

# Computer Society of India

Draft Conference Manual

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# CSI Conference Manual <sup>1</sup>

## 5.1 Introduction

During the several decades since its founding, CSI has conducted a large number of events such as conferences and workshops at different levels. CSI events are usually planned at Chapter, Regional, Divisional, National and International levels. The most important annual event of CSI is its Annual Convention. We have also had the privilege of running international conferences such as SEARCC and IFIP conferences. After the amendment of the Constitution in 2006-07, CSI brought in the mechanism of SIGs, which have also been running conferences subsequently.

These events constitute an important part of our activities around the country. Over the years, considerable experience has been gained on the conduct of such events. It is necessary now to draw certain standard guidelines in organizing these events so that they help in achieving the objectives of CSI, viz., upgradation of knowledge of member professionals in the country, as well to as generate consensus on the matters of national and international importance pertaining to the Information Technology.

Broadly speaking, CSI's event can be divided into the following categories:

1. Chapter level conference
2. Regional convention
3. Divisional conference
4. National Conferences and Seminars
5. CSI Annual Convention
6. International events (such as SEARCC/IFIP conferences)
7. SIG Conferences (both national and international)
8. Other Conferences jointly with partners institutions
9. Student Conventions—National, Regional and State level
10. Other events (exhibitions, job fairs, faculty development programmes etc)

## 5.2 General Rules

In all conferences, the host chapter has to play a major role in the success of the conference. For conducting any conference following rules apply:

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<sup>1</sup>This draft version of the revised Conference Manual has been prepared by Satish Babu, Chair (Conference Committee), largely based on the existing Conference Manual. This draft is subject to ExeCom approval

1. The conference should be organized around a strong theme, and its objectives fully defined. Some conferences provide technical information, where others provides different aspects of a technological development or issue. Where relevant, conferences should lead to policy recommendations that are evolved from the meeting, which CSI can communicate to the various governmental, industrial and academic institutions.
2. All events must be self-supporting in principle, and must make an effort to generate surpluses. Since the operations of CSI depends on surpluses generated through conferences, it is important to emphasize this point. It does not, however, mean that in certain special cases this cannot be overlooked, but this should be an exception (permitted by the ExeCom on a case-to-case basis) and not a general rule. In case, a deficit is anticipated, organizers should consider doing away with avoidable expenses like conference dinner, cultural shows, hand outs etc.
3. The Regional and Divisional conferences should be taken to smaller Chapters to spread the knowledge of computers and computer awareness. Metropolitan cities will continue to have their share, in any case.
4. It is desirable to plan all the activities for the entire year, right at the beginning of the year so that all the activities / conferences / workshops could be planned well, enabling chapter, regional, divisional and the international activities spread over geography and time.
5. Whenever any activity is carried out in collaboration with other professional bodies, the strategy should be well planned and CSI image should be projected prominently. The share of any surplus generated should be well defined. In particular, CSI's logo should only be used after a clear understanding of its role, both organizational and financial.
6. The registration fee should be fixed in such a manner that it should clearly reflect the difference between CSI and other private agencies running similar type of conferences and workshops. CSI members should get a tangible advantage in the registration fee compared to the non members. The fee differential could be generally around 20% but can be as high as 30 to 50 percent or based on 'no-profit' criteria. Student members may get even higher discount in the registration fees.
7. For every national and international event, one advertisement (usually half a page in size, but up to a full page in exceptional cases) is allowed in CSI Communications free of cost. Additional exposures are to be charged on prevailing rates. The same matter will also be displayed on-line, linked to the CSI KM Portal (ie., the CSI web site). The free exposure will be permitted in the CSIC of up to two months before the month of the actual event.
8. CSI is presently in the process of creating a unified repository of all intellectual artefacts generated through its conferences and other events. All content presented at CSI Conferences and other events mentioned in this manual will be eligible to be published in the KM Portal. For papers presented at CSI Conferences, CSI shall have the right to publish these in the central repository.
9. Host chapters whose proposal for conferences has been approved, shall be eligible for a seed money contribution (returnable to the HQ after the conduct of the event) if

required. The seed money can be an amount not exceeding 10% of the total approved conference budget. The money shall be returned to the HQ after the conduct of the event, together with the HQ contribution.

10. All national and international conferences as well as the Annual Convention are required to share their surpluses with the CSI HQ, as this forms one of the main incomes of the Society. The following shall be the proportion of net surplus due to the HQ for each category of events<sup>2</sup> :

**CSI Annual Convention:** 80% (when the net surplus is less than Rs 10 lakhs) or 50% (if it is Rs. 10 lakhs or over)

**National/Divisional Conferences:** 50%

**International Conferences:** 50%

For all Chapter-level events which do not fall into the above categories, 10% of the net surplus of each event shall be transferred to the HQ as contribution against basic HQ Services. A partial list of HQ Services that can be availed by Chapters for events are<sup>3</sup>:

- Use of members' mailing list
- Use of CSI Website
- Advertisement in CSI Communications
- Use of Regional and Divisional Facilities (including the time of RVPs and Divisional Chairs)
- Support from Manager(Conference Services)
- Use of Digital Repository for all Conference Artefacts (this is to be set up shortly)
- Use of HQ services such as membership development, student activities etc
- Liaison with Government of India and state Governments (eg., for example, for obtaining Visas for international conferences or for fund-raising for specific events)

For SIG Conferences, since many of them may be recurring every 1 or 2 years, a specific, case-to-case formula is to be worked out by the ExeCom.

In general, any deviation from the above rules of surplus-sharing is strongly discouraged, and would require ExeCom's prior approval.

11. The following time frames are recommended for planning of conferences:

- International Conferences: 18-24 months
- Annual Convention: 12-18 months
- National/Divisional Conferences: 6-8 months
- Regional Conferences: 3-6 months

12. For all events, prior intimation of Chair (Conferences Committee) is required for registration of electronic assets such as domain names, web site URLs and social media sites (eg., Twitter, Facebook). The web sites of conferences need to be approved by the Programme Committee of that particular conference. These assets should be registered in the name of CSI with Administrative and Technical contacts provided by the CSI HQ.

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<sup>2</sup>Excerpted from minutes of the ExeCom meeting held on 4 July 2009 at Chennai

<sup>3</sup>This decision was taken by the ExeCom on 24 July 2011 at Bangalore

## 5.3 Constitution of Committees

It has been the normal practice that all the CSI functions are held and managed by a number of committees which are constituted at various levels. This procedure has been working quite efficiently. It is also realized that it is difficult to develop a set of uniform recommendations for all times to come and for all types of functions. What, therefore, is attempted in this section is, a set of general guidelines which will help in efficient planning and conduct of the various activities pertaining to the event.

According to the Constitution, the Vice-President (President-elect), CSI, also holds the office of Chairman of the Conference Committee, and every year, the ExeCom nominates other members to work in the conference Committee. For the coordination and planning of all CSI conferences in the country, the Apex Body will consist of Vice-President, CSI, as Chairman and 4 to 5 other members nominated by National ExeCom.

It is suggested that Standing Advisory Committees should be constituted with the following functions:

1. To nominate Chairman(Organizing Committee) and Chairman (Programme Committee) and where necessary, Chairman (Exhibition Committee).
2. To monitor and coordinate the work of all the conferences within their jurisdiction.

### 5.3.1 Role of Host Chapter

Since most of the activities of CSI are held with the help of host chapters, it is necessary that the Chairman and Managing Committee of the host chapter play an active role in the planning and coordination of conferences. The Chairman, OC & PC, as far as possible, should be nominated from within the members of the host chapter Managing Committee. However, in some cases—such as for National or International Conferences—the National ExeCom, in consultation with the Advisory Committee, may nominate outstanding professionals for these positions.

### 5.3.2 Events that are independent of Chapters

The current structure of CSI permits the conduct of events that are not necessarily aligned with any CSI Chapter (even though some of these can be, in practice, hosted by a Chapter). These are encountered under the following situations:

1. SIG conferences
2. International Conferences, especially those in partnership with other organizations
3. Conferences organized by Institutional members
4. Conferences organized by Student Branches
5. Any other type of event (eg., an event in a city prior to launch of a new CSI Chapter, which may be directly organized by an RVP)

For these, case-to-case approval from the ExeCom is necessary for all important decisions (ie., Committee formulation and budget preparation).

### 5.3.3 Constitution of Advisory Committees

Each event requires an Advisory Committee that will appoint appropriate people for the key positions of Chair (Programme Committee), Chair (Organising Committee), and where relevant, Chair (Exhibition Committee).

The following composition of advisory committees are suggested for different type of events.

#### Chapter-level Events

- Chairman
- Vice-Chairman
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Immediate past Chairman
- MC Member

The Advisory Committee will keep Regional Vice-President, concerned Divisional Chairman and Chairman Conferences Committee informed.

#### Regional Events

The Regional Vice-President will carry out the regional activities at various chapters of his region.

- Regional Vice-President, Chairman
- Chapter Chairman, Vice-Chairman
- Chapter Vice-Chairman, Member
- Chapter Secretary, Member
- Chapter Treasurer, Member
- Managing Committee, Member (2)

The nomination of Chairman OC and PC will also be discussed with the Chairman, Conference Committee who will get approval of the Exec Com.

#### Divisional Events

- Divisional Chairman, Chairman
- Chapter Chairman, Vice-Chairman
- Respective RVP, Member
- Chapter Vice-Chairman, Member
- Chapter Secretary, Member
- Chapter Treasurer, Member
- Managing Committee, Members (2)

All divisional and regional conferences need to be planned in advance and have to be approved by Chairman, Conference Committee and National Exec Com for which the proposal along with financial plans.

### **Annual/National Convention**

- Vice-President, CSI (President-elect), Chairman
- Respective RVP of Host Chapter, Vice-Chairman
- Chapter Chairman, Member
- Chapter Vice-Chairman, Member
- Chapter Secretary, Member

### **International Events**

- President, CSI, Chairman
- Vice-President, CSI (President-elect), Vice-Chairman
- Past President, Member
- IFIP/SEARCC representative, Member
- Concerned Divisional Chairman, Member
- Concerned T.C. rep. of IFIP, Member
- Host Chapter Chairman, Member
- Host Chapter Vice-Chairman, Member

## **5.4 The Planning Process**

The following section refers to the selection of Chairman Program, Organizing and Exhibition Committee (CPC, COC, CEC) and their duties.

The names of CPC, COC and CEC are suggested by the concerned advisory committees and appropriate functional bodies. In case of National Convention, the names are selected by ExeCom from the list supplied (if found necessary, ExeCom can add more names).

Chairman will then select the members of their respective committee with minimum 6 and maximum 10 members and hold meetings as necessary for coordination of various activities of their committees.

In case of the National Convention, copies of all notices, minutes of meetings and reports should be sent jointly by CPC & COC to the CSI head office for circulation to ExeCom Members.

### **5.4.1 Duties and Responsibilities of the Program Committee**

*While this section and the next are written largely keeping the National Convention in mind, it is recommended that the principles laid out here are extended to other event categories as well.*

1. This Committee will set the theme and arrange for the technical content of the Convention.
2. The Chairman Program Committee (CPC) will be responsible for securing a program of the maximum technical and educational value to the delegates, and ensure that CSI's interests, as well as those of the Divisions and other stakeholders are well taken care of.

It has been found that invited papers, on carefully selected topics by eminent experts are generally found by delegates to be worthwhile as compared to contributed papers (however good they are), because they tend to cater to narrow specialized interests.



3. The PC will arrange for diligent examination and review of papers, and take all such measure as are necessary to prevent plagiarism, including the use of on-line tools, self-declarations and public disciplinary proceedings. CSI may also publish an appropriate disclaimer in the printed/online proceedings *vis-à-vis* the originality of content provided by authors
4. The PC will contact all the prospective authors and organize the keynote session, technical sessions and panel discussions.
5. During the planning of the event, the PC will decide if papers would be invited, or secured through call for papers, or both. In either case, the review of abstracts and papers would involve the Divisional representatives as well as invited subject experts in addition to the PC members
6. The PC, if necessary in consultation with the divisional representatives, will schedule sessions, subjects, speakers, panelists, session chairman, and moderators from the response to the invitation and call for papers, followed up by personal contact
7. The PC will indicate to the Organizing Committee the facilities required for the various sessions, the probable attendance, and other logistical details.
8. Where relevant, the Committee would arrange a 'Student Paper contest' as a part of the Convention and provide for presentation before a panel at the Convention 4 of 5 best papers received, in order to choose the prize winners. Certificates, monetary rewards and local hospitality would be provided to the prize winners, and only local hospitality to the other students whose papers were accepted for presentation
9. The PC will arrange for Tutorial and/or workshops, for one or two days prior to the Convention, on a topic of current interest, as a part of continuous education to the delegates.
10. The PC will ensure that the Divisional and Regional interests are well taken care of during the Convention and provide for minimum of two hours of non-conflicting parallel time for the meetings of the Divisions/Regional leaders to meet and exchange views on subjects of common interest
11. Events may bring out proceedings, souvenirs or other similar print or online compilations when found necessary. Such documents will contain the abstracts and contact details of paper presenters at the minimum.
12. The papers received for the Convention may be printed, preferably in a single or multiple volumes covering the subjects of the Divisions and distributed during the Convention at a nominal price. Alternatively, pre-prints of papers could be made available at the Convention at a token price. Selected papers may also be published in the CSI Communications/Journal or any other CSI publication for the benefit of the members at large. In some cases, it has been seen that it is inadvisable to print the proceedings of the Convention in view of exorbitant cost involved and difficulty in disposing surplus copies leading to a heavy loss.
13. There could be a Poster Session giving opportunity for those interested in meeting authors of good contributed papers. It also allows a wide selection of authors to attend the convention with their organization's support.
14. It would be prudent for the PC to plan and maintain a reserve list of speakers, to cater for any last minute drop-out of speakers.
15. Time slots should be planned for sponsored sessions such as manufacturers' presentations, after a careful selection, and after ascertaining that the content is of sufficient relevance to the audience

16. The PC should create and maintain all electronic collateral (web site, email lists and alerts, SMS alerts, social media links etc)

#### **5.4.2 Duties and Responsibilities of the Organizing Committee**

1. The OC should make all the logistical arrangements such as conference hall & arrangements, stage, publicity, publication, transportation, mailing to members, registration, catering, reception, hospitality, accommodation for VIPs & delegates, guest speakers, and Air or rail reservations if requested.
2. The Chairman Organization Committee (COC) would be responsible for all aspects of the convention except the technical program.
3. The OC should invite quotations for the various facilities/jobs involved and decide on lowest quotation unless otherwise justifiable. The process of selection should be transparent and fair.
4. The OC should arrange for printing of notices, brochures, registration forms, papers, souvenirs etc. and ensure their timely mailing/distribution.
5. The OC should arrange for delegates' badges, folders, souvenirs etc, for distribution at the time of registration prior to inauguration of the Convention.
6. The OC should ensure required facilities for the tutorial/workshop technical sessions, presentation of papers, panel discussion, procurement of various prizes from CSI headquarters, etc. as indicated by the Program Committee.
7. The OC will arrange for publicity in CSI Newsletter/Journal, local newspapers, national press (newspapers, Engineering Society magazines and other technical society publications), radio, T.V. and photographic coverage, pre-event, during the event, and after the event, by arranging Press Conferences and issue press releases for the duration of the Convention, giving out activities of the following days.
8. The OC with the assistance of the CSI head office will ensure wide publicity in Newsletters/Journals of Overseas Associate societies such as IEEE Computer Society, IFIP, Singapore Computer Society, and Australian Computer Society.
9. The OC will compile for its use updated mailing lists with the assistance of CSI head office.
10. If required, the OC will contact prospective exhibitors and organize a Technical Exhibition at the venue of the Convention or as close-by as possible. This work will be co-ordinated by CEC under the overall umbrella if OC.
11. The OC will open a Savings Bank Account exclusively for the event, to be operated jointly by any two of four/five nominees amongst the Program and Organizing Committee Members. The Bank Account would be closed after the financial summary is made and audited.
12. Bills incurred for the conduct of the Convention will be approved by the COC or his nominee and paid by cheque.
13. The OC should arrange for hotel accommodation for delegates, social get-togethers, sight-seeing, program for spouses etc. during the Convention.
14. The OC should ensure a positive experience to the invitees/guests and make special arrangements for catering transport etc.
15. The OC will make all arrangements for conducting the Annual General Body Meeting (AGM) of CSI on the second day of the Convention

16. The OC will make arrangements for the conduct of the National Council, ExeCom, Auditor's Meet and other CSI statutory and organizational events
17. The OC will arrange to print Invitation Card format (in an approved format) for Inauguration. The Committee will ensure timely issuance of invitation cards to all concerned.
18. COC should intimate venues and timings for all the functions outlines in sub para 5.6 (p) & (q), 3 months in advance to Head office of CSI.

#### **5.4.3 Duties and Responsibilities of Exhibition Committee**

1. The EC is optional, and only required if there the Annual Convention is accompanied by an exhibition
2. The EC will make all arrangements of Technical Exhibition including stall space, power supply (including UPS/generator), amenities (toilets, water, food, first-aid etc).
3. The EC will create a table of rentals for different exhibition spaces depending on area, location etc
4. The EC will ensure the allocation of specific stalls, and manufacturer's presentation slots, only after receipt of due payment.
5. The EC will collect and remit to the OC, at the end of the exhibition, all outstanding monies due to CSI on account of the exhibition
6. Number of stalls/slots should be based on norms. Any defaulter from previous conventions should not be entertained, until the dues are cleared.
7. As far as possible exhibition should be open to public, schools/Colleges etc. However all delegates must be allotted time slots, when they can see more effectively. Restricted hours for schools, student members, delegates and open timings for all should be encouraged.
8. The procedure for fixing the rentals and allocation of stalls should not only be made objective, fair and transparent, but also demonstrates viability.
9. The Chairman Exhibition Committee works under overall supervision of OC, and will be responsible for organization of the exhibition, settlement of accounts etc.
10. Care should be exercised in selecting large enough spaces, so as to have minimum number of venues for exhibition thereby avoiding the commuting problems. In case multiple venues are required for exhibition, adequate transportation arrangement should be made.
11. EC should ensure that all exhibitors must insure their products against *force majeure* contingencies
12. The EC should take special efforts to ensure safety of the public and exhibitors from fire & other hazards through the provision of sufficient emergency exits, fire tenders, alarms, fire extinguishers, water hydrants and other safety measures.

## **5.5 Post Conference Procedure**

### **5.5.1 Reporting**

The success of a conference is reflected by the final report which should specifically highlight the new scientific data reported during the conference including the recommendations of the conference and follow-up actions for future.

Another important aspect is the strict maintenance of fiscal discipline. It is necessary that the financial picture should be made within a reasonable time (2-3 months) after the conference. Conference accounts should be settled and internally audited. The seed capital (if used) and HQ dues should be transferred to the HQ in a maximum of 6 months after the conduct of the event.

A report on the conference—especially on the scientific and social aspects—will be useful to generate the views of CSI on the various important issues pertaining to the field of Information Technology. As we have to represent CSI views at various fora including the to the Government of India, such conclusions from the conferences will be of great benefit.

### **5.5.2 Electronic Assets**

In general, Conferences are expected to share their intellectual artefacts (papers, presentations, transcripts, videos, etc) with the CSI KM Portal. Conference web sites shall be kept live for a period of at least 12 months after the conduct of the conference

## **5.6 Conclusion**

CSI's Conferences are a primary instrument for the Society to fulfill its objectives of informing its membership as well as society at large of the technological and socio-technical changes taking place in the domain of Information Technology. This manual sets out key elements of procedure for organizing such events.

The ExeCom shall be empowered to decide on any aspects of organizing events that are not covered in this manual, on a case-to-case manner.