

## Resolution 07, regarding conferences

Taking into consideration the changes that the COVID19 pandemic has induced in the practice of science across the world and the IUPAP position statement on virtual conferences and worldwide accessibility (<https://iupap.org/iupap-statement-on-virtual-conferences-and-worldwide-accessibility/>), the IUPAP resolves to:

- a) Use the well-established guidelines developed by the Union to pursue the principle and the practice of endorsing and supporting the most deserving international conferences and meetings of physicists regardless of whether they are held in person, virtually or in hybrid form.
- b) Given the persistent effects of the COVID19 pandemic, give due consideration to the benefits of online conferences, recognising that safe travel and access to vaccinations are not universally available. Decide on the support/endorsement of conferences and meetings without discriminating against the (accessible) platforms on which they are held.
- c) Commit to update the Union's current guidelines on good practice to cover virtual (online) conferences.
- d) Call upon all organizers of scientific meetings and conferences which include virtual participation to take into strict consideration issues of accessibility restrictions that continue to persist on the basis of geographical locations and either choose platforms with global access and worldwide footprint or include more than one way through which unhindered global participation can be facilitated.
- e) Require organizers to take into consideration the devastating effects of the COVID19 pandemic and ease the registration fees of participants with difficulties; in particular the prospective participants who have lost income due to the pandemic-related job changes or caregiver-responsibilities, with priority focused on the women affected.

## Supporting information for the IUPAP 30<sup>th</sup> GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION ON CONFERENCES

1. The support of international meetings and the sponsorship of deserving conferences in various fields of physics is one of the founding cornerstones upon which the Union has consistently encouraged communications and enhanced physics research publications while fostering the free circulation of scientists,
2. The advent of the Covid-19 pandemic has fundamentally perturbed and significantly altered on a global scale the conventional and traditional physical platforms on which scientific conferences and international meetings are held,
3. As a direct effect of the Covid-19 pandemic, a number of conference organizers had to adopt, and to adapt to a variety of online platforms offering virtual equivalent in substitute for the conventional physical conference venues,
4. In instances where conditions were deemed permitting, organizers had opted to experiment on innovative hybrid models incorporating simultaneously both physical and online virtual conference platforms,
5. Further realizing that the resort to virtual conference platforms has once more acutely brought to fore the challenge of lack of access to certain internet-based meeting platforms that remain inaccessible from various regions of the world on account of either the country's regulations or due to sheer lack of digital cyber-infrastructure.
6. These restrictions and hindrance of access to conference meeting platforms not only affect negatively the international scientific collaborations but also aid intricately to perpetuate and increase inequalities that hinder further the free interaction of scientists and the need for global advancement of science across all communities as envisaged by the founding members of the Union,

The proposed resolution is thus based on the above listed reasons and on the recognition that it is highly likely that the transformational impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the modes, means and media through which international conferences are held will persist and that the devastating effects of the pandemic and the associated lockdowns will be long lasting, especially on under-represented groups and on communities with special needs.