



## Clarifications to the Call to Host the ESWW 2025+

The text in blue in this document has been prepared by the ESWW PC Sub-Committee for the evaluation of the ESWW for 2025+ (hereinafter SC) and sent to all bidders that declared their intention to send a full proposal to host the ESWW for any the years 2025-2029. It contains the clarifications to questions (text in black) raised by bidders.

Please refer to the Call for Proposal document for more details and further steps.

General Question: Teams.

1. The UK and Ireland teams have come to realise that we have common goals with future hosting of ESWW for 2025+: the UK team had always planned (post-initial declaration) to reach out to colleagues in DIAS regarding the prospects of changing one of our envisaged proposed England sites to somewhere in Ireland; and the Ireland team had planned to host one in Northern Ireland as well as one in Ireland. This meant that both teams have a very nice overlap and complementarity in our ideas for future hosting of ESWW meetings from 2025 onwards and we are able to change the years around for our initially planned hosting options to accommodate this nice, proposed rotation around Ireland and the UK. Thus, we have decided to join forces for a single submission, and we just wanted to be sure that the SC will not see this as a technicality in submitting a joint bid where two separate declarations were initially made independent of each other?

Reply: The SC does not see any problem in this and would encourage the bidder to send a joint declaration instead of separate ones as you propose.

Statement of Compliance – Table 1: Venue.

2. Please can you clarify on the inconsistencies with the poster boards; in one place the requirements state 200 posters, but in another, 125 posters?

Reply: The SC agrees and confirms the inconsistency. The place where it read 125 posters should read 200 posters.

3. Please can you clarify by what you mean by “Plan for hosting the E-SWAN space weather school in the days preceding the event.”? As this is an event that’s new for the first time this year (2023), is not organised by the ESWW PC, it needs some form of requirements please, so bidders know what it is that’s expected. Are you just simply looking for a single room to be made available, is it just for the weekend leading up to ESWW, for what duration exactly and on each of the days, what capacity is needed, what support is needed, who are the organisers that will need to be liaised with, what IT is needed, is it needed to be in some hybrid form, *etc...*? Thanks!

Reply: As this is the first year that the E-SWAN school is been organised, we encourage the bidders to declare if they are willing to support the hosting of the school as far as it does not compromise the budget and it is planned in conjunction with ESWAN to meet mutual expectations and interests.

4. What do you mean by “reasonable distance” in terms of travel; do you really mean some form of reasonable travel time as well as distance – and what is a



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reasonable distance please? Are we talking about something the equivalent of Brussels to Oostende as was done for several years for ESWW? Please can you be more explicit in what the SC wants from bidders for this requirement?

Reply: The term “reasonable distance” means that the distance (in km) will be evaluated as a flexible criterion by the SC and not as a strict requirement. But we understand that some reference is important. To facilitate the evaluation, we encourage the bidders to analyse the distance with the following reference that we will take as a flexible criterion and something that can be more precisely evaluated under the negotiation period. We understand that the main ways of travel within Europe are first the plane and then the train. If we take a city approximately in the centre of Europe, we cannot rely only on the train to reach from the farthest European city, thus we will focus on airports as a reference. Also, because we understand that every city with a reasonable airport has reasonable train connections. We also need a reference for a “reasonable” airport, and for that we can take as a reference the “list of the busiest airports in Europe” updated to the latest statistics. We encourage the bidders to evaluate the distance, as a first approximation, with the following criteria:

- As compliant if one of this two criteria is met:
  - Distance of the venue to one of the top 20 airports of the list less than 200 km within the same country.
  - Distance of the venue to one of the top 20 airports of the list is less than 400 km (even if it is in another country) but another airport exists in the same country, within the top 30 of the list, less than 100 km apart from the venue.
- As partially compliant if the distance to one of the airports in the top 45 of the list is within 150 km even if it is in another country.
- As non-compliant if none of the above is met. A justification or good reasoning should be given in order to evaluate and negotiate the venue at the same level of the above.

Please, be aware that the SC suppose that you are referring to the term that appears under Table 2: Locality of the Statement of Compliance and not in the Table 1: Venue as classified originally in the clarification request submitted because there is no term like that in that section.

5. Where you state “All lecture and meeting rooms on the same site”, is it acceptable for these to be in an adjacent building (*e.g.*, some rooms across different buildings/hotels all next to each other but not, in the technical sense, on the same “site” if operated by different companies/entities/organisations)?

Reply: Yes, the word “site” must be understood as a geographical term in the sense of distance, so the rooms are very close to each other without considering who or how they are operated. We will appreciate that the bidder state any of this incidence explicitly so that the venue is not under-evaluated and the connection between buildings can be properly evaluated.

Statement of Compliance – Table 2: Locality.



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6. What do you mean by “Possibilities to reach the venue via train or car without need to fly for European participants” and how heavily weighted is this “Additional desirable requirement” please? This clearly biases certain countries in Europe and effectively almost excludes those on islands off of mainland Europe as well as to the extremities of mainland Europe (*e.g.*, parts of Spain, Greece, Portugal, Italy, and also the likes of Ireland, Northern Ireland, Great Britain, Cyprus, Malta, Crete, much of Scandinavia, and suchlike). It is also worth noting that Coimbra (Portugal) is very difficult, if not impossible, to reach by train internationally, as was Zagreb (Croatia) – yet they were chosen for 2024 and 2022, respectively... Thanks!

Reply: Please, note that the Statement of Compliance is “intended to help the panel to ensure a fair and consistent approach to selection” as stated in the heading of the document. We think that carbon footprint must be considered in every aspect of our lives and we need to evaluate the possibilities to reduce it. This is also related to the accessibility to the venue which we cannot forget. The regions on the extremities of mainland and those off of mainland are under a disadvantage that we will consider accordingly and hope you can compensate with other advantages that the rest of the countries do not have. It must be understood also that Europe is extensive enough that even selecting a country in the approximate centre there are difficulties to access via train for many countries. Moreover, referring to clarification number 4, about the term “reasonable distance”, the ideal criteria to be met is the first one, that the airport is in a distance less than 200 km from one of the top 20 airports on the list, because this is a guarantee (or maximise the probability) that the city is one of the most visited ones in Europe and optimises the travel efforts in terms of energy and time required. Please, notice that Belgium for example does not have an airport in the top 20 of the list, meaning that this ideal criteria was not met by any of the venues of the ESWW so far.

We encourage the bidders to clarify anything regarding these aspects and any other in the “Proposal Document” so that the SC can take it into consideration.

### Statement of Compliance – Table 4: Financial Planning.

7. The Conference Fees being stated here as a starting price of €300 are very much outdated (and this start is also not consistent with the “Call to host...” document stating €300-€400); this is especially so given the high rising costs still, and also that Toulouse for 2023 has opened the standard-participant registration as €345 for the early-bird rate. Please can the SC look at this and update to a more-reasonable standard-participant early-bird rate? It is also noted as an “Additional desirable requirement” that “Evidence that the cost to participants overall will not be excessive *i.e.* below or no greater than inflationary increases from previous events”; with inflation being 10% or more across much of Europe at present, for 2025 the starting rate (based on Toulouse) could be as high as €417, for 2026 as much as €460, for 2027 as much as €505, *etc...*, for the early-bird registration and still be within this statement of no greater increases than inflation (compound 10% interest over two, three, and four years, respectively, used in this calculation as an approximate European inflation rate rolling forward). We are worried here that teams will either not account fully for the



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real costs in order to keep the registration rates down and score higher in the evaluations (*e.g.*, under €400 no matter what), or will go with these inflation-linked increases and get penalised in the evaluation for seemingly being too high (despite sticking to inflation-like or below rate increases). Please can the SC provide further clarification around these statements? Thanks!

Reply: We encourage the bidders to state the prices as a baseline plus the inflation as a percentage and not stating the final price because currently it is not possible to predict what the percentage will be for three or four years ahead. This also facilitates the comparison and evaluation between different years. The seemingly inconsistent between the SoC and the “Call to host...” documents regarding these prices must be understood that if the base price is between 300€ and 400€ the bidder can safely tick the Compliant tag. We encourage the bidders to justify and explain the probabilities to have a price close to 400€ if this is the case. If the price is over 400€ but not far, the bidder can say it is under the Partially Compliant and we also encourage the bidder to explain the situation in the “Proposal Document” so we can evaluate it accordingly.

8. Where you state as an “Essential Requirement” that Sponsorship for the event has been identified and/or secured; what happens if sponsorship is not needed and/or in terms of multi-year proposals, it’s unlikely that Sponsorship will be agreed 3-6 years ahead of the event? How will the SC take this into account please? Also, this is then doubled with the “Additional Desirable Requirement” of “Additional sponsorship for the event has been identified and/or secured” Please can you re-address these as appropriate.

Reply: The SC will consider this point as important only for those bidding for the first year. We suggest the bidders applying for other years to answer Compliant and state and explain this in the “Proposal Document”. We encourage the bidders to demonstrate a persistence of capability to secure or generate sponsorship. This could be from producing evidence of willingness of intended repeat sponsorship support from known entities, or evidence that the bidder has successfully secured sponsorship through good practice for other conference events.

Document of Call to Host ESWW 2025 Onwards:

9. With regards to your item 6, part 3. “A Proposal Document”, you state that for a single year you are allowed up to 6,000 words in the writing plus images and suchlike, but for a multi-year proposal, this is only expanded to 8,000 words. How does the SC foresee fairness in treating multi-year proposals (especially if across different locations so as to maintain the much-liked new variety and European experiences of ESWW) where only an additional 2,000 words are given to justify meeting all the requirements and setting out the objectives and suchlike for up to four additional years of hosting (since this call is for 2025, 2026, 2027, and in addition 2028, and 2029 will also be considered)? Also, is there a page limit in addition to the word limit?

Reply: The SC requires that the proposal does not go over these limits, but for multi-year proposals will also require, with this clarification, to attach an additional supplemental document of up to 6000 words providing specific detail on how repeat availability of conference venue facilities may be assured, and what additional value



European Space Weather Week

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to the Space Weather and Space Climate community is derived from adoption of their specific multi-year proposal. There is no page limit.

10. There is a note about “The LOC should foresee 2-3 meetings with the PC during the year of the ESWW which will address topics including the programme compilation... ..”; this is not something currently done and the PC also stopped site visits after Glasgow (the PC did not visit Zagreb or Toulouse, and has no plans for visiting Coimbra at this time – although the later-added personal virtual tour of Toulouse, recently, was helpful) – or do you simply mean that the Chair of the LOC (or their delegate) must take up the *ex-officio* role on the PC and be prepared for wider potential PC-LOC joint meetings if required (in addition to the regular planned 5+ PC meetings each year which the LOC Chair is expected to participate in)? Thanks again...

Reply: The meeting stated here can be organised online and the explicit mention that additional virtual meetings might be needed does not mean that the previous ones should be in person. Anyways, we encourage the bidders to state whether they have problems or not to meet in person.

The ESWW PC Sub-Committee for the evaluation of the hosting of the ESWW 2025+