CALL FOR HOSTS OF THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND ANNUAL MEETING OF HEPA EUROPE 2025
INTRODUCTION

This document provides information for organisations planning to put in a bid for the call for hosts of the annual conference and annual meeting of the European Network for the Promotion of Health-Enhancing Physical Activity (HEPA) Europe 2025. It includes information about the eligibility of host organisation, the procedure and selection process as well as details regarding organisation of the conference.

About HEPA Europe

HEPA Europe is the European Network for the Promotion of Health-Enhancing Physical Activity and a World Health Organization (WHO) Europe network. The mission of HEPA Europe is to provide a forum for the advancement of HEPA research, policy and practice for better health and well-being across the WHO European Region.

Objectives

- Foster interdisciplinary communication and knowledge exchange between researchers, practitioners and policy-makers.
- Facilitate sharing of experiences and best practice in HEPA promotion.
- Contribute to the development of multisectoral and intersectoral policies and strategies for HEPA.
- Strengthen collaboration within and between sectors to advance HEPA research, practice and policy.
- Provide capacity-building opportunities for researchers, practitioners and policy-makers to strengthen the skillset of the HEPA workforce.
- Deliver and support advocacy actions for the creation and maintenance of supportive social, physical and policy environments for HEPA.
- Provide a strong voice for the HEPA agenda.

Guiding principles

- Focus on population-based approaches for the promotion of health-enhancing physical activity using the best available scientific evidence.
- Encourage exchange, dissemination and sharing of experience and knowledge.
- Support cooperation, partnerships and collaboration with other related sectors, networks and approaches.

HEPA Europe holds annual meetings and, on most occasions, the annual meeting is held at the same time as a scientific conference. HEPA Europe seeks to use the annual meeting and conference to help achieve the network’s objectives and guiding principles.

To date, 15 meetings have taken place in cities across Europe¹:

¹ For reports and books of abstracts see https://www.who.int/europe/groups/hepa-europe-(european-network-for-the-promotion-of-health-enhancing-physical-activity)
ELIGIBILITY OF THE HOST ORGANISATIONS

It is essential that the aims and objectives of the Host Organization are consistent with those of HEPA Europe and WHO Europe. It is desirable that the Host Organization is an academic institution or closely linked with an academic institution with expertise in physical activity and health. It is also desirable for the Host to have a track record in working with, or contributing to, the objectives of the network.

It is highly desirable that the Host Organisation will look to leverage the opportunity of hosting the conference to further national actions on physical activity and plan for a conference legacy. The Host Organisation is strongly encouraged to collaborate with relevant interested stakeholders across government, non-government, academia and civil society to secure the maximum impact and benefit from hosting the conference.

PROCEDURE AND SELECTION PROCESS

For the conference and annual meeting of 2025, institutions interested in hosting the event are kindly invited to submit a written expression of interest by Friday 2nd February 2024.

Requirements

Submissions should address the following points:

- Experience of the local organizing committee addressing organizing international events, health-enhancing physical activity, and involvement in the HEPA Europe network;
- Initial ideas for a conference topic;
- Preliminary budget including registration fees for delegates, catering, expendibles and social activities.
- Support of the hosting institution (financial and/or in kind, including for example meals, secretariat-support, on-site helpers, printing of documents);
- Foreseen communication activities for local and international visibility;
HEPA Europe Conference EOI 2025

- Description of the venue including the attractiveness of the venue, capacity of the venue and accessibility of the venue (in particular closeness to an international airport, ease of transfers and ease of travel between airport and venue);
- Choice of convenient and affordable accommodation.

ASSESSMENT
Please note that the assessment of each application is done based on the above points. In addition to the above, the Steering Committee will also consider geographic distribution of hosting institutions. Therefore, submitters are kindly requested to address each point in their application, and not to go beyond 4 pages of text (minimum font size 10).

Additional information on organizational requirements, previous registration fees and number of participants is available upon request from hepaeurope@who.int.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
After awarding the organization of the next HEPA conference and annual meeting, an agreement shall be made between the HEPA Europe Steering Committee and the Host Organisation of the country in which the conference is to be held.

**HEPA Europe Steering Committee will**
- Disseminate marketing and promotional materials via HEPA Europe’s communication channels (e.g. newsletter and social media).
- Work with the host organization to advise on conference proposals.
- Liaise with the working groups to determine conference activities.
- Liaise with WHO Europe to determine Physical Activity Focal Point Network requirements.
- Provide onsite support during the conference.
- Work with the host organization to compile a post-conference report.

**The Host Organization will**
- Be responsible for the organization, administration and all financial aspects of the conference.
- Establish an Organising Committee (see box below) which will oversee logistics and planning of the conference such as sourcing a venue, managing logistics including audio-visual services, and event management.
- Establish, in collaboration with HEPA Europe, a Scientific Committee (see box below) which will be responsible for the organisation of the scientific program of the conference.
- Provide onsite support during the conference.
- Work with the HEPA Europe Steering Committee to compile a post conference report.

---

**Organising Committee**
Membership of the committee should be carefully selected to reflect the full range of tasks to be undertaken and completed in the preparations of the conference such as sourcing a venue, managing logistics including audio-visual services, and event management. At least one member of the organising committee should be an Early Career Professional\(^2\) from the Host Organization or other.

---

\(^2\) Within HEPA Europe we interpret early career broadly and that has been quite deliberate. It can mean researchers within five years of their first academic post, such as research assistants, postgraduate research students, postdocs, but equally applies to any professional such as practitioners or policymakers who are looking for support in using research in their work,
The Early Career Professional will specifically support the HEPA Europe Early Career Section in organising activities for early career delegates. The organising committee is invited to seek creative opportunities to involve the Physical Activity Focal Point Network in the conference to maximise knowledge exchange during the conference.

**Scientific Committee**
Membership of the committee should be proposed by the Host Organisation and can include international members. At least one member of the scientific committee will be an member of the HEPA Europe Steering committee.

**THE CONFERENCE**

**Language**
The official language of the conference will be English.

**Dates**
The HEPA Europe conference is usually held over 2.5 days. For organisational reasons and to avoid clashes with other events, the 2025 annual meeting should preferably take place in between late August-September). Organisers should seek early exchange with HEPA Europe regarding possible dates. It is not necessary to make date proposals for a submission of the expression of interest.

**Website**
The host organisation is required to develop and manage a secure conference website, including an abstract submission system.

The host organization is required to manage the registration of delegates though the conference website. The conference programme outline should be finalized before registration is launched to ensue that delegates can sign up to all available sessions and activities that require pre registration (e.g. Early Career Award, Working Group meetings and social activities).

**Financial terms**
The host organisation is encouraged to keep costs to a minimum to ensure an attractive event for delegates whilst breaking even. Hosts are encouraged to secure support either in kind contributions or funding support. All financial contributors should align with HEPA Europe’s aims and objectives and ensure that there are no direct or indirect interest exists which may be considered as constituting a conflict of interest with the HEPA Europe Network or that counteract WHO’s aims, recommendations or ethical standards.

Registration rates for HEPA members should be significantly lower than non-member rates and we would strongly encourage reduced rates for students as well as consideration of a one-day registration fee.

The Host Organisation is encouraged to develop a preliminary budget for the conference, including registration fees for delegates, catering, expendables and social activities. Registration rates for HEPA as well as those who consider themselves to be an early career representative (irrespective of how long they've been in post).
members should be significantly lower than non-member rates and we would strongly encourage reduced rates for students as well as consideration of a one-day registration fee.

Structure of the conference
The conference should contain combinations of the following formats:

- Opening ceremony.
- Invited keynotes.
- Oral communications (concurrent across multiple themes).
- Poster, e-poster, pitch-oral or other similar rapid presentation style sessions.
- Invited symposia.
- Closing ceremony.

Specific requirements

- **HEPA Europe Working Group Meetings**
  During the conference, each of HEPA Europe’s working groups (~10) should be given an opportunity within the programme to meet with members. These meetings can be held in parallel but Host Organisations are requested to schedule these across two conference days to allow members to attend multiple working group meetings.

- **HEPA Europe Network Annual General Meeting**
  During the conference the HEPA Europe Network will hold its annual general meeting. The meeting should take place at a time when no other sessions are being held so allow for maximum attendance. The Host Organisation is required to help arrange this 60-minute meeting and venue.

- **HEPA Europe Steering Committee Meeting**
  During the conference, the network will hold a face-to-face steering committee meeting, usually the day before the opening ceremony. The meeting will be a minimum of 60 minutes. The Host Organisation is asked to help arrange a venue.

- **European Union Physical Activity Focal Points Network Meeting**
  During the conference, the European Union Physical Activity Focal Points Network will hold their face-to-face annual meeting, usually the day before the opening ceremony or day after the closing ceremony. The meeting will be a day in duration for up to ~35 people. The Host Organisation is asked to help arrange this meeting and venue in collaboration with the WHO Europe which coordinates the EU PA focal points network.

- **European Union Physical Activity Focal Points Network Market Place**
  During the conference, the Physical Activity Focal Points Network should be invited to hold a marketplace sharing session to promote exchange and networking with delegates. The Host Organisation is asked to help arrange this activity in collaboration with the WHO Europe which coordinates the EU PA focal points network.

- **HEPA Europe Early Career Award**
  HEPA Europe believes in the importance of supporting researchers at an early stage in their career to develop their professional identity. An Early Career Research Award has been established to
recognize the contribution of early career researchers at the start of their scientific journey. Early career researchers will have the opportunity to enter this competition for scientific excellence. Abstract submission should allow for authors to indicate their eligibility and interest.

- **Social programme**
The Host Organisation are invited to suggest potential venues and themes for the social functions during the conference, as well as a range of physical activity opportunities. Organisers are encouraged to propose events which will allow delegates and guests to experience the culture of the host region. Examples of previous activities include formal dinners, music and dancing, led walks and performing arts performances.

**FACILITIES**

**Location**
The site proposed for the HEPA Europe conference should be located in a readily accessible area, and within easy distance of an international airport which should be served by both public and private transport.

**Accommodation**
The conference venue should be in close proximity to adequate hotel accommodation. Various facilities differing in price and services should be available.

**Venue Facilities**
The following facilities are recommended to adequately host the conference.

**Opening Ceremony and Plenary Sessions**
Seating capacity of us to ~450 delegates with large screen projection capabilities.

**Parallel Session Rooms**
Facilities should be available that allow for the holding of ~4 concurrent sessions that can accommodate the total number of delegates. Ideally these sessions will take place in relatively equal sized rooms, with careful consideration given to the seating capacity and seating configuration for the types of sessions planned.

**Poster Space (if required)**
Adequate space for poster sessions (either electronic or hard copy) should be arranged along with the necessary boards for mounting posters (if hard copy format is opted for). The programme and space should allow for ~150 posters across the event.

**Registration Space**
The registration space should be readily accessible throughout the conference and be of sufficient size and configuration to allow for the smooth registration of all delegates.

**Audio-Vsual Technical support**
Knowledgeable technicians/volunteers should be available to assist speakers in the different rooms.

**Speaker-Ready Room**
Hosts are invited to consider making one small room available to speakers to prepare and test their multimedia presentations, and to upload presentations to the relevant rooms and sessions. Knowledgeable technicians/volunteers should be available to assist speakers with this task.

**Lunch and Break Facilities**
There should be adequate eating facilities for lunch during the conference that permit all delegates to eat within a reasonable time period and in a comfortable setting. Beverages should be provided for morning and afternoon breaks.

**Information and Communications**
A wi-fi internet service should be provided within the Congress venue, and if at all possible, this should be provided free to delegates within the Congress centre.