1. Introduction

The ICA Regional Cartographic Conference (RCC) is held at irregular intervals, typically run by local organizing committees in different locations around the globe. It is essential that previous experiences are handed on to future local organising committees, whether they are working independently or in conjunction with a professional conference organising company. The ICA Executive Committee (EC) have prepared guidelines to assist RCC organizing committees wishing to organize and run RCCs. These guidelines are meant to establish minimum requirements as a starting point. Organisers are invited to extend guidelines as necessary.

2. Objectives

2.1.   The objectives of the RCC are to provide a regional cartography forum for presentation and exchange of new ideas and approaches through various session types, including plenary, technical, and poster sessions, as well as workshops and map exhibitions.

2.2.   The RCC typically includes:
- opening and closing ceremonies,
- plenary sessions with keynote speakers,
- scientific programme (involving selection, presentation and publication of papers and posters),
- social events, and possibly including 'map use' events.

These are each further detailed below.

3. The Role of ICA in Regional Cartographic Conferences

3.1.   The ICA EC invites member nations to bid for the right to host a RCC in their region.

3.2.   The EC decides on the location of the RCC.

3.3.   Decisions on the venue are usually made 12 months in advance of an RCC.

3.4.   Conference bids may include an invitation of the President, Secretary General & Treasurer or other members of the EC to inspect facilities and meet proposed key persons of the organizing committee

3.5.   The RCC conference bidding process is competitive. Successful bids include as much detail, as possible. Once a bid has been accepted by the EC, a follow up report needs to be submitted to the EC, including the programme draft and a budget.

3.6.   Two progress reports on the RCC organization are requested by the EC at least six and two months before the RCC takes place. The EC is available to respond to any question or issue that may arise.

3.7.   While the content of the final programme is in the responsibility of the local organising committee, it is highly recommended to include ICA Commission and Working Group Chairs in the paper solicitation, review, and selection process. These ICA officers should also be invited to chair sessions during the RCC.

3.8.   The EC must be consulted for the development of the technical programme. This will typically include approval of the conference topics, session themes, and keynote speakers, as detailed below in Section 10 of these Guidelines.

3.9.   It is expected the LOC offers the opportunity for an EC member to address the conference during the opening of the event.

4. Bidding process

4.1.   Any member of the ICA may submit a bid to host a RCC. Only ICA national members can submit a bid. Affiliate members can submit a bid with the support of the relevant national member (if applicable).

4.2.   A letter of intent should be sent to the Secretary General & Treasurer, accompanied by the bid, including detailed information on the proposed location, facilities, lodging, committee members and personnel, registration fees, and a budget. The intent should normally be submitted at least 12 months before the event to the EC.

4.3.   The ICA would expect the organisers of a RCC to promote the conference in an active manner to cartographers and GI scientists in the region and invite as many as possible to attend. The RCC could give an opportunity to national cartographic bodies to hold regular meetings in parallel as an integrated part of the RCC.

5. Organising Committee

5.1.   The Local Organising Committee (LOC) shall be finalized, and the Conference Director appointed, as soon as the decision to hold the RCC has been made by the EC.

5.2.   The LOC typically includes a broad range of local cartography and GIScience professionals, thus ensuring representation of the various cartographic strands and diverse expertise in a member nation.

5.3.   It is highly advisable to engage professional conference organisers for RCC organization, especially for handling registrations and accommodation. While it is recommended to engage a professional conference organizer, it is critical that the LOC and its sustaining organisations retain oversight and overall responsibility for managing the conference.

5.4.   Based on prior experience, the EC recommends the following optional sub-committees:
- A Programme or Scientific Committee to handle the Call for Papers, manage submissions and reviews, consult with ICA Commission and Working Group Chairs, manage accepted submissions, edit proceedings, and organize the scientific sessions;
- A Social Programme Committee with duties to organise and conduct receptions and other social activities;
- Technical Exhibition Committee with duties to conduct the Technical Exhibition, if included;
- Cartographic Exhibition Committee with duties to collect items for the Cartographic Exhibition, edit the exhibition catalogue, and display exhibition items.
- Technical Tours Committee with duties to organise and conduct a diverse set of technical tours, if included.

5.5.   A patron or honorary committee may be considered to further highlight the importance and regional flavour of the RCC, and to attract local sponsors, etc. Ideally, patrons will promote the RCC in their networks, and public outreach activities (on the web, newsletters, social networks, etc.), volunteer time of their staff for the RCC, provide contacts to the LOC, and contribute to specific events (e.g., Cartographic Exhibitions, tours, etc.), or make their space for RCC-related activities available.

5.6.   The inclusion of RCC relevant sponsors from the public and private sector is recommended: RCCs are an opportunity to advertise and promote the discipline of cartography and GIScience to governmental and commercial bodies.

6. Timing

6.1.   RCCs are at typically run biannually, but depending on needs, can also occur less frequently.

6.2.   The EC will coordinate proposed RCC time slots, to avoid ICCs and concurrent RCCs.

7. Budget

7.1.   The responsibility for the RCC budget rests solely on the LOC. The EC highly recommends sharing budget information as early as possible, as to enable feedback on anticipated fixed and other costs.
A tiered registration fee structure should be provided,

with reductions for registered students, retired participants, for shorter than full conference attendance periods, and for accompanying persons. The category 'accompanying persons' must be restricted to those who are not attending any part of the scientific programme. It is recommended to offer reduced rates for attendees from developing countries. The accreditation of those who primarily serve in booths in the Technical Exhibition (if involved) must also be considered. Keynote speakers should be offered complimentary registration.

7.2. The following budget cost items are to be included at minimum:

Conference venue; professional conference organizer;, printing, publications, equipment and materials for the Technical Exhibition, displays, and security for exhibitions; registration and payment systems, WiFi networking; signage; promotional efforts including website design, travel made by LOC representatives to promote the RCC; dispatch of publicity material and materials for exhibitions etc.;

Other costs such as: personnel for administration, management, purchasing, catering, cleaning and liaising; costs associated with opening and closing ceremonies, and other aspects of the social programme.

Following the ICA publication strategy the publication fee of currently 15€ per paper has to be included in the budget.

8. Mailing List

8.1. A comprehensive mailing list should be prepared for invitation and promotional purposes. Contact with the previous conference should be established to build on existing databases.

8.2. The database should be compiled in a form suitable for providing address labels and e-mail addresses.

8.3. The database should be used for personal invitations, especially to persons in countries where a personal invitation is needed for applications to attend a conference or to obtain a visa.

8.4. The Mailing List database is to be made available for the next LOC, with a request that may only be used for ICA conference purposes, and that privacy of this data be maintained.

9. Promotion

9.1. Promotion is a key to a successful RCC.

9.2. All brochures should contain as much information as available at the time. Potential delegates can be far from the venue and have to make a decision on the basis of what they can read in the information provided.

9.3. An informative website must be set up and continuously updated with access to the following information on its home page:
- Promotional materials, distributed at previous RCCs, or other relevant events, and mailed as widely as possible. This material needs to have as much information as possible at the time of distribution.
- Calls for submissions. The first call can be released at the end of a prior RCC.
- Preliminary programme
- Registration form, at least six months before the RCC, also distributed to the compiled mailing list.

9.4. Maps and other locational information should be included on the web site, such as the location of venue/hotels, tours, and other relevant data.

9.5. Preliminary Programme and Registration Forms should contain all necessary details for attendance. The registration form should cover all items and be clear and concise. It is expected that the website will incorporate the programmes and frequently updated and expanded publicity material (including preliminary conference schedules), but also links to the registration system, paper submission and accommodation booking

possibilities. Some feedback mechanism is essential to allow conference attendees to report queries and potential problems (e.g. clash between presenting and chairing a session).

9.6. The event should be announced on as many conference listings, diaries, and calendars in publications as possible, and through e-mail lists as indicated above. Publicity can also be effective through launch events within the country, participation of national representatives in other conferences and meetings, publication of articles in journals and the popular media, and creation and dissemination of further brochures both nationally and internationally.

9.7. An on-line registration system should be created to allow people to efficiently register their interest, formally register, pay (using a variety of methods, including credit card), and arrange hotel accommodation.

9.8. It is expected that registration fees will be kept relatively low: conference organisers should be aware that delegates expect that the registration fee will be considerably lower than their travel and accommodation costs, which are the main items of expense when attending a conference.

9.9. Early registration should be encouraged by introducing a discount for those registering up to 3 months before the conference. It should be noted that some alignment with the results of the paper reviewing process should be attempted: those submitting papers need to be told of the success or otherwise of their submission before the early registration period expires.

10. Technical Programme, Presentations, and Publications

10.1. The technical programme needs to reflect the cutting edge of cartography and GIScience. An RCC theme, highlighted in promotional materials etc. (i.e., specific conference title, etc.) should be used.

10.2. Various submission types should be offered, i.e., full papers posters, and abstracts. The selection of the submissions will be based on a review process by an expert panel, as described in the Publication Regulations.

10.3. The expert review panel should include experts leading the cartography and GIScience fields, including EC members, Commission and Working Group Chairs. LOC is responsible for the organisation of the review process and review board. The use of an online reviewing system is highly recommended, especially for large RCCs.

10.4. All submissions need to be prepared following the ICA publication guidelines. All published submissions have a maximum length of 8 pages, and are formatted based on the existing ICA template. There are three proceedings tracks:
- Full papers based on full paper review (8 pages)
- Full papers based on abstract review (8 pages)
- Abstracts (half page)

LOC can decide together with EC whether to offer all three publication outlets or only a subset. The publication is organized via the publisher Copernicus. Article Processing Costs have to be paid to the publisher (see Publication Regulations).

10.5. Posters should be a fundamental part of the programme, and there should be a dedicated space and opportunities to promote them. Formatting guidelines should be issued in the first call for submissions. It is essential that the poster sessions have an attractive, prominent, and easily accessible location.

10.6. Any sessions including early career scholars and student contributions may ideally be scheduled early in the conference to foster their visibility and networking with senior scholars.

11. Venue

11.1. It is advisable to suggest a couple of potential venues in a bid, thus including a potential fall back option. A minimum of 200 seats is suggested for opening and plenary sessions. The venue should provide up-to-date technical and audio-visual equipment. International accessibility and availability of nearby lodging and transportation are important points to consider for site selection.

11.2. The conference will have a designated WiFi access area, free of charge to participants.

12. Signage and Information

12.1. The LOC will provide adequate signage outside and inside of the venue for navigation support.

12.2. Especially if parallel sessions are run, session rooms and exhibition areas should be clearly labelled, and directions to them indicated in the conference materials.

12.3. The programme time table, including daily modifications, should be prominently displayed in the registration area.

12.4. The LOC will provide on-site conference information including but not limited to the most recent version of the programme and schedule of events, maps of the venue, contact information, exhibition details, meal location, and further local information, etc. This information can be included in a conference bag together with the conference proceedings, and a most-recent list of attendees, etc..

13. Opening and Closing Ceremonies

To leverage promotion of cartography and GIScience in the hosting region, it is advisable that the official RCC opening be of high profile. Additional care has to be taken to promote diversity of the community (i.e., gender, age, thematic background, etc.) when selecting keynote speakers, session chairs, and other high profile roles at the conference.

14. Post-conference Duties

The ICA and the LOC of future RCCs rely on summary reports of past conferences. It is critical to receive such a report as soon as possible after the conference, including conference statistics such attendee statistics for various events, presentation numbers by various categories, and summary remarks about the outcomes of the conference.

To support reporting, it is advisable to seeking attendee feedback at the conference with questionnaires placed in the conference bag. The survey results should be made available to the ICA EC.

15. Exhibitions

15.1. Local exhibitions connected with the conference are encouraged, and such exhibitions may be open to the general public to further promote the conference.

15.2. The LOC is responsible for adequate security measures in the exhibition areas.

16. Social Functions

16.1. Social events are an important feature of any conference and thus they are highly encouraged.

16.2. At least one ice-breaker or welcome reception should be included in the registration fee. A conference dinner or similar, open for all participants may be arranged for an additional fee.

16.3. Other social or networking events may be sponsored or offered.

17. Safety, Security, etc.

17.1. Safety and security for attendees, exhibitors, visitors and their belongings must be assured at all times during on-site conference events. The LOC is responsible for respective insurances.

17.2. Adequate measures must be implemented to ensure that this occurs. In particular, advice to delegates regarding their personal security outside the conference venue should be circulated.

17.3. Any safety or security related concerns that are identified prior to the conference or that arise during the conference must be communicated immediately to the EC, and all attendees.

17.4. The LOC will provide information and or assistance to delegates with disabilities, should they request it.

17.5. All delegates must be informed about on-site emergency and evacuation procedures.

18. Concluding Remarks

These guidelines are the result of many prior well run ICA and RCC conferences. The guidelines are aimed to support future LOCs in running equally successful RCCs. These guidelines may be updated with input from future LOCs at any time.

Original document derived from ICC guidelines by Vit Vozenilek, Sara I. Fabrikant and Laszlo Zentai in 2017.