



## International Students' Union of Norway

# GUIDELINES

## National Assembly Task and Organizational Matters

Version: February 2009

The following informal guideline represent principles and practices that guide the International Students' Union of Norway National Board (NB) as well as hosting Local Branch (LB) on how best to meet the needs and tasks required for organising ISU National Assemblies (NA).

### *General Guidelines*

Discussions over the arrangement for the NA should be participatory and inclusive of all involved in the tasks and organizational matters, including the host LB, host academic institution, partners, chairperson, funding stakeholders and others.

### *Budget*

Have a clear overview of finances before starting to plan the assembly. Make a budget of what should be covered from which source. It is important to coordinate on this issue in advance between NB and LB;

The different suggested budget-lines should be considered – in order to cover costs for NA participants including guest speakers, partners, chairperson/s and ISU members – are:

- a) Plane, train, bus, and or boat transportation to and from the location of the NA;
- b) Airport, train station, bus stations, and or seaport transportation to and from the location of the NA;
- c) Bus, tram and or train transportation at the location of the NA;
- d) Gifts for ISU members, partners, guest speakers and others;
- e) Food and Beverages including lunches, dinners, breakfasts and coffee breaks (as per agenda);
- f) Entertainment for evenings and for half a day (if necessary and as per agenda);
- g) Accommodation for both delegates and partners;
- h) Stationary;
- i) Miscellaneous.

### *Duties*

As per negotiations between NB and LB, as well as amount of funds that are acquired for the event, the above budget-lines will be organized and funded but either the NB or LB. During the years 2008 and 2009, the NB has been mainly covering and organizing items (a), (b) and (i) and leaving the rest for the LB to manage.



### *Location*

The NA is hosted by one of the ISU Local Branches. It should be decided two NA in advance at least. If two different LB would like to host the event, then the NB would have to place several decisive factors that all LB agree upon. A deadline will have to be set where both NB and LBs will have to vote for the best host accordingly;

It is important to have a good dialog with the hosting academic institution, funding sources and contact persons.

### *Accommodation*

Accommodation needs to be reserved in advance. It should preferably be a hostel that is quite cheap, can also be a hotel, cabin or private accommodation depending on the budget and availability. Contact possible places in advance to get price suggestions. To save logistics it is practical to host all participants at the same place; however, since the cost of accommodation for delegates are covered by the budget it is worthy to consider that some observers might be cover their costs either personally or through the LB and should have the option to stay at the cheaper accommodation than the delegates.

### *Participants*

Let the branches know the time and place of the NA some months in advance. The NA budget covers full costs for two delegates from each LB. The LB can also bring observers at their own personal expense and or from funding sources: budget of the local branch, student parliament, international office and or academic institution. The LB has to negotiate with ISU members willing to attend the NA as observers. If NA is coving the costs for the observers directly it has been problematic getting the expense back from the observer. It would be easier if we charge a participation fee in advance covering food and accommodation for such observers;

NA should invite ISU partners (NSU, StL and SAIH) to attend the assembly; NA budget will cover the expenses for one representative from each of the partners;

Set a deadline for participants to register for the NA, preferably two months in advance. Important to inform partners and LB about registration in advance, especially when the NA is not hosted in Oslo, as tickets to locations outside Oslo are more expensive and can be sold out if the participants register late.

The NA needs a chairman. It should be a person that has been a chairman before and that is not currently involved with ISU.

### *Travel*

According to the ISU Resolution (April 2008), it is advisable to ravel by land to reduce environmental costs. It is fair to say that ISU will only cover the cheapest option, so sleeping cabin on the train is only sponsored if the budget allows it;



It is advisable to contact each delegate directly and consult with them plane/train ticket options available. A verbal confirmation is required in case the written confirmation could not be possible before the deadline;

Correct names of participants should be available before purchasing tickets. Normally low-price tickets are non-refundable, so caution is required as well as double checking of names and dates etc when buying from the internet;

Receipts should be printed for the record and for the participants;

All participants have to confirm that they have received their tickets (electronically or hardcopy).

### ***Other Transportation***

Cost of travelling to and from each LB to the host NA venue meeting include train, bus, taxi and other means of transportation. Delegates should make sure they keep the receipts of such expenses with them;

Some host locations have accommodation, meeting venue/s, entertainment and food venue/s far from each other. A daily pass or enough tickets should be available for each participant and handed to him or her as they arrive to the NA. This would save a lot of work to recollect the tickets and repay each participant individually. That has been problematic in the past;

An envelope with return address and stamp should be available for each participant so that he or she can place all the tickets that are not available for them at the start of the NA and that they have covered from their own pocket. The envelopes with tickets and proper receipts relevant to the cost endured should be sent (to either hosting LB or NB) before a certain deadline. Late refund request should not be tolerated;

It would be ideal if each LB covers such costs but in the light of lack of funds the NA budget has been covering such minor costs.

### ***Meeting Venue***

A meeting venue that accommodates the number of participants registered for the NA as well as *ad hoc* observers from partners, academic institutions and students should be considered. A semi-circle lecture hall with a sloping gallery of seats is most desirable for hosting the large number of participants and for making the work of the chairperson and or moderators easier;

The venue should be easily accessible for the participants and especially late ones. Directions towards the meeting venue should be available as well as internet wire access (if possible).

### ***Food and Beverages***

All participants need to register diet restrictions when registering for the NA;

Recommended to contact all available catering, restaurants, cantinas etc at the location of the NA well in advance. Prices can be negotiated as you will order for several venues and many people;

The best option is to order breakfasts, lunches and break snack from the same place. If you have time and volunteers you can also save money buying breakfast from the supermarket and



prepare together in the morning, for this you will need a kitchen with fridge and groups responsible for cooking and cleaning;

Make sure to have food for people with special diet restrictions marked and separated so other people won't eat them;

So far, all recent NAs have included lunch and dinner on Friday, breakfast, lunch and dinner on Saturday and breakfast and lunch on Sunday. There should also be coffee/tea and snack available during breaks as people tend to be hungrier than normal during these kinds of events.

### ***Agenda***

The agenda should be made in advance and sent to the participants, chairperson, partners and other relevant stakeholders for information and comments;

If you have guest speakers for the NA, they have to be organized in the agenda according to their availability;

Some activities are compulsory for all NAs and more information on this is available by comparing previous NA agendas;

Heavy activities should be kept in the morning when people are more concentrated, in the period between lunch and dinner is more difficult to have activities that are passive or requires much concentration. Hence, workshops, group work etc should be scheduled after lunch;

The dinners on Friday and Saturday can with success be organized as social events and during breaks an opportunity to go outside for five minutes to stretch or play a game must be available.

### ***Maps and information***

It is important to provide all participants of the NA with maps, direction tips, contact numbers and relevant information beforehand about the location of the meeting venue/s, accommodation, entertainment and eating venue/s.

### ***Stationary***

For each participant a folder must be provided with all documents that will be discussed during the NA, all above maps and information as well as delegate or observer cards (needed for voting and or for signaling to the chairperson that he or she would like to speak);

Important information about the agenda, venue/s and other relevant information must be given to participants upon arrival;

It is advisable to have volunteers from the LB to help out during the NA for different tasks and or *ad hoc* tasks: for instance accommodating enough food for participants in case the amount requested from the catering company was not enough. Access to computers, internet, electricity etc has to be cleared in advance.