

## The European Business History Congress

The **European Business History Congress** is a forum for business and economic historians, social and cultural historians, historians of technology and scholars of other disciplines whose research explores different aspects of “business history” defined very broadly including the history of business, its products and practices, the relationship of business and society, or the history of capitalism in all parts of the globe. The Congress encourages debates on the research field, approaches to research, and academic practices based on theoretical, methodological, and thematic pluralism. The major aim of the Congress is to bring scholars together for a lively debate and to encourage discussion of controversial new views of the subject and methods of “business history”.

This guide addresses:

- EBHA support and local organizers’ obligations
- Timing
- Formats for sessions (papers, panels, tracks, and free forums)
- Requirements for paper proposals
- Requirements for panel proposals
- Requirements for workshop proposals
- Requirements for debates/discussions proposals
- Organizing Sessions/Panels
- Multiple appearances on the program
- Work of the program committee

### EBHA support and local organizers’ obligations

EBHA expects that the local organizer should maintain close contact with the president of the EBHA, who will in turn keep in contact with the officers and/or other council members as appropriate. In particular, EBHA should be provided with information on all major issues, including the total budget (itemized into major outgoings and planned sources of income) both before and after the congress. Congress charges should remain similar to those charged in previous conferences, not increasing more than 10% in relation to previous years- for members, PhD Students and early registrants. A special case would need to be made to the Council for increases in Congress charges above what is stipulated here in the Congress rules. For non-members and especially for last-minute registrants the organizer has more freedom , although charges should be set in consultation with the officers of the EBHA. The EBHA favours special, low fees for young scholars.

Since EBHA has very limited funds, the local organizing committee is entirely responsible for all costs of the congress held in her/his place, including such items as fees for rooms, coffee and lunches, the gala congress dinner, and the council dinner (for council members, local organizer, and previous presidents), but not for travel and accommodation of participants. The funding for

prizes needs to be agreed upon with the EBHA treasurer. The annual best paper prize is paid for by the EBHA, while the dissertation prize (awarded every two years) has normally been funded by the Lind Foundation and the Centre for Business History in Scotland. The latter has remained the case until 2022, and funding arrangements will be reviewed once again in conjunction with the Trustees of the Foundation and the Director of the Centre.

EBHA is prepared to host the homepage of the congress, which can be mirrored at the local organizers' own homepage. This is a rather cheap and more efficient solution than inventing everything from scratch. EBHA has also developed an online submission platform for abstracts, papers and organising the program etc. which can be requested for a nominal fee.

The program committee should not have more than five members. It is appointed by the EBHA council and consists of 2-3 members appointed by the council and 2 members suggested by the local organizers; the chairman of the committee is also appointed by the EBHA council. The local organizer can at his or her discretion form a local or regional or national committee.

The local organizer may also choose to have a book exhibition at the congress. Publishers have in the past been willing to pay a small fee or to contribute to sponsoring a reception.

The EBHA Council is responsible for appointing the members of special committees, such as the Best-Paper-Prize committee and the Dissertation Prize committee (the latter is every other year only!).

The dissertation competition has traditionally been a single event, held like the keynote speech as a plenary session, i.e. without parallel running sessions. Note that the EBHA pays travel grants for each of the finalists of the dissertation prize competition.

A keynote speech should be carried out by a well-known person who has developed outstanding work with relevance for the business history community. The appointment of the keynote speaker should be made in consultation with the program committee and the President of the EBHA. Usually there should be only one keynote speech at a congress, but there may be exceptions, which should be agreed with the EBHA council.

The local organizer can expect from EBHA help and advice; the support of the President in raising funds (e.g. in form of preparing letters to potential sponsors if needed) and help with the programme committee which chooses which proposals will be presented at the congress.

### Timing

The EBHA Congress is usually organized at the end of August or beginning of September, preferably on a Friday and Saturday. There is usually a full-day council meeting scheduled on the day before the scholarly programme of the congress begins, i.e. usually on Thursday. There is also generally some sort of reception or plenary speaker event/reception held on the evening before the congress. This is followed by dinner for the council which the local organizer normally arranges, hosts and funds. This dinner can also be placed on the day before if the council wishes to. Past presidents of the EBHA who are attending the congress can also be invited to the dinner as well. Some suggestions for organizing the congress:

Very early: congress theme. This should be presented to the Council and agreed upon as part of the process for deciding on the venue of future congresses. Proposals generally are put forward to the council by those who wish to host a future congress at least four years in advance of the actual event.

Early: Secure rooms for accommodation and for the congress.

Written commitment by the university (in case key personnel change between the agreement to host the congress and when it actually occurs).

1-2 years before the congress date: look for sponsors

1 year in advance: An invitation text should be prepared by local organiser for inclusion in the brochure of the congress held the year before. The local organiser should attend the congress held the year before to present plans for the event (and the projected budget) to the council and to the AGM. As part of this, a draft of the call for papers should be circulated to council for comments.

10 months in advance: Issue call for papers (after agreement by officers of EBHA); the deadline for paper and session proposals is normally mid-January to early February of the year in which the congress is going to be held (which is usually in August).

6-9 months in advance: all committees named, homepage, contact to publishing houses, contact local tourist information

4-6 months before: opening for booking (collecting money); this is normally done with a web site. The closing date for early registrations has traditionally been approximately 2-3 months in advance of the congress. The local organizer should contact the treasurer of the EBHA with regard to the procedure for checking on the membership status of participants.

Open access to papers on the respective congress homepage will be blocked a few weeks after the congress. EBHA-members will have access.

### Requirements for paper proposals

The information to be submitted includes:

(1) Author(s) information (1 page max per author): affiliation, short CV and authored publications related to the paper proposal.

(2) Abstract + keywords: the abstract should have no more than six hundred words which includes a clear statement of the research question and brief information on the theoretical/conceptual framework used. Keywords: indicate up to five keywords. Once accepted, papers submitted for the conference should have at least 12 pages (3,500 words minimum) to allow for productive discussions in the sessions and remarks by the commentators. All papers should be uploaded to the conference website according to the instructions and the deadline provided by the local organizers. Joint papers need a

responsible applicant who will also present the paper at the conference if the proposal is accepted.

### Requirements for session proposals

The EBHA welcomes different types of session proposals to the annual EBHA congress. We especially encourage paper sessions and panels which can be ninety minutes long or two-hours (if needed to accommodate more papers). The EBHA also encourages “workshops” of groups of scholars who want to use the opportunity of the congress to have their regular or specific meeting, e.g. in order to create research frameworks and develop papers or to prepare a book or journal special issue. Session proposals should include:

- (1) Title and a short abstract including the objectives of the session/panel/workshop and the issues to be addressed.
- (2) Presenters’ information: affiliation and short CV (up to 1 page long).

Other relevant information to consider is:

- **Paper Sessions** – Three to four presenters. The instructions given above for single papers also apply here.
- **Panels** - Three to five presenters suggested by the applicant. The instructions given above for single papers also apply here. Provide details about the chair and discussant
- **Workshops** – Workshops usually take place immediately before the congress starts. The precondition for workshop formats is ***openness to new participants***; all material to be discussed must have been published on the conference webpage three weeks before the congress.
- **Poster presentations** – quite common for presentations by PhD scholars, or scholars presenting their research projects, etc.

### Requirements for session or panel chairs

The **chair of a session/panel** has the following roles:

- Efficient time management (each speaker or commentator is to be interrupted when time is over)
- Taking care that the audience gets its full time for comments and discussion
- In the absence of an allocated commentator, the chair might take a lead, if the discussion does not start right away.

(If there is a commentator, after the comment, the audience should immediately get time for questions and comment so that a dialogue between speakers and commentator is avoided. Often, the speakers want to respond to the commentator and then provide lengthy answers. This is to be avoided by putting responses to the commentator to the end of the session.

### Multiple appearances on the program

Applicants may submit more than one paper or panel proposal, but in case of time/space constraints only one paper, session or panel per applicant might be accepted by the program committee.

### Work of the Program Committee

The program committee should not have more than five members. It is appointed by the EBHA council and consists of 2-3 members appointed by the council and 2 members suggested by the local organizers; the chairman of the committee is also appointed by the EBHA council. The chair of the committee will normally be from the host institution. Alternative arrangements are negotiated with partner associations in the case of a joint congress.

**Acceptance of a session, panel, track.** The applicants receive the program committee's decision no later than 4 months before the conference, except in years when the conference takes place at a different time of the year (earlier than August/Sept), in which case this period might be 3 months. Unfortunately, accepted speakers do not always show up for the congress. For this reason, an application accepted only appears in the final version of the programme when the applicant paid the conference fee no later than two weeks before the conference.

**Selection process.** The program committee meets within four weeks after the deadline for submissions. All members of the programme committee have access to the electronic submission platform, and they are expected to have viewed all proposals before the meeting. In exceptional cases, if numbers of applications are extremely high, the chairman might suggest a division of labour. E.g. paper submissions, panels, tracks. In such S/he must guarantee that each proposal is evaluated by at least three committee members.

**Online Electronic platform of EBHA.** The EBHA offers a platform for paper, session-, etc. submissions where all necessary data of potential participants is automatically uploaded and registered into a conference platform. The congress host may use this platform (but is it not compulsory) at a nominal fee. This platform is programmed to help set up the program of the congress based on the paper and sessions submitted. It can also be used in the evaluation process by the program committee, and the final organisation of the programme. Additionally, the platform provides the option to search and sort papers and sessions, to contact individual participants - paper givers, chairs and discussants.