” event. With the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, OCEANS was held in a virtual format. It is anticipated that future OCEANS may have both in-person and virtual components (hybrid). Although this OCOP manual mainly refers to in-person events, guidelines are included to describe procedures that apply to virtual and hybrid events.

Table 1.1 shows the preferred schedule and characteristics of an OCEANS. Any proposed deviations from this schedule should be discussed and approved by JOAB before implementation.

Table 1.1 Preferred Schedule of an OCEANS conference.

Conference duration	• 3 days (Tuesday to Thursday)
Frequency	• Twice-yearly
Location	• NA: every year in September or October • ROW: alternates between Europe (odd years) and Asia/Pacific (even years) - held between March & June
Pre-conf - Sun	• Society meetings as appropriate e.g. OCEANS Steering Committee (OSC), Reconnaissance Committee for prospective OCEANS (RECON), Joint OCEANS Administrative Board (JOAB) • Other meetings at behest of LOC
Pre-conf - Mon	• OES AdCom (all day) • MTS Board Meeting (all day) • Professional Tutorials (half day/full day) • Workshops (half day/full day)
Schedule - Mon	• Delegate onsite registration and Welcome Pack collection • Welcome/Ice Breaker or Civic Reception in early evening • SPC orientation (morning) and Student Mixer (following Welcome/Ice Breaker)
Schedule - Tues	• Opening Plenary Session (early morning); may include Society Awards and MTS annual membership meeting • Opening of Exhibits (mid-morning) • Start of Technical Sessions (early afternoon but should not overlap with plenary or exhibition opening) • SPC judging commences • Exhibitor Reception (early evening)
Schedule - Wed	• Plenary 2 (if required by LOC but should not overlap with Tech Sessions); may include Society Awards and MTS annual membership meeting • Technical Sessions (morning and afternoon) • Conference Social Evening (early to late evening) • SPC judging concludes
Schedule - Thurs	• Closing Plenary (if required by LOC - should not overlap with Tech Sessions); may include Society Awards and/or SPC Awards • Technical Sessions (morning and afternoon) • SPC Awards (mid-morning) • OCEANS Conference Closure “HotWash” (late afternoon); LOC, JOAB
Post Conf - Fri	• Workshops (as desired by LOC and approved by JOAB)

For in-person OCEANS, OES Administrative Committee (AdCom) and MTS Executive Board meetings are usually held on Monday prior to conference opening. Other Society meetings, such as OCEANS Steering Committee (OSC), Reconnaissance Committee (RECON) and Joint OCEANS Administrative Board (JOAB) are held as appropriate during the conference.

Whilst the OCEANS Conference and Exposition structure is not rigorous in its format or style, all conferences share common elements and typical statistics which can serve as a guide to LOCs in their planning.

- [A5] Typical OCEANS Statistics.docx
  https://www.oceansconference.org/OCOP v10/

1.6 Steps Required for Proposal Submission

As a member of MTS or OES you may have been approached by your Society to consider hosting an OCEANS in your locality. This could occur because your town or city is located in a strategic area defined by OSC and the Societies wish to pursue with you the possibility of holding an OCEANS in your area. Alternatively, you may already have a core of colleagues who feel that your location has the requirements and qualities needed to host OCEANS that you wish to discuss with the Societies.

When proposing an OCEANS, General Chairs (GC(s)) and other appropriate members of the LOC must be familiar with and understand the legal and contractual obligations and administrative procedures that must be undertaken. These procedures are described at the following link, and should read in conjunction with this section of the OCOP manual:

- [A6] OCEANS_Administrative_Components_ Final_1 July 2020-amended 21_0903
  https://www.oceansconference.org/OCOP v10

The LOC shall follow the steps outlined in this manual to achieve formal conference approval from the Societies. LOCs should start their planning as early as practicable before the intended conference date.

The GC should form an LOC as early as possible to assist in conference development. The LOC shall comprise a series of Chairs with their own sub-committees to cover the main areas of conference activity such as:

- General Chair (GC)
- Finance Chair (FC)
- Technical Program Chair (TPC)
- Exhibits and Patronage Chair (EPC)
- Student Poster Competition Chair (SPCC)

The above Chairs are mandatory for all OCEANS. Others may be added, such as Publicity, Promotion and Local Arrangements as required by LOC and PCO.

Core members of the LOC are required to be members of at least one of the Societies. They will be required to sign a conflict of interest form.

1.6.1 Preliminary Conference Proposal (Pre-pitch)

The first step to hosting OCEANS is identifying a GC who will lead the application process. The GC should contact OCEANS RECON (informally by email) expressing their interest in hosting an OCEANS. RECON will enter into discussion with the GC and offer them guidance on how to proceed.

Following initial consideration of their expression of interest by RECON, the LOC will normally be invited to submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) which confirms the LOC's desire to hold an OCEANS conference and their willingness to comply with the Societies' terms and conditions and associated regulations. The LOI should include the pertinent details of the conference and the benefits of holding the conference in their specific location, together with an indication of local facilities and support. A formal budget is not required at this stage. A template for the LOI, which should be no more than two pages of A4 or American Letter in length, is given in:

- [A7] Letter of Intent YYYY City_Template
  https://www.oceansconference.org/OCOP v10

Following submission of the LOI, the LOC will be invited to outline their bid in a "pre-pitch" presentation, virtually or in-person, at a designated RECON meeting. The LOI should be submitted no less than 2 weeks prior to the meeting to allow RECON to read the proposal. This pre-pitch will enable RECON to ascertain the likely success of a conference in this location and identify any possible weaknesses in the bid. Any reservations will be conveyed back to the LOC for further consideration.

1.6.2 Full Conference Proposal and Outline Budget

If the pre-pitch obtains consent from RECON, RECON will invite the GC(s) to submit a full proposal and ask them to present this (again in-person or virtually) for consideration at another designated RECON meeting.

Prior to submission of the full proposal RECON, with approval by OES Vice-President for OCEANS Conferences (VP OCEANS) and MTS President, may visit the proposed location (either in-person or virtually) to meet with the LOC, tour the conference venue and discuss the procedural and legal obligations of hosting OCEANS before a decision being taken.

A template for the full proposal is given in:

- [A8] Full Conference Proposal and Outline Budget YYYY City-Template.docx
  https://www.oceansconference.org/OCOP v10

An outline budget (prepared on the IEEE Financial Reporting Tool) shall be included with the proposal, indicating estimated income, expenditure and surplus. The costs should be based on average values of registration fees and provisional costs for venue and food and beverages. Note that the budget should be prepared on the basis of a 20% surplus. A link to the reporting tool is given below:

https://ieeemce.org/wp-content/uploads/financial-reporting-tool.xlsx

For more information on finance and budgetary requirements see:

- Sec 5 OCEANS Budget and Finance

Following presentation of a Full Proposal, RECON will evaluate and advise OSC if the proposal meets the requirements for hosting an OCEANS and makes a recommendation for approval to the OSC. RECON submits the Proposal Package (LOI plus Powerpoint Presentation) to OSC for review and formal consent to proceed. If in the view of OSC the proposal falls short of the necessary requirements then OSC will return the proposal to RECON for further consideration by LOC. If accepted, OSC recommends approval of the Conference to the Society Boards (OES AdCom and MTS Board).

1.6.3 Memorandum of Agreement and Letters of Appointment

Following formal approval by the Societies' Boards for the conference to proceed, the OES VP OCEANS and MTS President formally appoint the GC(s) and co-sign a non-binding Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with them which outlines the respective responsibilities of each party. The Societies and the GC(s) are the only two parties to the MOA. The VP OCEANS and MTS Presidents appoint conference liaisons (one from each Society).

A template for the MOA between VP OCEANS, MTS President and GC(s) is given at

- [A9] MOA_OCEANS YYYY City-Template
  https://www.oceansconference.org/OCOP v10

Coincident with signing an MOA with the GC(s), the OES VP OCEANS and MTS President issue Letter(s) of Appointment to the GC(s) and the conference liaisons approving their appointments. Templates are given at the following links:

- [A10] General Chair Appointment YYYY City-Template.docx
  https://www.oceansconference.org/OCOP v10
- [A11] Liaison-OES Appointment YYYY City-Template.docx
  https://www.oceansconference.org/OCOP v10
- [A12] Liaison-MTS Appointment YYYY City-Template.pdf
  https://www.oceansconference.org/OCOP v10

1.6.4 IEEE Conference Registration (ICX)

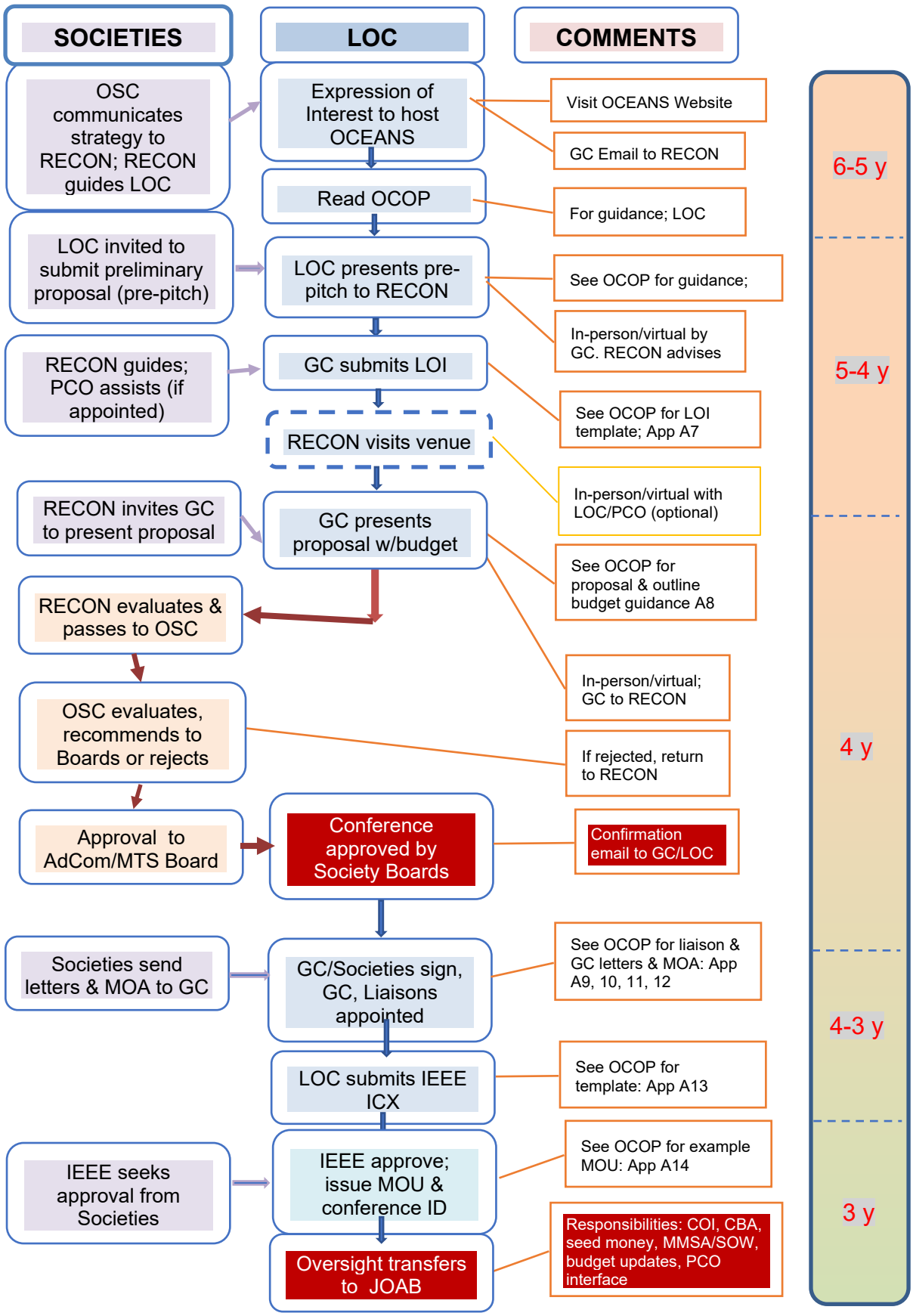
In order to benefit from its liability protection and legal services, IEEE requires that all events sponsored or co-sponsored by IEEE be registered with IEEE. The OCEANS GC(s) must submit an online IEEE Conference Application form through the ICX portal.

IEEE – ICX Conference Application

- [A13] IEEE Conference Application Guidance Notes (ICX).docx
https://www.oceansconference.org/OCOP v10
- [A14] MOU Societies and IEEE-2020 GC SAMPLE.pdf
https://www.oceansconference.org/OCOP v10

Upon receipt of the ICX, the IEEE Meetings, Conferences and Events (IEEE-MCE) assigns the conference a unique ID number and requests approval from the Societies. IEEE-MCE generates a non-binding Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that concerns only the two Societies, OES (as an affiliate of IEEE) and MTS, in which both agree to jointly sponsor the conference and accept the corresponding responsibilities and financial liabilities in the proportions outlined in the ICX application. Approval of the MOU for a given OCEANS by the Societies is a prerequisite to any further action by IEEE (including contract reviews, negotiations, signatures, etc.) on that conference.

OCEANS PROPOSAL FLOWCHART – RECON PROCEDURE



1.6.5 Planning and Operational Phase

Once the Societies' Boards have given their consent to a particular OCEANS, oversight transfers to JOAB, and the conference moves into its planning and operational phase. The Societies shall hire a PCO as an independent contractor to support the LOC. The PCO works in conjunction with the LOC to undertake services and responsibilities agreed with the Societies.

To complete this stage, the GC and FC of the LOC who have financial accountability must complete and submit an MTS Conflict of Interest (COI) Disclosure Statement and the online IEEE form for Principles of Business Conduct Compliance Certificate. Templates for these COI forms are given in:

- [A15] Conflict of Interest Templates.docx
  https://www.oceansconference.org/OCOP v10

On completion of the COIs, a Conference Bank Account (CBA) is opened by MTS for all NA conferences. In ROW, the PCO would normally open and operate this account with suitable provisions as to accessibility to funds. The LOC/PCO is now able to submit publications forms, sign event related contracts and apply for OES/MTS advances. For more information on CBAs and finance, see:

- Sec 5 OCEANS Budget and Finance

At this stage the LOC/PCO should submit to JOAB a fully-costed conference budget using the IEEE Finance Reporting Tool. Note that LOCs should aim for a 20% surplus in their budget.

https://ieeemce.org/wp-content/uploads/financial-reporting-tool.xlsx

When preparing their budget using this tool, the LOC FC should consult with the MTS Vice-President for Budgets and Finance (VP B&F) and OES VP OCEANS for guidance. See

- Sec 5: OCEANS Budgets and Finance for more details

1.6.6 Conference Management and Administration

To formalize the procedures for conference planning and execution, a series of administrative contracts shall be completed between the PCO and the Societies. The procedures differ slightly depending on whether OCEANS is in NA or ROW.

For NA OCEANS the Societies have signed an agreement with MCI-USA to supply event management services (PCO) for all NA OCEANS through 2024. The associated documents which define this arrangement (after review and guidance from IEEE Legal and the Societies) form a binding agreement. The contracts are all approved with signatures by the PCO, IEEE (on behalf of OES) and MTS.

Specific documents which cover the implementation of this agreement are the *Master Management Service Agreement* (MMSA) and a *Statement of Work* (SOW). The MMSA defines the legal terms and conditions that apply to every Conference in the agreement, whereas an SOW defines the duties required of the PCO for a specific conference and its relationship with the LOC and the Societies. The SOW can amend any terms of the governing document (MMSA) for each Conference. The MMSA governs ALL SOWs and those already signed by the parties. A template of the MMSA which covers the professional planning and operation defined in the MCI-USA agreement is given in the link below]:

- [A16] MMSA_GDPR_YYYY City Template.docx
  https://www.oceansconference.org/OCOP v10

The LOC and PCO work together to prepare an SOW that defines the proposed budgets, financial and other services, and fees payable, with guidance from JOAB, OES VP OCEANS, and MTS VP B&F. Once all parties (OES, MTS, IEEE Legal and the PCO) agree with SOW terms and conditions, an IEEE Representative (on behalf of OES), MTS President, and the PCO sign the binding agreement. Such SOWs are specific to each OCEANS Conference. The SOW consists of a general information document; an Exhibit A document which list specific duties and Exhibit B which outlines the financial terms and conditions. Templates are given at the following links:

- [A17] SOW General Info-YYYY City-Template.docx
  https://www.oceansconference.org/OCOP v10
- [A18] SOW Exhibit A & B-YYYY City-Template.docx
  https://www.oceansconference.org/OCOP v10

A template for adding an addendum to an SOW is given below

- [A19] SOW-Addendum#-YYYY City-Template.docx
  https://www.oceansconference.org/OCOP v10

For ROW OCEANS, LOCs are not obliged to use MCI-USA as their PCO, nor are they constrained to use the IEEE MMSA/SOW templates in contract preparation, if other suitable models are appropriate locally. However, utilizing IEEE templates and style is highly recommended since their use can aid the efficiency and timeliness of the contract negotiation and review process, and can serve as models for processing these agreements.

The LOC should propose a PCO to the Societies (in consultation with JOAB) to assist with general support and management of an ROW OCEANS. A contract based on the MCI-USA MMSA template (see [A16]) should be prepared and presented to VP OCEANS and VP B&F for approval. Specific duties for an PCO in ROW OCEANS may include those required for NA OCEANS together with any local variations which may be appropriate, at the behest of the LOC. These duties should

be defined in the corresponding SOW equivalent contract which must be reviewed by IEEE Contracts (and signed by both Societies) for legal guidance and to verify that they meet IEEE guidelines. (NOTE: such contracts should be prepared in English or the conference will be charged a fee to cover translation costs).

It is recommended that LOCs in ROW should appoint their PCO as early as possible in their conference development process. LOCs should contact Conference-Contracts for up-to-date documentation and advice on preparation of PCO contracts at the email address below:

conference-contracts@ieee.org

1.6.7 Delegate and exhibitor registration

Delegate and exhibitor registration for NA OCEANS is the remit of MCI-USA in accordance with the appropriate SOW.

In ROW, the LOC may utilize an external Web Provider (of their choosing) to provide a suite of proprietary Web Tools which include options for delegate registration, exhibit registration and hosting of a dynamic exhibits floorplan. Alternatively, LOCs may use the Societies Web Tools developed by Veraprise Inc. to fulfill these duties. If LOCs in ROW wish to use these facilities, they should select which options are required for their conference and prepare an SOW (as outlined above for NA OCEANS) and account for these services in their proposed budget. Veraprise is under contract to the Societies and works for the LOC subject to oversight and approval by the Societies.

1.6.8 OCEANS Website management

For NA OCEANS, website management, content and updating is under oversight of MCI-USA with input from the LOC. A standardized OCEANS layout, based on a WordPress template and style, has been developed for all conferences with variations in theme colors to differentiate between them. NA OCEANS does not require a volunteer webmaster.

For ROW OCEANS, Veraprise may be asked to help build the conference website using the same WordPress template as for NA OCEANS. A local webmaster should be appointed to manage website content and updates under the oversight of Veraprise. Optionally, an ROW LOC may appoint an independent web provider (on approval by JOAB) to maintain the website, but they should utilize the same WordPress template as above.

1.6.9 Exhibit Planning & Patronage

Exhibit Planning for OCEANS is the responsibility of the appointed PCO (regardless of conference location, NA or ROW). To ensure that local considerations and the experience of the LOC are taken into account, the LOC should be engaged in this process from the outset. The LOC shall appoint an Exhibit and Patronage Chair (EPC) to liaise with and work alongside the PCO to promote sales of exhibit booths and organize the exhibit venue. For more information see:

- Sec 6 Exhibit/Patronage Sales and Planning

1.6.10 Marketing, Promotion and Local Arrangements

Overall responsibility for marketing, promotion and local arrangements is primarily the remit of the PCO. However, the LOC should appoint a Publicity, Promotion and Local Arrangements Chair (PPAC) who is responsible for liaising with and working alongside the PCO to promote the conference and assist with marketing the event and with local arrangements and organization of the exhibit's venue. It might also be useful to invite the local Convention Bureau and/or Tourist Board to contribute to these activities.

- Sec 7 Marketing and Communications

1.6.11 LOC Meetings, Conference Closure and Auditing

The GC should convene regular meetings with the LOC to plan the conference. It is recommended that quarterly meetings be held up to 18 months before the conference; monthly meetings from 18 to 6 months; and weekly meetings from 6 months onwards. LOC Chairs and liaisons will attend, either in-person or remotely, to facilitate successful operation of the conference. It is further recommended that a PCO representative be invited to the LOC meetings. Liaisons should submit a joint report to VP OCEANS, VP B&F and JOAB Chairs outlining progress in the main aspects of conference organization; any departures from plan or budget; and highlight any major decisions and action points. The PCO and LOC FC must also submit monthly sales and financial reports with budget updates to the VP OCEANS, VP B&F, the LOC GC(s) and JOAB. The LOC must keep regular minutes of these meetings.

The conference week shall conclude with a conference-closure meeting (colloquially known as a "Hot Wash"), chaired by JOAB in which the LOC and PCO present a summary of the conference; lessons learned, registration numbers, number of papers presented, and predicted financial outcome etc. This would normally be attended by JOAB Chairs, LOC Chairs, Society liaisons, the PCO, VP OCEANS and VP B&F. If appropriate, future OCEANS GCs may be asked to attend.

Within 6 months of conference closure, the LOC/PCO should present a final audited budget to the VP OCEANS, VP B&F and JOAB Chairs, and close the conference account.

1.6.12 The Technical Program

The technical program is the major focus of an OCEANS. The LOC should strive to create a program which is topical, attractive, informative and covers a broad spectrum of ocean engineering, science and technology as is possible.

The LOC shall establish a Technical Program Committee (TP) under cognizance of a Technical Program Committee Chair (TPC Chair) to develop and organize the associated technical activities. For all OCEANS (NA or ROW), the Societies have contracted Veraprise Inc. to develop a web-based Technical Program Module (TPM) to assist LOCs in paper submission, review and technical session allocation. All LOCs, regardless of location, must use the TPM tools in their technical program development.

The steps to be undertaken in developing the technical program are described in more detail in:

- Sec 2 The Technical Sessions
- Sec 3 OCEANS Student Poster Competition
- Sec 4 Professional Tutorials, Workshops and Panel Discussions

1.7 Virtual and Hybrid Conferences

The character and expectations of conferences has changed since the global onset of the COVID-19 coronavirus in early 2020. Many conferences during 2020 and 2021 were held, or scheduled to be held, as virtual or hybrid events.

If an LOC is considering a virtual or hybrid approach, they should discuss this with JOAB at the earliest opportunity. While the concept of a virtual or hybrid OCEANS is relatively new and is still in the development phase, some consideration should be given to the variety of possible operational models. IEEE and MTS have not adopted or recommended any preferred model, therefore JOAB, the LOC and the PCO should work together to create the best possible format for a particular location.

Our two scheduled OCEANS conferences for 2020 (Singapore 2020 and Gulf Coast 2020) cancelled their in-person events and joined forces to produce a world-wide virtual event badged as OCEANS 2020: Singapore – U.S. Gulf Coast.

Some of the features which characterized the 2020 OCEANS were:

- The conference ran for a period of 26 days, from 5th Oct to 31 Oct 2020.
- All technical presentations were pre-recorded (videos required) and were available ‘on-demand’ through the conference dates.
- Most of the plenaries, keynotes and panel discussions were pre-recorded and presented, but the Q&A sessions were held live immediately after the respective event
- All tutorials and the SPC were pre-recorded and presented
- The SPC Award presentation was held live
- Town Hall presentations were held live
- The MTS Annual membership meeting and Award Ceremony was held as a virtual event with live presentations.
- The OES Award Ceremony included pre-recorded presentations.
- Exhibition was virtual

It is likely that other conferences in the OCEANS program, will join forces to create a joint event. Porto 2021 and San Diego 2021 have now agreed to join forces as OCEANS 2021- San Diego-Porto 2021 as a hybrid event with a mix of in-person and virtual events.

Hybrid events are considered as a mix of in-person (for local or regional participants) and virtual events (for those who are unable to travel to the venue). If it is likely that your event will comprise virtual or hybrid components, such activities will need to be highlighted in your proposal and budgeted for, accordingly.

The IEEE website provides information on the difference between virtual, hybrid and traditional in-person events and how to plan, organize and execute them.

https://www.ieeemce.org

2 THE TECHNICAL SESSIONS

To assist the LOC in developing the technical program and paper management, the Societies have contracted an external web-service provider (Veraprise Inc.) who has developed a proprietary browser-based web tool, the Technical Program Module (TPM), which facilitates management of the technical program, abstract and paper submission, the associated reviewing process and publication in IEEE Xplore. The web services provider is under contract to the Societies and works for the LOC subject to oversight and approval by the Societies. LOCs must use the TPM to prepare the technical program and the cost of selected web services must be accounted for by the LOC in their conference budget. Instructions for authors will be posted on the specific conference website.

The LOC should appoint a Technical Program Committee (TP), under the cognizance of a TP Chair (TPC) to develop and organize the technical activities and manage the technical program. The TPC is responsible for soliciting papers, selecting and guiding reviewers, making final selection of papers, notifying selected/rejected authors, arranging technical session schedules, appointing session chairs, and preparing papers for eventual publication on IEEE Xplore. For duties such as session room allocation and publication of conference timetable, the TPC should enlist the help of the PCO.

In addition to the TPC, the LOC also appoints an SPC Chair and a Tutorials & Workshops Chair (TWC). They work with, and under, guidance of the TPC to create appropriate programs. The TPC should enlist the Societies Technical Committees to help solicit papers, review abstracts, and provide session chairs.

A typical OCEANS technical program consists of:

- Plenary sessions
- Regular technical paper sessions (oral presentations)
- SPC

Additionally, the LOC may wish to include other optional technical events, such as:

- Professional Tutorials, Workshops and Panel Discussions
- Special technical sessions
- Regular technical posters

2.1 Preliminary Steps

The TPC should work alongside Veraprise to ensure timely submission of required conference publications forms through the IEEE online portal. This step will register

the conference and grants approval for publishing technical program content, initially through the conference proceedings and ultimately through IEEE Xplore. To activate this the following steps are necessary:

1. Letter of Acquisition (LOA): the LOA contains an agreement between your conference and *IEEE* that confirms a conference's intention to publish with the IEEE Conference Publication Program (CPP) and in IEEE Xplore. The LOA includes the following: official conference publication title, catalog numbers, copyright information for paper footers, links to conference paper templates, and instructions for preparing papers for IEEE Xplore.
2. IEEE Electronic Copyright Form (eCF): allows authors to transfer ownership rights of the intellectual property to IEEE. For virtual events, this should also include consent for authors to share their presentation with delegates and grant IEEE the right to archive for future access.
3. PDF eXpress: an IEEE-financed online author tool that assists IEEE conference organizers in obtaining IEEE Xplore-compatible PDFs from their authors. The tool is free to all conferences that are enrolled in the IEEE Conference Publications Program.

2.2 Technical Sessions Paper Management

The main features of the TPM include issuing a call for paper abstracts, reviewing and acceptance of abstracts, and allocating accepted papers into technical sessions. This includes allocation of session rooms of suitable size and availability of required AV facilities (in accordance with room availability negotiated by the PCO). Room provision for Societies' meetings, panel sessions, workshops and professional tutorials needs also to be considered.

The TPM provides the following features:

- Management of all aspects of the technical program and conference publication
- Abstracts submission portal
- Administrative support for technical program chairs
- Peer review of papers
- Author dashboard allows authors to manage their technical program submissions
- Management of copyright process to ensure compliance with IEEE
- Management of all direct communications with authors
- An interface with MCI-USA registration portal to initiate and verify completed paper registrations (if desired)
- Produce conference proceedings and post-conference submission to IEEE Xplore

To familiarize the LOC with these tools, the Societies offer key members (*e.g.* TPC, GC, SPC Chair and the PCO) training in their use, either in-person or virtually, at an OCEANS conference up to two years before the event. Travel, accommodation and registration for members of the LOC associated with this should be accounted for in the conference budget.

2.3 Call for Abstracts

A standard call for paper abstracts should be included in the Conference Announcement and distributed at preceding conferences. The call should indicate the scope of the conference, provide a website address that provides further information for potential authors, and all information pertaining to the conference venue. It should list the deadlines and schedule for submitting abstract proposals and uploading final papers.

The call for paper abstracts should be posted on the conference website at least six to eight months before the conference. It should clearly provide the requirements and restrictions on abstract proposals and final papers, and indicate that:

- Abstracts should be no more than two pages long, 500-1000 words (including figures, equations, and references).
- Abstracts should clearly explain the intended paper and its technical significance.
- Abstracts must be submitted online via the particular OCEANS website and uploaded in pdf format.
- Abstracts must represent the original work of all authors.
- Abstracts should indicate professional affiliation of all authors
- Abstracts should provide a principal author contact address (email)
- Abstracts shall not be advertisements or overly commercial

The call(s) should also include

- Abstract proposal due date.
- Weblink address for uploading abstract proposal, along with any special instructions.
- Any other restrictions, limitations, or requirements for papers.
- Full paper submission due date.
- The requirement that an author must pay a registration fee (giving right to a full registration package) and present the paper at the conference for it to be included in the conference proceedings published in IEEE Xplore.
- A request for email, phone number and postal address of contact person.

- A warning that paper proposals and final papers will be checked for plagiarism.

The call for abstracts should be posted on the same web page as the call for student posters along with that for professional tutorials. It should be publicized as widely as possible. The Societies' Technical Committee chairs will distribute to their members; post on their web sites and promote in their newsletters and other publications. It should be sent directly via email to attendees and authors from previous conferences. The promotion committee at the LOC should issue press releases to all appropriate media.

2.4 Abstract Submission & Review

The paper proposal review process is conducted through the OCEANS conferences website using the Societies TPM tool. Instructions to authors will be posted on the specific conference website.

The process begins with a call for abstracts and opening of the abstract submission portal. Authors should access the online portal for submitting their abstracts. The abstract submission process includes the collection of author contact information, abstract title and topic, co-author information, and the paper abstract in PDF format. Abstracts submitted for consideration in the SPC should be uploaded through the same portal. Proposals for Professional Tutorials, Workshops and Panel Discussions should be submitted directly to the LOC for consideration.

The Societies have developed a list of core technical topics (see [A22]) which cover the main areas of interest to the oceanic and marine communities, and which maintain continuity of content from conference to conference. In addition, the TPC and the LOC should select a set of local technical topics to be added to the core list. These "local flavor" topics, which are generally both location-specific and of current/topical interest, are selected by the LOC to showcase the specialties and topical issues relevant to the city or region, and to focus attention on the theme of the conference. This list of core and local topics is included in the abstract submission process and prospective authors should select the most relevant topic that their abstract applies to. This helps the LOC to allocate the abstract to the most suitable reviewers and an appropriate technical session.

Upon successful completion of an abstract submission, the corresponding author will be given password protected access to the author dashboard. The author dashboard serves as the primary portal for managing abstract information, monitoring abstract status, and for completing all required steps for participation in the conference's technical program.

Due to the unreliability and lack of security of email communications, authors should use the author dashboard for the communication of key notifications and abstract status updates. Through this portal, the corresponding author can manage and update co-author profiles and set the author display order.

During the abstract submission period, the TPC monitors progress, assists authors as necessary, and is responsible for ensuring correct allocation of the submitted abstracts by technical area so that the appropriate reviewers can be correctly assigned.

2.4.1 Abstract Review

Once the abstract submission window has closed (following an optional two-week extension at the behest of the TPC), the main focus is to recruit and organize reviewers. The TPC will work closely with the OES Technology Committees Chair (TCC) and the MTS Professional Committees Chair (PCC) of to identify a core group of reviewers. The two societies each maintain a list of eligible reviewers to be employed during the technical program peer review stage. Additional reviewers who can specifically review local topics abstracts should be provided by the LOC.

All reviewer profiles are managed through the TPM web tools interface. Invitations by email are triggered through the TPM and sent out to all reviewers, with links and unique passwords to access the reviewers' portal.

The primary assignment of abstracts to reviewers is based on their technical area of expertise. Each reviewer will have access to any abstract submitted within their area. However, to ensure an even balance of reviewed abstracts, reviewers are initially assigned a limited batch of (no more than) 20 for priority attention. However, if the reviewer wishes, he or she can access all abstracts available for review, based on topic association.

At least five reviewers should be assigned to each abstract with a minimum of three reviews needed. The TPM will deactivate an abstract for review once it has received four reviews, and will reassign pending reviewers of that abstract to other abstracts which have not reached the 3-review threshold. Abstracts are reviewed on a numerical scale of 0-9 (see [A20]). Reviewers are also encouraged to leave comments to be shared with the author, or additional comments for the TPC only.

Once reviews have been completed, the TPC will select the most highly rated paper abstracts for inclusion in the technical program. The TPM will automatically calculate the average score for each abstract and sort the list of abstracts by that score. A bulk

update tool allows for quick accept/reject status updates above and below a numerical score threshold, although manual overrides can be made to individual abstracts. The threshold score for abstract acceptance may vary from conference to conference depending on quality and number of submissions. Typically this lies around 5.0 or 6.0. For Global OCEANS 2020, this was set at 6.0.

The number of papers selected for presentation will depend on the number and quality of paper proposals received and availability of session rooms. Normally 8-10 parallel sessions (tracks) with up to 5 session time slots each day and 4-5 papers in each session are distributed across the parallel sessions. This corresponds to about 400 to 500 papers.

Often, as many as 20% of papers are never uploaded by the authors after acceptance. Thus it is common practice to select more papers than the anticipated program can accommodate. If more papers are registered than the venue has presentation rooms available, this can be accommodated by increasing the number of papers in a session.

During selection, preference may be given to papers which are consistent with the conference theme, and/or are solicited by Societies' committees. Negative consideration may be given to authors who submitted a paper for a previous OCEANS and did not attend the conference to present without a valid reason for non-attendance.

The final selection of abstracts and notification of authors should be made 3.5 months before the conference to allow authors sufficient time to prepare and submit significant, high quality papers. This is especially important where prospective delegates need company, governmental or institutional approval to release the final paper.

2.4.2 Acceptance and Rejection of papers

Acceptance and rejection notification emails are triggered through the TPM web tools and sent out to the corresponding authors for each abstract. For acceptances, the notification email includes key information and links to content regarding requirements and steps to complete the process for inclusion in the technical program.

Once acceptance/rejection notifications have been published, the author dashboard will display reviewer comments on their abstract reviews. These are also included in the acceptance/rejection letters and, in the case of acceptance, can provide constructive criticism and suggestions for drafting the final paper; and in the case of

rejection, provide reasons for the rejection and recommended actions for submitting abstracts at a future OCEANS.

The TPC should monitor the progress of author activity, assist authors as necessary, and ensure compliance with publishing requirements. These requirements include copyright submission, PDF eXpress compatibility, paper registration and upload of the final paper in pdf format. The TPM reporting tools and the online conference dashboard can provide snapshots of the database at any time, to determine what actions, if any, are necessary to bring the author compliance process to completion.

The TPM based author dashboard integrates with the IEEE electronic copyright form, updating the conference database with successfully signed copyright form information. For conferences in which MTS holds the copyright, an online copyright transfer/signature utility can be activated within the TPM web tools.

2.4.3 Full Paper Upload

The Proceedings of all IEEE-sponsored conferences are included in IEEE Xplore, an online electronic archive. Papers must first be converted to pdf format using IEEE PDF eXpress. Each OCEANS Conference registers for PDF eXpress with IEEE. The Conference then provides all authors with a Conference ID (e.g. OCEANSdc05) and a link to the PDF eXpress pages for that Conference. Authors create their own PDF eXpress account for each OCEANS Conference in which they participate using the Conference ID, their own email address, and an author specified password.

The final paper pdf upload utility on the author dashboard will accept only pdf(s) that have been generated through the IEEE PDF eXpress service. All pdf(s) distilled through IEEE PDF eXpress will contain an identifying signature in the pdf's metadata. The final paper pdf utility is programmed to read the uploaded pdf's metadata and permit the upload of only those pdf(s) that contain the pdf eXpress unique signature.

The PDF eXpress tool will:

- Check a pdf document for compliance and indicates what the problems are if the document is not compliant.
- Convert to the compliant pdf form documents files from : Microsoft Word, Rich Text Format, Freelance, (La)TeX (DVI and all support files required), PageMaker, FrameMaker, QuarkXpress*, Lotus Word Pro, Corel WordPerfect

Instructions as to how to use IEEE PDF eXpress may be found at:

- https://www.ieee.org/conferences/publishing/pdfexpress.html

Email support is available at pdfsupport@ieee.org.

Oral presentations are only allowed if a paper of acceptable length and quality has been received by the due date and only if it meets all of the requirements above. If no oral presentation of the paper is made at the conference, the paper will not be included in IEEE Xplore.

2.4.4 Indicative Timetable for Abstract Review Process

Task	Timeline	Action
Solicit additional local topics and add to web page	13 mo	LOC
Prepare advanced call for papers for distribution on web site and previous conferences	12 mo	TPC
Prepare and publish (web site email) final call for abstracts and open abstract submission	8-6 mo	TPC
Close acceptance of abstracts and assign reviewers	4.5 mo	TPC
Complete review of abstracts; acceptance/rejection decisions and send out notifications	3.5 mo	TPC
Publish preliminary technical program, solicit session chairs	3 mo	TPC
Deadline for final paper upload, finalize technical program	2 mo	TPC
Publish final technical program, send presentation instructions to authors & Session Chairs	1.5 mo	TPC
Check signage, oversee and audit sessions handle exceptions	On day	TPC PCO
Submit final papers to IEEE Xplore with "no shows" removed.	1.5 mo after	TPC

2.5 Technical Program Organization

Once the acceptance decisions have been made, the TPC and PCO will organize the papers into technical sessions for the conference. This is an iterative process based on the list of accepted papers. These should be grouped into technical sessions with a common theme and within an initial schedule. The TPM web tools provide utilities for defining, filling, manipulating, and querying the program session grid.

An Advance Program is prepared on-line as a feature of the TPM and should include only those papers uploaded by the authors. The program is published on the conference website at least one week prior to the early bird registration cut-off date so that presenters, session chairs and potential delegates can make appropriate plans. It will not be distributed as a hard copy in advance of the conference. A list of accepted abstracts should also be published on the website at this time.

The Final Program and schedule of technical papers is based upon the advance program, but will also include room numbers and session chairs and the final set of

uploaded papers. However, many authors will not complete the final paper upload due to a variety of reasons: delayed or denied travel visas, lack of institutional funding or approval, personal reasons etc. The attrition rate can be as high as 20% and you should be prepared for this in planning the final Technical Program.

Once the Final Program has been set, the database will be frozen and the TPC will coordinate with the OCEANS Webmaster to generate the conference proceedings on the conference web site and provide program data export files for populating content on the conference's mobile app. At this point, any changes to the final program schedule should be well coordinated with all content managers to ensure program data remain in synchronicity across all platforms.

Papers may be downloaded, by registered attendees, through a mobile phone app or via the OCEANS website. Access to the papers during the conference is limited to registered delegates and should not extend past the time of issuance of the papers through IEEE Xplore. However, for virtual conferences access may be allowed before conference opening and extended for a period beyond conference closing. The daily program should be displayed on video monitors throughout the conference venue and a single-page daily schedule made available at the registration desk.

Delegates can access papers using a unique login pass that they receive on registration. The conference proceedings are comprised of the papers that are presented orally as part of the conference's final regular technical program. The proceedings can be browsed by paper title, author name, or session topic, day and time. At the discretion of the TPC, the download option for individual papers can remain deactivated until after the paper has actually been presented orally. Post-conference, an additional option can be added to the online proceedings to download all conference papers in bulk for up to one month after the conference.

The proceedings released/distributed on the conference web site do not constitute the official proceedings of the conference; the papers are not yet published at this point in the process, nor can they be legitimately cited in later work. A condition of publishing a paper in IEEE Xplore is that it is presented in one of the technical sessions by an author or co-author. Some exceptions may be made if, for example, valid medical reasons or inability to get a travel visa etc. apply. The TPC should compile a list, based on session summary forms of all "no show" authors. After the conference, representatives of the societies will contact these authors and, in the absence of valid justification for not presenting, will remove those papers from the official proceedings in IEEE Xplore. The final collection of technical program papers will then be prepared and sent to IEEE Xplore, in accordance with the guidelines and instructions found in the LOA. Inclusion in Xplore constitutes official publication of the work and such papers may be legitimately cited in later work.

2.6 Conducting of Technical Sessions

Regular technical papers are grouped into technical sessions of papers with a common theme or technical topic. Each day will be composed of 8-10 parallel tracks (depending on availability of rooms) containing several technical sessions with 4-5 papers on a common theme per session. Twenty minutes should be allotted to each paper, including 5 mins for speaker swap-over and Q&A. Time should also be allotted at the beginning of each session for introductions and general announcements.

2.6.1 Session Chairs

Session chairs need to be recruited to moderate individual technical sessions, introduce presenting authors, enforce time limits and complete the session chair report form. The session chair report form provides important information to help the TPC assess session attendance and identify presentation no-shows. Session chairs can be solicited from the pool of presenting authors, in addition to Societies' technology chairs and colleagues local to the conference venue.

Session chairs should be recruited and assigned as soon as the technical sessions are scheduled. Societies' Committee Chairs should be asked to serve as session chairs and/or to nominate other suitable chairs. Two chairs are recommended for each technical session. As well as having general expertise in the subject matter of the session, and in order to provide professional diversity, the Chairs should preferably be from different Societies and geographical locations. It is advisable that at least one of the session chairs be experienced in that role or has presented at previous conferences. This allows for a junior or limited experienced delegate to act as the second chair.

Session chairs should read and check the papers in their session in advance of the conference to verify that the papers have no obvious problems; they should contact the speakers in their session prior to the conference and request biographical and background material to help them prepare a brief introduction to the speaker and the paper. The WebTools provide email links for individual session chairs to contact each speaker. Chairs should contact the TPC if they find or suspect any problems. The TPC will contact the authors.

It is important that the schedule of presentations should not be altered. Delegates move between technical sessions to hear specific talks; if a speaker does not show up (other than the last one), the Chair should not move the next scheduled up to fill the slot, but should try to promote a general discussion on a topic related to the theme of that session, or invite the audience to come back at the time of the next scheduled paper.

A record of the number of attendees at each presentation, and their impressions of the quality of the presentation, should be kept; it also vital that session chairs keep a note of “no-show” presenters and convey this to VP OCEANS and VP B&F. In NA this is carried out by the PCO.

If required Session Summary Forms are issued and collected by the appointed PCO.

- ([A21] Session Survey Forms) https://www.oceansconference.org/OCOP v10

2.6.2 Plenary Session(s)

The Conference shall open with a Plenary Session. The opening Plenary is a defining event of the conference and should address a broad oceans content which is in-line with the chosen theme of the Conference; and should appeal to a wide cross-section of delegates. Plenary Speakers should be invited from academics, industrialists, government agencies and authorities with an international profile in topics of local, national and global relevance to the ocean science and technology community. The speakers are selected and invited by the GC in consultation with the TPC. Normally up to three main speakers presenting for no more than 30 minutes each is sufficient; however, they may be preceded by (short) Welcome Addresses and Introductions by the GC(s) and local dignitaries.

The Plenary Session should be held in a large auditorium or ballroom to accommodate the anticipated audience size and should end by the middle of the first morning of the conference (*e.g.* 9 am - 11 am). If time permits, It may also include short promotions by the GC(s) of the next two OCEANS. It will be followed by the formal opening of the Conference Exhibit.

An optional second plenary session may be held on the Wednesday or Thursday morning of conference week: this should add greater breadth to the opening theme and provide delegates with a wider perspective. If held on Thursday it may be seen as more of a Closing Ceremony and summarize the events of the week. Again, it should not overlap with the opening of the Exhibits nor should it coincide with the technical sessions. SPC Prize presentations and OCEANS Conference Promotions could also be held in this session.

2.6.3 Regular Technical Sessions

The regular technical program typically consists of a series of concurrent sessions (depending on number of papers and availability of rooms), starting on afternoon of the opening day (Tuesday) of the conference (following the opening

Plenary session and Exhibit opening), and morning and afternoon of subsequent days. Each of these concurrent-session time slots consists of several parallel technical presentation sessions. Each technical session should focus on a particular subject or area of technology. Technical sessions must not be held concurrent with the plenary session, nor with the opening of the Exhibit; concurrent sessions in related areas should be avoided.

The core Technical Program Topic List, prepared by the Societies' technical committee chairs, should be followed in order to include all areas of interest to the oceanic and marine communities, and to maintain continuity from conference to conference. The LOC is encouraged to add a set of Special or Local Topics in order to give "local flavor" to the conference theme or to emphasize some event or activity relevant to the conference location. A list of the core technical topics is given at

- [A22] Core Technical Topics
  https://www.oceansconference.org/OCOP v10

2.6.4 Time Constraints

Enough time must be allotted for refreshment breaks in mid-morning and mid-afternoon. The refreshments must be held in the exhibit area, which affords attendees opportunities to view the exhibits and talk with exhibitors.

The end of each day's session should be timed to avoid any clash with evening functions. A welcome/ice breaker reception is often held in the evening of registration day (Monday of conference week). An exhibitor's reception is held in the exhibit hall on the first evening of the conference (Tuesday of Conference Week). A conference dinner/buffet is usually held on the second evening of the conference (Wednesday). If this is held at a different location from the conference venue, time must be allowed for transportation of delegates to the venue.

Time should also be allocated for the MTS annual membership meeting and Award Ceremony, and OES Award Ceremony. There is no formal arrangement or fixed slot, but often they are held after plenary sessions and are usually held on different days from each other. The LOC should discuss with the Societies when is the most appropriate time to schedule them. Luncheons recently have been held as buffets in the Exhibit Hall. Sufficient time in the technical program should be allotted for these luncheons.

2.6.5 Special Technical Sessions

Special technical sessions are conducted in the same way as regular technical sessions during the conference. Experts in emerging fields or topics of special

interest may be invited to help organize a special session on a topic of relevance to them. The session organizers are responsible for soliciting paper submissions for their sessions, and for advertising their sessions. Solicited submissions should indicate the name of the session organizer in the "I was asked to submit this paper by" field during the paper proposal submission. Authors may also submit unsolicited papers to the special sessions.

The session organizer should act as a reviewer for each paper in their special session, unless they are an author on the paper or have a conflict-of-interest. The TPCC should consult the session organizers when making decisions on papers in their session, allowing them an opportunity to influence the papers that are accepted in their sessions. The session organizers are *de facto* session chairs for their sessions.

All Chair(s) and presenters to Special Sessions should register for the full conference.

2.6.6 Student Poster Competition

The student poster competition (SPC) is a regular, mandatory and prestigious component of all OCEANS conferences. The regulations and organization of the competition are covered in more detail in

- Sec 3 Student Poster Competition.

2.6.7 Regular Technical Posters

While regular technical posters have not traditionally been part of OCEANS, they have been included in a few recent conferences. The selection process for such poster submissions should follow the same procedure as that of regular technical papers. The accepted posters will be displayed in an appropriate location in the conference venue at scheduled times but one which does not conflict with the SPC posters.

2.6.8 Professional Tutorials, Workshops and Panel Discussions

The inclusion of Professional Tutorials, Workshops and Panel Discussions are welcome additions to the Technical Program. Their inclusion is optional, but they offer alternative ways of interacting and imparting information to the delegates.

Tutorials may be half- or full-day courses on a specific topic taught by experts in the field. Continuing Education Units (CEUs) may be available, depending on the course content.

Workshops are typically hands-on experiences where experts provide guidance on specific topics of interest to the OCEANS community.

Panel discussions or Town Hall Meetings provide a forum for interactive discussion on subjects of special, local or topical interest. Their success strongly depends on the choice of moderator, and so the TPC should carefully select such individuals. Moderators should ideally be well-versed with the topic of the discussion, but need not be an authority on the topic. They should, however, be good speakers, and preferably have experience in moderating panels at other conferences and events. No published documentation is provided as part of these sessions.

The procedures required for organization of tutorial, workshops and panel discussions are outlined in more detail in

- Sec 4 Professional Tutorials, Workshops and Panel Discussions

2.6.9 Speaker-ready Room and Speakers' Lounge

A speaker-ready room should be made available to authors to check their presentation slides on a computer similar to the one available in the session rooms. Authors should be able to load their presentation into the computer at the speaker-ready room in advance of their session, and this presentation should then be automatically available on the computer in the technical session room.

In order to promote a feeling of relaxed interaction between speakers and session chairs, LOCs should provide a "Speakers' Lounge" in which speakers may casually and informally relax and meet, throughout the day, with their peers and session chairs. The lounge should be furnished comfortably with teas, coffees and snacks made available all day. If possible the speaker-ready room and the lounge could be "doubled-up". This lounge has replaced the traditional "Authors' Breakfast".

2.6.10 Presenter's Equipment & Room Preparation

Each technical session room should be appropriately equipped with a lectern, a computer projector, a screen, sound system, a timer and a laser pointer for the presenter, and a table and chairs for the session chairs. The screen should be positioned so it is visible from the lectern and the session chair's table. A microphone should be mounted on the lectern, or a lavalier microphone should be provided for use by the speaker. A microphone should be provided on the session chair's table. If the room is large, a roving microphone should be provided to facilitate audience questions.

It is recommended that presenters use the PC provided as part of the AV facilities. If the presenter needs to use his/her own computer, the procedure of changing from one computer to another should be practiced before the start of the session. The LOC may recruit volunteers from local universities and colleges to provide assistance to speakers in audiovisual requirements and usage. One volunteer per room is advisable.

2.7 Author Registration Fees

The Societies' require that at least one author of a paper must attend the conference at Full Conference Registration rate and personally present the paper in the allocated technical session. This is a mandatory requirement for the paper to be included in the Technical Program and publication in IEEE Xplore. To assure compliance with this policy, a full conference registration must be paid by one of the authors at the time the paper is uploaded. A paper registration includes full delegate registration for the conference for one of the authors and can be applied to two additional papers for which that person is also an author.

Paper upload is blocked by the Web Tools until the paper registration is completed. The upload part of the website must clearly state this policy. Presentation by another delegate not listed as an author is not allowed, nor is a video or other electronic presentation acceptable *in lieu* of a personal appearance. An important exception to this rule will be if the conference is held in virtual or hybrid mode, where pre-recorded presentations will be accepted.

Students participating in the regular Technical Program must register at the appropriate student rate. However a student registration on its own cannot be used to qualify a paper for inclusion in the regular Technical Program; as indicated above, a full paper registration fee must be paid by one of the authors. A student is not allowed to present a paper unless a senior author has paid a full registration. This rule also applies to participants in the SPC Program; however, in this case, the conference covers the paper registration fee.

Exhibitor full registrations associated with the purchase of booth(s) in the Exhibit may be applied to a paper registration to qualify it for the Technical Program. In this case, no separate paper registration fee is required.

2.8 Virtual or Hybrid OCEANS

While the concept of a virtual or hybrid OCEANS is relatively new and is still in the development phase, some consideration should be given to possible operational models. Several different models have been applied to various conferences around

the world. IEEE and MTS have not adopted or recommended any preferred model. If an LOC are considering a virtual or hybrid approach they should discuss this with JOAB at the earliest opportunity.

Some presentational considerations which should be taken into account if pursuing a virtual/hybrid approach include:

- Authors should be given at least one months' time to prepare and upload their videos.
- Authors should pre-record their presentations and make them available to be streamed at pre-arranged time slots throughout the conference.
- Detailed instructions must be sent to the authors, and a quality check conducted on each uploaded video.
- Virtual events must offer the authors and audiences an opportunity to interact via some form of live chat. Instructions on how to interact should be sent to delegates in advance of the event.
- All presentations could be made available simultaneously, with Q&A sessions timetabled during the conference.

A contact should be available, at pre-arranged times, through the weblink to attend to technical difficulties that might arise during the virtual proceedings. This is especially important for live events (*e.g*. tutorials, plenaries, panel discussions), but also for pre-recorded talks and posters, so that the delegates are able to resolve any technical problems in a timely manner. As a contingency, it is recommended that as much material as possible is pre-recorded (including prepared statements that precede panel discussions and live Q&A).

3 THE OCEANS STUDENT POSTER COMPETITION

In every OCEANS Conference the SPC is one of the flagship events. Initiated in 1989 by Col. Norman Miller it has run every year since. Its overall objective is to expose students to the activities of the professional societies, provide them with opportunities to interact with working professionals and to reward them for their poster presentation skills.

The SPC is jointly overseen by the OES SPC Chair and MTS VP for Education. To assist with “on the ground” planning and execution, the LOC shall appoint a local SPC Chair, who in turn forms a local supporting committee to help with organizing the SPC. An SPC Abstract Review Panel should also be formed from the Societies list of reviewers to perform the final review of poster submissions.

Calls for SPC abstracts are announced together with the call for regular TP papers, and are reviewed alongside the TP abstract submissions. SPC submissions are not specifically identified as such to the reviewers (although students must tick a check box to indicate that they wish to be considered for the SPC). After completion of the standard TP review process, the abstracts that were submitted under the SPC program are extracted and sent to the SPC Abstract Review Panel for a second review. This Panel ranks the candidates according to their review score and the LOC TPC Chair and SPC Chair, in consultation with the Societies SPC Chairs, makes a final selection of candidates who will be invited to attend OCEANS and present their posters.

Students whose submissions have passed the initial TP review but were not selected for the SPC shall be invited to participate in either the regular conference TP (as a full delegate) or in the General Poster Session (if held) at a reduced registration fee without full delegate benefits. Their early agreement to present a regular paper should be sought in order to facilitate preparation of the Technical Program.

The LOC SPC Chair must ensure there is space for the posters in the Exhibition Hall or another high traffic location and poster boards will be placed by event staff in that location. The local SPC Chair must not make any modifications to the rules of the competition without first obtaining approval from the OES and MTS SPC Chairs and consent by JOAB. The LOC SPC Chair should ensure that the OCEANS SPC site is linked from the LOC site:

http://www.oceansstudentpostercompetition.org/index.cfm

Further information on the SPC, including poster templates and judging rubrics are given in

- [A23] Student Poster Competition Templates.docx
  https://www.oceansconference.org/OCOP v10

3.1 Financial Support for Students Participating in SPC

All students selected for the SPC are offered a complimentary full conference registration. Travel and lodging support is also provided. The amount available and the requirements for subsidy is up to the discretion of the LOC SPC Chair following approval of the Society SPC Chairs. Applicable costs include:

- Full reimbursement for budget airfare (in accordance with sponsor regulations (*e.g*. US Federal law requires that government grant recipients travel by US flagged carriers);
- Ground transportation to/from the airports of departure and arrival or parking at the airport of origin whichever is lower;
- Meals and incidentals *per diem* during travel times only (US federally approved rate);
- Lodging (up to 4 nights) at one of the recommended conference hotels (3 star) or in student accommodation. Room sharing is recommended.

The LOC SPC Chair should prepare information and instructions detailing how students are to proceed with Conference registration and travel arrangements and distribute these along with the SPC acceptance communication or shortly thereafter. The information should include the process for distributing travel support (*e.g.* receipts submitted for reimbursement or other mechanism). Any projected expenses must be approved by the LOC SPC Chair BEFORE any transactions are undertaken (this needs to be communicated to the students well in advance of their trip).

3.1.1 SPC Travel & Prize Support

An estimated cost for the SPC should be included as a line item in the Conference budget to the value of 35,000 USD to cover registration, travel and lodging expenses and also any monetary prizes (6000 USD) offered. LOCs should seek to recover these costs by way of grants or patronage packages (see Sec 6.1).

For NA OCEANS, SPC travel and lodging costs have generally been funded by a grant from the Office of Naval Research (ONR) on application by the LOC. MTS have negotiated a three year grant commitment with ONR to cover SPC travel to the NA conferences up until OCEANS 2023. MTS intends to request a follow-on grant for travel to NA conferences beyond 2023. NA LOCs do not need to request a grant from ONR to cover travel, however, since ONR cannot fund SPC Prizes, the LOC should offer this as a patronage opportunity.

For ROW conferences LOCs are encouraged to apply to the Office of Naval Research – Global (ONR-G) for funding to cover travel/lodgings for SPC students.

Note though that no regular commitment or guarantee of funding exists from this source. If no or insufficient grants/support is forthcoming LOCs should solicit funds from other bodies. Support for travel/lodging could be offered as a patronage opportunity. The Schmidt Oceans Institute has signed a grant with MTS to provide prize money for OCEANS 2021 San Diego-Porto, OCEANS 2022 Chennai, OCEANS 2023 Limerick and OCEANS 2024 Singapore. MTS/OES intends to solicit continued funding beyond 2024.

LOCs should consult with the Societies to confirm status of funding for travel/lodging and for Prize Awards for each conference. If no grants are forthcoming, OES and MTS will each underwrite SPC expenses up to a maximum of 15,000 USD from each society. Regardless of this, the LOC SPC Chair should be prepared with “reserve” funds (*e.g.* 10% of the total SPC funding) in the event that reimbursements exceed the amount of the grants awarded or contributions from the Societies.

3.2 SPC Participant Eligibility

The SPC is open to all engineering and science undergraduate and graduate students enrolled, at least half-time, in any community college, college, or university worldwide. Participants must maintain their student status throughout the SPC process (from the time of application through the actual competition). Students may participate in the SPC up to three (3) times; prize winners may not participate in any subsequent SPC.

Participants may not present the same work twice. Significant advancements in the student’s research may be presented, however slight iterations or minor advancements shall be considered as previous work and should not be re-submitted.

The SPC Chairs should check the student’s name, affiliation, poster title, and abstract to ensure that all of the above requirements have been met. Students selected to participate are provided with SPC guidelines including poster dimensions, required author information and Society and Sponsor logos and the judging rubrics (see [A23]) to help them prepare their poster presentations. Winning poster examples can be seen at:

http://www.oceansstudentpostercompetition.org/index.cfm

and rules for travel reimbursement should be provided to each SPC student participant as soon as they are accepted into the competition.

The average number of posters presented and funded is around 20 depending on availability of funding.

A student may submit only one abstract for any given SPC. Furthermore, the SPC Chair must be cognizant of multiple submissions from the same organization (university, lab *etc.*) where students' research exhibits a high degree of overlap.

Students selected to participate in the SPC are expected to follow the requirements put forth by the program. These include:

- replying to emails from the LOC SPC Chair, verifying acceptance in the program, and openly coordinating travel information;
- preparing a poster that follows the specified size and content guidelines and addresses the criteria in the scoring rubric;
- attending orientation meetings and mixers; and
- staffing their posters at the times intimated by the LOC SPC Chair or specified in the technical program.

Failure to follow all of the guidelines is grounds for disqualification from the competition, with no publication of the paper and forfeiture of reimbursement of related travel expenses.

3.3 Judging of SPC

The LOC SPC Chair in conjunction with the Societies SPC Chairs should establish a panel of judges whose members are responsible for evaluating the posters, in-person or virtually, at the OCEANS for which the posters have been accepted. Up to 6 independent expert judges shall be chosen who will personally evaluate the posters at OCEANS.

The judges shall be selected from diverse fields of expertise and based on experience to ensure sufficient coverage of the wide range of disciplines covered by shortlisted posters. In general, the recruited judges shall be knowledgeable in the fields of ocean engineering, science and/or technology. It is recommended that the pool of judges include a mix of academics and industry leaders. It is important that the judge pool be varied from conference to conference so as to avoid bias. The pool of judges needs to be identified 3 months prior to the Competition. Judges should be chosen from those who have registered to attend the conference.

The judges should be able to devote up to four hours during the conference between Monday and Wednesday to (i) meet and review the judging criteria, (ii) complete their judging duties, and (iii) attend the SPC Judges Meeting (typically on Wednesday afternoon; to be organized by the LOC SPC Chair) during which prize assignments will be discussed.

The LOC SPC Chair shall maintain regular communication with the judges prior to the Conference. These communications should include examples of winning posters

http://www.oceansstudentpostercompetition.org

and may include a pre-conference orientation (telecom or webinar). Judges should receive a copy of each SPC participant's paper as soon as it is available (typically, at least two weeks ahead of the Conference) to encourage reading prior to the Conference. The judges should be given a copy of the scoring rubric and scoring sheet at least three weeks before the Conference. Two weeks prior to the Conference, the students have to upload their posters to the OCEANS Dashboard; (see Pre-Conference Abstract Review below). Immediately following the deadline for uploading, the judges should be provided with access to these files. In addition, the LOC SPC Chair should communicate information about pre-competition meetings, daily SPC session times, judging schedules and other relevant information in advance of the Conference.

The judges are required to review all posters in the Competition. The judges should declare any conflicts of interest beforehand, and they may be allowed to excuse themselves from judging certain poster(s). During the in-person interactions during the conference, SPC participants need to limit themselves to a five minute oral explanation of their work to panel of judges. The time limit ensures an equitable and time-efficient process for evaluating all posters. Judges may elect to revisit a poster later to continue the conversation. Posters shall be evaluated using the SPC Program judging rubric and score sheet (see [A23]).

3.4 Abstract Review

The Call for Student Posters should be distributed widely to colleges and universities with ocean-related departments and curricula and take place at the same time as the general call for papers. The Call should be publicized on the Societies' and OCEANS web sites and through the Societies' newsletters and publications etc. and included in Conference announcement flyers.

As indicated earlier, poster selection occurs in two stages: the first stage takes place alongside regular reviewing of Technical Papers. In the second stage, qualifying abstracts are reviewed again by suitably experienced reviewers. This second review is based on a 100-point scale system. Each abstract will receive 5 reviews if possible. Each reviewer should not review more than 20 abstracts.

All evaluation scores will be placed into a scoring system developed by the Societies which permits sum points for each as centered normalized variable to avoid artifacts. If an abstract is accepted in the first stage and is ranked in the top 20-24 abstracts during the second stage, the associated paper is selected for inclusion in the SPC. The final determination of acceptance into the SPC is accomplished by the *OES* and *MTS* SPC Chairs and the LOC SPC Chair and takes into account not only technical

quality but also funding available, geographical distribution and other logistical parameters of the SPC participants.

The LOC SPC Chair should work with the LOC TPC to notify the students accepted for the SPC as soon as possible. See [A23] for an acceptance letter template. This letter includes detailed information and instructions on how to proceed with submitting the full paper through the Conference web site. In addition, students should be reminded that completing and uploading their papers by the specified deadline is a necessary step to obtain the complimentary registration and travel expenses. Students must include a brief biography, an endorsement by a university advisor, and a copyright release at time of upload.

In addition to a full paper, students accepted to the SPC are also required to prepare a poster (see [A23]) to be displayed and evaluated at the Conference. Two weeks prior to the Conference, the students shall be asked to upload a “pdf” of their poster to the OCEANS Conference Dashboard. During the Conference, students are required to discuss and explain their poster to the SPC Judges, and other interested Conference participants, on days/times specified by the LOC SPC chair.

The papers of the students selected for the SPC and presented at the conference will be included within the final Conference Proceedings when they are published in the IEEE Xplore database.

3.5 On-site Judging and Awards Presentation

The LOC SPC chair should hold at least one pre-competition orientation meeting for the students, which SPC judges are encouraged to attend. This orientation should review the on-site requirements, including the specific days/times that students are required to staff their posters as well as the day/time for the SPC award ceremony. During the orientation meeting, the students should present a strictly-timed 5-minute talk (oral only, no props or presentations) describing the work presented in their poster. This serves to give any judges present an insight, and may facilitate formulation of appropriate questions to be asked during the actual poster sessions.

In addition, prior to the actual judging, the LOC SPC chair should arrange an onsite meeting with the SPC judges, preferably just prior to the meeting with the participating students, to review the scoring rubric and score sheet, answer any questions or provide clarification, and review the scheduled judging days/times.

The LOC SPC Chair should ensure that the posters will be located in a high traffic area in the Exhibit Hall or other high traffic area if space is limited in the Exhibit Hall.

The students must be present at their poster at all coffee and lunch breaks from afternoon of conference day 1 through to afternoon of day 3 (or as advised at introductory meeting). If students are not present at their posters during these times, their poster may be removed from the competition, and therefore their paper will not be published and they lose eligibility for reimbursement for the expenses they incurred traveling to OCEANS.

Monetary prizes (see Sec 3.2.2 above for pertinent funding details) are to be awarded to the top three (first, second and third) posters. The prizes are to be distributed in amounts equivalent to 3,000 USD for first place (the *OES Norman Miller Award*), 2,000 USD for second place and 1,000 USD for third place. The monetary awards and plaques as well as certificates of participation are presented to the students during a Conference banquet or other suitable time to be advised.

3.6 Post-conference Follow-up

The LOC SPC chair must ensure possession of receipts and must process the claim for any outstanding student travel reimbursements immediately following the Conference - provided that the student has respected the SPC rules. In addition, a notice announcing the winners of the SPC should be widely distributed (to colleges, universities, conference patrons, funding agencies, etc.) and publicized on the Societies' web sites and through the Societies' newsletters and other publications.

Other follow-ups include thank-you notes to the SPC Judges and funding agency(s) and ensuring any final reports to funders are submitted in a timely fashion.

3.7 SPC Timeline and checklist

A detailed timeline and checklist of action items to be followed by the LOC SPC Chair is given in [A23].

4 PROFESSIONAL TUTORIALS, WORKSHOPS AND PANEL DISCUSSIONS

Professional tutorials, workshops and panel discussions are a fundamental element of an OCEANS Conference. The Conference should include a series of Tutorial Sessions and Workshops in accordance with the theme of the conference and in areas of science and technology relevant to OCEANS. The LOC shall appoint a Tutorials and Workshops Chair (TWC) to develop and organize the tutorial and workshop program. The TWC reports to the LOC chair, but coordinates with the TPC and also with the OES Tutorials Supervisor at the outset of the planning process.

Tutorial and Workshops are traditionally held on Monday, the day before the formal opening of the conference, but can be held on other days on the recommendation of the LOC and approval of JOAB.

4.1 Professional Tutorials

Tutorials are essentially special classes delivered by an “expert” which describe the fundamental elements of a particular area of science or technology. They may be presented as either full or half-day tutorials.

Tutorial proposals should be requested in the same “Call for Papers” as that for Technical Papers and Student Posters. A proposal should include a 500-word abstract of the topic. The abstract should explain the utility of the tutorial and the intended audience; it should indicate if a half-day or full-day session is intended. An outline of the material to be presented should accompany the abstract. Tutorial proposals should also include a 250-word biography of the instructor.

One of the main benefits of offering Professional Tutorials is that attendees can acquire Continuing Education Units (CEU) for an accreditation tutorial which assists the attendee in career development.

The following forms are needed for a particular tutorial to be registered with IEEE to obtain CEUs:

- Application/Registration with IEEE – one form is needed for each tutorial to be given. The OES Tutorials Supervisor will work with the LOC TWC to complete these forms at least 2 weeks before the tutorial date.
  [A24] Tutorial Application – EXAMPLE.pdf
  https://www.oceansconference.org/OCOP v10
- “IEEE Accreditable Roster Form” – completed by the LOC TWC based on the collection of Rosters for each tutorial (distributed and collected by the

Instructor at the end of the session). This lists the attendees who wish to obtain CEUs.
[A25] Tutorial Accreditable Roster Table-Template.xlsx
https://www.oceansconference.org/OCOP v10

- "IEEE Tutorial Evaluation Form" - completed by each participant who is registered for CEUs, distributed and collected by the Instructor at end of the session.
  [A26] IEEE Continuing Education Course Evaluation.docx
- https://www.oceansconference.org/OCOP v10

The cost of CEU registration (at 5 USD per attendee) is normally shared between the Societies. Attendees that have paid a Full registration fee for the Conference will be charged 10 USD per tutorial for CEU credits. General information on the IEEE Certificates Program is given at
https://www.ieee.org/education/certificates

There is often a large variation in attendance of tutorials from year-to-year (independent of topic area and speaker). Popular tutorials may be provided from conference to conference, although care is needed to avoid recurrent repetition and ensure novelty/diversity. The OES Tutorials Supervisor shall keep a record of presenters and attendee statistics concerning past Tutorials. The LOC TWC shall engage with the OES Tutorials Supervisor at an early stage to be assisted regarding the choice of tutorials to offer. The LOC TWC will provide basic statistics regarding the number of attendees per tutorial and number of attendees requesting CEUs to the OES Tutorials Supervisor. Tutorials that attract fewer than 4 participants may be cancelled. Attendees registered for cancelled tutorials should be offered the choice of transferring to another tutorial or a full refund of tutorial fee, if any.

The cost of photocopies and room equipment is borne by the conference, but instructors should pay for their own travel and lodging expenses.

The LOC should sign a contract with the Instructor(s) agreeing the Rights and Responsibilities of both parties and detail the kind of compensation they will receive (*e.g.* free/discounted conference registration). A template for formal contracts is available in

- [A27] Tutorials Contract Template.docx
  https://www.oceansconference.org/OCOP v10

Registration for the tutorials is handled by the conference registration site.

Table 4.1: Tutorials Registration Fees for non-Full registration attendees

	Early Half/Full	Late Half/Full
Members	175/250 USD	200/275 USD
Non-members	200/300 USD	225/350 USD
Students	175/250 USD	200/275 USD

4.1.1 Tutor Compensation and Registration Fees

Tutorial registration is included in the Full Conference Registration fee, tutors receive a discount on their Full Registration.

In addition, a fee of 10 USD per tutorial shall be applied for attendees requiring CEUs (this allows for the IEEE registration fee of 5 USD per tutorial) and have paid a full registration fee. All other types of attendees registered for the conference shall pay a fee for tutorial registration as per Table 4.1. Instructors are provided with a 50% discount on a full registration for half-day tutorials and a 100% discount on a full registration for full-day tutorials. If there is more than one Instructor per tutorial, the discount shall be divided equally amongst Instructors. This model shall take into account financial implications for the whole budget. In particular, the cost and number of rooms available on the Tutorials day and the cost of any F&B offered to attendees. It is not mandatory for F&B to be offered to Tutorials attendees. However LOCs may choose to offer light refreshments, but these should be budgeted for accordingly. This information shall be transmitted to attendees.

4.2 Workshops

There is no standard template or format for a workshop. They are typically, though, hands-on experiences where experts provide guidance and tuition on specific topics of interest to the OCEANS community.

Workshops can be scheduled for the same day as Tutorials (Monday before the Conference begins or at some suitable time throughout the conference week). Fees for Workshops would normally be set at the same level as for Professional Tutorials. They are otherwise part of the Technical Program. However, no CEUs are offered for attendance at Workshops. Any content that may be perceived as more “commercial” than “educational” cannot be presented in a Tutorial, but may be more suitable for presentation as a Workshop. A Workshop does not produce published papers and might include oral presentations, discussion, or be in some other free-form.

Proposals for Workshops plans should be made through the LOC.

A typical Workshop which has run at several NA OCEANS is the OCEANS K-12 Workshop and this may serve as a model for new workshop proposals.

OCEANS K12 Workshop Series

The OCEANS K-12 Workshop is an annual event sponsored by MTS and OES on the Saturday preceding any NA OCEANS.

The workshop is offered to approximately 30 local educators of 6-12 year-olds, depending on meeting space availability and budget. The workshop normally lasts from 9 am to 3 pm, however the schedule does vary. There are normally 1 to 2 guest speakers and three break-out sessions featuring a marine technology demonstration, and through the course of the day the teachers rotate through the activities. Catering is required to provide the participants a light breakfast and lunch.

Participants receive a certificate of participation for the day recording the number of hours (professional development) received.

4.3 Panel Discussions and Town Hall Meetings

Panel discussions or Town Hall Meetings are a welcome addition to the technical program. They can provide a forum for interactive discussion on topics of special, local or topical interest and are distinct from Professional Tutorials and Workshops. They are normally composed of a distinguished panel of experts drawn from the wider academic and professional body and an audience of interested parties

5 OCEANS BUDGET AND FINANCE

The LOC will include a FC who should be familiar with accounting processes and financial report preparation as well as being skillful in the use of spreadsheets and accounting software.

IEEE-OES and MTS shall jointly assist in financing the Conference by providing equal advance loans. The amount and schedule for loans shall be indicated in the Conference Plan and Budget. All loans shall be documented and entered into the Conference accounting record. All loans shall also be included in the Conference financial records. After repayment of the loans, OES and MTS shall share the net surplus or loss from the Conference on an equal basis.

Sharing of surplus/loss with local or regional entities of IEEE and MTS shall be arranged independently by each Society with its associated participating entities.

The IEEE conference management department has developed a series of financial guidelines to assist conference organizers. The FC is encouraged to familiarize him/herself with these guidelines and adopt those that are practical and relevant to an OCEANS. These guidelines can be found at:

https://ieeemce.org/planning-basics/

The reader is cautioned that these IEEE guidelines apply to both NA and ROW OCEANS. OCEANS held in NA have exceptions to these guidelines which are in this document. For example, NA conferences utilize a PCO that is responsible for all accounting processes and MTS provides the checking account for the conference rather than utilizing the IEEE checking account as described in the guidelines.

5.1 Budget

The FC and designated assistants shall prepare a Conference Budget showing revenue, expense, surplus, cash flow, and the extent of advance funds required. The following template must be used to create the budget:

https://ieeemce.org/wp-content/uploads/financial-reporting-tool.xlsx

The selected local group shall submit a Conference Budget to JOAB as part of the Conference Plan outlining anticipated expenditures and revenue. This budget must show a projected revenue that is at least 120% of projected expenses.

Once approved by JOAB, the budget should be forwarded to the PCO (NA Conferences) and IEEE (all Conferences) at the following URL:

http://www.ieee.org/conferences_events/conferences/organizers/conf_app.html?pageType=finance

The approved budgets serve as the limitation to spending authority within an overall constraint of 10%. The expenditures by budget line item will be reviewed periodically by the Society Treasurers. Budget revisions, if appropriate, must be approved by the Societies' Treasurers.

5.2 Conference Seed Funding (Society Loans)

Seed money in the form of a loan will be provided in equal amounts from IEEE-OES and MTS. These loans are to be paid back to each society from conference cash flow and do not form part of the conference revenue or expenses for the purposes of calculating conference surpluses. Under no circumstances is a conference authorized to borrow or accept a loan from any other person, party or entity. Should the need arise, requests for additional funding should be submitted to JOAB through the society liaisons.

5.3 Bank Account

For NA OCEANS, a bank account shall be established by MTS in the Conference name no later than two years before the Conference date.

For ROW Conferences an appropriate bank account will be established by the LOC in a similar timeframe. Authority to disburse funds shall be limited to the Conference General Chair or the Conference Finance Chair or such members of both Societies as they shall designate. IEEE requires three signatories with any two able to sign checks for disbursement. The third would normally be IEEE Headquarters. For NA Conferences, the PCO will be responsible for disbursing checks after appropriate written authority.

For NA OCEANS, there must be at least one IEEE and one MTS executive as a signing authority on the account(s) in addition to the LOC FC and PCO representative. There is a requirement for a minimum of two persons to sign checks. For clarity, this is an internal control feature to ensure concurrence on expenses being paid and not an attempt at equal society representation. As such, the two persons can be both MTS members, both OES members, or one from each society. For ROW OCEANS only IEEE need to be a signatory.

All NA OCEANS must have a named bank account established by MTS to facilitate the PCO financial responsibilities. The key to banking for OCEANS is that accounts must be exclusive to the conference they were created for. Payment gateway and

merchant services accounts must also be exclusive to the conference they serve. No transactions for any other purpose should appear or move through these accounts; nor should conference related transactions move through any other account(s) but those created exclusively for conference operations.

While it is not necessary to maintain only one bank account, FC are cautioned that if more than one is maintained, all of the reporting and bank reconciliations must also be maintained and provided for audit at the appropriate time.

Bank account arrangements for ROW OCEANS should be decided on a case-by-case basis by JOAB. In many jurisdictions, a domestic bank account and/or a PCO managed account is the best option.

Officers of the Societies must be cautious about signing on foreign bank accounts because of possible tax consequences.

5.4 Oceans Reserve Account Travel Fund

A special fund has been established to cover OCEANS travel expenses incurred by members of RECON, JOAB, and by Liaisons while developing future OCEANS conferences. Each Society contributes 10% of the current year's OCEANS surplus into a special fund held at MTS. The VP OCEANS and the MTS President shall approve all such travel or awards prior to any expenditure. All expense reports shall be prepared in accordance to MTS travel policies and submitted to MTS for reimbursement. The fund can also be used to supplement Student Poster Awards if a sponsor is not found.

5.5 Financial Reporting

Interim financial reports shall be generated monthly for NA Conferences by the PCO and at least quarterly for ROW conferences by the LOC Finance Chair. These reports are to be sent to Societies' Treasurers and Conference Liaisons to keep the sponsors cognizant of the financial condition of the conference. This should be done using the standard IEEE Financial Reporting Tool which shall be obtained from JOAB.

5.6 Account Reconciliations

For NA OCEANS the PCO will be responsible for reconciling the conference bank accounts with registration and exhibitor receipts and conference expenses. The bank reconciliation(s) should be prepared monthly and should be accompanied by printed bank, payment gateway and merchant services statements. For ROW Conferences,

the FC shall be responsible for all reconciliations; this should be done at least quarterly, but not less than monthly in the three months leading up the Conference start. Copies of all accounting reconciliations shall be saved for audit purposes.

5.7 Audit

An external Audit firm or IEEE MCE shall be engaged to complete a final audit of the revenue and expenditures of the Conference no later than 6 months after the last day of the conference. No member of the Audit group shall have authority to disburse Conference funds.

The following list of documents must be retained and forwarded to the auditor at the end of the conference:

- All original signed contracts and agreements between the conference and supporting societies
- All original and signed contracts, agreements and/or quotations between the conference and suppliers including but not limited to the hotels, conference center, audio visual suppliers, food and beverage, PCO(s) and entertainers
- All invoices, expense claims or other supporting documents paid with a copy of the check produced to pay it attached. Electronic copies of such documents without paper back up are acceptable. It is expected that the Finance Chair will have a high degree of assurance the sender of electronic documents they receive for reimbursement are legitimate from a bona fide sender.
- All bank statements with cancelled checks attached if so provided by the bank
- All bank reconciliations prepared by the Finance Chair spanning the entire period bank account(s) were open
- A copy of the final program for the conference
- All original exhibitor agreements
- Exhibitor Fee receipts reconciliations to conference exhibitor reporting
- All original patron agreements
- Delegate registration supporting documentation (should be provided by the PCO) or from Webtools
- Delegate Registration Fee receipts reconciliations to conference attendance reporting
- Conference Plan, including Conference budget
- Grant agreement(s), if any, including any amendments
- List of conference committee members and position on committee
- Summary of Conference Manager’s (CMS) accounting records (i.e. receipts and disbursements)

- If PCO, Treasurer's/Finance Chair's accounting records (i.e. receipts journal and disbursement journal) are maintained on an Excel spreadsheet, please provide an electronic copy.
- All documentary evidence and correspondence relating to barter deals and their equivalent cash value. For example, exhibit space offered free of charge in exchange for advertising in trade magazines or deep discounts on exhibit space and social function tickets and the like to conference patrons. Note: A proper entry for barter agreements should be included in the conference financial statements. Such entries should be clearly identified as barter related transactions.

5.8 Insurance

Property and Liability Insurance and bonding shall be provided by the Societies for the Conference and shall meet the minimum coverage required by each Society. Existing Society insurance policies shall be used as insurance coverage for the event. In addition, event cancellation insurance shall be procured by the PCO to cover any losses due to an event cancellation.

5.9 Registration Fees

5.9.1 Registration Fee Structure

The Registration Fees which should be applied to any given OCEANS Conference are calculated in accordance with the formulae outlined in

- [A28] Fee Schedule for OCEANS.docx
  https://www.oceansconference.org/OCOP v10

In applying these formulae please note that:

1. Base registration fee will be the Member Advance Full Registration fee
2. All other fees will be a function of the base registration fee
3. All fees that are a percent of another fee have been rounded to the nearest 5 USD or in equivalent currency (not rounded up to the next 5 USD)
4. All fees are in US dollars,

In addition:

1. Non-member full conference registration fees are to be at least $75 greater than society member (OES and MTS) registration fees.
2. Registration fees for members of the two sponsoring societies should be lower than those for non- members. Participating societies may be selected to help advertise the Conference in their publications, with their members allowed to register for the Conference at member rates.

3. IEEE Life members and MTS Emeritus and Life members must be offered reduced registration at the equivalent lowest student rate.
4. Registration as a student should be granted only to those who can prove they are enrolled in a degree program at an accredited institution and are currently taking a full course load towards their degree/qualification. A significant registration discount should be provided to students to attend technical sessions and the exhibits. Such reduced registration does not include any social functions but does include the Proceedings
5. ROW OCEANS should be conducted in the local currency. This will help to protect against losses due to foreign currency fluctuation.
6. JOAB will provide a schedule of fees in USD that the LOC should convert to their local currency at the then current exchange rates.

5.9.2 Complimentary Registration and Accommodation

Where appropriate the LOC may offer complimentary or discounted registration (and if appropriate accommodation and travel) to specified individuals. However, such concessions need to be individually justified, should be awarded sparingly, be in keeping with the agreed conference budget, and shall be approved by JOAB and MTS VP B&F and VP OCEANS.

Particular individuals who may qualify for such concessions include:

- Local Dignitaries
- Plenary Speakers and invited Keynote Speakers
- Selected key members of the LOC

Complimentary registrations will not be offered to paper presenters or session chairs. Society Liaisons are not considered to be part of the LOC and should not be offered complimentary registration. Their fees should be supported by the Society they represent in accordance with their Societies' regulations.

Often the PCO will have negotiated a number of complimentary hotel rooms as part of an accommodation package with the hotels. The PCO should ensure with the FC and Local Arrangements Chair that such rooms are allocated preferentially to those from the list above.

5.9.3 VAT and Other Tax Rebates

Some jurisdictions offer a rebate of VAT and other local taxes paid on what may be deemed a foreign conference. The FC is responsible for investigating any local jurisdiction rebates that may be available and submitting claims for such refunds promptly after the conference close.

5.9.4 Society Related Expenses

Often the Societies will incur overhead expenses related to a Conference. Examples are rooms required for OES AdCom and MTS Board Meetings; OSC and RECON/JOAB meetings together with any related expenses such as beverages and Audio-visual (AV) facilities. Such expenses are invoiced separately to the respective Society for reimbursement prior to the Conference closing for NA OCEANS. For ROW OCEANS these costs are excluded when calculating the net proceed distribution. Joint meeting expenses such as the OSC, JOAB, RECON is shared between each Society.

5.10 Final Financial Reporting Deadline

The LOC FC is responsible for providing any and all financial reports and related form submission and applications to IEEE, OES and MTS (where applicable). Table 5.1, while not exhaustive, will give an indication of the variety of submissions required and their related timing.

Table 5.1 Budget reporting schedule

When	What	How
Upon receipt of MOU from IEEE	Establish CBA for receipt and disbursement of conference funds	NA OCEANS: MTS VP B&F for an MTS CBA ROW OCEANS: local bank account with IEEE/MTS/PCO officials as signatories
Upon receipt of MOU	Budget approval	OES Treasurer and MTS VP B&F
CBA(s) opened, signatories assigned	Request and obtain loans from OES and MTS	Contact OES Treasurer and MTS VP B&F
24 mo before start	Submit pre-conference forecast for review by OES and MTS	OCEANS IEEE financial reporting tool; review by OES Treasurer & MTS Executive Director
By November 30th each calendar year	Submit pre-conference forecast to IEEE	Complete IEEE Financial Web form use recent pre-conference forecast
24-18 mo before start date	Review insurance, ensure adequate covers	IEEE Insurance for additional coverage
24-18 mo before start	Review tax information, ensure IRS and international compliance	Contact IEEE Tax Compliance & Administration; VAT & HST/GST (Harmonized Sales Tax; Goods & Services Tax)
12 mo before start	Submit pre-conference forecast; review by OES and MTS	OCEANS IEEE financial reporting tool; review by OES Treasurer & MTS Executive Director
By November 30th, each calendar year	Submit pre- conference forecast to IEEE	Complete the IEEE Financial Web form; using recent pre-conference forecast
Between set up and close of conference	Complete relevant IEEE forms/reports; e.g. W-8 & W-9, 1099 & 1042; Schedule of Payments; report on foreign bank accounts	NA OCEANS: submit to MTS accounting prior to year-end. ROW OCEANS: contact IEEE Conference Finance
12-9 mo before start	Submit application for publications rebate	IEEE Website or contact IEEE Conference Publications Management
6-4 w before start	Submit pre-conference forecast	OCEANS IEEE financial reporting tool; review by OES Treasurer & MTS VP B&F
During Conference	Request real-time reporting	Monitor registration and conference budget. Lend any and all finance and related support

20 d after conference	Registration clean up	Process refunds, receipts and balances due
1 mo after	Process outstanding bills	
2 mo after	Submit post-conference forecast; review by OES and MTS	OCEANS IEEE financial reporting tool; forward to OES Treasurer & MTS Executive Director
2 mo after	Repay all loans	Checks to OES Treasurer and MTS VP B&F
2 mo after	Submit application for any applicable tax rebates	Contact local tax authority
No later than 3 mo after conference	Submit audit material to independent auditor	Contact OES Treasurer & MTS VP B&F to assign an independent auditor
No later than 4 mo after conference	Submit final audit report and final financial report	Submit to OES Treasurer and MTS VP B&F; complete IEEE Finance Web form
No later than 5 mo after	Distribute surplus	Wire funds to IEEE and MTS (request wire instructions from OES Treasurer and MTS VP B&F
No later than 6 mo after	Submit final audit report and final financial report	Submit to OES Treasurer and MTS VP B&F; complete IEEE Finance Web form

The following forms need to be completed by contracted vendors. Vendors outside the United States of America must submit a W8 form to IEEE. A W-9 form should be completed by US Tax Payers.

Templates for W-8 and W-9 forms are given in

- [A29] W-8 & W-9 Form Templates.docx
  https://www.oceansconference.org/OCOP v10

6 EXHIBIT/PATRONAGE SALES AND PLANNING

Exhibit/Patronage Planning for OCEANS is primarily the remit of the appointed PCO (regardless of conference location, NA or ROW). In NA OCEANS, PCO duties are carried out by MCI-USA (through 2024). In ROW, the PCO is appointed on the recommendation of the LOC to carry out these duties. Much of the guidance included here relates to NA OCEANS, but differences in procedure between NA and ROW OCEANS will be highlighted as they arise.

To ensure that local considerations and the experience of the LOC are taken into account, the LOC should be engaged in these procedures from the outset. The LOC shall appoint an Exhibit and Patronage Chair (EPC) to liaise with and work alongside the PCO to promote sales of exhibit booths and organize the exhibit venue and solicit patrons. LOC Chairs can provide personal industrial contacts, particularly local companies who may not be regular OCEANS exhibitors, to the PCO for an active sales effort.

LOC Chairs should focus on passing “warm leads”, client and industry relationships to PCO for an active sales effort. These handoffs can happen via email or through a list of company names and contact information. It is recommended that the LOC focus on companies local to the region that may not be a typical year-to-year exhibitor of OCEANS.

6.1 Patronage

In NA, Patron Packages are negotiated and offered by the PCO. All such packages shall be guided by, and agreed with, JOAB. The LOC will be advised and consulted in the offering of such packages. In ROW, the PCO and LOC develop a series of packages to be offered to potential patrons and sponsors. These need approval from JOAB.

Patronage opportunities can include both packaged deliverables with booth space and *a la carte* items such as delegate-bags, lanyards, WiFi, venue centric branding and receptions. LOCs must verify with PCO about pending First Rights of Refusals for patron *a la carte* opportunities and must not promise such deals to future exhibitors/patrons through verbal agreements or trades. LOCs should, however, “brainstorm” and plan on what sponsorship opportunities can take place with a local/regional feel. In NA OCEANS a la carte opportunities shall be agreed to between the PCO and LOC and offered to potential patrons or sponsors.

6.2 Soliciting Exhibitors

The PCO, in collaboration with the EPC, creates and maintains the floor plan inventory system, executes exhibit contracts and provide detailed monthly sales/prospect reports to the GC(s), FC(s), VP OCEANS and VP B&F.

For NA conferences, the PCO will begin exhibitor solicitation approximately 12 months before the Conference. In collaboration with the LOC, the PCO will develop an Exhibit & Patron Prospectus, which details pricing and opportunities for participation. The initial exhibitor booking process begins onsite at the previous year's conference. The PCO will have a Sales Office in the back of the exhibit hall and will actively work to secure exhibitor contracts.

For ROW conferences, there is some benefit in the PCO starting the exhibitor/patronage planning stage 24 months before the conference date. This is especially true if the appointed PCO and potential patrons/exhibitors have little experience and knowledge of the OCEANS brand.

The PCO will take the lead on Exhibit Sales, including outbound communications (such as phone calls and direct emails). The PCO will provide monthly reports to LOC/JOAB and liaisons with updates on contract sales, payments, pending sales and highlights on company outreach. PCO will house all exhibitor and prospect data and work with Societies to ensure updated list management.

Exhibitors from other ocean-related conferences, such as Underwater Intervention, OTC, Underwater Technology and Oceanology International shall also be solicited. Dependent on budget and LOC approval, a member of the PCO sales team will attend competing shows to prospect for OCEANS. Under no circumstances will "suitcasing" by the PCO sales team be allowed (see Sec 6.7).

6.3 Exhibit Management

The design and layout of the exhibit hall will be crafted by the PCO based on OCEANS history and industry standards. Location of the exhibit hall should be considered when selecting the venue giving it prime placement at the facility.

An Exhibitor Information Kit providing full information for potential exhibitors shall be provided 90 days before the conference. The kit shall include information such as costs for exhibiting, order forms the exhibit floor plan, registration and housing links.

6.4 Exhibitors Registration

Each exhibitor booth shall include one Full Delegate Conference Registration (Exhibitor Full Registration) and up to four (4) “booth only” registrations (Exhibitor Booth Only) per 10 ft x10 ft (3 m x 3 m) booth or patron (sponsorship) level. A further two (2) booth-only registrations are offered per 10 ft x10 ft (3 m x 3 m) additional booth space.

An Exhibitor Full Registration includes tickets to all social events, with the option of purchasing additional guest tickets for the events and access to the technical sessions. An Exhibitor “Booth Only” registration includes access to all hall activities.

6.5 Policies for Special Booths

“Exhibits Only” registration facilitates Exhibitor’s desires to meet with invited clients during the conference. An Exhibits Only registration is available through Registration. There is no charge for such registrations, but registrants are not allowed attendance at the technical sessions nor at any of the social events outside of hall activities.

Additional Exhibitor Full Registrations may be included with a booth as negotiated with the PCO, or Exhibits chair in consultation with PCO, in exchange for some financial consideration from the exhibitor.

Exhibit space is often provided free-of-charge in exchange for advertising or other services (media barters). Examples of some special booth policies follow:

- Barter deals with magazines – It has always been a practice of related industry publications (Sea Technology, Underwater Magazine, Ocean News & Technology, etc.) to receive free exhibit space in exchange for full page advertising in their publications. As a minimum, two full-page advertisements are expected prior to the conference. Many of the publications will also provide pre- and post- conference articles if provided by the LOC.
- Barter trade-for-booth at another conference (Society or LOC): One of the best methods to promote the conference is to trade exhibit space with other related conferences. This is usually done on a one-for-one space trade basis.
- Complimentary booths for OES and MTS: The sponsoring societies shall always have side-by-side booths. They shall ideally be located in a prime spot and arranged to show the cooperation between the sponsoring societies.
- Complimentary booths for upcoming OCEANS conferences: In addition to the Society complementary booths, the next four OCEANS conferences (2 years) will each be provided with a fully outfitted booth, alongside the Society booths, to market their conference.

- Companies who are also patrons: Special-priced exhibit space can be provided to Patrons. This should be documented in the patron packages agreed with the PCO.

6.6 Exhibit Space

Recommended elements of the required Exhibit Space:

- Demonstration area: such displays can add to the quality of the exhibits but should not distract from the exhibits or exhibitor foot traffic. They should be intended as an enticement to visit the exhibits.
- Student Poster Area: The student posters shall be on display for attendee viewing, and also for judging, in the exhibit hall. The 20 or so posters usually take up a space equivalent to 2-3 exhibit booths. The SPC area should be separate from the Student Poster Only area. Depending on space allocation this could also be located in a foyer near the exhibit hall
- Exhibitor Lounge: It is recommended that the exhibitor-only-lounge have tables, chairs, and refreshments throughout the day (based on hall hours) where the exhibitors can relax. This may be offered as a patronage opportunity.
- F&B Breaks: These shall be provided at multiple locations throughout the exhibit hall.
- An Exhibitors' Reception shall be held in the exhibit hall on the open day of exhibits. The F&B station placement during the Exhibitors' Reception shall promote movement throughout the exhibit hall.
- Exhibitor Theatre/Innovation Theater: A theater in the Exhibit Hall can provide a forum for Exhibitors to present 20 to 45-minute commercial presentations to an audience attending the Exhibits and consider pre booking delegates to each presentation. These theater slots are sold opportunities. The walls of the theatre must reduce sound from interfering with conversations outside the theatre, and theatres should be located ideally at one end of the exhibit hall This is provided by MCI-USA in their patron packages. ROW PCOs should consider offering this.
- Loud music prevents interaction between exhibitor and delegate and should be discouraged.

6.7 "Suitcasing" and Unauthorized Audio/Visual Recording

"Suitcasing" refers to those companies and persons who attend the OCEANS conference, and "work the aisles" from their suitcase (briefcase) and solicit business, or attendance for competing conferences in the aisles, conference areas, or hotels. Only contracted exhibitors are permitted to promote their competing conferences, products, services, or company at the OCEANS conference. All company promotion

and product sampling must occur within the contracted booth space. This includes, but is not limited to, handing out flyers, approaching exhibitor booths to see products, and leaving and/or distributing produce information in public spaces and show floor aisles. Exhibitors found doing so will be asked to leave the show and forfeit their badge; materials left will be confiscated and disposed of properly. Attendees who violate this policy will be asked to leave the show and forfeit their badge. Additional penalties may apply. Any “suitcasers” observed by either exhibitors and/or attendees should be reported to the show management immediately.

Photography for personal use and social media use is permitted throughout OCEANS – this includes oral and poster sessions, public lectures, Town Halls, plenaries and keynotes – unless the presenter has expressed the option to be excluded.

Permission is understood to be granted with the following exceptions:

- The presenter has affixed a “no photo” image provided by OCEANS to the poster or the presentation; or their own “no photo” image or language.
- The presenter, and/or the convener on behalf of the presenter, explicitly states to the audience the preference for no photography. Understanding that attendees come in and out of the room during sessions, OCEANS recommends that presenters affix the “no photo” image on all slides to ensure that attendees are aware of the presenter’s preference.
- When a photograph of a presenter, a presenter’s slides, or a presenter’s poster is shared on social media or elsewhere, the presenter must be identified by name.
- Attendees are expected to honor the preference of any presenter who has indicated “no photo.” OCEANS will enforce this expectation.

Other considerations:

- Please be respectful and considerate of others and do not use flash, block attendees view of presenters when capturing photos, or otherwise disrupt presentations.
- Do not photograph individuals under 18 years of age without explicit verbal or written permission of a parent or guardian. If in doubt, ask.
- OCEANS may hire professional service providers (photo/video/audio) to document and display the event. By attending the event, you acknowledge and agree that (i) OCEANS may edit and use footage it captures at the event for marketing and promotional activities and for any other lawful purpose in the ordinary course of its business; (ii) MTS and IEEE-OES disclaim all liability for the capture of your image in any multimedia format by other attendees at the event.

6.8 National Pavilions

It will often be the case that an umbrella exhibit space will be bought by a national trade body or government economic agency to promote companies from that country. This will usually be “space only”. The national agency is then likely to resell this space to individual companies, often at a reduced or subsidized rate. Such national pavilion options should be actively sought, to raise the profile of the exhibition, and occupy larger areas of the exhibit hall. The PCO will liaise with current and past Exhibit Chairs to establish best contacts for such pavilions.

7 MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

7.1 Marketing and Promotion

The marketing and promotions strategy for the OCEANS conference is developed and executed by the PCO (MCI-USA in NA OCEANS) and in consultation with the LOC. The marketing plan should incorporate key messaging and tactics to reach both owned audiences (society members, past attendees) and unowned audiences (event prospects within relevant industries). As deemed strategically necessary and within budget, tactics executed by PCO may include but are not limited to:

- Barter Partnerships
- Advertising
- Organic and Paid Social Media
- Influencers/Brand Ambassadors
- Email Marketing
- Direct Mail
- Search Engine Optimization (SEO)
- Search Engine Marketing (SEM)
- Content Marketing
- Public Relations
- Website

7.1.1 The Role of the LOC

For development of the plan and key messages about the conference, the PCO marketing team depends on the LOC to provide in partnership with the PCO events team:

- Conference theme for a particular OCEANS
- Measurable conference goals (*e.g.* attendance goals)
- Conference Content
    - Trends, topics to highlight
    - Technical Sessions and Plenary Keynotes
    - Location context

Members of the LOC are uniquely qualified to speak to the appeal of OCEANS to prospective attendees and are therefore asked to contribute in an authentic way to the marketing efforts. LOC members not only speak in the “language” of their peers but are also aware of the location specifics that can illuminate the event experience.

The LOC can help expand the reach of marketing efforts in several ways:

- Social media – Share conference information on personal social media channels and within social media groups.
- Content development – Prepare content about the conference to help promote it, *i.e*. articles, press releases, blog posts, photos, testimonial videos.
- Grassroots Marketing – Meet with local organizations to share the significance of the international conference to their organizations and communities. PCO can support these efforts with marketing collateral as budgeted.
- Networking – Leverage industry relationships, specifically local, to assist with exhibit/patronage and pass along contacts to PCO sales team
- Prospect lists – Share qualified prospective attendee lists with PCO for adding to conference marketing audiences.

LOC will develop the conference theme (tagline). PCO will present LOC with options to be used graphically on the website, in promotions, as well as onsite (signage, etc.) The goal is to continue to solidify the overall OCEANS brand versus location-specific monikers.

7.2 Communications

The recent average of member attendees (2018-2020) having either MTS or OES membership at an NA OCEANS is about 36% (compiled by MCI-USA). This maybe lower when OCEANS is in ROW. Publicity that reaches non-members is especially important. People active in Government, Industry Public Affairs, Public Relations, Press, and ocean magazines should be solicited to assist in a Publicity Campaign.

Since the recent growth in the use of all-electronic communications and publication at OCEANS, the use of printed publications and collateral has been minimal. The mainstream of information is through the Website, email marketing and targeted advertisements via social media and online/web. Nevertheless, some information is still distributed in paper form, including publicity flyers/brochures. The following printed publications should be produced:

- A conference announcement (preview flyer) that LOC members can distribute at industry events, *etc*. Direct recruitment of papers and attendance by LOC leaders when they speak at other conferences and meetings is particularly effective.
- Posters and flyers should be available at pertinent conferences.
- Abbreviated Onsite Program (Including schedule at a glance, general conference information and advertisements)

The PCO is also responsible for planning and executing a publicity campaign and preparing press releases, as well as managing press onsite during the live event. The PCO will develop a full marketing campaign and calendar.

Table 7.1 Marketing & Promotions Planning Schedule

Time before OCEANS	Tasks	Action
18 mo	Determine conference theme/tagline	LOC
14 mo	Present proposed event graphics	PCO
12 mo	Create overall marketing plan and calendar	PCO
12 mo	Ask magazines to place notice of Conference in Calendar of Events	PCO
12 mo	Prepare and publish Conference announcement for distribution at preceding conferences	PCO
12 mo	Develop web site layout and open web site	PCO
12 to 6 mo	Prepare advertisements to appear in selected industry publications	PCO
12 mo	Meet with local organizations to share the significance of the international conference to their organizations and communities	Liaisons
12 to 4 mo	Place advertisements in selected magazines *possibly in exchange for exhibit space*	PCO

7.3 Conference Surveys

The PCO and LOC will employ a series of delegate and exhibitor surveys aimed at assessing and tracking the experience of OCEANS delegate and exhibitors. Surveys to be conducted include:

- Technical Session Summary : monitors the quality of the Technical Presentations and the number of “no shows”.
- Conference Summary: monitors overall experience of delegates at OCEANS
- Exhibitor Summary: monitors the experience of exhibitors in exhibiting at OCEANS.

These surveys will normally be carried out using an OCEANS Mobile App operated by the PCO and LOC. For LOCs who prefer to do so on paper, a series of appropriate forms is available in

- [A21] Session Survey Forms.docx
  https://www.oceansconference.org/OCOP v10

7.4 Operations and Logistics

This section describes the logistics necessary for conference implementation, including hotels, F&B, social events, conference facilities, tours, local transportation, and related items. These logistics have an important impact on attendee experience.

All activities planned and carried out related to the conference will have a jointly sponsored approach and visual, where relevant. Events shall be sufficiently planned to provide an orderly and pleasant experience for the attendees. However, excessively lavish and costly arrangements should be avoided.

7.5 Budget

For NA OCEANS, the following procedure should be followed in budget reporting:

- 12-14 months prior to the event, the LOC will submit a draft budget to the PCO. The PCO will provide feedback based on OCEANS history, the location and quotes received from the different venue departments and vendors
- PCO will share the draft budget with key members of the LOC to provide a budget that will allow successful implementation of the conference and one that stills encompasses the vision of the LOC.
- The final budget is sent to OES Treasurer and MTS VP B&F for approval
    - OES Treasurer and MTS VP B&F communicates to JOAB its approval or provides JOAB questions or concerns. JOAB provides feedback to LOC for adjustments as needed
- Beginning approx. 3-4 months before the conference PCO will start to give bi-monthly budget updates in the budget template so that PCO and the LOC can track where finances stand currently
    - Closer to the conference this frequency will increase
    - PCO and LOC discussions 4-5 weeks pre-conference to finalize ‘nice to haves’ versus ‘need to haves’
    - pre-conference to finalize ‘nice to haves’ versus ‘need to haves’

For ROW OCEANS there is some advantage for the LOC and PCO to begin this process about 2 years prior to the conference opening.

7.6 Hotel & Convention Center

Candidate hotel(s) and conference facilities will be proposed by the selected LOC in the initial city proposal to IEEE. RECON will perform a virtual or onsite (if the RECON individual resides locally) assessment of the hotel and conference facilities based on budget, venue familiarity and consultation with PCO.

The PCO will handle the venue Request for Purchase (RFP) process for venue and/or hotel block and make recommendations to LOC for approval. The Societies' appointed PCO shall negotiate the contracts. The conference facilities contracts are

subject to review by IEEE and must be signed by the President of MTS and a representative from IEEE. The hotel contracts will be reviewed and signed by PCO.

The PCO, with LOC approval, will require two (2) in-person planning site visits to coordinate exhibit hall, registration and signage and production needs.

The selection and allocation of the meeting rooms for the Exhibit Hall, technical sessions, tutorials, and Student Posters, office/ancillary space etc. shall be led by the PCO in coordination with the LOC/TPC.

The appropriate Audio Visual aids for presenting the paper (laptops, LCD projectors, screen, speaker timers, microphones etc.) will be contracted. This equipment will be sourced based on service and pricing by the PCO and presented to the LOC for approval. This provider will be responsible for onsite trouble shooting, Technical Session Author AV support and back-up equipment as needed. Attendance, including the presenting authors, should be taken at each session to aid in projections for future Conferences.

Signs and directions shall be provided in prominent locations at the hotel and throughout the conference facilities. Signage is professionally produced with OCEANS branding through the General Service Contractor/GSC. The PCO will coordinate the needs based on the facility layout, events taking place and budget for this conference line item. Digital signage is also a useful and sustainable option best served for the Technical Sessions due to frequent changes.

Adequate security arrangements shall be provided, particularly in the registration area where money will be handled and in the exhibit area where valuable equipment will be on display. The exhibit area security arrangements must be in effect 24 hours per day between set-up and takedown. Facility requirements for security should also be considered. The PCO will secure bids based on historical needs, current year conference schedule and facility requirements.

The Arrangements Committee of the LOC in conjunction with the POC shall establish a medical emergency contingency plan. The hotel and conference facility staff(s) should be involved with planning, in anticipation of possible need.

One of the largest items in the budget is the F&B, including luncheons, breaks, and social functions. The hotels and conference/convention centers typically provide 3% over the guaranteed order of food. Some facilities require food and beverage orders based on registration numbers whereas others allow guarantees based on history. The preferred method of F&B order is an *a la carte* estimated consumption versus packages which are typically more expensive and can be wasteful. PCOs should

make use of their experience and knowledge with industry recommendations and trends. They should lead the communications, facility arrangements and Banquet Event Orders. The LOC is to be consulted and can participate in vision collaboration. Please note as a general rule take 70 to 80 % of the Full Conference registrants to base your guarantee around. This is subject to change based on history, location, and food function. Please defer to the POC on recommended F&B order quantities. The F&B offerings are contingent on the budget and schedule Typically F&B functions consist of the following: speakers' lounge, Ice-breaker Reception & Student Mixer, Exhibitors Reception and two or three buffet luncheons.

- The Speaker Lounge replaced the Speaker breakfast starting in 2018 for NA OCEANS (See Sec 2.6.9). This lounge was designed to allow authors to flow in and out throughout the day for a light F&B snack as they prepare for presentation. This is less wasteful and more budget friendly while still serving the authors.
- Buffet lunches eliminate the need for extra packaging associated with box lunches. New F&B distribution methods and recommendations are emerging in light of COVID. The PCO will be knowledgeable on industry standards and recommendations.
- Lunches and breaks should be held in the exhibit hall. This encourages socialization, networking and enhanced exhibitor exposure.
- Venues are open to menu customization based on budget, in season foods and participant dietary needs.
- Drinks tickets are recommended if social functions have bars, this controls the budget. Historically there has not been an excessive overconsumption and the Gala has been open bar. Beer & Wine versus liquor is another option to be mindful in the budget.

Other special events may be arranged such as cocktail parties, special dinners for groups, such as the MTS and OES administrative councils. The Societies will be responsible for the cost associated for their individual meetings. The cost for joint meetings will be shared. These costs will be billed to each Society after the Conference for reimbursement to the Conference.

7.7 Registration

The web-based registration process, both advance and on-site, and including payment, badges and collection of and access to statistical information is operated by the PCO. Additionally, the PCO coordinates staffing, computers, printers and local temporary staff. Volunteers may be recruited from local universities and colleges to assist with registration and offer support with audiovisual facilities in technical sessions (see Sec 2).

7.8 Local Transportation

Transportation arrangements from airports to hotels is normally the responsibility of the participants. The PCO may be able to coordinate local shuttle arrangements or negotiate busing discounts to be included with registration material. Local Tourist Boards and Convention Bureau's may also be able to offer support by way of discounted bus passes.

Group transportation for offsite functions such as Gala dinner and off-site visits to industry receptions and demonstrations of facilities may need to be sourced by the PCO.

8 OTHER INFORMATION

8.1 Terms and Conditions for OCEANS Delegates and Attendees

For their own protection and that of all OCEANS conference attendees, delegates are required to register prior to attending any OCEANS event or activity. On registration, delegates must acknowledge and accept the Terms & Conditions shown at the link below. Should they not wish to accept these Terms & Conditions they should not register.

- [A30] OCEANS Registration TnCs-MCI.docx
  https://www.oceansconference.org/OCOP v10

8.2 Visa Applications

For those delegates who require a visa to enter the country in which OCEANS is being held, a suitable template is given in

- [A32] Visa Application Letter Templates.docx
  https://www.oceansconference.org/OCOP v10