Moving Anthropology Student Network

MASN Conference Organising Guide

Dear organising groups of the future Moving Anthropology Student Network conference, the following lines shall be an aid for the organisation of the future transnational MASN conferences. This guide may prevent you from making mistakes, which previous organising groups had to succumb! Further, and hopefully, this paper may be adjusted and complemented by many future organisers!

Before the conference

- Form a **reliable team** (you may check if your organising activities can be implemented in a creditable internship) It's important to have at least two people, who seriously want to realize the conference, who keep an overview and support the project through out the organizing and post production process.
  → don't forget to take here and then some time for informal gatherings to strengthen the group's dynamic and atmosphere during the whole and long conference organising phase
  → work towards a shared vision – maybe definable through a dragon dreaming session at the beginning of the organising process
  → have weekly plenary meetings beside the working groups' meetings
  → use practical communication and collective data saving facilities – maybe you can get an own conference organisation e-learning platform from your university; or, a mailing-list and a drop-box will also fulfill the job
  → create a central virtual pin-board to keep a clear overview about all the important dates and deadlines
- Build working groups: concept, programme, graphic design, communication and public relations, documentation, finances and accounting, event location and accommodation, meals, and transportation
- Think about cooperation possibilities with other projects, e.g. students' journal, film clubs, etc.
- Found an association & an association account
- Determine the date and theme of the conference at an early stage to recruit sponsors

The conference's topic is partly (2/3) proposed by the network and partly (1/3) chosen by the organizing group. During most of the previous MASN conferences each day was dedicated to a specific topic.

- Write sponsors & get money from earlier conferences if available
- Possible sponsors are definitely at first: the university and its sub-units, student councils or organisations, the city and the particular state, but also inter- or national anthropological organisations like the EASA etc.
  → keep in mind that: you usually receive the money after the conference happening!!!
  → further, many companies or organisations put up their finance plans or distribute their donations already in the preceding year. That's why it's better, if you've sent the funding requests already yesterday!!!
  → not just money donations are important, also publishing houses, professors or museums may donate books, and companies may help with material donations (food, drinks, bags, pencils, rebates for students etc.)
  → there might be also agreements between particular countries to facilitate the mobility of academics
  → a funding application portfolio may contain: <u>a project description</u> including a preliminary programme, <u>a finance plan</u>, a letter of support from the department head, and most importantly a personal letter that should necessarily be adapted to each company (that means: **no standardised letter!**)
- Rent or reserve the venue for the panels, presentations and workshops, and museum and/or city tours
- Design the call for paper & the registration form and send them out to all possible anthropology student bodies and departments (a list dating from 2013, which needs to be actualised can be found <u>here</u>)
  → create a conference e-mail address in order to receive the applications and papers, and bear in mind that the size of the mailbox is big enough
  → the deadline for the registration should be set about 14 days before the conference start
  → the deadline for the papers should be no less set than three weeks before the conference start
- Set up a web presence, the best, immediately after the conference topic has been determined!
- Find a practical accommodation where in the best case all conference participants will be able to stay
- Taking the meals and coffee breaks together in one location is a great base for informal communication, interaction and networking
  → Note, if meals aren't included in the accommodation that:

fee agreements for the kitchen team should be made
- Plan some leisure-time programme, for example a party, group games etc.
- Compile a reader with all the important information concerning the conference
  → where is what, the programme, the papers' abstracts, emergency numbers etc. (Don't forget to mention the sponsors on the print media)
  → the final version of the reader should be ready early enough to be printed at time
- Organise the documentation of the conference
- **Make regular <u>up-dates</u> of the financial plan since the sponsors need a detailed list of the costs!!!**
  → Regular team reminder: issue the invoices and save **all** the bills of the conference costs for the accounting!!!
- Create <u>accommodation forms</u> and a participants' list for the conference registration and the mailing list: Name, Department, University, City, E-mail, Phone nr., Admission: paid / unpaid
- Form a team for the info point

During the conference
- Set up the info point with at least one central contact person
- Form a bigger group of **reliable** helpers, if you want to participate in the conference yourself

After the conference
- Make the evaluation of the conference
- Evaluate the finances

General tips
- Create a relaxation space
- Find a means to identify the organising team
- Create more space for discussion (at least 1.5 hours for each session) and plan at least 15 minutes of breaks inbetween, so that the participants have enough time to move from room to room, etc. and further to compensate programme delays!
- Once more: issue the invoices and save **all** the bills of the conference costs for the accounting!!!

Epilogue: Good luck!

This guide is an English translation and modification of the Ethno Help Guide composed by the organising team of the Ethno Symposium in Leipzig, 2011. Thanks for sharing the guide with us!