

## WHAT IS AC FORUM?

AC Forum is a not-for-profit association with the aim of advancing association leadership and management. It provides its members with a variety of opportunities to network and exchange experiences in environments that are confidential, trust-based and free from commercial influence. All activities are led by members.

Members are associations aiming for excellence in association and conference management. Many members come from the healthcare sector, but membership is open to not-for-profit associations in any sector. To fulfil the AC Forum membership criteria, an organisation and its activities, including conferences, must be self-managed. AC Forum is exclusively for and by associations and currently has 41 members.

AC Forum's purposes are:

- to serve as a platform for communication and networking amongst association executives in relation to conference and association management and related activities;
- to enable the exchange of information between members in order to improve the standards of both association management and organisation of conferences and related activities;
- to increase the level of professionalism, in-house knowledge and expertise available within associations and association executives in association and conference management;
- to contribute and work towards better organised associations and conferences;
- to act as a platform to represent the joint interests of members in their dialogue with suppliers, clients, peer groups, regulatory and other bodies, in their field.

AC Forum provides platforms for knowledge exchange for association peers facing comparable challenges in the association and conference industry. Led by its members it organises workshops, educational activities and an annual two-day meeting in January.

Annual Meeting:	Yearly meeting with general educational programme focused on developments in association management and congress organisation.
Workshops & webinars:	Targeted, small-scale meetings on a specific topic aimed at in-depth discussion.
Task Forces:	Expert groups established to work on key issues.
Website & online discussion forum:	Online member community for the discussion of member questions related to association management and congress organisation.

## MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA

Membership is open to any organisation legally registered as a non-profit association according to the laws of the country in which it is constituted. The organisation must be a supranational association representing a particular profession or professional field. It may not be a trade organisation.

AC Forum consists of two types of members: full members and provisional members.

### Full Membership:

Full membership is open to organisations meeting all of the following criteria:

- the organisation is a supranational association representing a particular profession or professional field;
- the organisation is not a trade organisation;
- the organisation commits to fully participate in AC Forum activities in Europe through AC Forum's educational offerings and General Assembly;
- the organisation does not contract an association or congress management company to manage its organisation, unless this company has been established by the non-profit organisation with the exclusive purpose to serve the aims and objectives of the non-profit organisation according to its article of association;
- the organisation holds a conference on a regular basis, e.g. every 2 years, with at least 2,000 registered participants;
- the organisation has ownership of, and is the initiator of, the conference and the programme structure under the executive responsibility of a senior member of staff having substantial responsibility for the day-to-day management of the organisation's conference.

### Provisional Membership:

Provisional membership is open to organisations that do not meet all criteria for full membership at the time of application, but have clearly stated the intention to fulfil the criteria for full membership within the next 3 years.

Provisional membership is granted on an observer basis for a period of 1 year and is subject to renewal after such a period. Renewal is considered only in cases where sufficient interaction with AC Forum exists, thus making further collaboration useful.

Provisional members have no voting rights and someone from the organisation is not eligible for positions in the Board.

## MEMBERSHIP FEE

The annual membership fee is 1,500 EUR.

## APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Organisations applying for full or provisional membership must provide AC Forum with:

- the completed application form signed by the President or an individual legally authorised to sign;
- proof of registration as a non-profit organisation (preferably in English);
- organisational chart showing structure and staffing;
- association governing document, e.g. articles of association, constitution or by-laws;
- latest strategic plan (*if the association does not have a strategic plan, please advise*);
- by-laws of commercial entity belonging to the Association (preferably in English) (*if applicable*).

Applications are reviewed and assessed by the Membership Sub-committee (MSC).

Upon invitation, applicant associations present their organisation to the MSC and respond to questions. The MSC makes recommendations to the Board regarding membership applications.

Once the Board has reviewed the applications and the MSC's recommendations, applicant associations may be invited to be present during the next General Assembly.

Decisions on membership are made by the General Assembly on recommendation by the Board.

The closing date for applications is **23 September 2022**.

## RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF MEMBERS

Members are entitled to attend all meetings of AC Forum and to make use of its facilities. Activities of AC Forum are open exclusively to salaried and contracted staff working directly for the association who are able to speak on its behalf. All staff of a member organisation may participate in AC Forum activities.

Full member organisations in good standing may:

- participate in all activities of AC Forum;
- present proposals for discussion at General Assemblies;
- have voting rights via a designated voting delegate who is a staff member;
- have a member of staff stand for election to the Board (only one Board position may be occupied by an individual from a member organisation that is not headquartered in Europe).

Members shall further the interests of AC Forum to the best of their abilities and shall refrain from any action which could damage the reputation and the aims and objectives of AC Forum. Members shall comply with the articles of the By-laws of AC Forum and respect the resolutions of its General Assembly. All members shall pay an annual membership fee determined by the General Assembly.

Members must respect that all discussions within AC Forum are confidential and should not be shared outside of the AC Forum members' circle.