



Organising an Annual Network Meeting or company meeting for Universitas 21 **A guide for local co-ordinators**

Introduction

Experience has proven that organising the Annual Network Meeting (sometimes referred to as 'the AGM') is much easier if there is someone at the institution hosting an event who can take care of liaising with local contacts, organising hotels and catering, printing and all other on-site aspects of the event, rather than the Secretariat trying to deal with it remotely. Not only is it far easier for a local contact to have meetings or telephone calls with suppliers at sensible times of the day, but it should overcome any language barrier when making arrangements.

Once the location of the AGM has been agreed, the Secretariat in Birmingham will work closely with the local contact to ensure all aspects of organisation have been covered and will take over responsibility for the running of the event in person once the event actually begins. The Secretariat should be involved with and/or informed of all decisions with monthly and, nearer the event, weekly phone or Skype calls taking place between the Secretariat and the local contact. All correspondence with the delegates and invited guests will be made by the Secretariat, not the host institution.

The standard meetings which make up the AGM series of meetings include:

U21 Managers' Meeting
Annual Network Meeting
Nominations & Membership Committee Meeting
Presidential Symposium
Formal company business meeting of *Universitas 21* LBG (and U21Equity Ltd)
Gilbert Medal and U21 Award ceremony

The Secretariat is responsible for the content of all meetings, but the host is responsible for the Presidential Symposium in conjunction with the Academic Director (once appointed).

This document should serve as a starting point for any local contact organising a U21 event, but may not be an exhaustive list!

At least 9 months before the event

Discuss budget with Secretariat

The Secretariat will discuss the budget with the local contact to clarify the anticipated costs of running the meetings. The host will apply for funding to contribute to the costs of running the AGM (using the normal project application process of U21) and, once the funds have been transferred from the Secretariat following approval by the Managers' group, the host will be responsible for paying local bills for catering, room hire, audio visual equipment and the like.

Reserve hotel accommodation

Once the dates for the event have been fixed, research local hotels (delegates will cover the cost of hotel rooms and the Secretariat can advise of budget/standards/facilities expected) draw up agreement with selected hotel to hold a number of rooms. If it they can be cancelled without charge, hold more than necessary to provide a cushion for any unexpected registrations. Make a note of the deadline for confirming or releasing rooms and any penalty for not filling rooms held.

Relay information on room rates, booking procedure, access, breakfast and other facilities to Secretariat who will publicise necessary information on the meeting registration page on the U21 website..

Liaise with the Secretariat as to how best to handle hotel bookings – delegates usually either book directly with the hotel quoting a special code or through the local contact who manages the bookings. All conference registrations will be handled by the Secretariat and will be done online via the U21 website.

At least 7 months before the event

Meeting room bookings

Book necessary meeting rooms for the event, based on predicted number of delegates, including provision of water/refreshments and audio visual facilities (including tabletop microphones). The Secretariat will advise on the size of rooms needed, and the layout required, for each meeting.

Catering for meetings

Get quotes for catering:

- Tea, coffee & biscuits/cake (usually mid-morning and mid-afternoon)
- lunch (usually cold buffet)

Evening meals

There will be a number of evening meals which should be organised by the host university. These will usually include a formal dinner, as well as other meals. At this stage, it is only necessary to provisionally book the restaurant(s). There will usually be 'entertainment' provided at the formal dinner and the suggested format of this should be discussed with the Secretariat well in advance.

4 months before event

Photographer

Book a photographer, ideally available for the duration of the event for informal shots, but definitely available for the formal photo, the date and time of which will be advised by the Secretariat.

Photos will be needed by the Secretariat in high and low resolution format, preferably on disc, as soon after the event as possible.

Conference packs

Decide on the type of conference bags to be given out. The Secretariat will provide electronic versions of all documents to be included, which will need printing by the host. We will advise how many copies of each document will be required – this is often complex, but detailed instructions will be given! We will also provide pens, paper, lanyards and a U21-branded gift. All other items in the pack are up to the host institution, including:

- type of folder (to hold meeting papers). This can be a loose-leaf binder, pre-bound or any other type of folder that the host chooses
- folder cover – the Secretariat will want to see the design before it is finalised
- printing of documents and dividers
- any other insert or inclusion from the member university

Visa letters

Depending on the location of the event, certain delegates will require a formal invitation from the host institution to enable them to apply for a visa. These should be sent out well in advance. As part of the registration process, delegates will be asked to identify whether they need a visa and, if so, this information will be passed to the host to issue the letter of invitation.

2 months before event

Catering

Obtain sample menus and, with the Secretariat, decide on menus for all catered meals.

NB there is often a range of dietary requirements which need to be taken into account. This information will be gathered by the Secretariat on the registration forms.

Guests and invitations

The Secretariat should be involved with drawing up guest lists of those who the member might wish to invite: there may also be guests which U21 invites to the meeting (recipient of Gilbert Medal or putative new members, for example). In these cases, the Secretariat will contact those people and keep the host informed of those who are expected. Invitations then need to be issued, along with accommodation details. NB if hotel accommodation is pressurised, it may be necessary to issue invitations earlier to ensure accommodation is secured.

Seating plan

The seating plan for the meetings and any formal dinner will be drawn up in consultation with the Secretariat. Please note for the meetings a U-shape is preferred, while for formal dinners circular/round tables each seating 8 people is the preferred configuration.

1 month before event

Transport

Book any transport needed between venues or hotels and advise of transfer times.

Name badges

Organise name badges for delegates, as well as place settings for the conference and formal dinner.

Conference folders

The Secretariat will send by email all conference documents, which should be printed and compiled in the conference folders for delegates who have requested them to receive on arrival, ideally in their hotel rooms.

Press contacts

If a press release is to be sent about events at the meeting, the Secretariat usually wants to work with the host institution's press office to disseminate information – give contact names to Secretariat.

Hotel

Obtain/produce a final rooming list so the Secretariat to check against delegate registration.

Check hotel has all necessary information.

Venue

Check venues and rooms and confirm numbers for catering

Check all technical requirements have been met and arranged

After the event

Debrief

A debrief with the Secretariat team which is attending the AGM should take place, usually be a day or two after the conference has ended, before the Secretariat team depart.

Finances

Any financial contribution that is agreed to be paid by *Universitas 21* will be paid via electronic transfer usually to the host institution's bank account. In order to process payment, an invoice for the agreed amount should be sent to Tarlok Singh, Finance Administrator by email at t.singh@bham.ac.uk or by post to Universitas 21 LBG, c/o 109 Strathcona, University of Birmingham, Birmingham, B15 2TT, UK). Please note that the invoice should be addressed to our registered office, Universitas 21 LBG, Mont Crevelt House, Bulwer Avenue, St Sampson t, Guernsey, GY2 4LH, but if it is posted here it will take longer to reach the Secretariat, and hence payment will be delayed. The invoice should include the following details to enable an electronic transfer of funds

Bank Name
Bank Address
Branch Sort Code
Branch Swift
IBAN Number
Bank Account Number
Bank Account Name
Your Reference

Your reference is for your institution to recognise the funds when they are received, and is usually an invoice number, your internal project number or a description of the event e.g. U21 AGM 2012.

The usual process is for an invoice to be raised after the event, along with a brief summary of the event for inclusion in our publicity materials.

Responsibilities of host and Secretariat

Secretariat	Host
Meeting schedule	Venue hire/booking, including AV requirements/microphones for all large meetings
Meeting content	Hotel reservations
Meeting papers	Catering (lunch and evening meals)
Registrations	Transport to venues
Meeting seating plans	Dinner seating plans (in conjunction with Secretariat)
U21 branded goods	Symposium (in conjunction with Secretariat)
Liaison with guests	Printing of meeting papers (as required)
	Identifying and paying local suppliers