



Chairing an IFLA Congress Session

Equipment

Each session room is equipped with:

- Video projector
- Lectern with microphone
- Laser pointer
- Laptop with operating system Windows 10 (English)
- Remote control for PowerPoint
- Microphone (at least one) from which the audience can ask questions.
- Signs indicating “You have 5 minutes” and “Speak slowly”

You might like to arrange for someone to help you Chair the session by being responsible for holding up the signs where the speakers can see them. Check the layout of your Session room to see if this would be necessary.

Some Sections bring printed signs with the names of the Session’s Chair and Speakers to attach to the lectern or front table. These are optional and should be organised with your Section in advance.

All rooms have trained Congress Volunteers assigned to them. You can introduce yourself and ask them to help if you have any problems or questions.

In advance

Speakers should already have received the Speaker Guidelines:

<https://2020.ifla.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/guidelines-speakers-wlic-2020.pdf>

According to these guidelines, Speakers should upload and test their audio-visual presentations the day before their session (in the Speakers Preview Room in the Congress Centre). This applies to anyone, including you, who wishes to use a presentation in the session. It is not possible to bring a presentation to the room and upload it there. Please refer to your Congress Programme on-site for the exact location of the Speaker Preview Room.

If your session has SI (Simultaneous Interpretation), work with your Section Officers and follow the guidelines for preparing for the session:

<https://2020.ifla.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/guidelines-for-simultaneous-interpretation-for-chairs.pdf>

If the interpreters will not have the relevant texts in advance of the congress, ensure 7 copies of the text in the language in which it will be presented are delivered to the IFLA Secretariat in the Conference centre. Please refer to your Congress Programme on-site for the exact location.

If an announced speaker is absent from the conference, you may ask another person to summarise the paper but make this change clear to the audience. Changes to the advertised programme known in advance should be reported to IFLA by e-mail, conferences@ifla.org.

Ten minutes before your Session begins

Speakers have been asked to report to the Session room 10 minutes before the start of the Session so that they can meet you.

Please remind speakers that they should:

- Speak slowly and clearly to enable their audience to follow. Many delegates will not be native speakers of the language in which the paper is presented. Use the “speak slowly” sign if necessary.
- Avoid using idiomatic or other expressions unfamiliar to an international audience;
- Avoid using acronyms or sets of initials where possible;
- Explain acronyms and initials if you have to use them;
- Do not read the paper word by word, summarise the highlights instead;
- Aim to finish speaking a few minutes before the end of their allotted time so that there is time for questions and discussion. Use the “You have 5 minutes” sign if you like.

Also clarify with the Speakers the following:

- Whether SI is being used in the room and if so, what this means during the Session (see the separate guidelines).
- Whether every speaker has submitted a paper to the IFLA Library (library.ifla.org).
- How you will introduce each Speaker.
- Where they should sit.
- What language they will speak in and whether they will be able to respond to questions in other languages.
- Where you will display the signs indicating that they should speak more slowly or have 5 minutes remaining.
- What you will do when their allotted speaking time comes to an end.
- When you will take questions from the audience for example, after each presentation, or at the end.

During the Session

Session Chairs are responsible for ensuring that the audience get the most from the planned programme. Delegates want to listen, learn and discuss. Managing the flow of the session and keeping to time are critical to a successful session. Based on evaluation of previous congress Sessions, please follow these procedures:

- Speak clearly and slowly at all times, avoiding acronyms and idiomatic expressions: many delegates will not be native speakers and may struggle to follow.
- Announce any changes that have been made to the advertised programme.
- Let the audience know which speakers have papers available in the IFLA Library.
- Let the audience know at the start when they will be able to ask questions – for example, after each presentation, or at the end.
- Briefly introduce each speaker and say in which language s/he will speak.
- Remind speakers to “speak slowly” using the sign if necessary.
- If participants ask questions from the floor, ask them to introduce themselves and speak into the microphone.
- If your session has SI (Simultaneous Interpretation) follow the guidelines: <https://2020.ifla.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/guidelines-for-simultaneous-interpretation-for-chairs.pdf>
- Use the “speak slowly” sign if you believe the speakers are going too fast for the interpreters.
- Make absolutely sure that the presentations and meetings do not run over time, since this may affect the meetings following yours. If necessary, interrupt the speaker to ask them to finish; taking up another speaker’s time is discourteous to the other speakers and to the audience. Use the “You have 5 minutes” sign.

After the Session

If the Speakers have given permission, we hope to make their presentation (PPT) files available in the IFLA Library (<http://library.ifla.org>) after the Congress.