SOCIETY POLICY

BUSINESS PRACTICES OF CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

I. DEFINITIONS FOR THIS SOCIETY POLICY

A. The term "Event" shall mean a Society Unit’s meetings primarily focused on exchanging technical information, such as technical conferences or seminars, technical workshops and/or expositions, conducted at a site or electronically, and operated from or with a custodian fund. The Event Chair has the financial responsibility for the Event.

B. The term “Society Unit” shall mean chartered business units of the Society including Sector Boards on Technical Communities, Technical Divisions, Institutes, and their subunits.

C. The term “Event Agreement” shall mean a contract relating to an Event.

D. The term “SMC” shall mean the Sector Management Committee of ASME.

E. The term “EC” shall mean the Events Committee.

II. PREFACE

A. Article C2.1.1 states in part, "The purposes of this Society are to: Promote the art, science and practice of mechanical and multidisciplinary engineering and allied sciences...."

B. By-Law B2.1 states in part, "To promote the art, science and practice of mechanical and multidisciplinary engineering and allied sciences to diverse communities throughout the world the Society shall:....Encourage the preparation of original papers on engineering topics. Hold meetings for the presentation and discussion of original papers and participate in international engineering congresses....."

C. Article C6.1.1 states, “Society-Wide Meetings of the Society shall be held at such time and place as the Board of Governors shall designate.”

D. Article C6.1.2 states, “General Meetings of the Society which are primarily for the presentation and discussion of technical papers shall be under the direction of the Board of Directors of one or more of the sectors as appropriate.”
E. By-Law B4.4.8 states, "Any contract or other obligation to pay money in the work of the Society shall be valid only when signed by the Executive Director, the Assistant Treasurer or, the Second Assistant Treasurer."

F. Article C5.1.1 states, "The Society membership may be divided into smaller units for administrative and technical activities."

G. Article C5.1.2 states, "The provisions of the Constitution and By-Laws and Society Policies established by the Board of Governors of the Society shall govern the procedure of all units of the Society but no action or obligation of such units shall be considered an action or obligation of the Society as a whole."

H. By-Law B5.1.3 states, "The primary role of volunteer members of boards and committees will be to determine policies, develop programs, conduct studies, prepare reports, and advise the sector to which that board or committee reports on matters pertaining to specific assignments."

I. By-Law B5.1.4 states, "The primary role of staff assigned to boards and committees is to implement actions that are required to meet the objectives of the board or committee on a continuing basis. Working under broad lines of policy established by the board or committee, the staff will initiate programs, actively engage in the work, and make operating decisions necessary to carry forward the programs in a dynamic and efficient manner."

J. By-Law B4.4.1 states, "All funds received shall be directed to the office of the Assistant Treasurer for proper recording and deposit in authorized bank accounts."

K. Events of the Society are held to provide an appropriate forum for the exchange of technical information - both in person and through electronic means. The Conferences normally consist of formal presentations, panel sessions, technical paper sessions, and poster sessions, as well as other types of group discussions, and sometimes include related committee administrative functions. Expositions are an addition to a conference for the purpose of enhancing technology transfer.

III. PURPOSE

A. To state the ASME policy for all Events operated from or with a custodian fund.

B. To provide the legal, administrative and financial guidelines and procedures to be followed for Events.

IV. POLICY

A. The policy of ASME is to encourage efforts of its Society Units and their cooperation with other recognized, technical organizations in events of interest to ASME members that serve to promote the art, science, and practice of mechanical and multidisciplinary engineering and allied sciences. ASME may also conduct Events in association with governments, international trade associations, or commercial firms.
B. The Society may conduct, permit, or participate in Events and other similar activities that are of pertinent professional interest, are a benefit to the attendees and enrich the experience of the technical community. The technical community includes industry, academia, government, and the broader society.

C. It is the policy of ASME that no member of an Event organizing committee, organizing technical committee(s), or Society Unit(s) shall have a conflict of interest relative to the awarding of contracts relating to an Event. (See, Society Policy P-15.8 Conflict of Interest.)

D. In conducting, permitting, or participating in an Event, the Society shall require high ethical standards of its members and shall not permit practices to be conducted that are inimical or contrary to the aims and objectives of the Society. In situations where a member of an Event organizing committee is an ASME member and a member of another recognized technical organization co-sponsoring the Event, such conduct shall include, but not be limited to, disclosing such dual membership as well as any other potential conflict of interest to the relevant sector board and ASME legal staff.

E. The Society shall conduct or permit an exposition, or allow similar activity, only in conjunction with a meeting or conference conducted or co-sponsored by the Society.

F. Society conduct of, or participation in, expositions or other similar activities shall be subject to approval of the Board of the appropriate sector upon recommendation of the appropriate governing board, committee or other body.

G. Major new Events seeking development funds shall require Society Unit sponsorship and the appropriate Sector Board approval. The new Event request should identify a Society Unit partner or combination of Society Units (e.g., Technical Communities and Institutes Sector). The new Event request should also include a plan to transfer responsibility for the Event to that Society Unit partner or combination of Society Units.

H. All expositions sponsored or co-sponsored by ASME or a Society Unit shall be conducted in a manner consistent with ASME’s 501(c)(3) tax status.

I. ASME shall enter into contracts only with entities that have legal capacity to contract. Contracts with sectors, institutes, divisions or subdivisions of other entities with no independent legal existence are prohibited.

J. Society Units shall not commit funds in connection with an Event until a binding contract has been executed by the Executive Director, Assistant Treasurer or, if appointed, a Second Assistant Treasurer.

K. Events shall reasonably accommodate individuals with disabilities. Specific attention shall be paid to physical access to meetings, presentations, and other key elements of these events. Smoking is not permitted in meeting or function rooms of ASME events.
L. The Event organizers shall ensure that the conduct of the Event complies with United States law as well as the law of the site of the event.

V. CLASSIFICATION OF EVENTS

A. Events shall be classified as follows:

1. ASME Sponsorship

   The classification “ASME Sponsorship” shall apply when the Event is organized solely by ASME or a Society Unit, and ASME will receive all of the revenue and bear all of the financial liability related to the Event. Society units shall take reasonable steps to maintain ASME ownership of Events.

2. ASME Co-Sponsorship

   The classification ASME Co-Sponsorship shall apply when:

   a. The Event is organized by ASME or a Society Unit and one or more organizations and ASME will receive a share of the revenue or will bear a share of the financial responsibility and/or liability with the other organizations or

   b. ASME or a Society Unit is identified in the Event title or an ASME mark or logo is used.

   In all cases when an Event is classified as a “Co-Sponsorship” the procedures described in section VIII shall apply. (A model “ASME Co-Sponsorship” letter of intent shall be maintained on the ASME website.)

3. ASME Participation

   a. The classification of ASME Participation shall apply when an ASME Society Unit actively participates in an Event to the extent of organizing sessions or reviewing of papers, ASME is not identified in the title or advertisement of the Event in any manner, and ASME bears no financial responsibility for the Event.

   b. The Event must be conducted in a manner consistent with ASME sponsored events.

   c. In cases where an Event is classified as an “ASME Participation” the Society or Society Unit shall receive a full written indemnification from all Event sponsors and be named as an additional insured on the Event insurance policies. Any request for exceptions to this policy must be submitted to ASME Finance and must be accompanied by a full written explanation of the reasons for the requested exception. When an Event is classified as an “ASME Participation” the procedures described in section VII, infra, shall apply. (A model “ASME Participation” letter of intent shall be maintained on the ASME website.)
d. Nothing in this section of this policy should be read as precluding ASME members from participating as individuals in Events organized by other organizations, however reasonable steps should be taken to ensure that third parties are not led to believe that such participation is on behalf of ASME. If ASME members wish to individually participate in an Event, those members shall not collectively identify themselves as constituting a Society Unit. In addition, those members shall not employ the resources of the Society or a Society Unit when participating as individuals.

VI. BUSINESS PLANS AND BUDGETS

A. A business plan and budget is a prerequisite for Event approval. A business plan and budget shall be developed for an ASME Sponsored or Co-sponsored Event by the Society Unit(s) sponsoring or co-sponsoring the Event, and submitted to the EC for approval. The budget must first be approved by a representative of the Society Unit sponsoring or co-sponsoring the Event. Attendance estimates used in preparing the Event budget shall be realistic, based on prior experience of this and related events, and shall include consideration of current and anticipated economic conditions.

B. A Business Plan shall:

1. Discuss the business opportunities and Event scope. This includes breadth of topic and intended audience.

2. Identify the organizers and their experience in event planning, describe the participation of volunteers and ASME staff, describe the implementation of best practices, identify any prominent invited speakers, and describe the number of expected sessions to be held.

3. Identify the Society Units and outside organizations that will participate in technical planning.

4. If publications are planned, identify the form of publication of proceedings and any needed services to be supplied by ASME Publications.

5. Describe plans for paper review and other steps to assure high technical quality.

6. Describe plans for the expected means of Event promotion and advertisements.

7. The business plan template shall be maintained on the ASME website.

C. The budget shall include all expenses requiring payment for services for which disbursements are required. The budget shall include an estimate of salaries plus benefits, travel, and overhead for ASME staff supporting the Event. The cost of third party organizers, if any, shall also be included.
D. ASME internal services shall have the option to bid on all Events. In all cases where ASME internal services are not employed, competitive bidding procedures shall be used. A minimum of three external bid solicitations shall be employed by the Event organizers unless impracticable under the circumstances. If competitive bidding is not expected, the Event Chair is required to provide a written justification and seek approval in writing from the EC and ASME Legal Staff.

E. All analyses of prior Events used for budgeting purposes must employ a consistent means of comparison with respect to each budget analyzed.

F. All Event budgets shall be set to generate a minimum surplus (net above cost) of 15% over all budgeted expenses to ensure sustainable operation of the Unit. Exceptions to this policy will require prior approval of the Sector Board responsible for the Society Unit.

G. The EC shall receive reasonable funding from the ASME General Fund to support its activities. The EC shall submit an annual budget to the Committee on Finance and Investment (COFI) for approval.

H. All budgets for Events to be held outside of the United States shall address the laws of the location of the Event including, but not limited to, value added and other taxes, visa requirements, and any other local circumstances that could impact revenue or expenses.

I. During the course of Event planning, if substantial financial changes are made to the originally submitted budget, a revised budget shall be submitted to the EC for approval.

J. No member of the Event organizing board or Event organizing committee, their immediate family, employer or business he or she is closely associated with, shall receive compensation, monetary or otherwise, for services rendered in relation to an Event. This does not include awards or other honoraria that may be granted pursuant to ASME Awards policies or procedures. Immediate family shall mean spouse, domestic partner, brother, sister, children, ancestors as well as brothers, sisters, children, and ancestors of spouses or domestic partners.

K. Event registration fees shall be structured to reflect projected market conditions, in accordance with the specifications in the appropriate Sector Operation Guides. Where an Event and exposition are held jointly, the Event and exposition may be considered jointly for the purposes of determining whether the Event is self-supporting. However, expenses should be budgeted separately for accountability. For ASME Sponsored and Co-sponsored Events, the following rates for payment of Event registration fees shall apply:

1. Only Honorary ASME Members, ASME Life members, ASME Past Presidents, host district leaders, and distinguished guests invited by the President or his designated representative, with the concurrence of the Event Chair, shall be exempt from Event registration fees.

2. Approved invited speakers and guests may be considered distinguished guests, and may be exempted from Event registration fees, in accordance
with the business plan and the budget for the conference at the discretion of the Event Chair.

3. Authors, presenters, session chairs, session vice chairs, and invited discussion participants shall be charged registration fees at the ASME member rates.

4. Members of reciprocating societies shall be charged at the ASME member rates.

5. Students and/or ASME Early Career members (0-10 years out from undergraduate graduation) may be charged a registration fee that represents a discount from member rates.

6. Whether those attending special functions only will be charged a registration fee shall be addressed in the Event business plan and reflected in the budget. If a registration fee is charged, it may be less than the full Event registration fee.

7. Whether those attending committee meetings only will be charged a registration fee shall be addressed in the Event business plan and reflected in the budget. If a registration fee is charged, it may be less than the full Event registration fee.

8. If a non-ASME member or non-ASME student member registers at an ASME Event and pays the non-member or student non-member rate, they will be eligible to receive a one-year ASME membership at no additional charge. The non-member shall complete a membership application and submit it within 90 days of the Event in order to receive this benefit.

9. If the Event registration fees are not waived, the registration fees for an ASME Life Member may be reduced at the discretion of Event organizers. If an ASME Life Member is making a technical presentation, such member shall pay the Member Author Presenter registration fee.

10. If the Event registration fees are not waived, the registration for an ASME Honorary Member may be reduced at the discretion of conference organizers. If the ASME Honorary Member is making a technical presentation, such member shall pay the Member Author Presenter registration fee.

11. The Event Chair may establish a registration fee waiver policy consistent with the business plan and the budget for the Event.

L. The budget shall identify the expected means of Event promotion, advertising and signage and shall describe in detail:

1. The proposed advertising, mailings, posters, in technical publications or journals and other promotions of the Event. All advertising and signage shall be of ASME quality and shall be consistent with ASME format as defined by the Technical Event and Conference Planning Guidelines. ASME Events
2. The cost of all advertising, mailings, posters, in technical publications or journals and other promotions of the Event.

M. No member of an Event Committee or Board shall have a conflict of interest relative to the award of contracts related to an Event.

N. Society Units shall have the authority to enter into non-binding letters of intent with other sponsors of Events.

O. Society Units shall not have the authority to negotiate contracts with other sponsors of Events.

P. Where a third party is employed to organize the Event, responsibility for assurance that Event logistics are performed in accordance with ASME policy shall be borne by the Event Chair. This includes responsibility to assure that all advertising and signage are consistent with this policy and that the ASME name and logo are prominently displayed in Event advertising, signage, and literature. Such standards shall be defined in the EC’s “Technical Events and Conference Planning Guidelines”. Guidance may be obtained from the EC and The ASME Events Staff.

VII. APPROVAL

A. Make-up and Duties of the EC:

1. The Events Committee shall report to the Sector Management Committee and shall inform the Committee on Finance and Investment of its major decisions.

2. The EC shall be comprised of five (5) members, one from each Sector, as appointed by their respective Senior Vice Presidents. Such sector representatives shall participate actively in reviewing and approving all proposed Events. Additionally, the EC may add non-voting advisors who have expertise in organizing technical conferences and related events. Collectively, members shall have familiarity with the ASME Conference Calendar and with the broad set of technical conferences in which ASME participates.

3. The duties of this committee shall include: approving Events, soliciting and collecting post-Event reports, maintaining a database, capturing relevant historical data from past Events, and working with the Events Management Department in maintaining the ASME Conference calendar. This committee may, at its discretion, aid Event organizers in writing business plans and budgets and provide assistance in Event planning.

4. The EC shall take reasonable steps to insure consistency and avoid topical and scheduling conflicts within ASME’s portfolio of technical conferences.
5. The EC shall provide a quarterly report in writing to the Sector Management Committee (SMC) and the Committee on Finance and Investment (COFI) summarizing the EC’s activity during that quarter.

B. All Events with an expected gross revenue greater than or equal to $50,000 shall follow the procedures established by the EC and must be approved by the EC.

C. Events with actual or budgeted gross income of less than $50,000 shall be considered in accordance with the policies of the respective sector board.

D. Approval shall be based on submitted appropriate sector event approval request documents. A decision will be sent to the applicant within sixty days.

E. The criteria for approval shall include, but are not limited to:

1. Whether the proposed Event furthers the mission of ASME. This factor shall include, but not be limited to, likely technical quality, the likelihood that ASME will achieve or maintain prominence in the field, and synergy with other ASME activities.

2. Whether the proposed Event presents any financial and or liability risk to the Society.

3. Whether there is a conflict with other Events dealing with similar subject matter and whether an appropriate collaborative plan has been worked out among such Event organizers. In the event of an otherwise unresolved conflict, priority shall be given to Events of longer standing. The dates solicited shall not hinder the success of the Event nor inflict unnecessary cost.

4. Whether the location of the Event has been selected so as to maximize the success of the Event. Success factors shall include: (a) the proximity of local industry with an interest in the Event; (b) perception of attractiveness by potential attendees; (c) transportation and ease of accessibility in relation to the anticipated audience and (d) past history of success by prior Event organizers.

5. Whether ASME is to receive the copyright and publishing rights to any papers presented at the Event.

6. In the case of a Co-Sponsorship, whether ASME will conduct the peer-review of any papers. If ASME is not to conduct the peer-review, whether a credible peer-review process has been established.

7. Whether the Event has followed a fair, open and acceptable bidding process and whether any third party organizers will meet ASME quality standards.

8. The viability of the Event in the long-term.
9. In the case of an ASME Co-Sponsorship or ASME Participation, the distribution of financial and other risk between the parties.

10. The distribution between the sponsors of any surplus or loss relating to the Event.

11. The timeliness of the submission of the Event budget and business plan.


13. In the case of an ASME Participation, whether a full contractual indemnification and insurance have been obtained.

14. Past compliance with the audit procedures set forth in Section IX of this policy.

15. For established Events: (1) the ratio of accepted abstracts to rejected abstracts; (2) the ratio of no-show paid registrants to actual attendees; (3) the ratio of rejected papers to accepted papers; and (4) the ratio of submitted abstracts for paper presentation converted to presentation format. This information should address the prior two Events, if any. Historical information on the percent of papers recommended and/or appearing in archival journals, if available, shall also be included.

16. In the event that a proposed Event is not approved by the EC, the Event organizers shall be permitted to appeal the decision to the SMC. Any appeal shall be submitted to the SMC and EC in writing and shall set forth all facts supporting noncompliance with this policy. Noncompliance by the EC with this policy shall be the only ground for appeal.

VIII. LEGAL PROCEDURES

A. Any and all agreements or understandings relating to an Event that impose a duty upon ASME or a Society Unit shall be in writing and signed by all parties to the agreement. ASME signatories include the Executive Director, the Assistant Treasurer or, the Second Assistant Treasurer.

B. In all instances where ASME is not the sole sponsor, the Society or Society Unit shall negotiate with each and every sponsor a non-binding letter of intent setting forth the general terms relating to an Event.

C. The letter of intent shall include the following information: the identification of the subject matter of the conference, the proposed venue, the dates of the Event, the party or parties responsible for the technical content of the program (including peer review), the party responsible for on-site conference arrangements, general financial terms including the distribution of surplus/loss between the parties and the term of the proposed agreement.
D. The executed letter of intent shall be submitted with the appropriate sector event approval request documents to the EC. A copy of the executed letter of intent shall also be contemporarily submitted to ASME Legal.

E. Upon receipt of the executed letter of intent from the Society Unit, ASME staff shall, with the assistance of ASME Legal as necessary, negotiate contract terms and conditions with the parties identified in the letter of intent.

F. Once terms and conditions acceptable to ASME have been negotiated and the Event has received formal approval, the Executive Director, or Assistant Treasurer or, if appointed, the Second Assistant Treasurer shall execute an Event Agreement.

IX. AUDIT AND EVENT FINANCIAL REPORTS

A. Audits

1. All audits prescribed in this policy shall be conducted under the auspices of the ASME Audit Committee, a Standing Committee of the Committee on Finance and Investment.

2. Events where ASME has greater than a 50% financial responsibility and where actual or budgeted income or expense is $500,000 or more shall be audited by a professional independent auditor. The completed audit shall be submitted to the Event Chair and ASME Assistant Treasurer.

3. Events where the actual or budgeted income or expense is less than $500,000 will be audited on a periodic basis. Any Events not selected for a random audit may be audited by a committee composed of individuals who have no direct or indirect responsibility for the financial transactions of the Event. Any completed audit shall be submitted to the Event Chair and the ASME Assistant Treasurer.

4. The Event Chair and ASME Assistant Treasurer shall jointly obtain an estimate of the audit fees for Events where ASME has greater than a 50% financial responsibility and where actual or budgeted income or expense is $500,000 or more which shall be incorporated in the Event budget and reported as a separate line item on Event financial report forms.

B. Event Financial Reports

1. For all Events, the Event Chair shall be responsible for the preparation of a detailed financial report for the Event, showing all relevant items of revenue and expense as well as an accounting for final disposition of any remaining funds. Unless a final financial Event report for a preceding conference is submitted, no proposals for that future Event will be approved.

2. For Events managed by ASME Events Management, the Event Chair and the ASME Director of Events shall ensure that preferably within three months, but no later than six months after the Event date: (1) the Event bank account is closed; (2) any remaining funds in any Event bank account
are distributed; (3) any funds advanced by ASME or a Co-Sponsoring party are repaid; (4) the final detailed financial report has been completed and delivered to ASME Finance; and if required, (5) an audit of the Event financial activities is completed. Failure to meet the foregoing milestones shall be considered, and may be a basis for disapproval of future related Events.

3. For Events managed by third parties, the Event Chair shall ensure that preferably within three months but no later than six months after the Event date: (1) the Event bank account is closed; (2) any remaining funds in the Event bank account are distributed; (3) any funds advanced by ASME or a Co-Sponsoring party are repaid; (4) the final detailed financial report has been completed and delivered to ASME Finance; and if required, (5) an audit of the Event financial activities is completed. Failure to meet the foregoing milestones shall be considered, and may be a basis for disapproval of future related Events.

C. Post-Event Reports. Within three months after the event, the sponsoring unit will provide the EC with a report discussing the success of the Event relative to the business plan. This includes attendance of each category of attendee, number of sessions held, average session attendance, number of papers submitted, number of papers accepted, and number of technical presentations.

X. PUBLICATIONS

A. Event papers may be published as symposia volumes, workshop volumes, proceedings or individual technical papers. (See Policy P-12.6, P-12.11 and P-12.13)

B. When an Event is an ASME Sponsorship, ASME shall receive the copyright and shall be the publisher of all papers presented at the Event.

C. When an Event is an ASME Co-Sponsorship and ASME issues the “call for papers” or is responsible for the peer-review of the majority of papers presented at the Event, ASME shall receive a copyright and shall be the publisher of the papers presented at the Event. The conference organizers in the course of negotiating the letter of intent may include a royalty payable to other entities involved in the event that conduct peer review of the minority of the papers presented at the event. Such royalty shall not exceed the percentage of papers peer reviewed by the other entity. ASME Publications may, at its discretion, grant a license to copyrighted materials.

D. No papers submitted in connection with an Event shall be published in the final archival proceedings unless at least one author presents the paper at the Event. For purposes of this policy, the final archival proceedings shall be the version registered with the Library of Congress and available from ASME Publications.

XI. INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPATION

A. ASME is committed to the principle of participation of citizens of all nations at Events.
B. Where ASME sponsors, co-sponsors, or participates in a conference, the host organization shall be committed to securing freedom of citizens of all nations, irrespective of race, creed, color or religion, to enter or leave the host country for the purpose of attending such an Event.

C. The host organization shall make every effort to comply with this ASME policy unless such compliances are in direct conflict with the laws, regulations or stated government policies in the host country. ASME may decline to participate in international Events where it considers such restrictions to be too inhibiting.

XII. SENIOR GOVERNMENT SPEAKERS

Periodically, Event leaders wish to invite high level government officials to speak at Events. The appropriate staff support shall be consulted prior to issuing invitations to senior government officials. ASME’s Government Relations staff shall be consulted prior to issuing invitations to senior United States government officials such as the President of the United States, Vice President, Cabinet members, Federal department and agency heads, and members of Congress. Letters of invitation will be issued by the ASME President or Executive Director as appropriate. Any additional costs for security, accommodations, etc., shall be included in the Event budget.

XIII. APPLICATIONS AND REVISIONS

A. Written Event and publication contracts currently being performed shall not be subject to this publication policy during the term of such contracts. All future negotiated and/or renewed publishing contracts and Event Agreements shall be subject to this policy. Publishing contracts and Event Agreements shall not be renewed unless made compliant with this policy.

B. This policy shall be examined by an ASME Presidential Task Force every six years from the most recent revision or reaffirmation. The Task Force shall review the policy according to guidelines prepared by the Committee on Organization and Rules, and shall make a recommendation to reaffirm it unchanged, revise and reaffirm it, or eliminate it. (See Policy P-1.1)

Responsibility: Board of Governors


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