

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR THE JOINT
27TH INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES RESEARCH &
28TH WORLD IUSTI
CONGRESS**

The International Society for Sexually Transmitted Diseases Research (ISSTDR) and the International Union against STI (IUSTI) solicit proposals by qualified investigators to conduct ISSTDR's 27th biennial meeting in conjunction with the 26th World IUSTI meeting in 2027. It has been decided by the Board of ISSTDR and the Executive Committee of IUSTI that this conference will be planned as a joint conference of both organizations as the conferences in London 2009, Quebec 2011, Vienna 2013, Brisbane 2015, Rio de Janeiro 2017, Vancouver 2019, Amsterdam 2021, Chicago 2023, and the planned conference in Montreal 2025.

KEY DATES

- 15 May 2023** Application deadline
- 1 June 2023** Selection and notification of finalist applicants. Finalist should plan to attend the 2023 meeting in order to present their final bid.
- 23 July 2023** ISSTDR Board meeting, oral presentations, announcement of results

INTRODUCTION

The ISSTDR, founded in 1977, organizes biennial, interdisciplinary scientific meetings at venues that historically have alternated between Europe and North America, and have recently been extended to other continents. The ISSTDR meetings have emerged as the world's premier scientific conferences on STIs and their health consequences for populations around the globe. The IUSTI was founded in 1923 and is organized on both a global and regional basis. It is the oldest international organization with the objective of fostering international cooperation in the control of sexually transmitted infections including HIV/AIDS.

The Congress addresses the breadth of STI research, including the intersection between HIV/AIDS and other STIs, and encompass microbiology, virology, immunobiology, pathogenesis, and other basic sciences; clinical sciences, social and behavioral sciences, epidemiology, and prevention; and research in health services, public health, and prevention policy. The Congresses are global in scope and are designed to meet the needs of scientists, trainees and students from academia, public health agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and other institutions and agencies. Expanded information about the two organizations is available at www.isstdr.org and www.iusti.org. Information on the 2023 meeting is available at <https://stihiv2023.org/>.

ISSTDR MEETINGS

Leadership. Application of an investigator to chair an ISSTDR meeting constitutes nomination and willingness to serve as the Society's President after the conference. However, the Board plays a role

in selecting the President-elect. The person chosen to serve in this capacity assumes the role of Board member upon selection of the venue, moves into the role of President-elect at the meeting prior to the meeting they will host, and assumes the Presidency at the completion of the meeting that they were selected to host.

Organization. The meeting chair and their local organizing team assume all responsibility to plan and conduct the meeting. They are also responsible for fundraising and for the financial soundness of the congress. However, the ISSTDR Foundation, a sister organization established to financially support the organization of the ISSTDR meetings, will provide start-up funds to the conference organizers if needed. For combined meetings the IUSTI may also provide start-up funds. These start-up funds are to be returned after the Congress. A guide to IUSTI's expectations regarding World Congresses is stated in a procedural document available at http://www.iusti.org/about/statutes/pdf/IUSTI_Procedures.pdf although it should be noted that there is room for negotiation in the case of joint ISSTDR-IUSTI meetings.

Scientific Content. The ISSTDR meetings emphasize research presentations in both oral and poster format, selected from competitively submitted abstracts. Research presentations are supplemented by topical symposia and plenary/keynote presentations by invited speakers. Additional symposia, sponsored by commercial supporters or consortia of scientists with special interests related to STD/HIV, also have been appended to recent meetings. Expanded information about recent meetings is available on the website of ISSTDR, including the programme and abstracts since the 15th meeting.

Venue. The ISSTDR meetings are held biennially in odd-numbered years and consecutive meetings ideally are held on separate continents. Organizations bidding for the Congress must be able to demonstrate that they are able to provide world class conference facilities and a strong and active local professional society.

Scale. The last several ISSTDR meetings have attracted between 1,000 to 1,400 attendees from up to 108 countries, with approximately 700-1,300 submitted research abstracts. The meeting typically commences on a Sunday evening with a keynote address and welcome reception, followed by the main meeting content which occurs over the following 3 days (Monday – Wednesday). Several organizations normally host satellite workshops and symposia in the 1-2 days leading up to the main Congress. The starting day of the Congress may be shifted if necessary in order to secure an appropriate venue.

Social Programme. Traditional social events have included an opening reception for all registrants, typically following an afternoon or evening opening ceremony; the Presidents' dinner for ISSTDR and IUSTI World Board members and other dignitaries; a speaker's dinner for meeting organizers and invited speakers; and a main Congress banquet to which all registrants are invited. The American Sexually Transmitted Diseases Association (ASTDA) traditionally hosts an annual awards luncheon,

to which all ISSTDR conference registrants are invited. The organizers of each ISSTDR meeting have considerable latitude in designing attendant social programmes.

Specific financial issues. The ISSTDR Foundation has no-liability for a failed conference. The Chair of the Congress conference must present a formal budget and enter into an agreement with the ISSTDR Foundation and IUSTI. The Chair must agree a sum with the ISSTDR Foundation to kick-start the conference and agree to the amount to be returned to the Foundation following the meeting. The Chair of the Congress can approach IUSTI and/or the ISSTDR Foundation in case of financial difficulty due to no fault of his/her organization or planning.

The minimum amount of the starting funds will be 25,000 Euros by the ISSTDR Foundation and 15,000 British pounds by IUSTI. Any profit from the Congress will be shared by the ISSTDR Foundation, the IUSTI, and the host organization according to a formula that will be mutually agreed prior to the Congress. The process for the organization of future joint meetings is under discussion with both ISSTDR, ISSTDR Foundation and IUSTI and is evolving. In addition, IUSTI full members expect to receive a discounted registration fee; in the event that ISSTDR offers a similar paid membership option at the time of future Congresses, including the 2023 meeting, ISSTDR full members should also be granted a discounted registration fee. The concepts discussed in this paragraph are open to further discussions and may be modified.

PROPOSAL

Criteria for Selection. Formal criteria have not been defined for acceptance of a proposal, nor is there a quantitative scoring system. However, applications should address several major and secondary criteria for the Board's consideration.

Major Criteria

- STI-related scientific expertise of the chair and the local organizing team
- A history of involvement with ISSTDR as a board member, symposium organizer or attendee.
- Experience and expertise in organizing scientific meetings
- Experience and promise in raising external funds in support of the meeting
- Letters of support from the relevant IUSTI Regional Director; an ISSTDR Board member; local agencies needed to support the Congress should be considered for inclusion as part of the application package. A letter of support from the entity with ultimate financial responsibility should be provided.

Secondary Criteria

- Geographic considerations (country, city, climate, etc.)
- Proposed timing of the meeting
- Travel considerations (transportation links, visas, etc.)
- Facilities (meeting venue, hotels, etc.)
- Proposed social program

Format. Using a minimum 11 point font, the body of the text of the proposal must be a maximum of 5 pages (A4 or 8.5 x 11”), plus a maximum of 3 figures and/or tables. These limits are exclusive of cover letter, letters of support, appendices, and other supporting materials. A tentative budget to demonstrate familiarity with the potential costs of the Congress and possible funding mechanisms should be submitted. It is not necessary to submit extended (multiple page) promotional materials provided by cities’ visitors bureaus, conference centers, and similar materials. All elements of the application must be submitted electronically, using standard, readily available formats (e.g., Word®, Excel®, pdf, jpg, etc.). Applications should be sent by e-mail to the current ISSTDR Secretary, Caroline Cameron at caroc@uvic.ca.

Deadline. Applications must be received electronically no later than 15 May 2023. The current ISSTDR Secretary (Caroline Cameron, caroc@uvic.ca) and the current ISSTDR President (Barbara Van Der Pol, bvanderpol@uabmc.edu) can also be contacted prior to this date for discussions with interested applicants. Please use the following text in the subject line “2027 ISSTDR Congress”.

SELECTION PROCESS

Selection of Finalist Candidates. Selected members of the ISSTDR Board will screen applications and select a limited number of applications (probably 2-4) as final proposals. All applicants will be notified no later than by 1 June 2023 whether or not they were selected as finalists.

Final Selection. Finalist applicants will be invited to describe their proposals in 20-30 minute presentations during the meeting of the ISSTDR Board, in the co-presence of a selected number of IUSTI Officer-Bearers, to be held in Chicago on 23 July 2023, in conjunction with the 25th ISSTDR Congress. Final selection of the Chair of the 2027 Congress and the future ISSTDR President will be announced during the 25rd ISSTDR Congress Closing Ceremony.

Barbara Van Der Pol
ISSTDR President
Chair of the STI & HIV 2023 World Congress
Chicago, <https://stihiv2023.org/>.

On behalf of the Board of ISSTDR
www.isstdr.org

In cooperation with IUSTI World
www.iusti.org