

INTERNATIONAL VIOLA CONGRESS – ROTTERDAM 2018

*An Evaluation for the
Benefit of Future IVC
Organizers*



Dutch
Viola
Society

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INTRODUCTION

The present document describes the “Lessons Learned” from the Dutch Viola Society’s (DVS) organization of the 45th IVC in Rotterdam (Nov. 20th – 24th, 2018). It is written for the main benefit of non-professional congress organizers, i.e. those who have never organized an IVC (or any event of similar scale) before. That was our starting perspective when we took on this project. But it is hoped that some tips can be of use for experienced organizers as well, looking to improve their game.

The main lesson topics are summarized here:

1. Start Early
2. Establish a Vision
3. Consolidate the Facilities Plan
4. Know your Target Audience
5. Recruit a Good Team
6. Plan Proactively
7. Actively Manage the Finances
8. Embrace IT
9. Communicate!
10. Don’t Re-Invent the Wheel



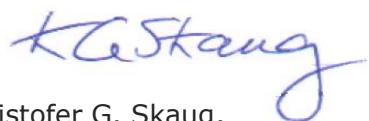
The chapters of this document are numbered accordingly.

Prospective IVC bidders are encouraged to consider these points, and be aware that a weakness in any of these areas can cause problems and pains down the road. But whereas the report is quite extensive, it is certain to hold points and observations that are biased/coloured by our specific circumstances and experiences from Rotterdam 2018.

Furthermore, in the last chapter I venture to propose some recommendations for the IVS to implement (or change) some of the traditional guidelines and processes toward the (prospective) IVC organizers.

While I was writing this, IVS President Jutta Puchhammer-Sédillot sent me a draft document titled the *North American Viola Congress Handbook*¹, which summarizes the organizational learning from the first 37 IVC's, almost half of which were organized in the United States and Canada (only two North American congresses have been held since, in 2010 and 2012). In particular with respect to facilities, this handbook gives a completely different perspective. The basic assumption / precondition in the North American IVC tradition is that the Congress is hosted and sponsored by an academic institution (university). The institution would commonly provide all required facilities, even including personnel and lodging (campus housing). But such luxury is unfortunately not commonly available for IVC organizers in other parts of the world, and many of the do's and don'ts discussed in the present report are directly or indirectly related to the lack of such a starting advantage.

So be critical, and assess for yourself whether these recommendations really apply exactly to your situation. It was anyway not my intention to write a universal and complete guide to Viola Congress organization, although the sheer length of this report may suggest otherwise ☺



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May 14th, 2021

¹ Originally written by Peter Slowik (Evanston, 1996), 2009 revision by Thomas Tatton, Kathy Steeley and Jutta Puchhammer-Sédillot

1. START EARLY

Summary:

Start early, to give yourself time to develop detailed plans.

Start early - this sounds obvious, but what is “early”, and why is so much time needed?

The IVS recommends submitting initial “declarations of intent” at least 3 years in advance of a prospective congress. This is because inspired IVC organizers are relatively rare, and bids surface irregularly – sometimes, the IVS receives 2 or 3 deserving bids for the same year, othertimes none. The IVS also strives to balance the appointments across different continents (so not 3 years in a row in Europe, for example). So there will be an initial phase of identifying the suitable “slots”.



At IVC Cremona 2016: the prospective hosts getting posed to pitch for IVC Rotterdam 2018

pressure, you may be rushed into making poor decisions.

The earlier you start, the better your chances to plot a working date. You have to negotiate and match the opportunities on the IVS calendar with conditions “at home”. You should take into account potential competing events in your own country/region, and try to avoid special holiday periods (e.g. Christmas) that would make it difficult for visitors to come.

Furthermore, commitments you may need from high profile venues and artists are commonly subject to a long “lead time” (early reservation and engagement schedules stretching 2 or more years ahead).

Another reason for starting early is that it simply takes a lot of thinking and hard work to organize a congress. You need time to mature your overall vision (see next chapter) and the zillions of details related to planning, financing, and logistics. If you are under too much time

I will illustrate these points by relating the early planning phase of IVC2018.

For the Rotterdam team, it all started when the DVS board members returned from their first IVC trip to Krakow (Poland) in 2013. Karin Dolman (President of our newly founded section) was all fired up, and spontaneously proclaimed the ambition of hosting an IVC in Rotterdam within the next few years. She immediately initiated talks with her employers: Codarts school for the Arts (where she was teaching), and De Doelen concert halls (to which she was liaised as member of the Doelenkwartet, the resident string quartet).

It was not until early 2016, however, that talks started to intensify. Pretty soon, it became clear that 2018 was the first realistic year to organize our congress. And we didn't want to wait longer than necessary, because we were eager, and it's hard to stay focused if the goal is too far into the future. The targeted facilities (especially De Doelen) would be available in the 2nd half of that year.

At all costs, we wanted to avoid a date clash with the Cello Biënnale in Amsterdam, a terrific bi-annual festival already plotted for October 2018. They have a huge budget and a firm subscription on media attention. You don't want to get your Viola congress steamrollered by something like that. So that drove us into November. Our calendar marker landed squarely on the Thanksgiving holiday (an important 4-day "family" weekend in the U.S.). But after using various facebook groups as a sounding board, we concluded that the number of Americans staying home for Thanksgiving would be compensated by those who found the Thanksgiving break to be an enabling factor to travel (in the end, this was about right).

At the Cremona IVC in October 2016, the DVS presented written letters of support from the Partner organizations and secured an initial nod from the IVS board to proceed with the planning.

From there on, our timeline ran as follows:

- 11/2016 (T-24 months): First official IVC organizing committee meetings
- 01/2017 (T-22 months): Sollicited commitments from Featured Artists (Atar Arad, Kim Kashkashian, Nobuko Imai, Lawrence Power and Timothy Ridout).
- 04/2017 (T-19 months): Started formal negotiations with De Doelen/Codarts for facilities
- 07/2017 (T-16 months): Started writing Project plan for financial support applications, and the official Bid Book for IVS board consideration; including first rough budget.
- 08/2017 (T-15 months): Initial negotiations with Hofpleintheater for main congress venue
- 09/2017 (T-14 months): Submitted detailed Bid Book to IVS. Officially appointed IVC hostship at Wellington IVC congress. Sent first financial support applications (to Dutch funds)
- 10/2017 (T-13 months): Launched IVC2018 [website](#) and [facebook](#) page.
Opened [Call for Proposals](#);
Preliminary contract signed with Hofpleintheater;

- Preliminary agreement with HKU Utrecht and Hellendaal institute for orchestra concerts;
- 11/2017 (T-12 months): Detailed discussions with De Doelen for Evening concerts
 - 12/2017 (T-11 months): First major financial support pledge (€15k) from City of Rotterdam
 - 01/2018 (T-10 months): A total of 120 Presentation Proposals received for the congress. Programme committee made initial programme selection and notified all Presenters.
 - 03/2018 (T-8 months): Started planning of detailed congress programme;
 - Contracted a full-time (paid) Production manager for October/November
 - Also contracted a Volunteers coordinator and a PR/Marketing manager
 - 04/2018 (T-7 months): Assessment point for results of first round of fundraising. Final “Go/No-Go” point for the Congress (we decided Go).
Agreement with De Doelen on ticket prices and online/remote ticket ordering/purchasing mechanisms; Final decisions on congress fees;
 - 05/2018 (T-6 months): [Congress Registration](#) opened on Website
 - 06/2018 (T-5 months): [4Viola Composition Contest](#) announced;
[Masterclasses application](#) form opened on Website;
Last major financial support commitment (€15k) from BNG Cultuurfonds.
Completed financial and artistic agreements with Featured Artists
 - 07/2018 (T-4 months): Processing Congress Registrations and payments;
[Big drive for host families](#) (private lodging) for student visitors.
 - 08/2018 (T-3 months): [Call for Exhibitors](#) prepared and opened
 - 09/2018 (T-2 months): Evaluating Masterclass applications;
 - 10/2018 (T-1 months): Opened [registration for Workshops](#);
Editorial process for Programme booklet. Deadline for Composition contest.
 - 11/2018 (T-3 weeks): Craziness ... everything else: Meal ticketing,
programme booklet printing, detailed logistics planning (day-by-day schedules for each core team member and volunteers), reception of guests, ...

You can tell from the above that once the snowball really started rolling, there was a rapid acceleration of activity, and no “idle time” margin left whatsoever in the end. We had certainly underestimated the complexity and work effort required for many of these tasks. If that is the case when you start 2 years in advance, imagine how challenging it would get if you have less time.

2. ESTABLISH A VISION

Summary:

Consider carefully to which degree the programme should include festival-like activities. Not every IVC needs to be an extravaganza! On the other hand, it is more difficult to obtain financial support for a narrow-scoped event. In either case, the overall “Vision” should aim to provide the fullest possible overall experience for all visitors..

Why would you sacrifice countless unpaid hours to organize a viola congress? Surely, you have some vision or goal in mind. You may already have visited a few IVC's before, so you know more or less what people are expecting. And maybe these experiences also told you what you missed, or what you think you could do better. All of this is valuable knowledge. You may also have something extra in mind, something unique from your local culture, or something new that has never been done before. Over time, all of these thoughts fuse into a vision of your congress.

For Rotterdam, our initial vision was, indeed, simply to emulate all of the best parts of our IVC experiences abroad, and add our own flavour on top.

The “academic core” of an IVC – a more or less closed event for a relatively small special-interest audience – stands little chance of receiving public funding (at least not in The Netherlands). Fortunately, we had people in our team who recognized this early on, and worked diligently to develop a larger and bolder vision.

To start with, we needed to enlist world class artists to establish an undisputable baseline of excellence. A catchy and flexible theme “*Exploring new ways to perform*” was milked for all it was worth, and major efforts such as the “*Discover the viola*” educational outreach programme, the *4Viola* Composition contest, the Luthier workshop, the carillon concert and many other ideas combined into a veritable Viola Festival, significantly exceeding the normal scope of an IVC. We felt that this would be a fitting and justified way to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the International Viola Society, a rather special circumstance in Rotterdam.

That being said, you need to be realistic and flexible in your vision. As an exercise in this respect, we identified the bare-minimum requirements to host any kind of IVC at all: A series of lectures and recitals for and by the attending violists and scholars. If all else failed, we could “simply” rent a modest lecture hall for a few days, and run a modest event with no featured artists, no grand evening concerts, no public outreach. That’s a vision, too! In theory, this could be done with almost no financial support at all, so long as the congress fees mostly cover the facility costs. But this was clearly a “contingency” scenario, not what anyone would particularly aim for.

But development of the vision goes further than just the principal events. The host should also develop a vision of the desired overall experience for the visitors, in the broad sense. One has to bear in mind that the visitors all have different preconditions, in terms of culture, language, financial means, diets, medical conditions, etc. Visitors with tight budgets (e.g. students) should be considered especially. As a host, one should try to avoid that significant but optional elements (e.g. evening concerts, dinners etc.) are involuntarily passed up because they don't fit the visitors' physical abilities, diet, budget, etc. We did have visitors with disabilities, so a special programme walk-through exercise was carried out to verify that we could offer them the best possible experience. Private lodging was offered to students and others with modest financial means. The traditional closing banquet was manifested as a copious but affordable buffet meal for everyone.

Even basic universal needs are not automatically covered. An IVC programme can be a very energy-consuming experience for the visitors, their fatigue maybe even magnified by jet-lag effects. The Hofpleintheater foyer offered recreational facilities and a permanently staffed bar, so that visitors could enjoy a sit-down with a drink and a chat between sessions. Affordable quality lunches and dinners in the next-door student-run restaurant meant not having to run around town looking for a hurried meal during the short breaks.

And speaking of basic needs, don't forget a guest Wifi! Especially overseas visitors will often find that mobile data roaming costs are ludicrous, so they really depend on Wifi. Hofpleintheater had a limited internet bandwidth, allowing no more than a few dozen people to share the connection simultaneously. So we gave priority to non-European visitors for the use of a fixed maximum number of (paid) guest Wifi accounts. It wasn't close to the level of Wifi service that we had wanted to offer, but at least we hope we helped those who needed it most.

Another special "visitor experience" sometimes left unmonitored is that of the Exhibitors. Next to offering a suitable exhibition space (see section 3.3), you could enhance their experience by offering a separate studio for testing violas, and/or showcase sessions to demonstrate specific products, maybe even enlisting the help of a renowned artist. And make sure they are invited for the evening programme, even if they are not "regular" congress visitors.

All of the above considerations can be captured by investigating a few key points:

- List the roles of all stakeholders of your congress: external visitors (see chapter 4 "Know your Target Audience" below), exhibitors, your own team, institutional and business partners, sponsors and benefactors, etc.
- Identify special needs subgroups among the above: people with tight budgets, restrictive diets, physical handicaps, extra young or old age, limited language skills, etc.
- For each group, make a mental role-playing exercise. What will their congress experience be like? Identify and fix any major weaknesses.

3. CONSOLIDATE THE FACILITIES PLAN

Subtitle: "Location, Location, Location!"

Summary:

A rock-solid facilities plan should be a core part of the overall plan from the very outset.

Some congresses are born from miraculous opportunities. Like, "*would you like to use our Conservatoire for a viola congress during a semester break?*". Resulting reflection: *An offer you can't refuse. Don't look a gift horse in the mouth*, so to speak. Now, you've pretty much *got* to organize a congress.

Note: As mentioned in the Introduction, a sponsoring academic institution is actually an assumed precondition for IVC's in North America. So if you are in this situation, you can probably read this chapter lightly.

However, most would-be congress organizers (outside of North America) are not so lucky. Their project is more often sparked by pure inspiration rather than by glaring opportunity. They then proceed to look for a suitable congress location. To make this fit into the IVC "mold" (and receive the blessings of the IVS board), there are several explicit and implicit functional requirements that the venues need to fulfil. What I describe below is (much) more than just the IVS minimum requirements: here's an extensive (but probably still incomplete) "facility wishlist" in the quest for a very good overall IVC experience, not just for the visitors, but also for the organizing team, the exhibitors, the artists, etc.

3.1. Primary Congress Facilities

3.1.1. Main Congress Auditoriums and Concert Venue(s)

Ideally, you should dispose of two large auditoriums, both with sufficient seating for the whole (daytime) congress audience, and offering sufficiently good acoustics for normal recital purposes. This allows you to distribute the programming between these halls, so while one hall is in use for a performance or presentation, the other hall can be used for dress rehearsals and sound checks for the next session. And then swap the roles. The closer together these halls are, the better – otherwise you'll have to allow a lot of time for back-and-forth transits of the entire congress crowd.

At least one of these halls should include technical support for lectures (microphones, beamers) and some degree of controllable stage lighting (e.g. for theatrical or otherwise animated performances). A decent sound system can also be needed when there are electronic sounds to be rendered or instruments that require amplification (e.g. electric violas). A concert-class grand piano in each auditorium is more or less mandatory.

You could get by with just one hall, but you then lose flexibility and capacity to accommodate a large(r) number of sessions and presenters (see chapter 6, "Plan Proactively").

If your programme includes prime-time evening concerts with top-notch Featured Artists, you naturally want to do them justice with a top-class concert hall. Such a hall should preferably have additional seating capacity for at-large audiences (in addition to your congress visitors). If you're very lucky, this requirement might already be met by one of the two main halls. But such venues are generally very expensive (€1000 per hour is a typical figure in The Netherlands), so you may have to be "economical" in using it only for the top-billed public events of your congress.

3.1.2. Studios and Rehearsal Rooms

In addition to the main Auditorium(s), you'll need several smaller classroom-size studios for workshops and masterclasses. The assumption is that these are used in parallel sessions with a maximum of 20-30 audience/participants each. A (not necessarily grand) piano should typically be available for masterclasses, and flexible seating options are an advantage (foldable/stackable chairs, easy to move around).

These rooms could also serve as practice rooms when not in use for workshops and masterclasses. Remember that some presenters will require the services of locally supplied congress pianists, and they will need time to rehearse together. So rooms with pianos are likely to be in hot demand. Some people may however simply want to practice individually, or rehearse with other non-pianist musicians. For this purpose, it is nice to have additional (smaller or piano-less) rooms available. (P.S. you can feel it coming – the need for a managed room reservation process!).

3.1.3. Exhibitor Space

Exhibitors are paying good money to come to the congress, attending full time to their exhibits (stands) in the hopes of doing business (real or prospective) with the visitors. They are an important source of revenue, not only for your congress, but also for future congresses. Therefore, you should treat them hospitably and offer a good environment. This starts with a generous Exhibition hall in a strategically favourable location, easily visible and accessible, so that the Exhibition naturally receives a healthy flow of visitors.

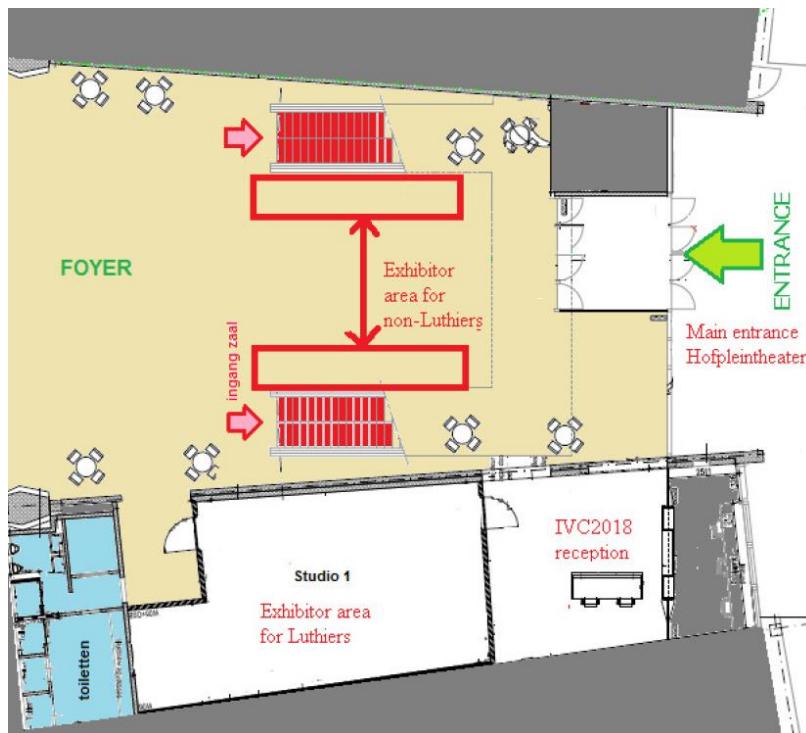
The Luthiers are commonly offering visitors to “test drive” their instruments, but this generates a lot of noise (depending on the local acoustics), so it is a good idea to supply some degree of acoustic isolation or sound-absorption, so as not to drive all by-standers mad. Ideally there should be a dedicated soundproofed booth or room nearby for viola-testing purposes (then again, if that room is too cramped or “dry”, it would not really be a nice place to test a viola for its sound qualities).



Studio 1: Demonstrating the relevance of an enclosed luthier exhibition area

You should also provide a secure (lockable) storage space near the Exhibit area to keep all those expensive instruments and other products safe at night.

We believe the Exhibitor area for IVC2018 came quite close to fulfilling most of these requirements. See the floor plan below:



The special needs mentioned above were met in the following way(s):

- Exhibitor space for non-luthiers in the open foyer, right inside the main entrance. There was some concern about draft from the entrance doors (chilly November days!), but on the whole it worked well.
- Luthiers in a separate studio next to the reception, with doors that could be kept shut or semi-shut to reduce the noise of instrument testing. The Luthiers themselves had to cope with continuous noise in an enclosed space, and some did complain about that.
- Night-time storage of Exhibitor products in the Luthiers' studio, which was locked.

3.1.4. Late-Night Location

The IVS Congress Guidelines speak of a more or less mandatory *Café Viola*, where the congress participants can socialize in the after-hours. This late-night location should be at a reasonable (preferably short walking) distance from the location where most people go to attend the Evening concerts. Moreover, if you intend to have any kind of performances during these late-night sessions, the establishment should have a stage (of sorts), and a reasonable sound system to make the violas audible in spite of the deafening and dampening effects of beer. (Speaking of which – check their price lists, if their drinks are above-average expensive, your guests are going to have less fun – especially the students).

If the location is the right size and type, you should try to strike a deal with the establishment owner that the location is reserved for your IVC crowd in the late evenings, for the duration of the congress. The prospect of a hundred thirsty guests coming 5 evenings in a row and bringing their own live music is not a bad proposition for a bar. Ideally, this should be your place for 5 nights, where you get a main say in music programming etc.

Don't underestimate the importance of the atmosphere and intimacy of this location. To make sure, visit it with your team on a normal night, to assess the friendliness of the personnel and the regular customers. Also, if it is a (too) big public bar, your IVC guests may get out-crowded and outshouted by the general public. Thus it may not function well as a special IVC hang-out.

3.2. Supporting Facilities

3.2.1. Meeting Room(s)

As noted in the IVS Requirements for IVC hosts, you have to provide a suitable meeting room for the IVS board and IVS Delegates' meetings during the congress. This should ideally be a business-like meeting facility with seats (and table space) for at least 15-20 delegates. The room is only needed occasionally, so no point in renting/reserving it for the whole week. It doesn't have to be in the same building as everything else, it is more important that it is fit for purpose (table(s), power outlets for laptops, maybe a beamer for presentations, etc).

3.2.2. Recreation Space for Guests

Ideally, there should be an informal lounge area on the main venue, where congress visitors can relax and have a drink and a chat between sessions. A refreshment facility (water dispenser, coffee machine, soda and snack vending machines, or better yet – a staffed bar!) can be a life saver during the very intense congress days. I'm not saying you should rent all that stuff if it's not there already, but you should recognise their "bonus value" when you see them).

Of course, if you're in a city centre and there are cafés and convenience stores right next door, that's good too. But it's even more ideal for the "social cohesion" when you don't force your guests out on the streets to get that cup of coffee.

In Rotterdam, we were lucky to have an in-house bar and lounge in the theatre foyer. We also added a table soccer facility (with viola stick-figures), "violist in

space” selfie-poster, and a free trial edition of our “Viola Quartet” card game at the lounge tables for visitors to have some fun. There were many more crazy ideas for games to be offered in this area (viola darts, viola nerfball, etc.), but we ran out of time to pursue them ☺.

3.2.3. Space for Your Team

You have to consider how and where to install the “Command centre” (headquarters) of your IVC Team. During the congress, the visitors will have an infinite and unrelenting demand for help and advice. You need a “reception desk” where you can interact officially with the congress visitors. This area should be comfortably dimensioned so that it doesn’t feel cramped if there are more than two visitors waiting in line. Think about functions such as ticket sales (cash / electronic payment facilities), information, registration, reservation (practice rooms!), etc. etc. There should also be some “retracted” office space for the congress manager and other key team members, not immediately accessible to the public, to allow undisturbed work, phone calls, using the computer, etc.

Your volunteer team also deserves some “private time” between shifts. See if you can find them a private “den” where they can withdraw, rest, eat, drink, and swap stories. In Rotterdam, the volunteers’ “sanctuary” room was a key sanity-saving facility.

3.3. Finding the Ideal Facilities – Our Story

Obviously, with such a long “shopping list”, it is very challenging to find all of these needs covered by one single building / neighbourhood. And on top of it all, the solution has to be financially viable.

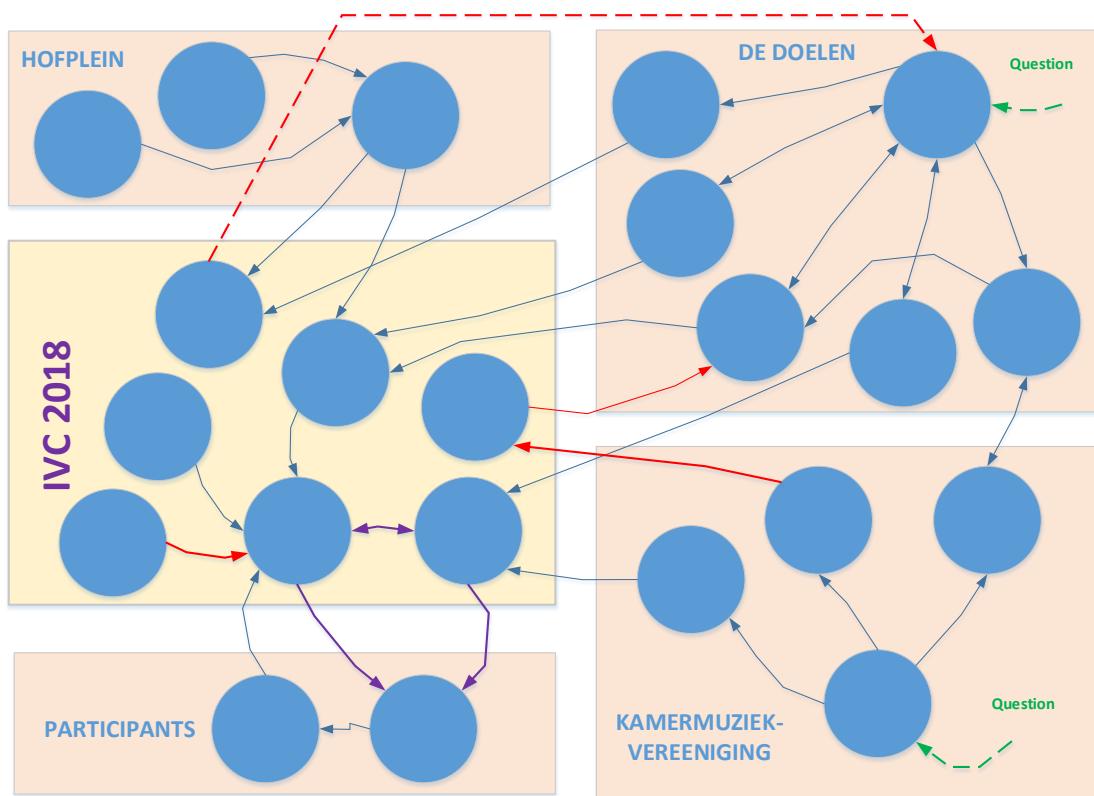
So in the early phases, you have to “shop around”, look for opportunities, and use your imagination. It is an advantage when the Organizing committee members live nearby and can visit prospective venues easily, to observe how they function in daily life, and to generate ideas for new and creative ways to use them.

The story behind the Rotterdam IVC Facility “Plan” is as follows.

Based on the initial enthusiasm and even written letters of support from our institutional partners, we were counting on a deal with the Codarts conservatory and the Doelen concert halls for free or discount-rate use of their facilities. The “Dream scenario” would be to use De Doelen as the main venue for the congress, and having the smaller recital halls and rehearsal rooms of next-door Codarts at our disposal for the essential logistical “wiggle space”.

As it turned out, this idea was way too naïve. Our “Dream scenario” turned gradually into a “Doom scenario”, where a full-time rental of De Doezen alone would cost us some €40,000 minimum. Meanwhile, Codarts unexpectedly announced that they had committed to host another major congress (ELIA 2018) in the exact same week! For a couple of months in mid-2017, we were rather desperate and on the brink of calling the whole thing off.

Here's a (simplified!) silhouette image of an actual dependencies chart that was discussed during this phase of our congress planning. I have intentionally removed specific questions / texts in each bubble (they don't matter anymore). But it gives a pretty good impression of how desperately confused we were at the time.



neighbouring community house (De Nieuwe Banier). In total, our daytime programming made use of three different recital halls, 5 workshop studios (each with a capacity of 20-30 people), 1 luthier studio, and at least 4-5 smaller rooms for rehearsals and other logistics. None of it was even in the slightest way superfluous or redundant.

As for the evening programming: thanks to the continued support of our institutional partners (De Doelen and Kamermuziekvereeniging Rotterdam), we still were privileged to enjoy 4 fantastic concerts in De Doelen and one in the beautiful Laurenskerk – concert venues of the highest acoustic standard.

Finding a suitable late-night location proved surprisingly difficult. There's no lack of bars in the vicinity of De Doelen (there's even an in-house bar, De Doelencafé, established exactly for the purpose of capturing the post-concert-thirsty crowd). The problem was that we wanted to have a place for ourselves so that we could run our Late-night programming (amongst which a couple of definitely non-mainstream musical styles). Most of the bars we looked at didn't even have a stage or a sound system, and we could imagine the trouble we'd have to go to in order to hush down the non-IVC crowd to listen to some modern solo viola music.

But finally, after a long search, we found (I still can't believe our luck! Thanks to a tip from my wife's jazz-playing niece) the PERFECT late-night spot: Societeit Matrix. Matrix is a small and cozy music club with a maximum capacity of about 100 guests, at a mere 7 minutes' walk from De Doelen. The house includes a stage with an extremely advanced acoustic system that makes you forget you're standing in just an oversized living room.

This club is not normally open every day, it is run by a group of volunteers who organize ethnic and alternative music nights on odd nights. Hence, it is not a popular place for your regular "night out". The owner granted us 5 nights of semi exclusive use, for free, provided we could guarantee a decent turnover in the bar. It is a pity that about half of our 350 congress participants never made it to Matrix (in spite of my relentless encouragements): Matrix was a five-star *Café Viola* location! (except - too small for 350 people). We had excellent performances every night of modern, cross-over and folk music – and even a magic act! Plus lots of affordable drinks, laughs and story swapping.

That was our "facility quest" story – all is well that ends well!

The lesson is that an IVC bid should include a very firm, credible plan for facilities, with sufficient flexibility for expansions – supported by confirmations of commitment/availability and firm financial quotations for rental costs from the respective facilities. In our budget, as undoubtedly for many other IVC's before us, the venue rental expenses were a dominant factor in the overall costs.

4. KNOW YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE

Not only should you have some general idea *who* will be coming to your IVC event,

Summary:

**Make a sound analysis of potential audiences and their motivations.
Strive for a broad attendance, including non-IVS member countries.**

you should also be able to count on it! (keeping *force majeure* events such as global pandemics and geopolitics out of the picture). Here are some examples (non-exhaustive list):

- Board members of the International Viola Society, in this capacity
- Special guests (artists and others invited by your organization)
- Professional violists, of which in terms of financial capacities there are at least two categories:
 - Violists with a teaching position at a University or Conservatoire, for which congress costs may be supported by their employer;
 - Orchestra and freelance violists, who travel on their own spare time, often have to pay all congress costs from their own pocket
- Professional (non-violist) musicians, traveling to the congress for the primary purpose of supporting the presentation (recital) of a violist.
- Composers, e.g. if their works are premiered at the congress
- Music press representatives, to write reports/blogs from the congress
- Luthiers and bow makers, either as exhibitor and/or as visitors
- Exhibitors (luthiers, music publishers, accessoire retailers and more)
- Viola students (college level) and aspiring viola students (secondary school)
- Amateur violists, who practice other professions
- Non-practicing viola enthusiasts, who just enjoy listening to viola music
- Representatives of Institutional and Business partners who may be present in capacity of their job, and/or as a result of curiosity in your congress
- Sponsors and Benefactors who provided financial or in-kind contributions
- Spouses/partners (and even children!) of any of the above, who may or may not be interested in the viola as such, but – if they come from afar – will probably want to attend a couple of the congress events for social reasons

You should also ask yourself if there are additional audiences who might be unique for your congress due to some special element of the programming. For each group, you should consider what (program element, price etc.) would particularly motivate them to come to your event, and what might discourage them.

Furthermore, as also indicated by the IVS Guidelines, you are obliged to make every effort to invite and encourage participation from all over the world. In the first

instance, this concerns the active IVS member chapters (countries). The IVS will automatically propagate your general letter of invitation to all Section heads, who in turn can be relied on to promote your congress to their members.

But you shouldn't leave it at that. Make an effort to recruit new audiences from non-member countries, approaching e.g. key teaching institutions and influential violists in those countries. This makes each IVC a potential "birth chamber" for new Viola Societies, as visitors are inspired to found their own Viola Societies when they return home. Thanks to active IVC recruiting in Scandinavia, the Rotterdam congress in turn led to the (re²-)birth of the Swedish and Norwegian viola societies.

You should also be aware of geopolitical barriers. Some nationalities may have a hard time getting entry visas to your country. We faced a time-consuming effort for a Kurdish-Iraqi couple (both violists) whose visas were denied. I'm not saying you shouldn't try, but be aware that visa applications need time.

The "usual suspects" who regularly attend IVC's is not such a large group – currently perhaps 100 people (from my observations over the past 4 IVC's). Many of them will come almost regardless of financial conditions and remoteness of the venue, because they enjoy meeting each other while having a viola-binge-week in an exotic location.

Well, 100 participants is OK if all you want is to fill (and pay for) a modest lecture hall. But if you're renting a professional concert venue, then you need a lot more audience. So our "plan" (or, more modestly, ambition) called for:

- Attracting above-average numbers of international congress visitors by offering more presentation opportunities, interactive workshops, masterclasses and top-notch concerts;
- Attracting hundreds of Dutch viola enthusiasts through our own DVS network;
- Drawing at-large concert audiences through all kinds of marketing channels.

We did OK on the international side (1st bullet), but on the two latter points we failed miserably. We had hoped for many more Dutch visitors to our public events!

We didn't know (understand) one of our key target audiences. Our Dutch viola friends mostly stayed home, they had little interest in an International Congress, especially one that required taking leave from work or school obligations. The general music audience came to our evening concerts – at least those that were organized and marketed by De Doelen. We had grossly overestimated the active and latent interest among Dutch amateur and professional violists alike, or at least we failed to trigger their curiosity. In our minds we had done everything we could, in this respect. This mistake didn't kill us (financially), but it was a big disappointment, because we really had hoped that this IVC would fire up the Dutch viola community like never before.

² "Re-birth": for a couple of years in the previous decade, there existed a joint "Nordic Viola Society".

Maybe this is different in other countries, but other IVC's (Poland, Italy, NZ) confirm the impression of a disparity with the interests of a wider circle of violists. Maybe it's the programming, maybe it's the whole concept and "image" of a viola congress that is just not attractive enough. Call it a "festival" and maybe more people will show up.

It is recommended to study (ask for) the attendance numbers at previous congresses, and make a sound estimate from that. If you think there are specific good reasons why you could expect a higher-than-average attendance, write down those reasons/assumptions, and be critical. Wishful thinking could get you in trouble (especially if attendance is linked to revenues!). Try to calculate the impact (on your budgets and facility needs) of achieving larger or smaller attendance than expected.

Another question worth asking: With a small tweak of programming or emphasis that simply extends themes you have already embraced, could you draw significant interest from a whole new group of people? (for example, if there is already a renowned percussionist or composer centrally featured in your programme: a masterclass for percussionists, a composers' workshop?).

5. RECRUIT A GOOD TEAM

Subtitle: "You and Which Army?"

Summary:

- **Recognise your team's strengths and weaknesses, and recruit good people for missing skills;**
- **Don't cling to unmotivated and negative people, even if you "need" them; they will drag you down**
- **Keep in mind that not everyone is prepared to contribute as unpaid volunteer; allocate budget!**
- **Take time to share and celebrate successes with the team**
- **Recruit, train, and coordinate a volunteers team**

6.1. The Core Team

Your initial "Viola society"-based congress team will most likely consist for a large part of viola players, who know an awful lot about viola-related matters, but who do

not necessarily possess relevant practical skills for congress organization. Congress Management is a cross-disciplinary profession in its own right, where general project management skills constitute an important foundation. You also need a financial manager, a planner, a (good) negotiator, a (good English) writer, technicians (lights, sound, camera, etc.), serious computer skills, Public Relations, graphic designers, "people" managers, and lots of other capacities that are probably only coincidentally available in your initial team.

By mid-2017, we were beginning to recognize the true magnitude and multitude of the challenges ahead. We took inventory of the skills in the core team:

Karin Dolman (co-host and President of the DVS) was the obvious artistic leader, with a knack for creating interesting program/recital programme combinations. With her shining enthusiasm and energy she was also an important dynamic factor that set and kept the ship in motion.

We were fortunate to have Emlyn Stam on our core team from the start, a professional violist and ensemble manager who knew all the ins and outs of soliciting funds from public sources (he was extraordinarily successful in this respect). Our DVS treasurer, on the other hand, resigned from his position, stating that he simply was not motivated to invest that much energy and time in a viola congress. While we were disappointed by this, we were also thankful that he told us honestly and clearly at an early stage, so that we could look for a replacement.

My daughter (Ursula) took care of secretarial chores; and myself, an engineer by profession, took on the managerial tasks of planning, action lists, schedules, designing processes, and more.

Nevertheless it soon became clear that our team in its initial composition was plainly not equipped to tackle all of the required tasks. So we started actively seeking reinforcements in certain areas.

One thing we recognised early was that during the Congress itself, we'd need a small army of volunteers to perform zillions of tasks. And we'd need a few good officers to provide detailed directions to that army. But none of us had relevant experiences to draw on. So we were fortunate to find Sarah Olieman, an eager and suitably experienced production manager. We fortunately had some funding commitments by then, so we allocated a salary for 2 full-time months and an operations budget for her. With her operations budget, she in turn hired her own right hand, Laura Jonker (an equally experienced musical event organizer), for practical assistance during the congress week. Together, these two formed a great team with a drive for detail and execution. They knew about classical musicians and audiences, and they understood festival volunteers. This was a huge psychological boost, because we knew we had someone reliable to think of all the nitty-gritty details of shift planning, stage logistics, transportation, accommodation etc. All in all this was an essential investment for us, without which the congress would have been a disaster.

We also hired a public relations professional to “beat the big jungle drums” in the final weeks leading up to the congress, and to take care of media contacts during the congress. A graphical designer was contracted for the visual branding of our online media, posters and pamphlets, and supporting production of the Programme Booklet. Both turned out to be indispensable. And in the end, even my wife Marianna jumped on the IVC bandwagon as Merchandise producer (*“if you can’t beat them, join them”... !*).

Working on a big project like this for 2 years, investing thousands of spare time man-hours with ever-increasing time pressure, unavoidably generates stressful moments and frictions within the team. We put out these fires with some much-needed social moments to celebrate the successes along the way: Home dinners or a night out for beers.



The IVC2018 Core team: from left, Emlyn, Anna, Ursula, Karin, Sarah, Kristofer (taken during the last official Late-night session on Day 5, hence the fuzziness!)

6.2. The Volunteer Team

We successfully recruited and invested in our “volunteer army” (in the end counting more than 50 troopers!). They primarily serve as “extra hands” during the congress itself, so they only enter the operational picture a few months before the congress.

The volunteers help taking care of a multitude of tasks which simply cannot be all be handled by your core team:

- Stage crew
- Reception staff
- Sales team (congress and concert tickets, merchandize)
- Guides (personally helping invited guests to find their way)
- Catering team (ensuring invited guests and volunteers are cared for)
- Safety team (stewards, certified Emergency Response (BHV) handlers)
- Photographers and camera crews to cover all events
- Heavy Lift Gang (heavy furniture, instruments, stage props, supplies)
- Drivers

A good shift planning is essential, since (obviously) no single volunteers can be on duty the whole time (even if they were, in theory, available). Some tasks are more or less self-evident – while other tasks require instruction and training, which in turn requires extra planning.

One thing to check in the shift planning is that, at each venue, there's continuously someone present who is certified in Emergency Response (e.g. CPR, procedures for fire and accident response – a formal obligation for all events in The Netherlands). This could also be someone from the venue owner's staff or from your core team.

in the form of free access to all congress events (outside of shifts), and a dedicated “recreation room” backstage in the Hofpleintheater with free food (fruit, sandwiches, etc.) and drinks. This investment was actually very modest in financial terms, but it was hugely important for the volunteers to feel properly appreciated and “cared for”.

You can probably also make good use of some extra hands during the congress preparation phase, for spreading promotional material (posters, flyers, stickers)

6. PLAN PROACTIVELY

Summary:

You must plan carefully all the work and processes leading up to the Congress, during the Congress itself, and after the Congress.

Design efficient and complete processes, but always keep your systems flexible, allowing for improvisation when necessary.

The Planning effort is in itself a huge challenge and an important part of congress organization. It is useful to divide the plan in three main phases:

- The work and the processes leading up to the Congress
- The Congress Event itself
- The wrap-up work after the Congress

You need to have a reasonable idea of the many tasks that are coming your way in each phase, their magnitudes, required knowledge/skills, and time constraints (in particular deadlines). But more than that, you should develop a “process” view of the bigger tasks, understanding their implications in terms of workflow, communications, finances, logistics, etc

Warning: This chapter is quite lengthy and detailed. Pour yourself a strong cup of coffee – you’ll need it!

6.1. Planning the Pre-Congress Phase

Firstly it is important to realize that the pre-Congress activities involve not only the direct tasks of your team and coordination with your partner organizations, but also include a number of important early interactions with the Congress participants.

An example timeline for your team’s preparatory activities has already been described in the “Start Early” chapter. This provides a reasonable view on the high level activities and timelines involved.

There are of course also hundreds of smaller tasks. You should track those using an “Action list” (an Excel sheet is highly recommended!) that records the nature of each task, the “assignee” (responsible person), the due date, and the current status of the task. This is a pretty standard project management technique.

However, in this chapter I want to discuss the “inner loops” and processes involved in some of the high level steps, particularly as regards the early interactions with congress participants. Those interactions included:

- The Call for Proposals
- Congress Registration
- The Call for Exhibitors
- Coordination of Congress Presenters
- Coordination of Featured Artists and Special Guests
- Applications for Masterclasses
- Ordering Evening concert tickets
- Registration for Workshops
- Registration for Meals

Just to give you an idea of the magnitude of the above interactions, by number of mails exchanged through the official IVC2018 e-mail accounts:

Activity Stream	Number of e-mails sent/received:
Call for Proposals	800
Congress Registration	1200
Call for Exhibitors	300
Applications for Masterclasses	500
Registration for workshops/meals/tickets etc	250
Coordination of Presenters	1400

Initially, it's easy to overlook the fact that each of these processes requires careful thinking. Getting these things right helps to avoid a lot of questions (from the participants) and recovery actions later on. Typically, each interaction needs to be designed with a clear purpose, so as to fulfil a number of criteria:

- Identify exactly which information you need from the counterpart, including agreements (consent) to your “game rules”
- Request only the minimum absolutely necessary information to fulfil the goals of the process (to avoid drowning in data, but also for GDPR reasons)
- Make it easy to provide the correct information, and hard to make mistakes
- Supply a set of rules that governs any agreement involved in the interaction
- Make it clear how the information will be processed, and what the nominal procedure entails (deadlines, confirmations etc.)

That last point is becoming increasingly important, as there is increasingly strict GDPR (privacy) legislation in most countries governing your responsibilities with respect to gathering, storage and usage of personal data.

In today's internet-driven world, you should use automation (computer technology) to facilitate these interactions as much as possible. Here are some examples:

- Use web-based forms to collect inputs

- Issue automatic confirmations of receipt by e-mail (to avoid the stress of having to reply immediately in person to all such submissions! Otherwise you can expect the popular question, “*did you receive my registration? I submitted it 2 days ago, but never heard anything back!*”).
- Generate unique reference numbers for registrations
- Implement automatic error / consistency checking in registration forms: validate e-mail addresses, block for mandatory fields, apply character masking to ensure proper input (e.g. numerals vs alphabetical characters)
- Ensure there is an efficient way to collect and process the data from the website, and test it before you start each campaign.

But a good system should also be “forgiving”: In the interest of “good visitor experiences”, no matter how perfect and logical your scheme seems to you, **you should remain flexible, and allow improvised procedures for people who are unable to comply with your processes for whatever reason.**

They are not being uncooperative or stupid - it could be a technical compatibility problem. For example, we found out that our Congress Registration form didn’t always work properly, although we had tested it on several Operating Systems and browsers – some people were simply unable to enter valid data.

That being said, you should of course do your best to fashion the processes in such a way that the large majority of interactions goes smoothly, without the need for workarounds. More about the use of automation in chapter 8. Embrace IT.

6.1.1. Call for Proposals

The Call for Proposals (CfP for short) is one of the major early processes in the congress organization timeline. This is the process by which you receive and select proposals for presentations during the congress. Technically, the CfP is only the “announcement of opportunity”, soliciting these proposals and outlining the game rules for the selection process. But in this context we describe the whole process up until the presenters are actually selected and confirmed.

It’s a long process (5-6 months nominally), and should start as early as possible, but preferably not before the end of the previous congress. Besides the time you need to perform it well, it’s also important for the presenters to be notified of their selection well in advance of the congress, so they can also apply for financial support and leave from their employers. At some Universities, this required “lead time” for support can be more than 6 months.

The whole CfP process can be viewed as consisting of the following main stages:

1. Authoring the CfP Invitation and Proposal Submission form
2. Receiving, processing and acknowledging Proposals
3. Evaluation and selection by the Programme Committee

4. Communicating the selection results of the Programme Committee
5. Receiving confirmation of intent from the selected presenters

6.1.1.1. Authoring the CfP Invitation and Proposal Submission Form

The CfP Invitation should be a dedicated page on your congress website which announces the invitation to submit programme proposals; it explains the application process (with a download link to the Proposal Submission form) and how (and by when) the proposals are to be submitted.

The CfP furthermore should include a set of rules, which are considered applicable and binding for a signed Proposal submission form. These rules spell out:

- What the applicant (Proposal submitter) must commit and agree to;
- Commitments of the IVC Organizers
- Specific services that the IVC Organizers will not commit to

Example agreements could be that no financial compensation shall be expected by the Presenter, and that he/she must be fully available to present on any of the official congress days. These rules also include practical commitments from your side, such as the notification date of selection results.

Here is the [link to the IVC2018 CfP Invitation page](#).

The Proposal Submission form is a good opportunity to request accurate information from the presenters, and thereby get a solid early handle on the congress planning. That can save you a lot of extra e-mail traffic later! So it is important to put good forethought in the design of this form.

We set the following “information goals” for the Proposal Submission form:

- A clear description of the Proposed presentation (format, title, duration, required facilities, description of contents)
- Ask whether the presenter would be willing to “share” a recital session with another presenter, allowing to economize time and facilities.
- Information about the Main Presenter(s): Name, nationality, date of birth, contact information, Viola Society membership.
- Information about accompanist and/or ensemble members (if applicable)
- Supporting documentation (with a clear description of the required formats), including CV, Biography, and a photo (for the programme booklet)
- Confirm no copyright / licence infringements in the proposed programme
- Acknowledge obligation to be member of an IVS-affiliated Viola Society
- Acceptance of all the mutual obligations applicable to the Call for Proposals

The generalized IVC2018 CfP Proposal Submission Form is shown in Annex

A.1. CfP: Proposal Submission Form.

6.1.1.2. Receiving, Processing and Acknowledging Proposals

Two months after the CfP had been published, the submission deadline expired. We had by then received some 35 proposals. While that was fine, it really didn't give us much to "choose from" – we could program them all. But we realized this was the week just before Christmas, and most people would have been too busy to write proposals; so we extended the deadline, and over the next few weeks we received another 80+ proposals. So that was a good decision!

Upon receiving each proposal (by e-mail), the following procedure was followed:

- Check that all the required documents were included
- Assign a Proposal identifier and store all documents in a folder with that name
- Create an entry in our Proposals database with the main points
- Confirm proper receipt by e-mail reply

Deep-dive topic: Proposal Identifiers

For Proposal identifiers, we used the format: **NNN_TP_<Name>_<Keyword>**

NNN Incrementing serial number in global order of reception, 001 = first proposal
TP Type of Presentation: RC = Recital, LR = Lecture-recital, LC = Lecture,
 MC = Masterclass, WS = Workshop

So for an hypothetical Lecture proposal "Cold Tuna: Arctic Field Test of Graphite Viola Pegs" by dr. B.A. Feaschiqq (Vice President for R&D of the Greenland Viola Society), the Proposal code could be: **024_LC_Feaschiqq_Tuna**

This code is useful for a number of reasons: For one thing, some people send multiple proposals, which would all be listed by the same presenter name. Or there could be multiple proposals about a similar subject (e.g. four Bach programmes). That is likely to create confusion when you want to discuss a specific presentation proposal. Since the serial numbers alone (001, 025, 107) are unique from the outset, all the other information is mostly explanatory or optional.

You can use the serial numbers for shorthand notation when discussing scheduling, placement in the programme booklet, rehearsals, etc. Finally, the fact that the Presentation type is built into the code makes it easier to detect "format errors" during the planning phase, such as assigning a workshop to a main auditorium hall, or a recital in a classroom studio. If you use the Proposal Identifier consistently in your communications, it also becomes much easier to search your mail archives for all internal and external communications relating to a specific proposal.

6.1.1.3. Evaluation and Selection by the Programme Committee

We wanted to accommodate (and invite) as many presenters as possible, but it was clear that even with parallel tracks we could not accommodate all the proposals. Therefore, in the period leading up to Selection Committee work, we contacted some of the candidates to explore their willingness to cut down on program length or otherwise modify the format, in order to make it easier to combine and fit elements into the schedule. A very specific example were folklore-based or experimental performances that might fit in the late-night programming (a very different and somewhat less formal presentation setting). Thus, a large number of proposals were pre-massaged with agreements that could potentially increase schedule capacity.

We had to come up with some effective (and hopefully fair) selection criteria. An affinity of the proposed topic with the Congress Theme (*Exploring New Ways to Perform*) was used as a primary yardstick. But we were also looking for overall diversity of topics/repertoire, and the diversity and quality of the presenters.

Achieving a balanced international spread was also a goal. More than half of the received proposals originated from only 5 countries (28 proposals from the USA, 14 from Italy, and 11 each from Poland and The Netherlands). Therefore, all other factors being roughly equal, we gave a certain priority to contributions from countries that would otherwise not be represented at all.

Having negotiated actual programme lengths down to a minimum before the selections, we literally had to do a detailed bookkeeping against the total amount of “presentation minutes” allowed in the schedule. For recitals, you have to keep in mind that presenters sometimes list only the “bare” playing time, i.e. adding up the duration (in minutes) of each piece. But between each piece there are gaps introduced by applause, tuning, and perhaps a short spoken introduction. So you may have to re-calculate the programme lengths by estimating these “overheads”.

We ended up selecting 65 proposals for the Congress programme. In general, we accepted all Workshops and Masterclass proposals, as we figured we could fit them all in “parallel track” blocks.

Around 30 proposals were put on a “waiting list”, in case one of the selected presenters should end up not being able to come. Note that in our programming system, Lectures and Recitals were not “interchangeable” – all Lectures had to fit in specific morning programme blocks. Therefore, we actually had two waiting lists, one for Lectures and another one for (Lecture-)Recitals.

6.1.1.4. Communicating the Selection Results of the Programme Committee

Now came the challenging part of communicating our selection results to all the applicants in the best possible way. There were three types of notification mails:

- a) Notification of Acceptance: The presenter was congratulated with the selection of his/her proposal for the congress programme. If any conditions had been negotiated for acceptance, these would be re-stated (e.g.

shortening/combination of programme). We requested a confirmation of the Presenter's acceptance of these criteria, and his/her intent to actually come to the congress. An example notification mail text is shown in Annex A.2. CfP: Notification of Acceptance. Last but not least, we also attached a personalized "Letter of Recommendation" which the Presenter could use for financial support applications - see Annex A.3. CfP: Letter of Recommendation (for Presenters).

- b) Notification of Waiting List Status: The focus of this letter is to moderate the disappointment for the applicant with a hopeful "but wait – you're on a waiting list, and your rank is currently <N>". Along with this, it is clarified that the waiting lists are not meant to be maintained forever – there's a deadline after which (for practical reasons) we would no longer invite new presenters, even if we lose some programming. You can see an example of such a notification mail in Annex A.4. CfP: Notification of Waiting List Status.
- c) Notification of Rejection: "Bad News" mail, but we emphasize the strong competition and the complex selection criteria. It is suggested that the applicant may re-submit his/her proposal for a future congress, and that we hope the applicant will consider attending our congress, even if not in the role of a Presenter. You can see an example of such a notification mail in Annex A.5. CfP: Notification of Rejection.

These mails all went out in one "big bang" (2-3 days' time span) – but remember, they are all personalized, giving as much individual consideration as possible to avoid misunderstandings from generalizations. And the Letter of Recommendation needs to be personalized, too. So even if you have a template text, it's still a lot of work (116 personalized mails, of which 65 with personalized recommendation letters, in our case).

6.1.1.5. Receiving Confirmation of Intent from the Selected Presenters

This is a natural step after having sent the Notifications of Acceptance. It makes no sense to start trying to piece together the Congress Programme if you don't have some confidence that the accepted presenters will actually come. There are several factors that could influence that decision on their part:

- They may need a commitment of financial support of their employers, or at least an approval of leave for the duration of the congress. The Letter of Recommendation can play a key role here.
- They may not feel entirely comfortable with the limitations (e.g. a reduced or modified programme, late-night time slot) that have been pre-negotiated as a condition of their acceptance.
- New or developing circumstances in their professional or private lives (since they submitted their proposal) have made a trip to your congress impossible.

This is why we thought it necessary to leave sufficient response time (6 weeks) for the presenters' confirmation of intent to attend the congress. A tighter deadline might have tempted the selected presenters to make unfounded/hurried decisions, which results in bad data.

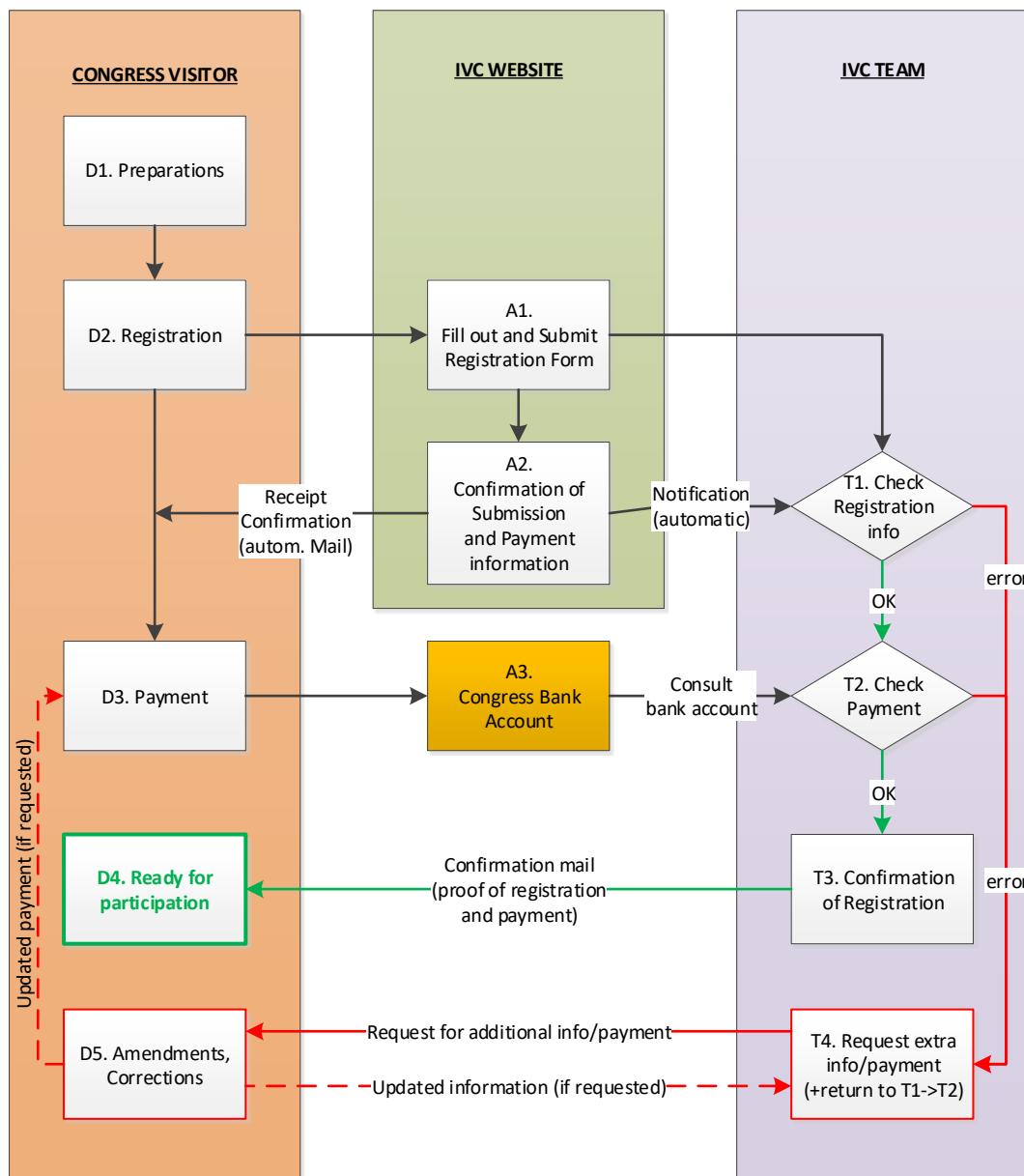
When the deadline for responses had passed, we had to "chase" those presenters who hadn't replied yet, to ensure we had all responses before starting the work of creating the congress programme (see section 6.2. below).

6.1.2. Congress Registration

Congress Registration is basically the process of selling congress tickets. Many of the strategic and financial considerations involved in this process are described in a later section (7.3.2. Revenues from Congress Ticket Sales). We were shooting for hundreds of visitors, with a finely tuned system of different ticket types and discounts ("early bird" and student rates). We already had good confidence in the first 100-or so visitors, being the congress presenters and their ensembles / accompanists selected through the Call for Proposals process. But it was important (for our cash flow) to get those tickets sold early. So we wanted to move fast, with a minimum of unnecessary repetitive efforts.

6.1.2.1. Congress Registration Process

With potentially hundreds of registrations to complete, you need a robust system to keep sane (and avoid administrative mayhem). So there was significant interest in making the registration effort as smooth and efficient as possible. The overall registration process was designed as a flow chart:



The starting point of the process is that the prospective visitors fills in and submits the Congress Registration form. The endpoint of the process is that the IVC team confirms completed registration. In between these endpoints there are several steps and checks, involving payment transactions, consistency checking, and potential manual iterations, in case information or payment is found to be incorrect or missing.

6.1.2.2. Terms and Conditions for IVC2018 Participation

An important element in the Registration Process was the “contractual” agreement with the visitors, called Terms and Conditions for IVC2018 Participation, spelling out

the ground rules for participation. When submitting a registration request, the participant was required to confirm agreement and compliance with these rules. The following main topics were included:

1. Definitions: A language technical introduction to define the meaning (in the context of these rules) of terms such as “participant”, “congress”, “congress manager”, “presentation”, “congress venues” etc.
2. Payment: Rules for determining congress fees, currency, VAT, means of payment, transfer costs etc.
3. Congress Registration: Obligation and implications of Registration, changing registration category, and terms of cancellation; No-show and badge policy. Special provisions for accompanying assistants of people with disabilities.
4. Protection and use of Data: GDPR related clauses; permission to audio/video record at congress events.
5. Responsibilities and Liability: Responsibility of participant to have a liability insurance in case of damages. Indemnity clause. Obligations towards participants with disabilities.
6. General Regulations: Venues’ local house rules, consequences of infringement, discretion of Congress Manager, place of jurisdiction.

The full text is given in Annex B.3. Terms and Conditions for IVC2018 Participation. It's quite a lengthy story, and a lot of thought went into this. We did not have a lawyer on our team – so much of the “legalese” was copied from similar blurbs of other congresses. Most of this is written to protect your back in case something goes wrong, and fortunately we hardly needed to lean on these rules at all. But better safe than sorry! We invite you to consider re-using some of this material.

6.1.2.3. Congress Registration Form (Website)

Unlike the CfP process, for Congress Registration we did not want to settle for exchanging manually edited Word documents. We've seen that done for other congresses, but since we were anticipating hundreds of registrations, we were determined to use a web-based registration form to reduce the manual labour of collecting and managing the registration data. For this purpose we bought a commercially licensed WordPress Form plugin for the website. In the spirit of “making it easy for the user to enter correct data, and hard to provide wrong inputs”, the design and input validation for the registration form required some iterations of testing and improvement. You can read more details about these IT aspects in section 8.1.2. Website Forms Plugin.

We set the following “interaction goals” for the Congress Registration Form:

- Obtain the visitor’s bare-minimum personal information: Name, date of birth (relevant for ticket price), e-mail address, country of residence;

- Obtain documented proof of membership of an IVS-affiliated Viola Society (required for Delegates and for discount); or, failing that, offer a 1-year membership of the Dutch Viola Society.
- Select Ticket type: Week pass or Day passes (week pass is cheaper if you attend more than 2 days; and includes 2 free evening concerts)
- Optional indication of interest in private lodging
- Assign a unique “Registration number” for easy future reference and tracking of payment
- Acceptance of all the Terms and Conditions applicable to Congress participants

You can find the (annotated) Registration Form in Annex B.1.

6.1.2.4. Congress Registration Payment

Ideally, the registration process through the congress website should include online payment facilities, supporting all modern means such as bank cards, credit cards, PayPal, ApplePay, Stripe, etc. For this purpose, your banking infrastructure needs to be coupled to the website, and this often requires additional arrangements to be made with your bank and other payment service providers. And: Look before you dive! You may find that in return for the convenience, many of these payment mechanisms impose service charges that border the unacceptable.

There could be IT challenges as well – e.g. payment module plug-ins may not always integrate easily in your website (depending on your platform), or may not work reliably in all browsers / operating systems.

We had some time pressure to get the registration system online, and decided not to include a built-in payment facility in our website – especially since we had some bad experiences with integration attempts in the past. We simply could not afford the risk of such problems consuming our time.

Another reason for us to avoid an online payment facility as an integrated step of the web-based registration process was the fact that we (rightfully, as it turned out) didn't completely trust the congress fee calculation mechanisms in our registration form, so we intentionally added an intermediate step of manually checking, possibly correcting, and confirming the amounts due. This is illustrated as step T1 of the process diagram in section 6.1.2.1 above.

So we decided to request separate bank transfers from participants as a baseline. Within the EURO zone, this is easy and low-cost thanks to the IBAN system. The main challenge remained to find a good alternative for money transfers from outside Europe.

For this purpose, we found a solution that worked well in 90% of the cases: The web-based money transfer service [Wise](#) (formerly “TransferWise”). It allows users to transfer money internationally without huge banking charges, and apart from

creating a Wise account, no special services or couplings of our own bank were needed. Compared to “regular” international bank transfers, it is easy, relatively fast (max 5 banking days), transparent and cheap (fees in the sub-percentage range, nicely calculated so that the money that reaches the recipient is clearly defined).

But! Keep in mind that no matter how much effort you put into an easy-to-use, low-overhead payment system, there will always be people for whom your chosen methods are unavailable. For example in some countries, international money transfer facilities are blocked for political / currency trading reasons. More commonly, technology itself gets in the way, when for example the internet browser, security policies, Java version discrepancies or other issues prevent successful use of the payment facilities. So in the interest of having a flexible and user-friendly overall registration system (enhancing the participants’ experience from the start), keep the path open for a participant whose only real option is to pay in cash on arrival.

6.1.2.5. Congress Registration Checking Process

In spite of the automated steps, there remains plenty of manual work for the IVC team to verify that each registration is complete and correct:

- Name, e-mail, country, and birth date information complete
- Valid evidence of existing Viola Society membership for current year
- Ticket type to be consistent with the visitor’s role at the congress
(all Presenters must be “Delegate”, only certain people qualify as “Associate”, and the rest could/should in principle register as “Auditor”)
- Rate reduction consistent with Viola Society membership, registration date and visitor’s age (early bird and youth/student rates);
- Payment consistent with amount due

Going back to the first principles of designing this interaction, then,

- Identify exactly which information you need from the counterpart, including agreements (consent) to your “game rules”
- Make it easy to provide the correct information, and hard to make errors;
- Supply a set of rules that governs any agreement involved in the interaction
- Make it clear how the information will be processed, and what the nominal procedure entails (deadlines, confirmations etc.)

6.1.3. Call for Exhibitors

As mentioned before, the Exhibitors coming to the congress provide an important added-value “marketplace”. The basic premise is that they have a vested business interest (making contacts and sales), and the congress benefits financially from their

fees. It is therefore important to treat them as serious business relationships with a firm contractual agreement and good service.

Creating these connections begins with the Call for Exhibitors. The Call for Exhibitors takes the form of an open invitation for companies to submit Exhibit booking requests. This invitation was published on the congress website, posted on social media, and sent by directed (not mass) e-mails.

Call for Exhibitors

Luthiers and manufacturers/resellers of viola related accessories, music publishers, recording companies, and other related firms and organizations are invited to exhibit their products and/or to present themselves at the **International Viola Congress 2018**, to be held at the Hofpleintheater in Rotterdam (The Netherlands), November 20th-24th, 2018.

The International Viola Congress 2018 in Rotterdam is a unique opportunity to make contact with literally hundreds of violists from all over the world, including professional performers and teachers, students, and amateurs. Furthermore we expect a significant presence from luthiers, music publishers, composers, and a general music audience.



You can now reserve an EXHIBITION SPACE (first-come, first-serve basis).

Please find here the applicable [Terms and Conditions for Exhibitors at IVC2018](#).

If you have read and agree to the above Terms and Conditions, proceed to place your booking request using the on-line [IVC2018 Exhibit Booking Request Form](#).



If you are not able to exhibit during IVC2018, but you wish extra visibility for your product(s), you may also place an **advertisement** in the IVC2018 Programme booklet, which will be seen by hundreds of violists and will give your product(s) a good exposure. [Contact us](#) for the separate placement of advertisements.

Screenshot of the Call for Exhibitors on the IVC2018 Website

We set the following “information goals” for the Exhibit Booking Request Form:

- Obtain the Exhibitor’s basic business information: Name, address (postal and electronic), website; contact and attendee names; types of product sold;
- Indicate requested Exhibit space format and additional services
- Assign a unique “Registration number” for easy future reference and tracking of payment
- Acceptance of all the [Terms and Conditions](#) applicable to Congress Exhibitors

You can find the Exhibit Booking Request Form in Annex C.1.

The contractual document [Terms and Conditions for IVC2018 Exhibitors](#) (Annex C.2.) played a key role in defining the business agreement. It describes the exact

commitments of the IVC organizers in terms of allocated space, facilities and services; and on the other hand the responsibilities of the Exhibitor. It deals with special topics such as e.g. furniture, power, internet access, ambient conditions, advertising, and shipping/storage of the merchandize.

It is also important to be clear about the official “exhibition schedule” (dates and times) including the set-up and dismantling of the exhibits (can they come one day in advance to set up the exhibit? Or leave stuff behind for return shipping after the congress?). And last but not least, as there are valuables involved (think of a luthier bringing half a dozen expensive violas!), it is important to set the proper scope for liabilities / damages.

In summary, Exhibitors generally have very special needs and concerns compared to those of general congress visitors. But they are also congress visitors in a limited way, so certain parts of the Terms and Conditions for IVC2018 Participation also apply to them – this, too, is defined in the Exhibitor rules.

Processing of the Exhibit booking requests for IVC2018 was a two-step procedure:

1. A mail acknowledging the booking request, including an Invoice for the Exhibitor fee and selected optional services (see Annex C.3.)
2. Once the invoice was paid, a definitive confirmation of the booking would be issued.

Overall, the Exhibit request / booking process covers a lot of details, and you want to get this right, for the reasons mentioned above – your Exhibitors must be very well cared for, their investment is significant, and their satisfaction is very important for your congress.

6.1.4. Coordination of Congress Presenters

The “Coordination” tasks specifically involves closing the loop on all practical matters pertaining to each Congress Presenter (artist/lecturer) before and during the congress. Unlike all of the more-or-less automated “registration”-type activities discussed above, this particular process needs to be done manually and personally one-by-one. No two presentations or presenters are the same.

One of these challenges is to agree on a venue and time for the presentation. The CfP “contract” of course includes a clause that specifically requires the presenter to be unconditionally available to give the presentation at any time or day of the congress. Nevertheless, it is difficult to enforce such a commitment. In the case of IVC2018, roughly 20% of the presenters still ended up presenting us with schedule constraints, such as arriving late or leaving early (some even ended up only attending a single day of the congress!). The typical justification is that they simply cannot afford to stay all week, for work reasons (obligations / opportunities elsewhere), family reasons, or financial reasons (cost of lodgings etc.).

But when this happens after you have already accepted a presenter to your programme, you're in a weak negotiating position: if you cannot accept the presenter's schedule constraints, you have to change your congress programme and start searching the "reserves" list for a replacement. That is an exercise with an uncertain outcome.

Beyond the schedule aspect, you need to make firm agreements on technical facilities, rehearsal times, actual performance programme (if a recital), stuff they need to bring (electronic files, special devices), contact information for the stage manager and technicians (if needed), iterations of texts and photo for the Programme Booklet, and more.

This planning process is an essential activity, which should be performed by the person in charge of the congress presentation logistics. Every little detail that you fail to arrange in advance of the congress can spell disaster during the congress: Presenters not knowing where to go, when to be present, whom to speak to, how to prepare, what to bring, etc.

6.1.5. Coordination of Featured Artists and Special Guests

The Featured Artists and other specially invited guests obviously require dedicated and careful handling. They have certain priority in terms of scheduling, facilities and proper support during the congress (travel, lodging, meals, rehearsals etc.).

International top rank musicians are generally represented by an agent, so you will have to negotiate and coordinate with professional agents who are very well aware of their clients' needs and constraints. The agreements need to be tracked carefully and preferably summarized in a contract. But e-mail agreements can also be considered binding.

The first challenge is of course to get the Featured and other guest artists to commit to come to your congress at all. As described in Chapter 1 ("Start early"), this could be as early as 2 years in advance of the congress. At that point, they will expect some commitments from you as well, but at that early stage you probably don't have a firm view on your finances. We managed to solve this by committing to financial agreements no later than 6 months before the congress (see section 7.2.4. Costs of Artist Salaries for more details).

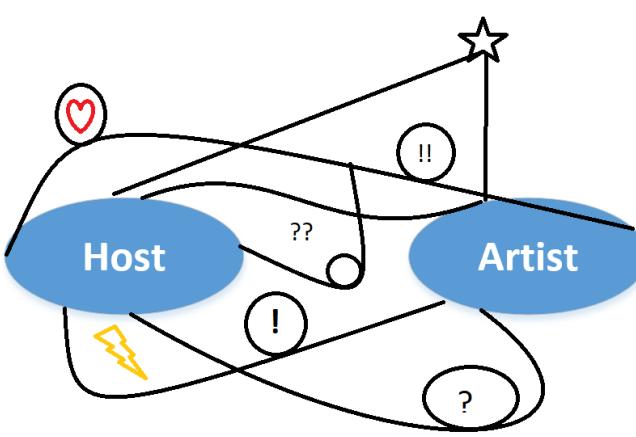
Then there is obviously the planning of their artistic contribution. What will they play? What concert venue can you offer? Accompanist? Special instruments? Orchestra/conductor? Can they play something that aligns with your congress theme? All of this has significant impacts on your planning and congress programme, but it also of course matters a great deal for the artists themselves, e.g. for their preparation and motivation to play specific repertoire with specific colleagues. Consider asking them also to give a masterclass (1 hour, 2-3 students) so that you can use this opportunity to attract more students to the congress.

On a general note about the interactions with guest artists, don't assume that they will know everything about your congress in advance, your congress could be just one stop among many in their busy lives. Assume rather that they see it as just another gig, unaware of the context. Be prepared to guide them individually through the minimum set of things they need to know. They can, and will, misunderstand complex (or even quite simple) information if you only pass it to them in writing.

For one-stop guests - keynote speakers, special performers (carillon concert!) etc. – you also need to fine tune mutual expectations. They generally will not stick around at your congress, so feed them the minimum information they need to come in, do their thing, and leave. This really takes a bit of mental gymnastics from your side, to view the congress from an outsider's point of view, and make sure their questions are fully answered (not just "go to our website and read the visitors' information").

A big part of this clearly relates to the "communication" topic (see also section 9.3.3. Communication with Invited Guests), but I mention this here because it also broadly belongs under the "planning" topic. There's no complete planning checklist I could make, nor a flashy diagram that can sufficiently capture this process, except perhaps this association to the French abstract artist Joan Miró:

IVC Artist Coordination:



Joan Miró:



6.1.6. Applications for Masterclasses

Masterclasses are an important means to attract music students to the IVC, offering unique opportunities to meet important viola pedagogues. Therefore we had all of our "Featured Artists" also scheduled to give masterclasses, and we were fortunate to also have a number of the congress presenters offering masterclasses, so we had a total of 16 masterclass teachers. Thus we were able to offer as many as 40 individual masterclass placements (20-25 minutes each), so we also anticipated more than that number of applicants.

The application process was opened in June (T-5 months) with a deadline in September (T-2 months). A special consideration herein was that we assumed some students would only plan their IVC participation, including possibly long-distance travel, if or when they had been accepted for a masterclass. Therefore we did not want to leave masterclass selection up to a last-minute decision process.

We designed an application process with a dedicated application form on the website, and its own set of rules – unsurprisingly called the “Terms and Conditions of IVC2018 Masterclass Participation”. Those rules basically paralleled the standard requirements for online auditions and competitions, including specifications for the submission of (audition) video recordings via YouTube links.

The application form asked for a minimum of personal information, but also a photo, a C.V. (resumé), and the candidate’s preference for a masterclass teacher (3 choices allowed). Some teachers wanted to focus on special repertoire – hence we had Kim Kashkashian’s masterclass themed on Kurtág’s *“Signs, Games and Messages”*, there were classes dedicated to Bach, Reger and Enrico Polo solo pieces, as well as Jutta Puchhammer’s *“Pièces de Concours”*. So that choice really mattered.

We received a total of 60 applications, so there was quite a bit of reviewing work to do. The selected candidates were notified only a few weeks after the application deadline.

The final part of the (pre-congress) Masterclasses planning process consisted of coordinating the repertoire (asking the selected students what they would play, and passing this on to the masterclass teacher), and arranging for the availability of our house pianist(s) where needed (and making sure they got the piano scores). Finally both students and teachers had to be informed of the exact time and place for the masterclass. It took quite a lot of extra mail iterations, mainly because of the sheer scale of the masterclasses programme within the congress.

6.1.7. Ordering Evening concert tickets

Since only 2 out of the 5 evening concerts were included in the standard congress fee (week pass), participants had to order separate tickets online for the other three evenings (Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday). This is not a very nice solution, you want to be able to offer simple and complete all-in packages to the participants. But in this case, unfortunately, we had no choice.

In principle, these extra ticket sales were all facilitated by the website of our partner De Doelen concert halls. We realized a little (too) late, however, that this website was only in Dutch language, so we had to add a complete layer of indirection through our own website to properly explain to our international visitors what the offerings were, how they could order and pay, etc.

Adding to the complexity for many international visitors, the payment facilities at De Doelen's website did not support various standard credit cards, PayPal etc. So we ended up creating a special "ticket ordering form" on our own website, which upon submission would automatically generate a reservation request to De Doelen's ticket office. The visitors could then pay cash at the ticket office upon arrival.

It was quite a lot of work to get all of this clearly arranged and agreed with De Doelen, as well as of course creating the front-end on our own website. We also sent out several mailings to all registered participants to explain the procedures.

In a way that wasn't all bad, because it also gave us the opportunity to pre-filter the wealth of concert offerings on De Doelen's website, and also to announce our specially organized IVC pre-concert performances of talented young viola soloists and youth orchestras (these pre-concert events were not announced by De Doelen).

The lesson learned from this is that concert ticket pre-sales for a truly international audience is not a straightforward task, even when you have a professional concert hall / organization such as De Doelen to support you.

6.1.8. Registration for Workshops

The IVC2018 had a very rich offering of 10 different workshops, many of which were scheduled twice during the congress. Workshops in this context are defined as interactive group lessons with a maximum group size of typically 20 participants. We were worried that early bookings would lead to an unfair distribution, where some people would sign up for a massive number of classes, leaving no free space for latecomers. This concern was rooted in the fact that workshop eligibility was intended to be a privilege reserved for the Delegate-level participants, who paid more for their congress tickets. So all Delegates who wanted, should be able to attend at least one Workshop, even if they register late.

So we created a Workshop registration form on our website, but due to some late wobbles in the planning department, this registration form came on-line only very late (T-1 month). As a result, very few people actually used the form, and our workshops were heavily underbooked on Day 1 of the congress. So we continued with a manual registration process at the IVC reception. As a result, fortunately most of the workshops were quite well attended in the end. But our booking system failed miserably, mostly because of the lateness. The desperate "register NOW for workshops!" announcements were drowned out by lots of other last-minute information and reminders.

Tip for future organizers: Get the workshops planned out early as part of the congress programme, so that people can sign up for workshops when they register for the congress. Otherwise there are too many individual registration actions expected of the participants.

6.1.9. Registration for Meals

The lunches and dinners at the neighbouring Zadkine college were a great success, but that was more due to luck than planning. Unfortunately the final deals with Zadkine on prices and menus were closed only 2-3 weeks before the congress. Therefore we had no way to get the pre-ordering process for our participants announced in a timely fashion. The meals had to be pre-booked 24 hours in advance, so that was already too late for lunches on Day 1.

We hurriedly put up an ordering form on our website, but it was too late for most guests to discover this. Instead we sold meal tickets cash and “first-come, first-serve” style at our reception, up to a fixed maximum number of guests per meal.

It all worked out reasonably well (food was served on time and people were happy), but it was rather in spite of the half-shod meal ticketing system.

Tip for future organizers: Same as for the Workshops, get the offerings out early.

6.1.10. Reflections on the Pre-congress Interactions

If you have read through these almost 20 pages on the topic “Planning the Pre-congress Phase” (section 6.1), you will probably have noticed that we had rather many different registration forms and associated sets of rules. In retrospect, this was not a good thing. A typical IVC2018 visitor would be expected to fill in at least 4 online forms at different times (Congress Registration, Evening Concert tickets, Workshops registration and Meal tickets registration). It would clearly have been better for both participants and organizers to reduce the number of these individual special-purpose forms to just one or two more comprehensive forms.

Having all these details ready up to 6 months in advance of the congress is however not realistic. Therefore, to “consolidate” all of these individual registration processes, we would have had to postpone the start of Congress Registration until T-3 months. But that would have undermined our need for “early bird” registration payments, so there is a definite conflict of interests here.

Another option could have been to plan for and announce on-site registration for workshops and meals from the start. That would certainly have reduced stress on the organizers’ side for not having finalized arrangements on these subjects on time. And it would have been helpful for the participants to have a more consistent information and practice of managing / requesting these reservations.

6.2. Planning the Congress Itself

Time to talk about all the fun of designing the Congress schedule:

After receiving some 120 presentation proposals from all over the world, the “Scheduling puzzle” for our congress seemed enormous. One full presentation session was budgeted at 50 minutes (including Q&A time, in case of lectures). Those 120 proposals represented some 100 hours of total programming. Our 5-day (effectively 4.5 day) schedule offered room for a maximum of 35 hours of single-track daytime programming. We knew we’d have to disappoint many, but at the same time, turning down too many people would result in a very limited attendance. The following solutions were pursued:

- Implement “parallel track” programming for lectures, workshops and masterclasses; up to 4 masterclasses and workshops could run in parallel; or one lecture session in parallel with 2 masterclasses or workshops. Recitals should always be single-track (without competition).
- Lectures and recitals would be “paired” in sessions of two consecutive 25-minute programs
- Ask presenters to reduce speaking/playing time to 25 minutes wherever possible. This survey should preferably take place as a part of the Programme Committee’s selection work. In practice, most presenters that were approached with this request were very cooperative and happy to get a presentation slot at all!
- Ask certain presenters if they would be willing to perform on the late-night programme (instead of daytime). You have to be selective and tactful with this question, it should only be asked of those with a flavour of programme (style of music) that might be suitable for such a setting.
- Minimize time-consuming audience transits between venues; keep things close together!

There are certain quality sacrifices inherent in these measures: Cutting down individual presentation time goes at the expense of conceptual programme integrity (for those who had a recital programme with a very specific intentional design), and obviously reduces the depth of lecture topic treatments. Furthermore, “parallel tracking” means that audience will have to choose between two or more simultaneous sessions. We told ourselves that this branching would be defensible for lectures, workshops and masterclasses; and that the freedom of choice may even be appreciated by the audience. But ultimately, parallel-tracking goes at the expense of the (attendance to the) presentation with the least popular / attractive-sounding title.

The upside is of course that you can fit a lot more distinct presenters into the schedule, and the programme becomes very rich and varied.

In addition, there were several wishes, needs, and practical constraints that had to be observed:

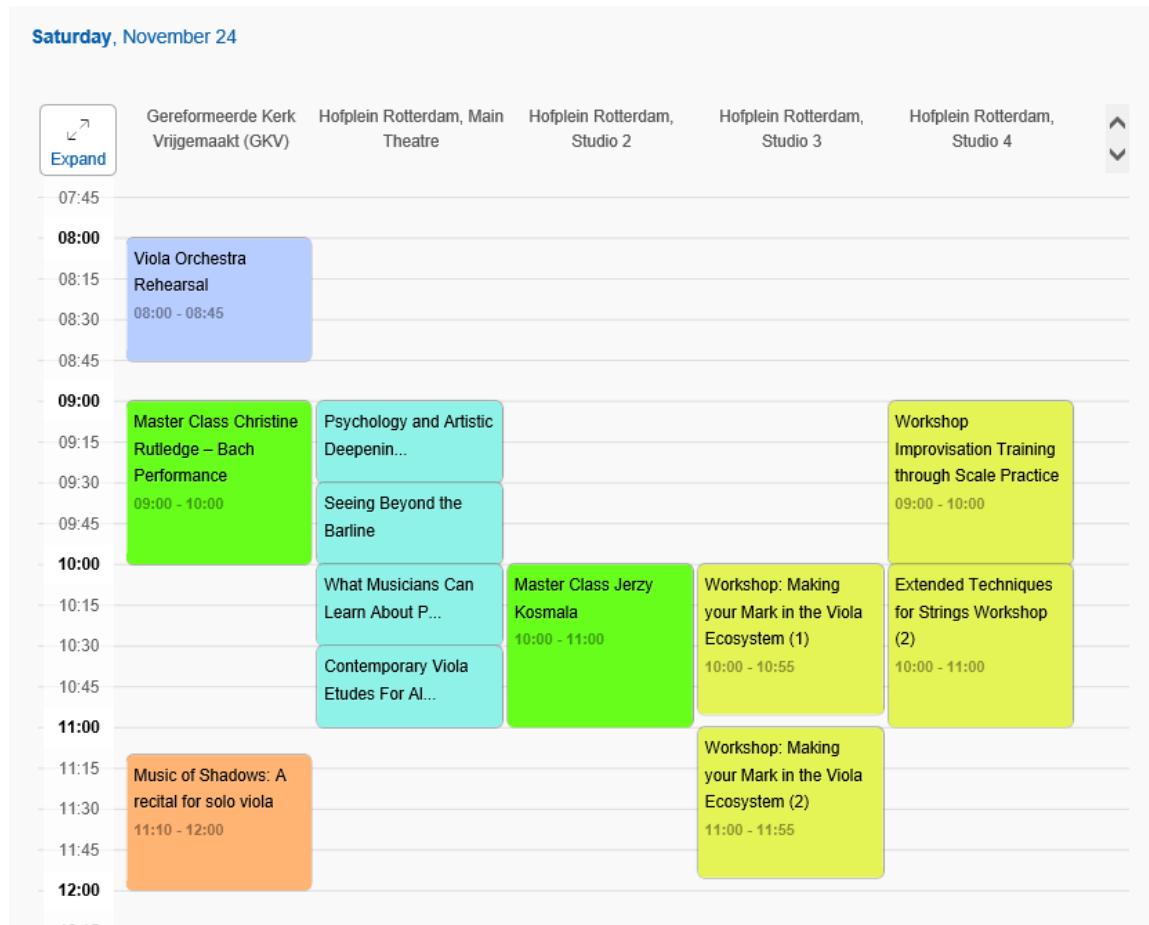
- Main recital halls to be used alternately for rehearsals and performances (so that a “dress rehearsal” on location could always be planned close to the performance itself).
- Availability of specific resources such as accompanists, audio/visual aids, special lighting, etc.
- Specific “unmovable” priority plenary events, such as Opening/Closing ceremonies, Masterclasses of the Featured Artists, Viola Orchestra, etc. – had to be respected;
- The schedule should strive for fixed/regular session start-times (“on the hour”), so as to avoid a complicated timetable with risk of misreading the start times etc.
- We wanted the congress days to have a certain common pattern: Lectures and workshops in the morning, first musical recitals not too early (certainly not at 9am!); A major Featured Artist masterclass in the early afternoon; large recitals / orchestra concerts and theatrical events in the late afternoon. It doesn’t have to be like that, of course, but it was a goal.
- Visitors need regular breaks between sessions, to chat, have a drink, look at the exhibitor stands, and rest their ears (!).

Adding further complications to this puzzle is the fact that, no matter how solemnly you make the presenters promise to be available for the full congress week (we actually had them check and sign this commitment in the CfP form), the reality is that ultimately you cannot enforce it. As mentioned previously (section 6.1.4. Coordination of Congress Presenters), once their proposal is accepted, many Presenters will come back during your planning process and declare themselves unavailable for certain (or even most) days, “take it or leave it”. There’s really nothing you can do about it, so just enjoy the hysterical ride (and have a few strong drinks to chase the headaches).

So... how do you really go about designing a working Congress schedule? Karin actually started out buying a whole set of blackboards with chalk and magnetically attached wooden plates, upon which each 25-minute presentation segment (lecture/recital) or 50-minute workshop/masterclass could be physically jousting for room on a 2-D schedule space. This worked OK initially, but it was difficult to visualize the different locations, and even more difficult to share the results with the team (except by taking pictures and mailing them around).

After a while, we switched to the web-based tool “Sched” (<https://sched.com>), recommended to us by the 2017 Wellington IVC congress manager (Elyse Dalabakis). This tool helped us to generate an online congress schedule (which could also be displayed e.g. on the Main venue monitor) and allowed real time editing. Nothing ever goes entirely as planned, so a tool like this is very useful to publish programme changes in a dynamic way (e.g. room and time changes). Sched wasn’t perfect, some tasks were more difficult and work-demanding than necessary. For example, it did not make an appropriate fuss if a location or a presenter was accidentally double-booked. I reported these issues in full to the Sched team after

the congress, for future improvement (that report was very much appreciated, so hopefully Sched is a little better by now).



(Screenshot of Sched presenting parallel track schedule in 5 different locations).

After countless iterations of reviews, debates and compromises between artistic priorities, publicity / financial / logistic interests, politics (whom to please or disappoint) and more, we finally had a schedule. A benefit of this long maturing process is that you develop a very detailed mental picture of the congress, hour-by-hour. This pays off when the congress week is finally there. Did it work out perfectly in practice? Of course not. But it got close enough to what we had imagined. You can study the [full congress schedule here](#).

We started detailed scheduling 8 months before the congress, and it remained wobbly right up until the day before the congress. Another reason to “start early”!

6.3. Planning the Post-Congress Phase

The day after the final Congress night (which probably involves a lot of good drinks, fond farewells, etc.), it's time to switch into the "Post congress" mode. Having spent years planning and building up, there are obviously lots of things that need to be carefully dismantled, settled, and wrapped up.

You may tend to forget about this phase, if you think that all that matters is to get everything in place and run the congress week. But you can't go into extended catch-up hibernation on the day after the congress! The "aftermath" is important too, and the timeliness is very important to others, even if not for you personally. For IVC2018, it was a good month-long effort to wrap everything up, and the final financial transactions and reports were only completed 5 months after the Congress.

So best to include it in your planning. But exactly what needs to be done, depends strongly on all the specifics from your preparation phase. Here is therefore only a bullet-list of the most likely points of attention:

- Make sure all Congress venues are returned on time to the agreed state.
 - All equipment and belongings of the IVC team to be packed up and taken away (it will be more than you think!)
 - Schedule time slots for suppliers of rental equipment to come and pick up their goods (rented instruments, IT infrastructure, exhibitor tables)
 - Other rented equipment to be returned by your team – plan the trips
 - Exhibitor products to be picked up or shipped as per agreement
 - Venue furniture to be restored to default positions
 - Execution of cleaning tasks, if so agreed
 - Inspection, return of venue keys or other loaned items
- Send thank-you letters (mails) to all stakeholders. This includes the IVS board, your Partners, the special guests (artists), Exhibitors, congress Presenters, Sponsors, and of course all congress visitors (insofar as they were pre-registered). See chapter 9.3. Coordination and Reporting, which includes a specific "Post congress" communication plan for each of these groups.
- Physical tokens of appreciation for e.g. institutional partners (e.g. a bottle-of-something and a souvenir), to be brought in-person.
- Ask congress participants for feedback (as part of the thank-you letter), e.g. through a dedicated questionnaire on your website (we failed to do that, but we got lots of spontaneous feedback anyway – mostly positive, luckily ☺).
- Write a summary report for your Sponsors, including a recap of how the congress turned out (number of visitors, number of events, media coverage, and most importantly a financial summary). For public funds who have committed to support your congress, this may in fact be the precondition to cash out. This must be done as soon as possible, and even before you have the detailed final financial report.
- Settlements with everyone with whom you have financial agreements (debtors and creditors - the list is quite long). Timely payments are greatly valued, don't put it off unless you must.

- Post-processing/editing of all the video recordings, to be catalogued and made available to the participants. (Actually we're still not done with this part for IVC2018!). Maybe even produce an "aftermovie", which can be nice to offer to sponsors as supplement to the written report.
- Several Congress participants may request personalized "certificates of attendance", this could be of importance for them e.g. to justify financial support from their employers. Be prepared to support this when requested (we received more than 30 such requests - and were not so timely with it).
- Handover of inputs for next congress organisers (see section 9.3.1.)

Clearly you'll need a team to do all of this as well! So plan especially some volunteer shifts on the first 2-3 days after the congress for the logistics of tidying up and transporting stuff.

Finally – don't forget to properly thank your own team! Celebrate together, cook them a nice meal (or go out together) - this gives closure like nothing else.



On the personal front – do give yourself enough time for all of this. I took 4 weeks of leave from work for the congress month: 2 weeks before the congress, 1 week for the congress, and 1 week post-congress. The last 3-4 days were spent sleeping. That last bit should absolutely be planned for, too. ☺

7. ACTIVELY MANAGE THE FINANCES

Summary:

Create a budget. Be aware of the risks (key estimates and assumptions) on both sides of the balance. Manage the cash flow. Remember that a fat profit cannot be your ultimate goal.

Managing the finances can easily appear as an unnerving, or at best boring, part of Congress organization. Most elements of your congress plan depend on good execution in this area. But if you're not the type who loves the art of fundraising, budget balancing and financial negotiations, it is easy to envisage your project as a ship helplessly adrift on stormy seas. In this paragraph we hope to demonstrate how you can "take the bull by the horns" with regards to the finances.

7.1. Create a Budget

For the finances, too, you need a vision. The financial vision is mapped to a budget, listing the estimated costs and revenues. Here is the summary of the actual finances of IVC2018 in Rotterdam (final balance sheet):

SUMMARY BALANCE SHEET IVC2018		
28/04/2019		
COSTS	Amount	Notes
Administration/Production:	€13,493.30	Production manager + assistant, IT expenses (Wifi, website, Sched), volunteer team supplies, sponsored concert tickets
Rental of Equipment:	€4,395.42	Piano's, percussion, sheet music, PIN terminals
Rental of Venues:	€36,240.83	Hofpleintheater (incl. technicians etc.) + GK church 5 days, De Doelen 2 evenings, additional spaces
Catering:	€6,052.00	Zadkine meals (5x), Opening celebration, Congress closing dinner
Travel costs:	€4,096.00	Flights Kashkashian, Ridout, Arad, Schulzovsky, Gotlibovich, Forde; and local travel various guest artists
Lodging costs:	€5,902.16	Hotel stays for IVC board members and guest artists
Salaries:	€16,938.15	Guest musicians, pianists, luthiers, composition contest
Marketing:	€13,354.61	Marketing manager, Design and production of Posters, printed and online/social media ads, flyers, programme booklet
Educational outreach:	€10,000.00	"Discover the Viola" outreach programme (production, 4-person team performing at 6 schools)
Documentation (photography):	€2,581.16	Professional photographer for Doelen concerts; editing of IVC Video recordings
Merchandise:	€7,600.00	Goods for sale at IVC: Playing cards, stickers, stamps, etc.etc.
Total costs	€120,653.63	
REVENUES	Amount	Notes
Fundraising	€81,000.00	In total 13 public funds and private foundations committing to between €1000 - €15000...
Sales	€33,360.97	Congress fees, concert revenues, merchandise, meal tickets
Sponsoring	€10,298.00	Advertisers (prog. book), Exhibitors, Donations
Total revenues	€124,658.97	

The first budget will always be **wrong**. You will only know in retrospect, after all the dust has settled, how wrong you were. But you (the team as a whole, but in particular the financial officer) have to be keenly aware of the risks that are inherent to the nature of the estimates on both sides of the balance.

Throughout the project, you should of course consider every opportunity to improve revenues and limit costs, **but remember that a fat profit on the bottom line should not be a goal in itself** - it could mean that you have been underspending and/or over-charging, probably to someone's disadvantage; i.e. that you missed a chance to improve the "value for money" metric for your guests. Your main objective is to make the visitors happy, ensuring that you don't ruin yourself (or your Viola Society) financially in this process.

Ideally, the financial end result should be close to a break-even game. This is in fact also what your sponsors are expecting: Public and semi-public funds may even withhold part of their commitment if it turns out you can manage without it (that's why they commonly insist on receiving your post-congress financial report before cashing out).

You should also keep in mind the time-dependent nature of costs and revenues: You have to work to ensure that enough revenues are collected early, so that you can also pay the early bills. You should establish a cash flow plan, which tracks the expected timeline of major expenditures versus the rate of incoming revenues. Communicate clearly (and negotiate, if necessary) with creditors and debtors, so that commitments on both sides of the balance are in line with your needs and expectations over time.

These points are mostly obvious and basic for an experienced project manager, but as mentioned in the Introduction to this report, we're assuming that the readers are not so experienced, and anyway it can't hurt to repeat them. In the following subsections, we will have a closer look at the "typical" costs and revenues, respectively.

7.2. Costs

We will discuss the main costs that should be considered, not necessarily by order of magnitude (how they materialized for the specific case of IVC2018 Rotterdam), but by general importance.

7.2.1. Costs of Administration and Production

The Administration and Production costs are difficult to envisage clearly at an early stage. Our initial estimates started optimistically very low, thinking we could find "zero cost" solutions for most things by sacrificing our own blood, sweat and tears. But as the project evolved, it became clear that we simply *had to* "buy" help and technical means to survive.

In the Team ("*You and which army*") chapter above, I already described how we hired a Production manager and other specialists to help out. Those hired guns had a price, but saved our lives. As further noted in that chapter, we also allocated budget for food and drinks for our "army of volunteers" during the congress, allowing to sustain the busy shift scheduling while offering some degree of comfort and relaxation.

Since in these days a majority of communication takes place electronically, the classical office costs (paper, postage, photocopying, small materials) were very limited. But for the same reason, IT infrastructure was not cheap: The essential Wifi at Hofpleintheater (rental and installation of a wireless network with several routers) cost us a good €1500. Costs of the congress website were dominated by the licence for Sched and a Wordpress plug-in for creating feedback forms (registration, etc.).

7.2.2. Costs of Venue Rentals

As mentioned in the "Facilities plan" chapter, this is a key challenge that cannot be taken lightly. Whereas there exist historical examples of IVC's that were generously hosted by an institution (e.g. a University / Conservatoire) and miraculously enjoyed a head start with virtually zero facility costs, in general you have to come up with a set of locations and negotiate their availability and price.

Initially, availability is of course the most important concern for you, in order to consolidate your facilities plan. But sometimes, the use of additional services can be equally important (for the location owner) to set a price: Tables and chairs for exhibitors, beamers and large display monitors, use of resident instruments (pianos, tuning), music stands, internet, security, catering facilities, cleaning, and so on. But in the early stages, you don't know exactly how many of these services you'll really need and can afford. So you should pursue a basic rental contract with the mutual agreement to negotiate a more complete final contract later (e.g. 2-3 months before the congress).

During the later detailed negotiations, the proposed costs are likely to start snowballing. Keep your head cool, and stay creative. You don't want to risk the basic facility plan (and hence the whole congress) by playing "hard ball" with the owner of the facility at such a late stage – you're going to need his goodwill every step of the way. In the end, thanks to a bit of "give and take" and a very thirsty congress audience (bar turnover exceeded our wildest expectations), we achieved a win-win end result with the Hofpleintheater (our Main venue).

A few points to watch carefully in the written agreement for each venue:

- Daily opening/closing hours and related procedures
- Fixed services requested (personnel with defined tasks, authorities, and working hours)
- Usage of furniture, audio/visual systems, internet, pianos, etc.

- Authorization and training to operate complex/expensive equipment (e.g. auditorium electrical systems)
- Prices for variable services/consumables (e.g. bar price list – even if beverages are paid by the visitors themselves, you want to ensure they are reasonably priced)
- Initial and final conditions: Date/time of first entry and final departure; cleaning responsibilities, (re)location of furniture, inspection, etc.
- Lines of communication (whom to call in case of problems, @both parties)
- Security concerns (maximum number of visitors, hazardous operations - e.g. rolling out a grand piano, other physically demanding tasks)
- Presence of certified Emergency Response staff (yours or theirs?)
- Liability for damages
- Terms of payment (when, how much)
- Cancellation conditions

7.2.3. Costs of Travel, Lodging and Catering

Most congress visitors are expected to pay for their own travel, lodging and meals. However there are two important exceptions:

- 1) The IVS board members require lodging to be arranged or paid for
- 2) Invited guests (especially Featured Artists) will – as a minimum – expect travel, lodging and meals to be paid for.

Both these groups – typically around 10 people total - may also stay slightly longer than the average congress visitor, due to extra preparations (IVS board meeting, rehearsals). It is a challenge to reserve the necessary financial means, but you can also use this requirement as a kernel around which to start developing lodging and catering offerings for other visitors. For example, if you approach a hotel for a preliminary block reservation (and hopefully some deal for a special congress discount rate), at least you have these 10-or-so people as a guaranteed starting point. In a big city (like Rotterdam), it is not easy to impress with such numbers, but in a smaller setting it may help. Start the search for a good hotel early (9 months ahead is reasonable), this improves also your bargaining position.

Travel costs for invited guest artists can be moderated by booking early. The artists themselves may not be eager to do this (for various reasons), but you should politely persist, and offer to make the booking on their behalf. The price difference between booking a flight 6 months ahead and 2 months ahead can be 50% or more. Clearly, for intercontinental travel, that really matters.

In any case, it is your duty as a host to make the trip comfortable, with a minimum of waypoints (transfers), reasonable departure/arrival times, and shortest possible travel time. A 1st class airplane ticket is probably not needed, but you should carefully check the conditions for bringing violas as cabin luggage in Economy class. The airlines' carry-on luggage regulations are often intentionally vague, so when in

doubt, ask around (e.g. in internet viola forums) for other violists' experience with a given carrier. For the air travellers under your responsibility, make it a door-to-door travel arrangement, with pick-up at the airport.

Regarding meals: These are the valuable occasions for socializing. It is strongly recommended to organize meals in such a way that a large part of the visitors willingly follow your lead. There could be dozens of other options for those who prefer eating alone or in smaller groups, but if you can strike a deal with a nearby restaurant to offer food and drinks at irresistible prices, then you will score big on the "overall experience" criteria. Consider even subsidizing these meals, and offer pre-purchase of fixed-price meal tickets. This also simplifies your care for the invited guests, eliminating a potentially complicated refund process for restaurant bills etc. You can tell from the Rotterdam balance sheet above, that this really doesn't have to cost a lot (a large part of the "cost" part was recovered by sale of meal tickets).

7.2.4. Costs of Artist Salaries

The IVS Rules for Congress Hosts (at least the version that was applicable to us) explicitly prohibited paying artists for their performances at the IVC. However, a specially invited big-shot artist is unlikely to accept playing for free. So we worked around this rule by reasoning that the Featured Artists were paid for their contributions to the "Public Festival" part of the event, rather than the "Congress" part.

As for negotiating salaries, typically you want to have the financial conditions settled with a written agreement (formal contract or just a mail) at least 6 months before the congress. However, at this stage you may not be so sure of your finances (many revenues are at that point still "projected", not materialized). On the other hand, if you wait until the last moment, you are in an even weaker bargaining position (getting a "no deal" in your face would be a Big Problem at that late stage).

So, given these early uncertainties, you need to start with a modest low-risk offer, without insulting the artist. What helped us was to agree on "floor" (minimum) salaries, with the additional promise of increasing the actual payment to a higher level, if the final congress balance sheet would allow it (and fortunately, we were able to do that!).

Again, this whole discussion only applies to specially invited guest artists. You could consider in this category also your "house pianists" (we had 3 of them) and other performers and ensemble members who are directly invited for special concerts.

Under no circumstance should you go down the path of discussing financial compensation for regular congress presenters selected through the Call for Proposals. Even if the presenter has a "Name" (many of them do, to some extent). That would be letting the proverbial Genie out of the bottle!

7.2.5. Costs of Marketing

Marketing of your congress can seem like a bottomless pit. How far should you go, how much should you invest? There's no easy answer to that question. Spending nothing is not an option, but you must set a limit. Choose a budget and stick to it.

As shown in our outline budget sheet at the top of this chapter (section 7.1), our marketing expenses amounted to around 10% of our total budget. Note that this figure included the printed programme booklets, which could also have been considered a production cost (but these booklets certainly did have a promotional function, next to the key informational value).

More about Marketing strategies in section 9.2. Marketing below.

7.2.6. Miscellaneous Costs

Here is a grab bag of other cost items that can come into the picture:

Rental of Instruments and Equipment: There's no end to the number of potential challenges in this respect. One concert may demand a whole array of professional-grade percussion instruments. At another time you may need special technology to amplify the sound of a viola played from a church tower 80 meters above the ground. And an almost indispensable convenience during the congress is a (wireless) PIN/card terminal to allow your visitors to make electronic payments on site.

Photography and Recordings: A professional photographer to capture main events for good press photos is a good investment for communications. Additionally, all programmed events should be video recorded (this is currently an IVS recommendation). For this, you may need to invest in equipment (don't rely on your 6-year old family camcorder) to ensure reliable quality recordings. You need at least two good video cameras (to avoid moving them around all the time) with tripods, and sufficient external storage (e.g. USB disks) to offload all the raw recordings. In chapter 9.4. Recording, we discuss the logistic aspects of photography and video.

Insurance: Organizing a congress brings up lots of "what-if" questions, such as:

- What happens if you have to cancel the whole congress?
- What if some unspeakable accident occurs (with material damage or personal injury), and you are held liable?

Insurances specially designed for congresses and festivals are commonly available, and they are both expensive and full of conditions in legalese that make them very opaque – so it's difficult to estimate your chances of successfully claiming. After several months of weighing different offers and options, in the end (the week before the congress) we took a collective deep breath and decided not to buy insurance. That was a risk, but we were fortunate not to have reason to regret this decision,

which saved us at least €2500. But I don't feel particularly proud of this – perhaps the IVS should simply prescribe some kind of minimum required liability insurance, to avoid arbitrariness in the future.

7.3. Revenues

7.3.1. Revenues from Fundraising

We sent out a total 35 applications for financial support, resulting in 13 pledges for a total of €80,000 (the names of these sponsors are [listed on our website](#)). As you can tell from the budget presented in section 7.1, this money accounted for roughly 2/3 of our total revenue. However, about half of these funds would only be awarded after the congress, upon presenting a full report of actual expenses and revenues.

Consequently, we had to keenly monitor our cash flow, to ensure we could manage all obligations for advance payments (e.g. for the concert halls, hotels and other things), keeping the bank balance aligned with the projected timeline of payments. We never really got into trouble, but it was a risk.

A really nice [crowdfunding video](#) was created with enthusiastic contributions from the viola sections of six major Dutch symphony orchestras (Concertgebouw, Rotterdam Philharmonic) as well as conservatory and youth orchestras. Unfortunately we started too late with this campaign, so it failed to reach its target amount. We ascribe this failure to lack of resources in the crunch phase of the project.

There were also private donations resulting from an earlier drive, offering e.g. free passes to our (self-funded) evening concerts and other benefits. All in all this did not amount to a significant share of the overall funding, however. We even tried to launch a "[corporate sponsorship](#)" campaign, offering advertisements on our website and "Sponsor board" presence (on- or off-stage), but we ran out of time to pursue it properly, so that resulted in nothing.

7.3.2. Revenues from Congress Ticket Sales

The [Congress pricing system](#) was very difficult to design. The IVS Guidelines for Congress Hosts implied that "Presenters" (who typically form a majority of the attendance) should have their congress fees waived. But our budget depended on income from admissions. And we wanted amateurs and students to attend in great numbers for the lowest possible price, but it all had to balance out. We also tried an "early bird" incentive scheme, offering discounts for people who signed up early. You can find [here \(link\)](#) the categories and rates that we finally decided on.

This policy was met by many objections (the most common one from Presenters being “*What, I have to PAY to play!?*”). The distinction between “Featured Artists” who were directly invited by us (and paid), versus “Presenters” who were invited on the basis of a submitted proposal, reflects also the aforementioned distinction between “Festival” and “Congress” activities. But this was not obvious to everyone, especially to visitors with previous IVC experiences of contrasting policy.

In our pricing system, we sought a justifiable grading of price levels by defining different “Participant categories”:

- The **Delegate** level would cover the all-inclusive ticket grade for the full-time participating professionals, allowing access to the popular workshops (interactive group lessons), masterclasses, viola orchestra, etc.
- But we knew that not all visitors would be violists with a burning desire to attend every single minute of the congress – for example partners or non-violist musicians (accompanists), certainly interested in a few selected congress events, but also just as likely to take considerable time off to go exploring the city. For these visitors, we defined the **Associate** ticket level.
- We furthermore envisaged a class of **Auditors**, amateurs and non-practicing viola enthusiasts, who could be perfectly happy with a more passive congress attendance (i.e. no workshops or masterclasses).
- And finally, we also arranged for **Day passes** (cheaper for those who could only attend 1 or 2 days), and **Student/youth** rates (50%-70% reduction, depending on ticket type and moment of purchase).

Although complex (10 different ticket types with time-dependant rates), our price policy looked fair and reasonable in theory. But I’m not so sure we really managed in practice to execute a watertight price policy that satisfied everyone. And, in the end, you may have to consider cutting some deals for people with special circumstances that you had not considered in your system.

I could write a whole book just about this problem, but I leave the topic here by suggesting that the IVS should adapt their rules relating to “waiving congress fees”, so as to create a reasonable level of expectations for organizers and visitors alike. The IVS recommendations even include a paragraph that suggests that all Presenters should have their fees waived. But if your budget requires you to (re)cover €20,000 or more from participant fees, then you can’t afford to let your first 50-100 participants come for free.

A system that I personally would wish to see applied consistently for future IVC’s (used by some other musical congresses - e.g. BassEUROPE) is known as Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) Compensation. This takes into account the big differences in price and wealth levels between countries, applying a reduction (20%-60%) on the congress fee depending on the visitor’s country of residence.

7.3.3. Revenues from Exhibitors

The Exhibitors (luthiers, bow makers, retailers, sheet music publishers etc.) are regular visitors to IVC's, and deserve proper attention. They rent a table where they can display and sell their products, and make new (potential customer) contacts during daytime congress hours.

We had significantly underestimated the demand in this respect: having opened the [Call for Exhibitors](#) less than 3 months before the congress, within 3 weeks we had a fully subscribed exhibition area (14 tables). This was a welcome source of revenue that we had not dared to count on (in spite of hints to the contrary). If we had had more confidence, we would have pressed for a larger exhibition area. Furthermore, had we started the drive for Exhibitors much earlier, it could have further reduced our worries about the overall funding, and we might even have been able to lower the Congress registration rates.

Such uncertainties could be resolved early by having a list of regular Exhibitor attendees early, surveying them for interest. Such a list could be systematically passed on from one year's congress organizers to the next.

7.3.4. Revenues from Advertisements

It occurred to us rather too late that Exhibitors and [Advertisers](#) were, in many ways, two sides of the same coin. Some companies who cannot exhibit, may still want to put an ad in the programme booklet.

And be aware that some of the Featured Artists may have publicity contracts associated with the endorsement of certain products. The presence of Lawrence Power at our congress, for example, landed us a full-page, colour advertisement from Pirastro (strings manufacturer).

To get an idea whom to approach, keep an eye on companies that advertise in the mainstream music magazines and websites, e.g. The Strad and violinist.com. Ask former organizers for their lists of advertisers. Persistency can be a reason for a company to advertise again. I found out after the congress that a number of interested companies with presence at previous IVC's had not "found" us, and therefore did not know how to keep up the presence. Conversely, for some advertisers such as d'Addario strings, we were very aware of their regular contributions to IVC's, and contacted them early, unfortunately without reaching the right contact person (until it was too late).

This "continuity gap" is perhaps something that could be helped by systematically doing a "knowledge transfer" from one year's IVC to the next. For this to go smoothly, you should ask exhibitors and advertisers for their consent to pass on this

information to next year's IVC organizers.

7.3.5. Revenues from Sale of Concert Tickets

At IVC2018, 3 out of the 5 evening concerts were run by our partners (De Doelen and the Chamber Music Society), and were therefore financially "out of our hands". For the remaining two evenings, we had the full financial risk. The first 300 seats for each evening were reserved for the Congress visitors (paid for through their registration fee), volunteers and sponsors. The remaining at-large tickets were sold through the website of De Doelen. Due to a technical glitch (one of the concerts was incorrectly marked as "sold out" in the last weeks, whereas there were still hundreds of seats free!), we failed to reap the expected profits from these evening programmes (with top-notch stars such as Nobuko Imai and Kim Kashkashian), instead ending with a loss after subtraction of the associated costs.

7.3.6. Revenues from Sales of Merchandise and CD's

Merchandise is not really an essential part of a congress, but we felt it had a legitimate role in our vision of a "Festival". So we designed and printed a unique "Viola Quartet" card game, and had T-shirts, bags, coasters, bookmarks, cookie stamps, pens, post cards and playing cards produced with viola themes. There were even playful little mechanical "viola toys" for children, and chocolates with the congress logo. Most of this never sold out, and it only generated a modest revenue. But the remaining assets stay with the DVS and continue to be sold at viola events. If only for the "fun" of it, I'd say it was worth the investment.

We also sold CD's at the Merchandise stand, brought in large numbers by the congress artists themselves. With a modest commission on each CD sold, we ended up selling almost 130 CD's total. A significant part of those sales were the CD's of Kim Kashkashian, who had just released a big Bach album. We had struck a nice deal with her Label ECM to send us a big box of CD's, allowing us to retain a healthy commission on each sale. To add to the joy, Kashkashian even agreed to do a signature session.

We might very well have reached similar agreements with the labels of Lawrence Power and maybe Nobuko Imai, given a little more time. But it remains an interesting idea for future organizers to explore.

8. EMBRACE IT

Summary:

- Ensure you have a well-designed, easy-to-use congress website
- Implement registration forms that ease the flow of data
- Automate registration feedback mails to the visitors
- Use good tools to manage and publish the congress schedule
- Use social media to promote your congress, and be aware of the posting best-practices of each platform for optimal “reach”
- Use cloud services for safe archiving and information sharing

8.1. IT for External Use

8.1.1. The Congress Website

The Congress Website was explicitly chosen to be the central focus of the online presence of our Viola Congress. It should be the best-updated and most frequently visited reference for all stakeholders, and in particular for the (prospective) congress visitors. In our observation the efforts associated with a good website are often underestimated. It should serve as an inviting, flashy yet user-friendly, informative and interactive tool. You don't get there by just hiring a web designer to put up a nice front page. Ideally, the functionality and interactions with visitors / exhibitors / sponsors both before, during, and after the congress should be considered.

On the other hand, having an IT professional at your beck and call for the entire 2-year period from the project's main phase start until post-congress reporting is going to be very expensive. So make sure the website has an easy-to-use content management system, e.g. WordPress (or equivalent). This allows you to improve and expand your website without any particular IT skills beyond basic document management and editing (same as creating Word documents). If you need some specialist help with registration forms and payment modules, so be it.

The website should support the following functions:

- Call for Proposals
- Visitor Registration
- Exhibitor booking
- Other operational registrations (Masterclasses, Workshops, meals etc.)

- Full Congress Programme
- Information about Featured Artists and other Special Guests
- Information for/about prospective/actual sponsors and benefactors

For congress visitors and sponsors it is nice to be able to re-visit the website in posterity. It is strongly recommended to keep the congress website alive for an indefinite period after the congress ends. It is a useful reference also for future organizers. We would suggest that IVS lay down a strong recommendation/rule for future congress organizers in this respect.

8.1.2. Website Forms Plugin

An important function of the congress website should be to collect registration information from the participants, by means of custom designed “forms”. You could use the freely available Google forms for this purpose, but they do not always support exactly the kind of interaction you want, and they force the users to leave your website.

A Wordpress website does not support forms functionality by default, so we had to buy and install a commercially licensed plugin. Selecting a suitable plugin was not easy - there are literally hundreds of them available on the market, but we took the time to ask around a lot, read reviews, test different trial versions, and so on.

We had some technical requirements of our own as well: Having many different tickets and rates, we needed the form to be able to calculate the total ticket price automatically, so as not to add this task to the burden of registration (and checks on our side). Not all Form plugins have that capability, but we got it. Other capabilities / characteristics we wanted were:

- Automatic generation of e-mails for notification and confirmation (upon submitting a form)
- Relative ease of use (for the form designer)
- Sufficient choice of interaction widgets (checkboxes, drop-down lists etc)
- Configurable checking logic that would help to prevent invalid input and simplify the user's next choices depending on already entered information
- Authentication means (Captcha component) to prevent internet Bots from generating fake entries
- Ease of exporting data sets to Excel (our primary administration tool)

We found all of these criteria fulfilled in a plugin called “FormCraft”, which wasn't very expensive (€50). We were reasonably satisfied, although it did turn out to have some bugs, e.g. the automatic mails were sometimes incorrectly generated, or got snagged in spam filters. And sometimes the calculator function mysteriously gave up and ended up offering free tickets (we had to intervene manually here, of course).

8.1.3. Sched

We mentioned the role of Sched (<https://sched.com>) in section 6.2. above in the planning and publication of the Congress Programme. However, we failed to fully take advantage of the “networking” features of this cloud based tool. Particularly for the Presenters, this platform offers the possibility to annotate and advertise their presentations. And congress visitors are encouraged to create profiles and compose their own “personalized” schedule (nice when there are parallel tracks to choose from), marking up those events that they are particularly interested in.

Another Sched feature that we didn’t use was the “One-click publishing” function, which would allow to generate an up-to-date PDF version of practically the entire Congress Programme Booklet (or at least the schedule-related part of it) with a single button click. This was done for the 2017 Wellington congress, and it had the advantage of being able to maintain all the schedule information in a single source (i.e. the Sched database), rather than branching off a “shadow copy” for the printed Programme Booklet. We did notice a number of discrepancies that could be ascribed to this split. The main reason why we chose not to entrust Sched with this task was that Sched’s default output layout (which we could not control) was not really very elegant, and it would contrast with the chosen “style” of the rest of the booklet.

There are similar event-hosting platforms around, so I’m not going to talk too much more about Sched in particular here.

8.1.4. Social Media

Up until 10 years ago, Social Media was a non-thing for most congress organizers. But in today’s world, you can’t afford to ignore these platforms, where literally billions of people worldwide hang out every day. This could be different again 10 years from now, but let’s stick to today’s realities.

The days are gone when people went “surfing” the internet, looking up their favourite websites in the hopes of finding the latest hot topic. Most people expect to find out what’s happening through their feed on sites (apps) such as facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn.

And each of those platforms have their own idiosyncrasies, which makes it impossible to just re-post the same message everywhere. In order for a post to be effective, you need to understand the rules for each platform, i.e. how to make the posts reach a maximum number of relevant people.



This includes aspects such as tagging (particularly important on Twitter and Instagram), providing appropriate media contents in the best way (pictures and videos to be linked either from YouTube or uploaded directly to the platform), smart use of links etc. (almost impossible on Instagram). You must also identify and get access to the most important viola-related groups (esp. on facebook) where you can additionally share your posts.

8.2. IT for Internal Use

For most of us, Congress organization is a spare-time activity. And you simply cannot have enough spare time for such a project, so use your time efficiently. There are thousands of tasks and facts that you have to track. This cannot be done with analogue conversations, pen and paper alone: you have to trust electronic tools to help you out. Here are some aspects of our internal IT tools and practices that were found to be helpful.

8.2.1. Excel Spreadsheets

Some people think of spreadsheets as an arithmetic toolbox for accountants and engineers. But the truth is that the main use of Excel today is related to the management of lists. From a “CSV” file or by manual entry, you import data into rows and columns, which can then easily be filtered and sorted in any number of ways to provide terribly convenient (and even necessary) overviews. Words fail to describe how indispensable this is for a congress organizer, who deals with numerous different lists with potentially hundreds of items, such as:

- List of congress presenters and programme details
- Contacts list for your team and all associated partner institutions, invited guest artists, volunteers team and other resources
- List of registered congress participants (and their payment status)
- List of masterclass candidates (and their selection/assignment status)
- List of Exhibitors and Advertisers
- List of action items for your team (all those myriads of tasks)

Before you ask: Yes, of course you can write this down in a Word document as well. But Word cannot match the powerful filtering and sorting functions of Excel, which allows you to identify sub-lists on demand, for example:

- A list of all Lecture Presenters and their assigned time slots
- A list of Delegate participants who have not yet signed up for a workshop
- A list of Exhibitors who have ordered Wifi and extra power outlet
- A list of Masterclass students who will play something by Bach

- A list of urgent, open action items assigned to you only

8.2.2. E-mail and Chat

We all know that E-mail is a double edged sword. On one hand, it allows to convey complex information with all kinds of attachments. It allows to raise and answer multiple questions in one go, without losing track. It can be nicely archived and searched.

But E-mail can also be a big time-waster, when used inappropriately. A single phone call can save a dozen or more ping-pong mails. Mail works differently for different people depending on their writing / reading / conversational strengths. You have to learn those capacities of your teammates and choose the best form of communication accordingly.

We had three dedicated e-mail accounts for IVC matters:

- A mailbox for all general matters. This account was managed by the hosts (Karin and myself)
- A mailbox for our producer (Sarah), allowing her an independent communication channel and archive structure for her specific tasks
- A mailbox for the treasurer (Anna), to deal with all questions relating to payments (creditors and debtors)

There was quite a bit of interchange between these accounts, but on the whole the separation proved effective and useful.

For “small talk” and quick questions, the Whatsapp group of the IVC team was really useful. For example for a one-liner question with a one-liner answer that does not need to be archived for eternity. Or a small “whoop” of excitement from small step-by-step achievements, online “high-fives” helping to reaffirm the team spirit.

8.2.3. Cloud Storage Services

The “cloud” is no longer just a fancy buzzword, it is a tremendous help for distributed

Name
Bijeenkomsten
Bonnen KM Merchandise Kosten
Financieel
Inschrijvingen
IT_Infra
IVS_zaken
Locaties
Marketing_PR
Productie
Programmering
Register

teamwork. For us, using Google Drive as our shared repository for all IVC-related documentation was a huge productivity boost. We structured it by topic in top-level folders as shown below:

- Team Meetings (Minutes)
- Financial documents (contracts, budget, invoices...)

- Congress registration (process & data)
- IT infrastructure (operational IT info & procedures)
- IVS Liaison topics (Bid book, reports, IVS rules...)
- Congress Venues (rental info, facilities, floor plans)
- Marketing & Public Relations (flyers/posters, press)
- Production files (shift planning, catering, lodging)
- Programming (congress schedule/contents)
- Register (Action lists, contact lists, ...)

The final (frozen and archived) state of our IVC2018 Google Drive contained almost 5,000 individual files for a total of 5GB of data.

Using a cloud storage service like Google Drive, you can stop depending on a specific device to find your information: You can consult all of those critical action lists, contact lists etc. even from your tablet or smartphone, while on the road or on the congress floor. This allows a lot of operational freedom (you do not have to sit behind that one unique laptop that contains the master files for everything).

Cloud sharing allows everyone in the team to access the information that you all need (avoiding e-mail ping-pong of uncontrolled local document copies). When someone updates a document, everyone gets that update immediately (as long as they are connected to internet). It is also an excellent insurance against "local IT disasters" such as crashed hard disks.

But don't trust it blindly – bad things can still happen: if one of the connected devices (laptops in particular) is attacked by a virus, it could delete or encrypt everything on that disk, and Google's "Backup and sync" client then faithfully spreads the corruption (though probably not the virus itself) to everyone. You should give someone in your team the task to make a weekly back-up of the Google Drive archive, so that you can always recover if such a disaster strikes (it didn't happen to our IVC2018 drive, but I did experience this scenario in another organization).

Note that one could equally well use e.g. OneDrive or Dropbox for an equivalent functionality, but Google Drive fit best with existing practices of the DVS.

9. COMMUNICATE!

This chapter is a bit of a grab-bag collection of a number of topics that have “Communication” as a common denominator. It underlines the importance of strongly projecting your congress, and to proactively communicate with your stakeholders, to keep them involved and informed at all times.

Summary:

- Establish a visual identity (logo/branding) for the congress
- Be persistent and efficient with your Marketing
- Be consistent and conscious about the communication with your stakeholders (participants, guests, partners, sponsors) in all phases of the congress project (before, during, and after).
- Plan for complete coverage of your event with video recordings and photography, and rehearse the related logistics
- Allocate enough time and resources for the production of the Programme Booklet, it is more important than you think!

9.1. Branding

We were fortunate to come up with an inspired and eye-catching Logo for our IVC at an early stage (18 months in advance), including determinant theme colours (purple/orange). The theme colours in particular were felt to be very distinguishing, a rather unusual (but not unpleasant) combination in the public space. Here's the banner used on the IVC2018 website, which summarizes the theme nicely:



With this, we could also theme our facebook page, Instagram channel, hand-out stickers, pamphlets and other things to a coherent and persistent “visual branding” of the congress event.

It was gratifying to be able to include such a visual identity already in the IVS Bid book (from which the style of this report has been copied), as well as in the early financial aid applications. By the time you launch major online presence for the Call for Proposals, the core logo should definitely be a part of it.

During the congress itself, the logo and theme colours were abundantly applied to banners, goody bags, T-shirts, programme booklet and various souvenirs / merchandize (pens, coasters, stickers, bookmarks, playing cards...). We even extended the branding to our very special IVC chocolates! (This gimmick was not nearly as expensive as one might think, and contributed to the feeling of “total immersion” in the IVC).

It all fit well together.



9.2. Marketing

Marketing is a tough topic. You can't do without it, but it costs time and money, and the return on investment is difficult to ascertain. That being said, you can and should advertise via all imaginable channels: social media, flyers, stickers (get people to stick them on their viola cases, cars, and other publicly visible surfaces), city posterboards, electronic billboards, and personal networking. Send ambassadors to orchestras and musical societies, take every opportunity to pitch the congress.

Also be conscientious about including your institutional partners and major sponsors on all printed promotional material (logo's on flyers, posters, programme booklet). Such things are absolutely mandatory! Also, don't just copy their logos off the internet, make sure you've got the current official version and style of logos (some institutions and companies are very precise on this topic – we had multiple iterations over the correct logo style for some sponsors). Once such material is printed, there's no way to recover (save for a re-print, with major financial consequences).

I've yet to see viola congresses going to the extreme of buying ads in mainstream media such as newspapers, radio and television. But there is a less expensive workaround for that: Send press releases to all major newspapers, radio and TV stations – it may get you mentioned in a newspaper story or on some aired musically related programme.

It's important that you have a dedicated and resourceful person to organize this work, someone who is experienced and knows all the channels. It takes dedicated work to achieve results. In the end, chances are you'll hire a professional, like we did.

You have to allocate a wet-finger estimate budget Marketing (see chapter 7.2.5. Costs of Marketing). The returns are difficult to predict or assess, especially in financial terms. But the public awareness of your congress and its flagship cause (the **VIOLA** and all that it stands for) will inevitably improve.

<TBD picture of Rdam Poster column here!>

9.3. Coordination and Reporting

Timely and clear communication and reporting towards all stakeholders is essential. This is true for all phases of congress organization: planning, execution and post-processing. In the following, we look at the specifics for each major group of stakeholders, paying separate attention to the situation before, during, and after the congress.

9.3.1. Communication with the IVS

The IVS is the “brand owner” of the International Viola Congress concept. The IVS board members have put their trust in your team to organize a congress according to their rules and guidelines. They are not going to lean back and say, “*surprise us*” - it is their continuing concern to ascertain that your plans and efforts are pointing in the right direction. So it is very important to keep closely in touch with the IVS.

Prior to the Congress:

You will have submitted a “bid book” of sorts, describing your plans. This bid book should include (as an annex) the questionnaire provided on the IVS website, with the title “Guidelines for making a bid to host an International Viola Congress”. This is a useful initial checklist, but it does not cover all of the IVS rules and recommendations. So you should walk through the whole set of IVS congress rules. Like me, undoubtedly you will find rules with some room for interpretation. Write down your doubts and talk to the IVS board about them. Perhaps there are even some things that you find impossible to comply to: ask for their agreement to “waive” the rule. Have it black on white, so that you are not faced with unpleasant surprises later.

Keep the IVS board regularly updated of your progress - a report every 3 months or so is probably a reasonable frequency. The progress report does not need to be a self-standing formal document – a summary e-mail is OK. Some aspects that should be clear in this report:

- What has been achieved by your team since the last report
- Major tasks / challenges for the coming 2-3 months (before next report)
- Schedule: are you on track? (compared to the schedule in the bid book – major milestones such as Call for Proposals, Registration, etc.)
- Finances: Status of fundraising efforts, major cost evolutions, balance
- Any other significant news (good or bad) relating to the congress preparations

When you come into the “home stretch” of the last 6 months before the Congress, it is time to also discuss the logistics for the IVS board members – their travel plans (arrival and departure dates) and lodging options. Remember that you are responsible for arranging the lodging. You should also discuss when and how to plan the mandatory IVS section heads / plenary meeting(s) during the congress, because this is almost always difficult to fit in a busy congress schedule (some board members and/or section heads may have specific commitments or wishes linked to the congress presentations).

For the programme booklet, you should invite the IVS President to write a word of welcome. Don’t wait until it’s almost time to go to print! Furthermore, the IVS President commonly has a role (gives a speech) during the opening and closing ceremonies of the Congress. Make sure this is mutually agreed and understood.

Finally, the IVS board members are experienced congress visitors, and have in all likelihood arranged a congress or two themselves. Don’t be afraid to ask their advice for resolving apparent dilemma’s or tough choices.

During the Congress:

Continuing on the previous paragraph, for the same reason you could use the IVC board members as a sounding board during the congress itself. If there is something specific they think could and should be improved, try to fix it if you can.

After the Congress:

When the dust has settled after the Congress, send the IVS a dedicated letter of thanks for their trust in you and your team, and the support and advice given. You could possibly also (again) ask for their feedback, if they don’t offer it spontaneously.

Also at some point (not too long) after the congress, you should offer to provide some data for the benefit of the IVS and future IVC organizers, for example:

- A congress report including a final financial balance sheet
- A separate “lessons learned” document (much shorter than the present one)
- List of Exhibitors and Advertisers (including addresses and contact persons)

In fact, I would recommend that the IVS board will make these outputs a mandatory requirement for congress organizers (it currently is not).

9.3.2. Communication with Institutional Partners

Prior to the Congress:

Make sure that the mutual obligations / commitments are clear, put them on paper. Especially any financial agreements; but even if there is no exchange of funds involved, the in-kind contributions can be of vital importance. A mutual understanding of the implications of “partnership” should be worked out (media mentions, use of logo...). The partners have a vested interest in some form, make sure you understand this clearly: what’s in it for them? Ask what you can do to promote or enhance their interests in return for their support.

You should keep in touch regularly, in writing or (better yet) through live meetings or phone calls, to summarize status on both sides. Don’t assume that they are continuously thinking about your congress. You don’t want to discover (too) late that they are forgetting important preparations or running behind schedule.

Invite your partners to special events, e.g. media events or promotional concerts leading up to the congress. Make sure they are invited to the Opening and/or Closing ceremonies of the congress, as well as selected high-profile concerts.

During the Congress:

For all partners with operational impacts on the congress, ensure that you have a point of contact on stand-by (office or cell phone) when in need for real time adjustments / changes. As mentioned above, make sure they are invited to high profile congress events, and invite them if you have spare tickets left for an evening concert, for example.

You could also organize a special reception (e.g. in connection with one of the events mentioned above) for partners and sponsors to be treated to a drink and a snack, and perhaps a meet-and-greet with your Featured Artists and/or other notables (we did not do this in Rotterdam).

After the Congress:

Obviously, Partners can never be thanked enough, but you can try! For example: A symbolic but nice gift for your main points of contact, delivered in person. A souvenir (autographed?) copy of the Congress programme booklet. And of course an official letter of appreciation, for distribution internally in the partner organizations.

If there is a perceived need, you could offer to meet with your partners for an evaluation of the project, where they may express their own “lessons learned”. It is good to have their feedback – did they achieve their own goals with this project?

9.3.3. Communication with Invited Guests

The specially invited guests are a particular responsibility, requiring some careful and dedicated communication loops, sometimes involving artist management agencies.

Prior to the Congress:

In the pre-congress phase, there is a lot of detail to be worked out for the invited guests. This has already been covered in section 6.1.5. Coordination of Featured Artists and Special Guests. Keywords include early commitments, financial negotiations, artistic agreements, recordings, publicity aspects, travel and lodging plans, etc.

Remember that invited artists are generally not taking part in the pre-congress communication loops of regular congress presenters and participants (proposal and registration processes), so they need carefully tailored summaries of practical information.

Don't forget to invite your guest artists to bring their CD's for sale at the merchandize table (if you plan to offer this service). This may in turn require communication with yet another party, the artist's recording label (company).

During the Congress:

Invited guests obviously need a bit of extra attention during the congress. Hospitality and service should be implicit parts of your agreement with them. The logistics can be daunting, but you should think about meals, drinks, guidance, rehearsal support, transportation, etc. Don't expect guests to memorize their schedule, have someone dedicated to assist them with information and practical guidance. Make sure they have your cell phone number (or the production manager's number), and that you have theirs, so that notification of unforeseen situations can be as swift as possible.

After the Congress:

Take time to write a nice thank-you note to show your appreciation for the artist's contribution. Also sum things up with the artist's agent, if s/he has played a role in the pre-congress process. Last but not least, one of the best ways to show your appreciation is of course to ensure a quick financial settlement.

9.3.4. Communication with Congress Presenters

The Congress Presenters are in many ways similar to at-large congress participants, but the distinguishing difference is their active contribution to the congress programme. This requires additional communication processes.

Prior to the Congress:

We have actually been through the pre-congress communications with Presenters in earlier chapters, specifically:

- Section 6.1.1. Call for Proposals
- Section 6.1.4. Coordination of Congress Presenters

By the end of the pre-congress phase, it should be 100% clear to all presenters when and where to rehearse and perform, whom to speak to, how to prepare, what to bring, etc.

During the Congress:

Each Presenter should have a name and phone number of a specific contact person in your staff who supervises their rehearsal and performance, in case anything comes up (late to rehearsal, asking directions, etc.). This needn't be the same person for all presenters, in fact it may even be a good idea to distribute this task, so that each guide can afford to pay undivided attention to their assigned Presenter for the duration of their rehearsal and presentation slots.

Some Presenters may have extra rehearsal needs, e.g. if they are performing with one of the house pianists. Ideally, the rehearsal facilities (e.g. piano studios) should have sufficient room for this, even if the request is brought up last-minute.

After the Congress:

Thank-you letter with links to reports, press coverage, photo collections, aftermovie

Links to recorded videos

Questionnaire for feedback (could be the same as for visitors)

9.3.5. Communication with Exhibitors

Prior to the Congress:

We have already discussed the Call for Exhibitors (see section 6.1.3 and Annex C) as the primary vehicle of early interaction with the Exhibitors. In this stage it is important for you to ask yourself what you can do to optimise their return - what's in it for them? Beyond just attending their exhibits, would they for example be interested in special demo sessions to pitch their products? Do they have special connections with certain artists at the congress?

Some IVC's have offered

For the rest as "regular visitors"

During the Congress:

After the Congress:

Thank-you letter with links to reports, press coverage, photo collections, aftermovie

Financial settlement (if necessary)

Questionnaire for feedback

9.3.6. Communication with Congress Visitors

Newsletters (remember not everyone is on social media, and you need to be able to "push" information)

during the preparatory phase as well as after the event

Prior to the Congress:

Congress registration (6.1.2)

Concert tickets (6.1.7)

Reg Workshops (6.1.8)

Reg Meals (6.1.9)

Communicating through the website

- Interviews with prospective IVC visitors
- Sharing pages on featured artists and special guests
- Making sure “Names” among the regular presenters are mentioned and promoted

Keep programming info better separated from the Sched info. Currently it was an incomplete hybrid, and we ran into inconsistencies.

During the Congress:

Congress bureau / reception: Q&A

Electronic info screens for last minute news / updates

Daily “viola pitch” session can also be used for important announcements from IVC organizers.

After the Congress:

Thank-you letter with links to reports, press coverage, photo collections, aftermovie

Questionnaire for feedback

9.3.7. Communication with Sponsors

Prior to the Congress:

Financial aid application

Sub-category in-kind sponsors and other helping hands (host families...)

During the Congress:

Invite to special events e.g. opening ceremony and/or special concerts

But don't expect them to be interested enough to attend everything.

After the Congress:

Send congress report including account of financial results.

Programme booklet

9.4. Recording and Photography

A (good) picture can tell a thousand words. After having spent all that money and effort to create something beautiful, why leave the media heritage from the congress to chance? It's notoriously difficult to take good pictures in a concert hall without the proper equipment and skills. A random snapshot from someone's phone is unlikely to do justice to the occasion. Hire a professional (experienced in concert photography) to cover the main events of your congress! You will not regret it.

Furthermore, there should be people in your volunteer team dedicated to photo and video coverage of all events (not only those taking place in the main auditorium!). Ensure you have sufficient storage at hand (a TB-sized USB drive should do) to back up all of the resulting digital media products on a daily basis – local (video)camera storage devices are likely to fill up quickly when in continuous use for 18 hours a day. The IVC2018 "digital media vault" ended up measuring 182GB (before any post-processing/-editing).

In spite of a decent effort to organize continuous camera control by our volunteers, the outputs of this effort were a bit disappointing. In particular in the main Hofpleintheater, we had not taken the time to test for the best camera position. Hence, most of the recordings from Hofplein are of poor quality (unfocused picture and unbalanced sound). Additionally, a number of sessions/presentations were missed due to avoidable issues – e.g. the storage ran full, the battery ran low, or someone simply forgot to start the recording.

To avoid repeating such errors, future organizers should have a more dedicated and technically capable video camera team with time to do "dress rehearsals" in advance, to check for the best locations to mount the camera, and practice routines to monitor

power and storage capacity, intervening in time (i.e. at least 1 hour before anything could happen) to fix the problem.

Another aspect yet is audio recording. We didn't even try to arrange anything special in this respect, because our two main presentation venues (Hofplein and GKV) did not have the acoustics to justify the effort of bringing in high-end recording equipment. But at one point we were close to having a radio recording deal for one of our Evening concerts in De Doelen. It is something that, given more dedicated effort, should definitely have been possible.

By the way, while photo and video recordings of Congress events may seem like an obvious and natural part of the process to you, not all artists would automatically accept it. Therefore, you should make sure to bring this up during pre-congress communications. For Presenters, you can even get this out of the way in the Call for Proposals stage by requiring a consent to video recording and use of photos to promote the Congress in the media.

9.5. The Programme Booklet

At first, I (personally) made the mistake of regarding the Programme Booklet as a mandatory but not particularly useful or rewarding exercise. After all, committing such a complex congress schedule to paper is asking for problems – and we already had planned for live-updated electronic means of conveying the schedule (via Sched). Who would rather carry around an unwieldy rag of paper with schedules that are prone to obsolescence from the very day they are printed?

But once we had entered the hot phase of editing work, I realized how wrong I had been. The Programme Booklet is so much more than just a printed schedule.

The Programme Booklet communicates all practical details about your congress to the participants. Its primary use is during the congress itself, but that doesn't mean it cannot have a promotional value: It is also an attractive advertising opportunity for your Exhibitors and other musically related companies.

Your participants will carry it around during the congress week, also in public spaces outside your congress venue. And after the congress, the booklet is often kept as a cherished physical souvenir, with artists' autographs and real time scribbled notes.

It is easy to underestimate the effort that goes into this publication. You need good and accurate writers (and proof readers!) who deeply understand the content, so at least one key organizing committee member should be among the editors. Start early with the parts that are most "static", such as the introduction, general project descriptions, etc. Give the booklet a practical format (size A5 fits easily in a purse or

even a coat pocket). The structure should facilitate both a “quick reference” function (looking up schedule and practical information) and in-depth details, in a non-conflicting way.

Keep in mind that the booklet should also acknowledge the hard work and help from your team, institutional partners, sponsors, benefactors, host families, etc. It is very embarrassing to forget someone in this context! So start those lists early and review them frequently, so that they are complete at the time of printing.

Exactly for this reason you should also make sure to allocate enough spare copies of the booklet for your partners, sponsors and benefactors, as a physical manifestation of the event that they helped to create, and also to demonstrate that their contributions have been duly acknowledged (thanks and mentions, logos).

Typical content that should be included in the booklet:

- Words of welcome by the Host(s) and the IVS President
- Words of welcome from a dignitary (patron) and major institutional partners
- A complete schedule of all congress events, including (for each event) the time, venue, presenters’ name(s), and a compact description of the lecture topic / recital programme.
- Description of special themes and projects relating to the congress
- An alphabetically indexed “who’s who”, with pictures and brief biographies, of everyone who performs/presents at the congress, with some extra attention given to the special guest artists (they could be listed separately, with more extensive biographies). And don’t forget the (house) pianists!
- Alphabetical list of the Exhibitors
- Names and faces of the Organizing team (including names of volunteers)
- A list of sponsors and benefactors
- A suitably scoped city map showing all congress venues
- Information about food and drinks (esp. when organized by the congress)
- Table of contents (in front or in the back)
- Publication credits (mention of editors, contributors, design, printer)
- A blank page or two for the participant’s own notes (this is very useful! And it speaks in disfavour of using glossy paper).

Start early looking for Advertisers, as they impact the finances (and the total page count) of the booklet. Don’t be too modest - ask higher rates for back cover and inside cover placements.

No booklet is ever perfect. No matter how many times you proofread and how last-minute you send it to the printer, there will be spelling errors, factual discrepancies, and outdated information. Therefore, prepare to have a “live” bulletin board (e.g. a large computer monitor) on the Main Venue where corrections and updates can be posted.

10. DON'T RE-INVENT THE WHEEL

Summary:

Learn as much as you can from other congresses – both former IVCs and other musical congresses.

Of course innovation is good, but you should avoid to re-invent the wheel. This is something you probably don't need to be told, if you've already patiently read this whole report.

A long line of former Congress Hosts is still around, and their advice is invaluable. I had the good fortune to be in frequent contact with Jutta Puchhammer (twice IVC host, 1999/2006), Dorotea Vismara (2016), and Wellington 2017 congress manager Elyse Dalabakis. This was of great help, not only to identify weak points in our plans, but also to help distinguish real risks from low-probability (imaginary) risks.

We also looked at (the websites of) congresses and festivals for other instruments, e.g. the [International Trombone Festival](#), [ClarinetFest](#), [BassEUROPE](#) Festival etc. This was very helpful to get more detailed ideas on the Congress Registration process, Exhibitor booking forms, and to formulate a sound set of "Rules and Regulations" as safety net for potential disputes.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

What can one conclude after all these words about organizing an IVC? If I wrote it right, the conclusion should echo the numbered list of “Lessons Learned” (chapter titles of this document). So go back and read the Introduction!

Secondly, spread throughout the tens of thousands of words, we presented some recommendations for rules that could be improved at IVS level:

- Require a PPP-based (or similar) system to differentiate congress fees for participants from countries with challenged economies (section 7.3.2).
- Clarify / improve the rules relating to payment of artists and waiving congress fees for presenters (moderating expectations, in particular to avoid notions of unfair/unequal treatment, and the indignation from “*having to pay to play*”).
- Require the establishment of a Congress Website, which has to remain online for at least 5 years after the congress.
- Specify a list of documents that should be made available to the IVS after a congress to pass on to future congress organizers; for example
 - A final balance sheet (similar to the one shown in section 7.1)
 - A “lessons learned” document (much shorter than the present one)
 - List of Exhibitors and Advertisers (including addresses and contact persons)

This is not to say that the IVS congress rules in place today is not good enough, but we think they could be even better! ☺

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The institutional partners played a key role in the realisation of this congress: First of all De Doelen (Neil Wallace, Judith Rothmans), the Rotterdam Chamber Music Society (Bas van Ouwerkerk), Hofplein Rotterdam (Rick Oversluizen), GKV church (Willem van der Lught), Matrix Rotterdam (Yasar Saka), HKU University of the Arts Utrecht (Sonja Heijmans), Zadkine Rotterdam (Maaike de Zeeuw), Hellendaal Music Institute (Katja Dirven Didychenko), Rotterdam Youth Symphony Orchestra (Mark Lansbergen), the Royal Dutch Carillon Society, and Codarts Rotterdam.

Several board members of the International Viola Society and former congress hosts provided invaluable advice along the way: Carlos Maria Solare, Jutta Puchhammer-Sedillot, Michael Vidulich, Dorotea Vismara and Elyse Dalabakis.

We are grateful for the invaluable cooperation of our Featured Artists: Lawrence Power, Kim Kashkashian, Nobuko Imai, Atar Arad, Timothy Ridout and composer-in-residence Leo Samama; as well as the special artistic support from Mikhail Zemtsov, Yuval Gotlibovich, Drew Forde, Robyn Schulkowsky, Francien Schatborn, Doelenkwartet, Lisa Eggen, Oene van Geel, Richard de Waardt, Letizia Sciarone, Jeppe Moulijn, I Solisti Aquilani, Het Tollens Ensemble, the Zemtsov Viola Quartet and many others – and in particular also our dedicated and tireless house pianists Caecilia Boschman, Daniël Kramer and Noriko Yabe.

The foursome of inspired luthiers who organized and executed the unique viola builders' workshop during the congress also deserves mention: Jan van der Elst, Chaim Achttienribbe, Kai-Thomas Roth and Gijsbert van Ziel.

We also thank all of the congress presenters who submitted proposals and took the effort to travel to Rotterdam to share their ideas and music with the world – and the Exhibitors who invested their time and resources to attend our congress.

And last but certainly not least, we are deeply thankful for our financial sponsors: The City of Rotterdam, Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds, BNG Cultuurfonds, Stichting Bevordering van Volkskracht, De Groot Fonds, Dioraphte, Elise Mathilde Fonds, Van Ommeren – de Voogt Stichting, Van den Berch van Heemstede Stichting, Het Kersjes Fonds, van der Mandele Stichting, G.Ph.Verhagen Stichting and STOER.

ANNEX A – CALL FOR PROPOSALS DOCUMENTS

A.1. CfP: Proposal Submission Form

For the implementation of the Proposal Submission form, we had a carefully crafted Microsoft Word document. This was mainly because we hadn't yet developed our website with a proper "form plug-in" that would allow to enter the data online. Using Word had advantages and disadvantages. For example, people with older versions of Word were unable to operate the simple "checkboxes" to select standard options. We had found this problem by testing, so for those affected we allowed to write "[Yes]/[No]" behind the checkbox instead. Yet other applicants used OpenOffice to edit the form, which really messed up the layout. Based on our rules, we could have disqualified those submissions, but decided instead to exercise "flexibility" (assuming the applicant was simply unable to use Word for good reasons).

NNth International Viola Congress
<Congress City>, <Congress Date(s)>
Proposal Submission Form

The current document is the Official Proposal Submission Form for IVC <year>. It must be edited/completed using Microsoft Word, saved (preferably as PDF) and submitted to the IVC Programme Committee (<e-mail address>) by <Proposal Deadline Date and Time>.

How to use this Submission Form:

- Download and save this Submission form document with a meaningful name, e.g. "IVC_Proposal_<Name>.docx"
- Open and edit the document using Microsoft Word (edition 2007 or later).
- Enter text in the white cells, behind/below any existing content guidelines contained in brackets (e.g. **<Enter description>**).
- Some sections may require repetition when information for multiple persons is to be listed; to do so, select the relevant table rows and copy-paste them, as needed.
- Checkbox entries (e.g. **Microphone**) should not be overtyped/replaced, a single click on the checkbox will toggle a cross in the box (**Microphone**), by which you indicate that the given option applies for you. If this doesn't work, enter the text "[YES]" or "[NO]" to the right of the option (thus: **Microphone [YES]**).
- All confirmation check-boxes in section 5 must be selected with a cross (or a **[YES]**).
- The Signature in section 5 must belong to the Main Presenter. It should be inserted as a scanned graphical image. If such an image is not available, enter the Main Presenter's full name as text.
- The Submission form should ideally be presented as a PDF document. Most modern Microsoft Word editions support this by selecting "Save As..." and then choosing File type "PDF (.pdf)" format. If this is not available in your version of Word, submit the document as-is, in Word format.

Proceed to the next page to start filling in the Submission Form.

1a. Information about the Presentation

Definitions: A Presentation is to be understood as the general term for the proposed activity.

The Format of a Presentation can be either of the following categories:

- Recital: Live musical performance without significant verbal presentation;
- Lecture-recital: A recital combined with a verbal presentation of topical nature;
- Lecture: A verbal presentation without live performance, but possibly using Audio/visual aids
- Masterclass: A public lesson for talented viola students (to be selected by the IVC host)
- Workshop: An interactive topical session involving the active participation of the audience.

Note: All verbal presentations and supporting materials (except song lyrics) must be provided in English.

Format:	<Click here to select Format option> <i>(a drop-down selection menu should appear; If it doesn't, enter a valid option manually: Recital, Lecture-recital, Lecture, Masterclass or Workshop).</i>
Title of Presentation:	<Descriptive Title reflecting Topic or Subject of Presentation>
Duration (50' max):	
Sharing option:	<input type="checkbox"/> The Presentation programme is modular and could be split up, in order to share session time with other Presentation(s) (<i>in general, this is only a viable option for Recital programmes; such an allowance makes it easier to fit recital pieces into the Programme</i>).
Facilities needed:	<input type="checkbox"/> Microphone <input type="checkbox"/> Beamer / facility to display computer presentations / films <input type="checkbox"/> Computer with USB/CD player connected to sound system <input type="checkbox"/> Internet connection <input type="checkbox"/> Stage lighting control (technician) <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify):

1b. Description

<Enter a free-form description of the proposed presentation, its central thesis / idea, and its relation with the Congress Theme (see Call for Proposals), min. 300 – max. 1000 words.>

1c. Repertoire (only applicable for recitals and lecture-recitals)

<List of works to be performed: Title, composer, and duration of each piece>
 <Please include also the years of birth and death (if applicable) for each composer>
 <Please specify any rental costs and royalties/licensing restrictions that may apply>

1d. Reference Recordings

<Links/references to recordings of the programmed repertoire, if available>

2. Information about Main Presenter(s) (*copy and repeat this section for each Presenter*)

Definition: The Presenter is the primary speaker or performer, and is the point of contact for the Programme Committee. If there are additional Presenters (with a leading role), please copy and repeat the below section as many times as required to provide information about all Presenters. Accompanists / non-viola playing ensemble members are to be listed separately in Section 3 below.

Last Name:	
First Name(s):	
Nationality:	
Date of birth:	
E-mail address:	
Telephone number:	
Residential address:	
Viola Society:	
Reference recording:	<Links to recent online recordings of the Presenter, not necessarily performing the proposed programme>

3a. Request for Local Pianist

Local pianist:	<input type="checkbox"/> I need a local pianist, contracted by the IVC hosts <i>(subject to availability; extra costs may apply)</i>
-----------------------	--

3b. Information about Accompanist

Accompanist:	<input type="checkbox"/> I am bringing my own accompanist
Name (Last, First):	
E-mail address:	
Telephone number:	
Instrument:	

3c. Information about Ensemble (*other than Presenter(s) and Accompanist*)

Own Ensemble:	<input type="checkbox"/> An ensemble contributes to the performance
Name of Ensemble:	
Number of players:	
Reference recording:	<Links to recent online video or audio recordings of the Ensemble, not necessarily performing the proposed programme>

Members of Ensemble (*copy and repeat this section for each member of the ensemble*)

Name (Last, First):	
E-mail address:	
Telephone number:	
Instrument:	

4. Supporting Documentation <i>(informational – no inputs here)</i>	
Presenters:	For each Presenter mentioned in Section 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A full professional C.V. (resume), max. 2 pages - A customised biography in text form, max. 250 words, addressing personally the IVC 2018 context and audience. <i>(this will be used directly in the Programme book, if selected)</i> - A photograph of the Presenter (headshot)
Accompanist:	For each Accompanist mentioned in Section 3b (if applicable): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A short biography in text form, max. 125 words - A photograph of the Accompanist (headshot)
Ensemble:	For the Ensemble specified in Section 3c (if applicable): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A short history of the ensemble in text form, max. 125 words - A photo of the ensemble (group picture)
Document Files:	Document files (e.g. C.V.'s and biographies) must be submitted in PDF (or Microsoft Word) file format, and must have a clear and meaningful file name, e.g. "Presenter_<Name>.CV.pdf"
Picture Formats:	Pictures must comply to the following format requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - JPEG file format - Meaningful file name, e.g. "Presenter_<Name>.photo.jpg" - Photo must be recent (less than 5 years old) - Full colour - Resolution minimum 1200x1200 pixels

5. Confirmation and Signature	
Application:	<input type="checkbox"/> I confirm that the supplied information is complete and accurate.
Intellectual property:	<input type="checkbox"/> I confirm that the proposed programme is either free of copyright/ intellectual property rights, or will have obtained the required licenses/permissions for performance from the Copyright owners.
Documentation:	<input type="checkbox"/> I confirm submission of all required supporting documentation in the proper specified format (compliant to Section 4).
IVS Affiliation:	<input type="checkbox"/> I acknowledge my obligation to: a) <u>either submit proof of membership with an IVS affiliated Viola Society (*) at the time of Congress Registration,</u> b) <u>or to register for a <YourVS> membership (**)</u> at that time. <small>(*) Note: The American Viola Society is not affiliated with the IVS.</small> <small>(**) YourVS yearly membership rates are: <...></small>
Obligations:	<input type="checkbox"/> I have read and accept all of the mutual obligations and non-obligations listed in the Call for Proposals.
Date and Signature:	

A.2. CfP: Notification of Acceptance

dear <Main Presenter Name(s)> -

it is our pleasure to inform you that the IVC20xx Programme Committee has decided to accept your Proposal to the Congress programme:

<Proposal_Identifier>: <Proposal Title>

The Programme Committee received <**Total Number of Proposals, e.g. 116**> quality proposals from all over the world, from which <**Number of Selected Proposals, e.g. 67**> have currently been (wholly or partially) selected. There was considerable pressure to shorten the contributions to fit as many different elements as possible onto the program.

Either: Therefore, as agreed in previous communication, your proposed programme has been modified / shortened to include **only <list of works> <and/or other necessary conditions>**.

Or: Nonetheless, we have decided to accept your contribution unmodified, in its originally proposed length and format.

Please confirm (by reply to this mail) by <fixed deadline date 4-6 weeks from now> at the latest that you accept our invitation, including the noted modification to your programme. Note: This confirmation would not constitute a binding commitment of attendance from your side. At this stage, we just need to know that you agree to the conditions and still *intend* to participate at the congress.

In the attachment, you will find a personalized Letter of Recommendation, which could be helpful in applying for leave and financial assistance for visiting the congress.

As soon as Registration opens for the congress, you will be offered a special early-bird discount rate for Congress Registration. **<if applicable:> Your pianist/ensemble members will be offered a further reduced rate.**

We will keep you informed on the general progress of our planning for the Congress through regular newsletters.

We congratulate you on your selection, and look forward to seeing you in <**Congress City**>!

sincere regards,

<**Host or Chairman Name**>

Host, <**Congress Title e.g. 49th IVC or IVC2023**>

Meaning of colours (not to be used in actual notification letter):

In <**red**>: Text to be customised for each presenter

In <**blue**>: Template customization, depending on global congress circumstances

A.3. CfP: Letter of Recommendation (for Presenters)

<Place>, <Date> <Your Congress Logo>

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

to whom it may concern,

this is to confirm that <Presenter Name> has been invited as a contributor to the NNth International Viola Congress (IVC) in <City>, <Country> (<Dates>). The proposed contribution is in the form of a <Recital / Lecture / Workshop>, with the title: <Presentation Title>

The IVC20xx Programme Committee has selected this contribution from a competitive field of <Total Number of Proposals> high-quality proposals, on the basis of originality and perceived strength.

As the host organization of the IVC <Year>, the <YourViolaSociety> fully supports and endorses the ambition of <Presenter Name> to travel to <City> in order to bring <his/her> work to the attention of the international viola community. We strongly encourage you to support this endeavour with all available means.

Should you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincere regards,

<signature>

<Host or Chairman Name>

Host, International Viola Congress <Year>, <City>

Meaning of colours (not to be used in actual recommendation letter):

In <red>: Text to be customised for each presenter

In <blue>: Template customization, depending on global congress circumstances

A.4. CfP: Notification of Waiting List Status

dear <Main Presenter Name(s)> -

Thank-you kindly for your Proposal for the IVC20xx. The Programme Committee received an overwhelming <Total Number of Proposals, e.g. 116> high quality Proposals from all over the world. It was unfortunately impossible to fit them all into the congress programme. As a result, a great number of deserving Proposals had to be put aside.

This is unfortunately the case for your Proposal:

<Proposal_Identifier>: <Proposal Title>

The Programme Committee has however decided to add your Proposal to the official Waiting List. If Presenters who have currently been admitted to the Programme should cancel their plans of attending, the Proposals on the Waiting List will be admitted in order of their current ranking. The rank is your current standing in the list (number 1 being the first Proposal to be selected in the event of a cancellation or withdrawal).

Your current rank on the list is: <rank 1-20>

Note: This list is specific for <Recitals/Lectures> – so only if another <Recital/Lecture> is withdrawn, will yours advance in the ranking.

<if applicable>: Some additional conditions for your eventual acceptance have been identified:
 - e.g. your proposed programme has been modified / shortened to include **only <list of works>**
<and/or other necessary conditions>.

The Waiting List will be considered for pending Proposals until <**fixed date 4-5 months before the congress**>. If you have not heard from us by then, we will send you a notification that your Proposal will no longer be admitted. Please also let us know if you do not wish to remain on the Waiting List (e.g. if you make other plans in the meantime).

We hope that you still plan to attend the IVC20xx congress, even if you end up not being a presenter! The full Congress Programme will soon be published on our website.

We will keep you informed on the general progress of our planning for the Congress through regular newsletters.

sincere regards,

<Host or Chairman Name>

Host, <Congress Title e.g. 49th IVC>

Meaning of colours (not to be used in actual notification letter):

In <red>: Text to be customised for each presenter

In <blue>: Template customization, depending on global congress circumstances

A.5. CfP: Notification of Rejection

dear <Main Presenter Name(s)> -

Thank-you kindly for your Proposal for the [IVC20xx](#). The Programme Committee received an overwhelming <[Total Number of Proposals, e.g. 116](#)> high quality Proposals from all over the world. It was unfortunately impossible to fit them all into the congress programme. As a result, a great number of deserving Proposals had to be put aside.

This is unfortunately the case for your Proposal:

<Proposal_Identifier>: <Proposal Title>

This Proposal has also not been included in the (short) Waiting List in case of cancellations.

The Programme Committee has taken great care in considering the merits of each Proposal. A number of factors were taken into account by the Committee in reaching their decision, including the time available, connection with the congress theme <[Congress Theme](#)'>, diversity of repertoire, international representation and the diversity and quality of the presenters. The decisions of the Program Committee are final and cannot be appealed, but we hope that many of the rejected proposals for [IVC20xx](#) will find their way onto a future IVC programme (where the above criteria may weigh out differently).

We hope that you still plan to attend the [IVC20xx](#) congress, even if you are not a presenter! The full Congress Programme will soon be published on our website.

We will keep you informed on the general progress of our planning for the Congress through regular newsletters.

sincere regards,

[<Host or Chairman Name>](#)

Host, <[Congress Title e.g. 49th IVC](#)>

Meaning of colours (not to be used in actual notification letter):

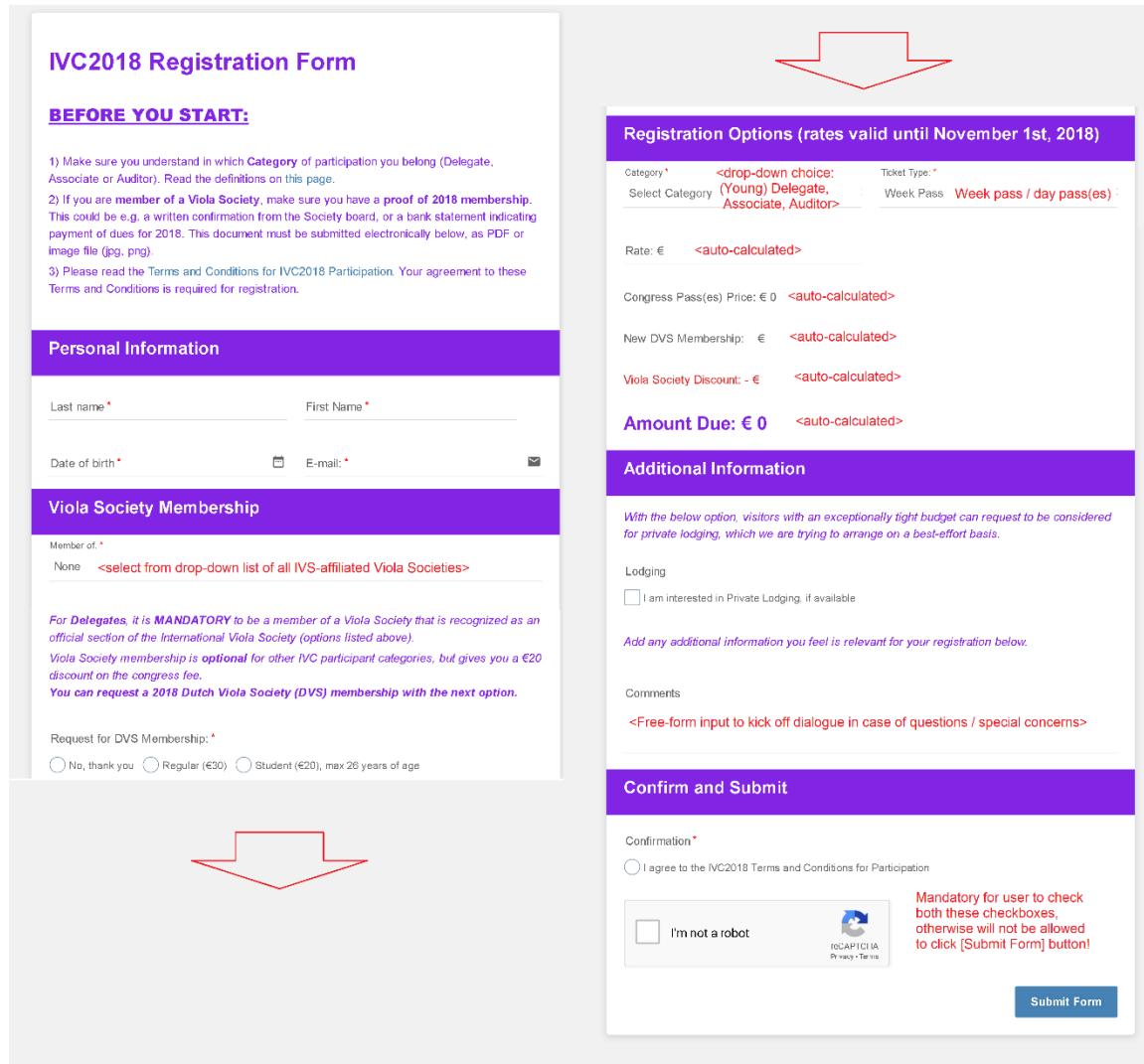
In <[red](#)>: Text to be customised for each presenter

In <[blue](#)>: Template customization, depending on global congress circumstances

ANNEX B – CONGRESS REGISTRATION DOCUMENTS

B.1. Congress Registration Form

Here is a screen capture of the Congress Registration form, including annotations (in red) which explain the workings of some of the widgets.



The screenshot shows the IVC2018 Registration Form with several sections and annotations:

- IVC2018 Registration Form**
- BEFORE YOU START:**
 - 1) Make sure you understand in which Category of participation you belong (Delegate, Associate or Auditor). Read the definitions on this page.
 - 2) If you are member of a Viola Society, make sure you have a proof of 2018 membership. This could be e.g. a written confirmation from the Society board, or a bank statement indicating payment of dues for 2018. This document must be submitted electronically below, as PDF or image file (jpg, png).
 - 3) Please read the Terms and Conditions for IVC2018 Participation. Your agreement to these Terms and Conditions is required for registration.
- Personal Information**
 - Last name *
 - First Name *
 - Date of birth *
 - E-mail: *
- Viola Society Membership**
 - Member of: *
 - None <select from drop-down list of all IVS-affiliated Viola Societies>
 - For Delegates, it is MANDATORY to be a member of a Viola Society that is recognized as an official section of the International Viola Society (options listed above).
 - Viola Society membership is optional for other IVC participant categories, but gives you a €20 discount on the congress fee.
 - You can request a 2018 Dutch Viola Society (DVS) membership with the next option.
- Request for DVS Membership: *
 - No, thank you
 - Regular (€30)
 - Student (€20), max 26 years of age
- Registration Options (rates valid until November 1st, 2018)**
 - Category: * <drop-down choice: (Young) Delegate, Associate, Auditor>
 - Ticket Type: * Week Pass Week pass / day pass(es):
 - Rate: € <auto-calculated>
 - Congress Pass(es) Price: € 0 <auto-calculated>
 - New DVS Membership: € <auto-calculated>
 - Viola Society Discount: - € <auto-calculated>
 - Amount Due: € 0 <auto-calculated>**
- Additional Information**
 - With the below option, visitors with an exceptionally tight budget can request to be considered for private lodging, which we are trying to arrange on a best-effort basis.
 - Lodging
 - I am interested in Private Lodging, if available
 - Add any additional information you feel is relevant for your registration below.
 - Comments
 - <Free-form input to kick off dialogue in case of questions / special concerns>
- Confirm and Submit**
 - Confirmation: *
 - I agree to the IVC2018 Terms and Conditions for Participation
 - I'm not a robot
 - reCAPTCHA Privacy-Terms
 - Mandatory for user to check both these checkboxes, otherwise will not be allowed to click [Submit Form] button!
 - Submit Form**

Note: There are some “dynamic” parts of this form that are not shown.

- 1) when the “Viola Society membership” is selected as any valid value other than “None”, you will be presented with another widget requesting the upload of a digital document that proves your membership of that society, and the “Request for DVS Membership” sub-section will be hidden.
- 2) when the “Day pass(es)” option is selected for the “Ticket type”, additional options are made visible/available to select the specific Weekday(s) of the congress for which day passes are desired.

B.2. Mail Confirming Receipt of Registration Request

IVC2018: We received your Registration Request IVC-R20
 IVC2018
 To: Kristofer G. Skaug; 19/05/2018 17:34

Dear Kristofer Skaug,

thank-you for submitting your request for IVC2018 Registration - we are very happy that you intend to visit our congress! Your Registration will be confirmed when the payment (Amount Due, shown below) has been received. This payment must be sent **within 14 days** by bank transfer to:

Dutch Viola Society
 International Bank Account Number (IBAN): **NL14RABO0136477445**
 BIC/SWIFT code: **RABONL2U**
 Please include **your full name** and your unique Request ID "**IVC-R20**" in the Description field.
 All international transfer costs must be paid by the **sender**.

If we do not receive your payment **within 14 days**, this Registration request will be deleted.
 Here are the details you have submitted to us at 19/05/2018 15:34 (UTC):

IVC2018 Registration Form
Personal Information

B.3. Terms and Conditions for IVC2018 Participation

Source document:

<https://ivcrotterdam2018.nl/terms-and-conditions-for-ivc2018-participation/>

1. DEFINITIONS

In these Terms and Conditions, the following definitions are used:

- 1.1. Congress refers to the 45th International Viola Congress 2018
- 1.2. IVC refers to the organization behind the Congress, part of the Dutch Viola Society.
- 1.3. Registration refers to the act of filling in and submitting the Congress Registration Form, **and** fulfilling the financial obligations specified therein.
- 1.4. A Participant is a person who registers for the Congress as (Young) Delegate, Associate, or (Young) Auditor.
- 1.5. Congress Manager refers to either the IVC Chairman or the IVC Congress Production Manager.
- 1.6. The Primary Congress venue is the Hofpleintheater, owned and operated by the organization Hofplein Rotterdam.
- 1.7. The Secondary Congress venue is the Gereformeerde Kerk Vrijgemaakt (GKV), Simonstraat 8-10, Rotterdam; owned and operated by the church community of the same name.
- 1.8. The term Congress venues refers to the primary and/or secondary venues mentioned above. This **excludes** any other venue, managed and operated by other organisations.

- 1.9. The term Presentation refers to any lecture, lecture-recital, recital, workshop or masterclass that is part of the Congress programme.
- 1.10. The term Congress event refers to any Presentation, plenary session or other event that is part of the Congress programme.

2. PAYMENT

- 2.1. By clicking the **Submit** button in the online Congress Registration Form, the Participant is liable to pay the indicated Amount Due for registration to the Congress.
- 2.2. The Amount Due indicated in the Congress Registration form at the time of submission is **calculated** based on the Participant's inputs. The IVC will manually verify these inputs. If it is determined that the Participant owes a higher sum than calculated in the original form (due to incorrect inputs), a follow-on invoice will be sent to the Participant. In such cases, the Participant has to complete also the extra payment before Registration can be considered completed.
- 2.3. Payments to the IVC are accepted in EURO currency only.
- 2.4. All payments to the IVC are free of VAT (Dutch BTW).
- 2.5. Payments to the IVC shall be made exclusively by bank transfer (*). Other forms or means of payment (e.g. Credit cards, cheques, or cash payments) are not accepted. During the Congress, the IVC may or may not accept additional forms of payment.
- (*) The online payment service TransferWise is recommended for international transfers from outside Europe. This allows to convert a local bank or credit card payment into an international bank transfer. The end result is the same (from IVC's point of view).**
- 2.6. All bank transaction costs shall be covered by the Participant, also in the case of refunds being paid by the IVC.

3. CONGRESS REGISTRATION

- 3.1. Registration is mandatory for everyone attending the Congress.
- 3.2. Registration is personal, and cannot be done as a group, or on behalf of someone else.
- 3.3. The Registration can be changed after Registration Form submission, provided that a written request is sent (by e-mail) **by November 1st, 2018** to **finance.ivc2018@dutchviolasociety.nl**. The change is subject to evaluation and acceptance by the Congress Manager, and subject to conformance with the specific cases listed in clauses 3.3.1 and 3.3.2. below.
- 3.3.1. The Registration can be changed in cases where the Participant Category and/or Ticket Type are updated in a positive direction, such as:

- Upgrade of Participant Category to Delegate
- Upgrade of Ticket Type from Day Pass to Week Pass
- Increase the number of Day Passes

In each of the cases above, the Participant will have to pay the difference in rate for the new Ticket Type and/or Category **based on the rates in effect on the date of receiving the request** (not the rates valid on the original date of registration).

- 3.3.2. The following Registration changes may be requested free of charge:

- Change the date(s) of attendance/validity for Day Passes
- Change of personal information or preferences not affecting the Registration fee.

- 3.3.3. The following Registration change requests will not be allowed:

- Downgrade of Participant Category from Delegate to anything else
- Downgrade of Ticket Type from Week Pass to Day Pass
- Reduce the number of Day Passes.
- Change of personal information affecting the Registration fee (e.g. date of birth)

3.4. Cancellation of Registration may be requested in writing by sending an e-mail to:
finance.ivc2018@dutchviolasociety.nl.

- If a Cancellation request is received before **October 1st, 2018**, the IVC will refund 100% of the paid Congress fees, minus €10 cancellation fee.
- If a Cancellation request is received before **November 1st, 2018**, the IVC will refund 50% of the paid Congress fees, minus €10 cancellation fee
- If a Cancellation request is received on or after **November 1st, 2018**, the IVC will not refund any paid Congress fees.
- Any fee paid for **Dutch Viola Society membership** is non-refundable.

3.5. A Registered Participant not showing up to attend the Congress (in part or in whole) is not entitled to refunds: No-show is not in any way equivalent to Cancellation.

3.6. The IVC will issue personalised **badges** to all registered Participants upon arrival, subject to verified payment of all due Registration fees. The following rules apply to use of Badges:

- Badges are required to enter and stay on Congress venues.
- Badges must be worn visibly at all times while on the Congress venues, except when the Participant is actively presenting or performing as part of an official Congress Presentation.
- Badges are not transferable or replaceable.
- A Participant who loses his/her badge will have to re-register at full price.

3.7. Participants with disabilities may be accompanied by their Personal Assistant (carer) free of charge. The Personal Assistant must still Register (as Associate), but will be waived from obligation to pay congress fees. The disabled Participant must contact the IVC prior to Registration (ivc2018@dutchviolasociety.nl) to clarify such cases.

3.8. In the unlikely event that the Congress itself would be cancelled, the Participant will receive a 75% refund on the paid Congress fees.

4. PROTECTION AND USE OF DATA

4.1. The data provided by the Participant for Registration may be used by IVC and the Congress venue operators for internal use. Internal use includes logistics planning, accounting, website, databases, mailing lists, as well as the on-line and printed Congress program guide.

4.2. The Congress newsletter and essential information related to the Congress will be sent to all Participants. A Participant may request to be removed from the mailing list.

4.3. The IVC will never disclose any of the Participant's information to third parties except as noted in clause 4.1.

4.4. Upon completed Cancellation of Registration (with or without refund), the IVC will erase all of the Participant's registered information from the Registration Database.

4.5. Within 6 months of the end of the IVC (i.e. by May 24th, 2019), the Registration Database of the IVC will be deleted entirely.

4.6. The Participant grants permission to the IVC to record and use photos or videos containing his/her likeness, for the purpose of promoting the Congress in print, video, or online media. No royalty, fee, or other compensation shall become payable to the Participant by reason of such use.

4.7. Congress events must not be recorded (audio/video) by anyone without prior and express written authorization from the IVC.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES AND LIABILITY

- 5.1. The Participant shall not inflict damage to the buildings, equipment or furniture of the Congress venues. Any damage charges in connection with the restoration or protection of the buildings, equipment, or furniture will be at the expense of the Participant.
- 5.2. The Participant shall have accident and liability insurance coverage.
- 5.3. The Participant, his successors, and assigns, hereby releases and holds harmless the IVC, Hofplein Rotterdam and GKV, their directors, officers, members, agents, employees and volunteers from all claims, damages, liabilities, losses, and expenses (including attorney's fees), of any kind and nature whatsoever, arising from or related to the Participant's attendance to the Congress.
- 5.4. The Participant shall indemnify and keep IVC as well as our local partners (Hofplein Rotterdam and GKV) fully indemnified from and against all actions, claims and demands brought against these resulting (directly or indirectly) from any infringement of intellectual property rights of any third party affected by the Participant.
- 5.5. The IVC will not be responsible for any third party liability incurred by Participants as a result of any alteration of format, date and location of the Congress.
- 5.6. A Participant with disabilities must contact the IVC prior to Registration (ivc2018@dutchviolasociety.nl) to discuss any special need. The IVC unfortunately cannot guarantee the availability of facilities for disabled participants other than those already provided by the Congress venues.

6. GENERAL REGULATIONS

- 6.1. Any specific local regulations issued by Hofplein Rotterdam or GKV will become parts of these Terms and Conditions.
- 6.2. In case of infringement of these Terms and Conditions, IVC reserves the right to refuse or cancel the Participant's Registration without reimbursement of expenses, and to refuse admission to the Congress venues.
- 6.3. All points not covered herein are subject to the decision of the Congress Manager.
- 6.4. Place of jurisdiction for disputes concerning the present agreement is Rotterdam, The Netherlands. The Registration agreement shall be governed and construed according to Dutch laws.

ANNEX C – CALL FOR EXHIBITORS DOCUMENTS

C.1. Exhibit Booking Request Form

Here is a screen capture of the Exhibit Booking Request form, including annotations (in red) which explain the workings of some of the widgets.

IVC2018 Exhibit Booking Request Form

BEFORE YOU START:

Please read the Terms and Conditions for IVC2018 Exhibitors.
Your agreement to these Terms and Conditions is required in order to submit this form.

Company Information

Company Name *

Type of Business *

Address *

City and Postal code *

Country *

Select

Website address:

Contact Information

Last name *

First Name *

E-mail: *

Confirm E-mail: *

Telephone *

Exhibit Booking Options

Exhibit space *

Select space

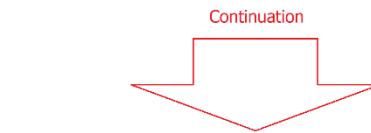
[Whole unit / Half unit](#)

Additional Services

Power supply (€30,-) Internet access (€30,-) Protective Table cloth (€10,-)

Advertisement in IVC2018 Programme Book (40% discount!)

None Full Page (€240,-) 1/2 Page (€120,-) 1/4 Page (€60,-)



Names of Attendees

Attendee 1 (mandatory) *

Attendee 2 (optional)

Describe what is to be exhibited / sold:

Product description

Additional Information or Requests

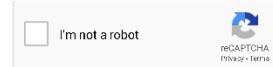
Comments

<Free-form input to kick off dialogue in case of questions / special concerns>

Confirm and Submit

Confirmation *

I agree to the IVC2018 Terms and Conditions for Exhibitors



Mandatory for user to check both these checkboxes, otherwise will not be allowed to click [Submit Form] button!

[Submit Form](#)

C.2. Terms and Conditions for IVC2018 Exhibitors

Source document:

<https://ivcrotterdam2018.nl/terms-and-conditions-for-ivc2018-exhibitors/>

The following Terms and Conditions apply to all IVC2018 Exhibitors, and form an integral part of the IVC2018 Exhibit Agreement.

1. DEFINITIONS

In these Terms and Conditions, the following definitions are used:

1.1. Congress refers to the 45th International Viola Congress 2018 (IVC2018), taking place from November 20th – 24th, 2018.

- 1.2. IVC refers to the organization behind the Congress, part of the Dutch Viola Society.
- 1.3. The Primary Congress venue is the Hofpleintheater, a building containing a theatre facility at the visitor address Bentemplein 13, 3032CC Rotterdam.
- 1.4. The organization Hofplein Rotterdam is the owner and operator of the Primary Congress venue.
- 1.5. An Exhibit constitutes an assigned rented space and related services (further defined in clause 2), assigned to an Exhibitor at the Primary Congress Venue. The Exhibitor is expected to use this space to display, promote and sell his products and services.
- 1.6. An Exhibitor refers to the representative(s) of a company or institution that has requested an Exhibit at IVC2018.
- 1.7. The Exhibit Agreement is a contractual agreement for rental of an Exhibit and related services, mutually enabled by:
 - (a) the Exhibitor's submittal of an Exhibit Booking Request Form, and
 - (b) the subsequent non-automatic, explicit acceptance of the booking request by the IVC.
- 1.8. The Congress Manager refers to either the IVC Chairman or the Congress Production Manager.

2. FEES AND SERVICES

EXHIBIT FEES:

2.1. The **rental fees for Exhibit space** are as follows:

- **one whole unit** of Exhibit space: **€500,-**
- **one half unit** of Exhibit space: **€250,-**

2.2. The **full Exhibit fee** includes the unit rental fee (defined in clause 2.1. above), plus the cost of additional (optional) services requested by Exhibitor.

2.3. The **full Exhibit fee** is applicable, even if the Exhibitor is not able to maintain the Exhibit at all defined Exhibit times (see clause 3.4)

2.4. The **full Exhibit fee** is applicable, even if the Exhibitor does not occupy the full rented space.

2.5. A second Exhibit (space and services) can be requested by the same Exhibitor, subject to availability.

INCLUDED SERVICES:

2.6. **One unit** of Exhibit space consists of:a volume with the following dimensions / boundaries: **2.0m wide x 1.6m deep x 2.1m height** (6.5 ft x 5.2 ft x 6.9 ft).

2.7. Included with one unit of Exhibit space are the following items and services:

- **A 2.0m x 0.8m** (6.5 ft x 2.6 ft) rectangular table
- **Two** chairs
- Secure locked storage room for evening hours (Studio 1)
- **Two** named Congress week passes (registered in **Auditor** category,
including two evening concert tickets for Nov. 22nd + 23rd, street value €92,-!)

2.8. With the rent of **one Half unit** of Exhibit space, the following applies:

- Exhibit space is **1.0m wide x 1.6m deep x 2.1m height**
- Includes **one-half** of an Exhibit table (**1.0m wide x 0.8m deep**)
- Includes **one** chair

- Includes one named Congress week pass (registered in **Auditor** category, **including** evening concert tickets for Nov. 22nd + 23rd, street value €46,-!)

OPTIONAL SERVICES:

2.9. The following additional optional services can be requested:

- Power supply for computers or other low-power electrical equipment: **€30,-**
- Wifi Internet connection for computers and/or sales processing equipment: **€30,-**
- Protective table cloth (mandatory, but Exhibitor may bring his own): **€10,-**
- Advertisement in the Congress Programme Booklet at **40%** discount
- Additional named Exhibitor Congress badges (available at week pass or day pass rates)

EXCLUDED SERVICES:

2.10. The following services are not available:

- Additional lighting (or darkening)
- Special ambient conditions (cooling or heating)
- Acoustic isolation or amplification
- Carpeting

3. EXHIBIT VENUE, SCHEDULE, SET-UP and DISMANTLING

3.1. The Exhibitor will be assigned an Exhibit space at either of two adjacent locations within the Primary Congress venue:

- The "Studio 1" for sound-producing exhibits (typically luthiers)
- The Main Foyer of the Theatre, for non-sounding exhibits (e.g. publishers)

3.2. Exhibit location assignments are at the discretion of the Congress Manager.

3.3. A map of the Exhibit areas and their relative locations is shown below (click to enlarge):



Map of Exhibitor Area at IVC2018

EXHIBIT SCHEDULE

3.4. Official Exhibit hours are:

11:00h – 18:00h (Nov. 20th)

09:00h – 18:00h (Nov. 21st – 23rd).

09:00h – **16:00h** (Nov. 24th)

3.5. The Exhibit must be open (operational) during all Exhibit hours, unless otherwise agreed with the Congress Manager.

3.6. At least one Exhibitor representative must be in charge of the Exhibit while open.

3.7. Exhibits must be promptly closed at the end of Exhibit hours.

SET-UP OF EXHIBITS:

3.8. As the Exhibits are considered an integral part of the Congress, all Exhibits must be set up on **Tuesday, November 20th by 11:00h** (am), unless an exception has been negotiated with the Congress Manager.

3.9. Exhibitors can begin setting up their Exhibits on Tuesday November 20th, starting at 08:30h (am).

DISMANTLING OF EXHIBITS:

3.10. Exhibits **will close at 16:00h on Saturday, November 24th.**

Exhibitors are expected to maintain their Exhibits until that time, unless an exception is negotiated with the Congress Manager.

3.11. **Exhibits must be fully dismantled, packed, and moved / shipped out of the Primary Congress venue by 17:00h on Saturday, November 24th.**

4. FURNISHING AND FACILITIES

FURNISHING

4.1. Included in the Exhibit Agreement is the provision of (part of) a table, and one or more chairs. These furniture items are mandatory, i.e. the Exhibitor is not allowed to replace them with his own furniture without prior approval by the Congress Manager.

4.2. The Exhibitor is allowed to set up additional display panels, banners etc., provided that these do not infringe upon the defined boundaries of the Exhibit space, and as long as they do not constitute a safety risk to staff, other exhibitors, or congress audience.

4.3. Exhibits must not obstruct the view of, or interfere physically with other exhibits.

4.4. Exhibits must not obstruct access to (emergency) Exits, fire stations and fire extinguishers

4.5. The Exhibitor is required to provide his own protective table cloth for the full rented surface of the table, or to rent such cloth from the IVC (see clause 2.7 above).

POWER ACCESS:

4.6.. Access to a power outlet (characteristics: 230V AC/50Hz, Type F grounded plugs) can be requested at a limited additional cost (specified in clause 2.9 above). Maximum supported power consumption is 100W, typically enough to drive one or two laptop computers, an electronic payment terminal and/or a phone charger. This service is not intended to power large electronic devices, lamps, heaters/coolers, cooking equipment, etc.

INTERNET ACCESS:

4.7. Internet access may be requested at a limited additional cost (see clause 2.9 above).

4.8. The IVC does not guarantee the Quality of Service for the internet connection. The service supports low bandwidth services only (e-mail, purchase processing etc.). High bandwidth activities such as multimedia streaming etc. are explicitly not supported.

4.9. The internet connection is a shared resource between all venue users (IVC offices, exhibitors and congress participants), and it shall be used responsibly. If Internet is used to process orders and payments, the Exhibitor must be prepared to support a backup/alternate way to process them.

STORAGE:

- 4.10. During the Congress, reasonable storage space will be provided for shipping cartons and packing materials. Where possible, such materials may be stored under the Exhibit table.
- 4.11. The Exhibitor's products and packing materials must comply with all municipal, regional, and national fire safety laws.
- 4.12. During night hours (18:00 – 09:00), the Exhibitor may leave his products and equipment in Studio 1, which will stay safely locked until the next Congress day.

5. SHIPPING, DUTIES AND TAXES

- 5.1. Exhibitors who intend to ship materials to IVC2018 will receive exact shipping information once the Exhibit Agreement has been established.
- 5.2. Shipping of Exhibit materials (to and from the Primary Congress venue) is the sole responsibility of the Exhibitor. All necessary arrangements for shipping shall be made ahead of the Congress. The IVC and Hofplein Rotterdam will not be able to assist with the shipping process in any way.
- 5.3. The IVC assumes no responsibility for goods delivered to the Primary Congress venue prior to the Congress, nor for materials remaining in or leaving the Primary Congress venue after the last day of the Congress.
- 5.4. The Exhibitor is responsible for payment of all applicable import duties for their products
- 5.5. The Exhibitor is responsible for collecting and reporting taxes for sales made during the Congress.

6. LIABILITY AND INSURANCE**CARE OF THE BUILDING:**

- 6.1. **Nothing shall be posted on, tacked, nailed, screwed or otherwise attached to the walls, floors, ceiling, or any other parts of the Congress venue building or furniture.**

6.2. Any damage charges in connection with the restoration or protection of the building, equipment, or furniture will be at the expense of the Exhibitor.

INSURANCE:

6.3. The Exhibitor shall ensure damage/accident insurance coverage for his own materials and representatives present at the IVC venues.

RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND HOLD HARMLESS AGREEMENT

6.4. Exhibitor acknowledges Exhibitor's understanding that IVC's involvement is limited to assisting the Exhibitor with respect to Exhibitor's use of the Hofplein Rotterdam facilities and presentation of Exhibitor's goods and services at IVC 2018. In consideration of IVC's and Hofplein Rotterdam's efforts in so assisting the Exhibitor, the Exhibitor, its officers, agents, employees, members, successors, and assigns, hereby releases and holds harmless the IVC and Hofplein Rotterdam, their directors, officers, members, agents, employees and volunteers from all claims, damages, liabilities, losses, and expenses (including attorney's fees), of any kind and nature whatsoever, arising from or related to Exhibitor's use of the facilities and presentation of Exhibitor's goods and services at IVC 2018.

7. EXHIBIT BOOKING, CANCELLATION, AND PAYMENT**EXHIBIT BOOKING**

7.1. An Exhibit Booking shall be requested using the on-line [IVC2018 Exhibit Booking Request Form](#). Booking Requests submitted by e-mail, telephone or other communications are not considered valid.

7.2. Upon Exhibitor's submittal of the IVC2018 Exhibit Booking Request Form, the IVC will notify the Exhibitor by e-mail within 5 working days whether or not the request has been accepted.

7.3. The confirmation of a booking request will include an invoice for the related fees (depending on the booking options selected by the Exhibitor). This invoice must be paid by the Exhibitor within 15 working days (3 calendar weeks).

7.4. When the IVC has confirmed the payment of the invoice, the Exhibit Agreement will be considered fully established. The Exhibit Agreement includes full acceptance of the mutual obligations defined in these Terms and Conditions.

7.5. In case the IVC is unable to accept and confirm the Exhibit Booking request (e.g. if spaces are already fully booked), the Exhibit Agreement will not be established.

CANCELLATION

7.6. Cancellation of a confirmed Exhibit Booking may be requested in writing by sending an e-mail to: finance.ivc2018@dutchviolasociety.nl.

7.7. When an Exhibit Booking is cancelled by the Exhibitor, he may receive full or partial refund of the fees, subject to the following conditions:

- Cancellation by October 15th, 2018: 100% refund
- Cancellation by November 15th, 2018: 50% refund
- Cancellation on after November 15th, 2018: 25% refund

7.8. In the very unlikely event that the IVC2018 itself would be cancelled, the IVC will cancel all confirmed Exhibit Bookings, and the Exhibitor will receive a 75% refund.

PAYMENT

7.9. The Amount Due for payment is indicated in the invoice issued by the IVC, upon confirmation of an Exhibit booking request.

7.10. Payments to the IVC are accepted in EURO currency only.

7.11. All payments to the IVC are free of VAT (Dutch BTW).

7.12. Payments to the IVC shall be made exclusively by **bank transfer** (*). Other forms or means of payment (e.g. Credit cards, cheques, or cash payments) are not accepted.

(* **Full bank details for the IVC are given on the IVC2018 Contact and Bank Information page. The online payment service TransferWise is recommended for international transfers from outside Europe.**

7.13. All bank transaction costs shall be covered by the Exhibitor, also in the case of refunds being paid by the IVC.

8. GENERAL REGULATIONS

8.1. The Exhibitor will not be permitted to set up his Exhibit at the Congress venue until all agreed fees have been paid.

8.2. The Exhibitor shall not reassign, sublet, or share his/her Exhibit space without written consent of the Congress Manager.

8.3. The individual Exhibitor representatives at the Congress venue are registered by the IVC as Congress Participants in the Auditor category, and must comply to the following relevant clauses of the general (link:) **Terms and Conditions for IVC2018 Participation**:

- Clause 1: Definitions
- Clause 3.6: Badges
- Clause 4: Protection and use of Data
- Clause 5: Responsibilities and Liability
- Clause 6: General Regulations

8.4. These TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR IVC2018 EXHIBITORS form an integral part of the Exhibit Agreement between the Exhibitor and IVC. The full cooperation of Exhibitors is expected in their observance.

8.5. In case of infringement of these Terms and Conditions, IVC reserves the right to revoke the Exhibit Agreement with the Exhibitor, and to deny his access to the Congress venues, without refund.

8.6. Any specific local regulations issued by Hofplein Rotterdam will become part of the Exhibit Agreement.

8.7. All points not covered herein are subject to the decision of the Congress Manager.

8.8. Place of jurisdiction for disputes concerning the Exhibit Agreement is Rotterdam, The Netherlands. The Exhibit Agreement shall be governed and construed according to Dutch laws.

C.3. Confirmation of Exhibit Booking with Invoice

On Thu, Sep 6, 2018 at 4:21 PM IVC2018 <ivc2018@dutchviolasociety.nl> wrote:

dear mr [REDACTED]

thank-you kindly for your booking request for an Exhibit at IVC2018!

We confirm that we have processed your booking and have made a reservation for an Exhibit space, which will become definite once the attached invoice has been paid.

At that time, we will also register you as participant to the congress - you will receive further information in due time. We will also be in touch about the delivery format of material for the Advertisement you have ordered.

Should you have questions about the payment, please consult our Treasurer, Anna Schenk. She can be reached through the address finance.ivc2018@dutchviolasociety.nl

Looking forward to meet you in Rotterdam in November -

kind regards,

Kristofer Skaug
IVC2018

--
International Viola Congress 2018, Rotterdam - <http://ivcrotterdam2018.nl>

Attached invoice (example):

INVOICE

45th INTERNATIONAL VIOLA CONGRESS ROTTERDAM 2018

Invoice number: IVC-Rxyz (*please include this in payment reference*)

Invoice Date: 06/09/2018

Name: <Exhibitor' Company Name>
<Exhibitor' Company Address>
<e-mail address>

Description: **IVC2018 Exhibitor Fees**
Full table: €500
Power + Internet + Table cloth: €70
½ page Advertisement: €120

Total Amount Due: **€690,- (EURO) - no VAT**

Payment due: 27/09/2018 (September 27th)

Payable to: **Stichting Dutch Viola Society**
Steegoversloot 243, 3311PN Dordrecht,
The Netherlands

Bank Account: IBAN account no.: **NL14RABO0136477445**
BIC/SWIFT code: RABONL2U

Bank's Address: Rabobank Nederland
Croeselaan 18, 3521CB Utrecht,
The Netherlands

For bank transfer from outside Europe, we warmly recommend the use of **TransferWise** – (<https://transferwise.com>). This online money transfer service lets you pay to our IBAN bank account, using your own local currency with e.g. a Credit card or a local bank transfer, but without the sometimes disproportionate international transfer and currency exchange fees applied by regular banks.

In case of questions, please contact finance.ivc2018@dutchviolasociety.nl