

## **World Federation of Colleges and Polytechnics (WFCP)**

### **Guide to Hosting the World Congress\***

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Prior to the founding of the World Federation of College and Polytechnics (WFCP), professional technical education and training institutions engaged through informal networks. With names ranging from community college to polytechnic to institute of technology, it was not always easy for institutions to recognize sister institutions.

The desire to have a forum to talk on a regular basis, learn from each other, and share experiences was the basis of the formation of the World Federation. In 1999, the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (now known as Colleges and Institutes Canada) hosted the 1st World Congress of Colleges and Polytechnics in Quebec City, Canada. The Congress was planned by the International Planning Committee, with partners from the USA, Canada, New Zealand, Colombia, South Africa, Commonwealth Africa, India and Southeast Asia.

WFCP operated as an informal network until it was formalized in 2002 with the organization's first constitution at the 2nd World Congress, held in Melbourne, Australia. Since its inception, the Federation's membership has grown as it continues to offer members a forum to exchange best practice and promote professional and technical education and training around the world.

The Congress is held approximately every two years and is the hallmark event of the World Federation of Colleges and Polytechnics. Education professionals gather in a member country to hear the latest trends, best practices and network with their peers in the professional and technical education and training sector. The Congress programs are informed by the Federation's Affinity Groups and reflects the host nation's local cultural flair.

The host nation bears the responsibility for planning the Congress. Hosting a World Congress involves working with the WFCP Board of Directors, arranging a venue, developing a funding plan, working with industry and local and international organizations to develop an exhibit hall and forming local partnerships with educational institutions or agencies to help the program committee form a theme for the Congress, amongst others.

Securing at an early stage a venue that is large enough to host delegates is critical. For this reason, the WFCP calls for nominations to host the Congress 2 years before the scheduled date so once the selection of the host is made, early booking of the venue can proceed.

The Congress is a mix of pre-Congress activities, keynotes, plenaries, concurrent sessions and networking activities. The Federation uses the occasion of the Congress to conduct strategic planning and organize a retreat for the Board of Directors.

\* Subject to changes

## PREVIOUS WFCP WORLD CONGRESSES

The list below contains information regarding the date, location and host organisation of each Congress since 1999:

- 1999 World Congress: Québec, Canada (Colleges and Institutes Canada, formerly Association of Canadian Community Colleges)
- 2003 World Congress: Melbourne, Australia (TAFE Directors Australia)
- 2005 World Congress: Dubai, United Arab Emirates
- 2008 World Congress: New York City, USA (American Association of Community Colleges)
- 2010 World Congress: Birmingham, UK (Association of Colleges)
- 2012 World Congress: Halifax, Canada (Colleges and Institutes Canada)
- 2014 World Congress: Beijing, China (China Education International Exchange Association)
- 2016 World Congress: Vitória, Brazil (Conselho Nacional das Instituições da Rede Federal de Educação Profissional, Científica e Tecnológica (Conif))
- 2018 World Congress: Melbourne, Australia (TDA & Victorian TAFE Association)
- 2022 World Congress: San Sebastián, Basque Country, Spain (TKNIKA)
- 2023 World Congress: Montreal, Canada (Colleges and Institutes Canada)







## **EXPECTATIONS**

The following elements are required for each Congress:

- Keynote speakers from a variety of countries and backgrounds
- Opening and closing ceremony, gala, or social event
- Sessions designed to tie in with the Federation's Affinity Groups
- Awards of Excellence
- Pre-Congress activities:
  - Leadership Institute [organized by Postsecondary International Network]
  - Youth Camp
  - Campus Tours
- Post-Congress Activities
  - Board or Directors Meeting/Retreat

The Congress should operate under a series of accepted principles:

- Reflect the strategic direction of the Federation;
- Ensure the Federation's Affinity Groups are reflected in the program;
- Reflect the international nature of the Federation;
- Be managed with sound business practises;
- Uphold the "greening" begun at the Brazil Congress, including a concerted effort to ensure the Congress is designed with the principles of sustainability and attempts to mitigate the impact on the environment;
- Be accessible both in communication pre-Congress and on-site;
- Provide a forum for participants to showcase innovative practices and host interactive discussion on professional and technical education and training;
- Provide opportunities for networking and professional development;
- Ensure the host nation's culture is reflected throughout the Congress, whether in the program, plenaries, and/or social activities.

## **SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Board of Directors Responsibilities**

The WFCP Board is a working Board that takes an active and direct approach to managing the affairs of the Federation. In the context of the World Congress, the Board is responsible for:

- Approving the venue of the Congress;
- Managing the planning subcommittee;
- Confirming/approving the decisions made by the planning subcommittee;
- Encouraging participation by delegates and exhibitors from their own members and countries;
- Ensuring international representation in the International Youth Camp, Leadership Summit and Awards of Excellence; and
- Approving the Congress theme.

The Board may allocate some of its decision-making power to a World Congress Subcommittee, as done for Beijing (2014), Melbourne (2018), San Sebastian (2022) and Montreal (2023).

### **Secretariat Responsibilities**

The WFCP Secretariat supports the Board and the activities of the Federation. In the context of the World Congress, the Secretariat takes direction from the Board and the host country and completes the tasks assigned, as needed. In addition, the Secretariat is responsible for:

- Ensuring the Board has the tools necessary, including time, to meet and plan the Congress;
- Liaising between the Board and planning subcommittee;
- Managing the Awards of Excellence;
- Sharing information, as directed;
- Creating promotional material, as needed; and
- Ensuring the WFCP website, social media accounts and newsletter promote the Congress and can facilitate those looking for information regarding the Congress.

### **Host Organization Responsibilities**

The host organization is responsible for:

- Working alongside and in collaboration with the WFCP Board of Directors;
- Developing the Congress budget with a view toward a modest surplus to be returned to the WFCP (or shared on an agreed arrangement between the host organisation and WFCP) and if any deficit is incurred to carry the full responsibility;
- Selecting a local committee of individuals to plan the Congress as the organizing committee;
- Selecting a venue that is:
  - accessible
  - can accommodate the appropriate number of people in a plenary setting, smaller auditoriums for breakout sessions and workshops, meeting rooms, exhibition hall;
- Choosing the Congress theme and keynote speakers;

- Working with local vendors to ensure all aspects of the Congress are planned and prepared for in terms of logistics and products needed, including meals for delegates during the Congress;
- Implementing the Call for Presentations, Youth Camp, in association with the Board;
- Working with a local designer or institution to design the Awards of Excellence plaque or trophy;
- Planning the Congress program;
- Ensuring some sessions are designed to tie into the Federation's Affinity Groups or priorities identified by the Board of Directors;
- Conducting campus tours;
- Promoting the Congress;
- On-site management of the Congress;
- Ensuring branding of the Congress reflects the Federation brand;
- Bearing the cost of the Youth Camp and Leadership institute when participants have arrived in the host city;
- Setting up and maintaining the Congress website;
- Registration;
- Exhibition;
- Logistics – e.g. guidance to hotels, travel, etc.; and
- Raising funds – including funding from government and sponsors.

## **ELEMENTS OF EACH CONGRESS**

### **Keynote Speeches / Plenary Sessions**

Speeches should fit the overall theme of the Congress, addresses the big question reflected in the Congress theme, and speak directly to professional and technical education and training. Keynote speeches should include a period for question and answer, to allow for an engaged audience. The organizing subcommittee will choose the Keynote speakers and the Board of Directors will confirm the decision, before it is acted on.

### **Opening and closing ceremony, gala, or social**

The opening and closing of the Congress allow the host country an opportunity to showcase local talent and the strength of their own domestic institutions. Skills competition or performances of local dance and music are an integral part of the host nation leaving its unique mark on the Congress.

The Closing ceremonies must allow for the announcement of the next Congress.

The host nation will decide whether to adopt a more formal gala or a less formal social activity, such as a cocktail, for the opening and closing of the Congress.

### **Sessions designed to tie in with the Federation's Affinity Groups**

Workshops, roundtables and smaller plenaries should reflect either the themes or areas around the Federation's Affinity Groups. Whether a stream approach is adopted — with presentations in multiple rooms matching the themes — or a roundtable approach is used, the Affinity Groups should play an important role in determining the final look of the program. The leads of the Affinity Groups should be involved in aspects related to successful applicants of the Call for Presentations and planning of sessions related to their Group.

### **Breakout Sessions**

Workshops, roundtables and smaller plenaries should reflect the Congress themes. Breakout sessions should be used to allow as many delegates to speak as possible; this will also encourage attendance. However, this should not lower the quality of presentations accepted.

### **Meeting/breakfast for CEOs / Presidents**

A networking opportunity for CEOs and Presidents of institutions and member associations should be included in the Congress program. A breakfast allows an informal event for leaders to develop ties and discuss approaches to professional and technical and education and training.

### **Awards of Excellence**

The Congress should allow a space, whether within the opening and closing ceremonies, or as a standalone event, to recognize the winners of the Awards of Excellence. The host country will work with a local designer to design the Gold Award plaque for the recipients. The Awards of Excellence recipients are featured in the WFCP's World's Best Practice Guide that is to be launched at the Congress, after the recipients are revealed.



### **Exhibitors & Sponsorship**

Exhibitors offer an avenue of revenue for the Congress host. A space to allow industry, institutions, and others in professional and technical education is recommended for each Congress. In 2016 and 2018, events were held in the exhibition hall (i.e. networking drinks, presentations, workshops, etc.) to encourage delegates to visit exhibitors.

### **PRE-CONGRESS ACTIVITIES**

#### **Leadership Summit**

Since 2020, the Postsecondary International Network (PIN) has been responsible for organizing and leading the pre-Congress Leadership Institute – a two-day workshop directed by leaders of institutions, associations and other organizations involved in professional and technical education and training.

#### **Youth Camp**

An international camp for students, with activities designed to facilitate discussion on professional and technical education and training and the role of youth. The students should produce a video project “Voice of the Youth” that will be presented to the all delegates at the Closing of the Congress.







### **Campus Tours**

Tours should allow participants to see different aspects of local institutions and allow for discussion about best practices and challenges faced by institutions of professional and technical education and training.

### **POST-CONGRESS ACTIVITIES**

#### **Board Retreat**

The WFCP Board will gather for a retreat where they will conduct business and welcome new Board members with an orientation of the Board. The retreat is a working one. The host country should provide a space that allows the 15-person Board to meet in relative privacy and comfort.

### **FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

The host country bears all of the cost related to the planning and hosting of the Congress. The host should work toward a modest surplus from the Congress with the surplus to be returned to the WFCP or shared between the host organisation and WFCP. The host organisation incurs the costs if a deficit is incurred.

The host organization can expect the cost of hosting the Congress to be around \$1 million (USD).

### **HOW TO APPLY**

If you are interested in hosting the World Congress, please submit a proposal to the WFCP Secretariat at [secretariat@wfc.org](mailto:secretariat@wfc.org).