

**A guide to organising the
Universitas 21
Undergraduate Research Conference**



The leading global network
of research universities
for the 21st century

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Setup	4
Selecting a date for the conference.....	4
Invitations to U21 universities.....	4
Visa Applications.....	4
Facility Booking.....	4
Hold dates at your university	5
Finance	5
Special Activity for Staff.....	5
Communications between host and delegate universities.....	5
Insurance	5
Meetings for visiting faculty	5
Website and Registration.....	6
U21 URC Website.....	6
Universitas 21 Logo Style Guide.....	6
Registration	6
Details required	6
7-9 Months Prior.....	8
URC Working Party.....	8
Delegate accommodation.....	8
Confirm bookings for conference facilities.....	8
Start basic layout of schedule	8
Catering.....	8
Book ground transport.....	8
Revise Budget.....	8
6 Months Prior	9
Delegates start to register	9
Master List.....	9
Airport transfers.....	9
Additional items.....	9
3 Months Prior	10
1 Month Prior	11
Finalise delegate list.....	11
Tours.....	11
Finalise programme for printing.....	11
Dinner invitations.....	11
Produce name tags incorporating U21 Logo	11
Two Weeks Prior	12
Staff Briefing.....	12
Dinner.....	12
Email participants	12
Hotels.....	12
Conference Week.....	13
During the conference.....	13
Notes on presentations	13
Notes on posters	13
Final Day.....	13
Post Conference.....	14
Reports.....	14
Budget.....	14
Make sure the U21 Banners are returned to U21 Secretariat	14
Appendix A – Example brochure.....	15
Appendix B – Initial letter of invitation.....	15
Appendix B – Initial letter of invitation.....	16
Appendix C – Visa check list	17
Appendix D – Finance (example).....	18
Appendix E - Schedule of Events (example)	19
Appendix F – Follow up letter	20
Appendix G – Useful contacts	21

Introduction

This document was created by Anne Gilmore and Lisha Allen following the 2006 Undergraduate Research Conference at the University of Queensland and has been added to by other organising teams over the years.

It is intended to be a point of reference for each institution organising the URC and should be seen as a constantly evolving document – each organisational team should add suggestions, comments and observations which they feel will aid those working on the URC in the future.

U21 Undergraduate Research Conference

The first U21 Undergraduate Research Conference took place in 2005.

The URC aims to attract students from a diverse range of discipline and typically includes a range of seminars and student presentations interspersed with social activities and tours to promote networking and stimulate discussion.

The URC also offers academic staff the opportunity to engage with U21 colleagues, discuss topical issues and develop professional networks

2014, Shanghai Jiao Tong University: *Food Safety: from farm to table*

2013, The University of Amsterdam: *Urban Challenges: building healthy, smart & creative cities for the future*

2012, Waseda University: *Connecting to the future*

2011, Fudan University: *Share your inspiration*

2010, University of Melbourne: *Faculty of Imagining*

2009, University of Glasgow

2008, National University of Singapore: *Sustainability*

2007, McGill University

2006, University of Queensland

2005, University of Virginia

Setup

The hosting of a URC will be decided by U21 Managers at least 18 months in advance. It is worth finding out if your institute has hosted such an event previously. This will help save time and also be a good indication of the activities which took place in previous years.

Selecting a date for the conference

It is important to consider the following when selecting a date for your conference:

- Vacation and examination periods for the universities you will be inviting to the conference and also those at your own university.
- School holidays in your own state - as it may reduce the number of staff available to attend or assist in running the conference.
- Check on other major events that your university may be holding at the time you wish to hold your U21 URC as this may limit the availability of senior staff to attend functions.

Once provisional dates have been selected, they should be emailed to the U21 Secretariat, along with an outline programme, theme, budget and plans, for confirmation and approval.

Invitations to U21 universities

- The contact name and address for all the U21 Managers can be obtained from the U21 Secretariat.
- Make sure your institute invites all U21 members to be represented at the conference, including new member institutions.
- A colour brochure that can be emailed with your invitation featuring your institute and your country is a useful promotional tool (Queensland example in Appendix A).
- The U21 website has a page for the URC – be sure to include the Secretariat in all correspondence to ensure relevant and up-to-date information appears on the site.
- Decide how many students from each institution may attend. This is usually determined by budget and accommodation restrictions. In previous years there has been a limit of between 3 to 5 participants from each university, but this decision is at the host's discretion.
- Be aware that the interpretation of "undergraduate" varies across universities.. In your invitation be specific who you are inviting to your conference.
- A sample letter of invitation is in Appendix B.

Visa Applications

As conference administrator, you will receive many questions regarding visa applications. Make sure you have relevant details on obtaining visas or that you can direct enquires to a suitable information resource. Find out whether there is a department in your government who may help out with visa applications. You should keep a record of all delegates which include information such as that in Appendix C.

If letters of invitation are required, they should be addressed personally to those students who require them, written on headed paper from the host university and include the conference dates, plus some extra days either side for travelling.

Facility Booking

Book room for presentations on campus. The room should include:

- Capacity for number of delegates
- Disabled access and seating
- Desks and chairs
- Air conditioning / heating as appropriate
- Campus network
- Data Projector
- VCR/DVD Player
- Whiteboard

- PC with Windows. Ensure that it has the latest software (you will need to check with the delegates if they will be using any specific software in their presentations – if so they may have to bring their own lap top).
- Make sure there is a USB cable to connect USB pen drives or memory sticks
- Water etc for speakers

Hold dates at your university

Send out a memo with important dates as a diary holder for the university's senior staff. Make sure you cover at least the following dates:

- Opening Ceremony
- Dinner
- Closing Ceremony

Advise your university events management or protocol office of your U21 event

Entry in your university's calendar of events. This is important for those who may wish to view the presentations and meet with visiting academic staff.

Finance

It might be useful to request that a new account be set up for URC expenditure. Set up conference budget (see Appendix D)

Special Activity for Staff

You may wish to plan a special activity for visiting staff while the students are doing some other activity. For example: In 2006, staff were invited to attend a workshop on "Investigating teaching and learning practice in purpose built teaching and learning space". This may help universities decide which faculty member will accompany the students.

Communications between host and delegate universities

- Communications between the host university and member universities would ideally occur through **only one** staff member at each university. This is not necessarily the staff member who then accompanies the students.
- The main organiser will receive and send hundreds of emails over the course of the event.
- The host university should consider potential problems if student delegates come unaccompanied.
- It is extremely important to provide attendees with a detailed outline of the programme and all activities a.s.a.p. including times, venues and, if appropriate, dress code.
- For safety reasons it is important to know the arrival and departure dates and time for each delegate.
- Conference organisers should be aware that many students may not have travelled independently prior to this event. For some of the students, this will be their first overseas trip.

Insurance

Talk to your university Insurance Office and Occupational Health and Safety Department for a Risk Assessment.

Meetings for visiting faculty

Some visiting staff may request library and internet access during visit and request meetings with academic staff at the host university not involved in the conference – this is easier to arrange prior to their arrival due to the very full conference program.

Website and Registration

U21 URC Website

Most URC hosts choose to create a website for the event. If you choose to create one:

- Make sure you have link to the U21 website (www.universitas21.com)
- Also ask U21 to update their website with the date of your event
- Have access to website and text as required
- Create suitable name for URL
- Have an email address set up for conference enquiries

Consider including the following information:

- Purpose
- Conference Host, venue and accommodation
- Important dates
- Registration
- Submission details for abstracts and papers to Oculus
- Attendee Guidelines
- Travel to (whatever country) and visa information
- Local Tours options
- Travel Insurance information
- Included contact details for General Enquiries

Past experience has shown that if you get the website right, the whole process of registering, supplying information and enabling staff and students to understand what needs to be done and what is happening is made much easier.

Universitas 21 Logo Style Guide

The U21 logos are available from the Secretariat in high and low resolution, in .jpeg and .eps format and in both colour and black and white. A style guide is provided for anyone who uses the U21 logo or who needs to communicate for or on behalf of the network and should be adhered to at all times. The logo with the strap line should always be used.

Registration

It is up to the host institution to decide whether registration is done on-line or off-line. In either case, the information which needs to be gathered remains the same.

Details required

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| • Name | • Telephone Number |
| • Gender | • Fax Number |
| • Preferred name for name tag | • Audiovisual requirements |
| • Degree enrolled in | • Provisional presentation details |
| • Name of University | • Travel details |
| • Faculty/School/Department/Centre | • Dietary requirements |
| • Name | • Special needs |
| • Postal Address | • Name of Next of Kin |
| • Contact email address | • Telephone Number of Next of Kin |

It may be necessary to collect this information in stages, depending on the system of registration you choose to adopt. This is entirely up to you!

It should be noted that in previous years the student delegates completed their registration form as soon as they were advised by their university that they would be attending the conference, whereas there was some need to follow up the accompanying academic staff for details! NB: Some universities arranged the flights for their whole group and others required each person to make their own travel arrangements.

Colleagues in Fudan (URC 2011) found that it is very helpful to have a website that accepts online registration. The students are constantly changing their travel plans and accommodation requests and they are asked to offer the latest info all to the online system. The organizers, therefore, can have the most updated info anytime from the website and make changes of arrangement accordingly.

7-9 Months Prior

URC Working Party

It is recommended that the host university should set up a U21 URC Working Party. This working party should consist of senior staff members in key areas of the university who will assist later in the promotion and organisation of the conference.

For example: A representative from the Vice Chancellor's Office, Deputy VC (Academic) Office, Dean of Students, International Educational Directorate, Marketing, Protocol and Directors of Studies from various faculties.

The administrator(s) responsible for the basic organisation of the conference should also be present at these meetings and be made known to the members of the working party.

Delegate accommodation

Accommodation can be either in hotels or on campus and can be dormitories, shared rooms or single rooms, depending on availability.

It is advisable to visit any hotels that will be used to accommodate delegates and establish working relationships with staff who will be looking after conference bookings, as these are likely to be complicated and constantly changing!

Be aware that delegates will arrive prior to the conference and some will stay for additional time at the end.

Delegates will require internet access in their accommodation.

Confirm bookings for conference facilities

Make sure you are familiar with both the conference venues and the surrounding area, including facilities available and the possible uses of space (e.g. catering set-up, group discussion etc)

Start basic layout of schedule

It is a good idea to start setting out the schedule well in advance, so that you can get an overview of what still needs to be arranged or organise. (See Appendix E for an example schedule used at Queensland.)

Build in some "contingency" time to allow for late starts / overrunning of sessions.

At the 2007 URC it was noted that some students did not attend the cultural activities as they wished to work on presentations. Wherever possible, students should have everything prepared beforehand and encouraged to attend all activities provided by the host.

Catering

Book a good caterer and ensure all dietary, cultural and religious requirements are catered for.

Book venue and cater for Conference Dinner

Book ground transport

Work out how to transport delegates from hotel to university without getting anyone lost! This is particularly important as the schedule is often very tight.

Revise Budget

It is important (and useful) to keep an overview of the budget and expenditure through the organisation of the project.

6 Months Prior

Delegates start to register

The person in each member university who is responsible for co-ordination of their university's participants should send the names of the staff and student participants to the dedicated email address (if set up) or the conference organiser.

This would be a good opportunity to send a follow-up letter to all universities (example Appendix F)

The co-ordinator and the accompanying faculty member may be the same individual.

Master List

It is advisable to set up Master List for staff and student delegates to include the following details

- Delegate number
- Name
- Age
- Date of birth
- Gender
- University
- Faculty
- School
- Postal address
- Email
- Telephone
- Next of kin contact details
- Contact at U21 institution
- Accommodation required
- Arrival date
- Departure date
- Visa information
- Guest names
- Any special needs
- Any dietary requirements
- Any further information
- Accompanying faculty member details (as above)

NB it is important that information about allergies is available to all organisers who might need it over the course of the URC. Perhaps this could be part of the briefing to those responsible for students' welfare during the conference.

Airport transfers

Provide details for delegates to get from airport to hotel and to your campus. You could arrange for pickup either of individuals or groups to collect travellers from the airport and take them to their hotel. Not all the delegates will travel in groups and some will arrive late at night and alone. The safety of your visitors is top priority.

Additional items

Keep working on schedule - find places of interest for the group to visit and make the necessary arrangements.

Request U21 Banners from U21 Secretariat. There may be other items available as well, so please enquire!

Book graphic designer and printer for the production of the programme

You may wish to use Student Ambassadors as tour guides, this should be arranged well in advance.

Revise Budget

3 Months Prior

- Create Room List for accommodation and keep in touch with hotels.
- Start work on programme document and keep budget up-to-date
- Place order for any conference pack items. Previous items have included satchels/back packs, T-shirts, notepads etc.
- Decide on format & colour of name badges
- Book photographer
- Start looking at catering and menus. Include morning teas, lunches, dinners and conference dinner
- Revise Budget
- Obtain a welcome message to delegates from the Vice-Chancellor's Office for inside cover of your programme.
- Many students fail to submit the abstract and title of their presentation until the last minute, which can cause problems in finalising the presentation schedule and inviting academically-related and interested faculty members to act as moderators. We might have been too soft on deadlines with the students. Future planners might take the possible delay into consideration.

1 Month Prior

Finalise delegate list

Produce alphabetical list by staff, student and university.
Follow up details missing from delegate registrations

Invite senior staff members to Chair session of the presentations. When engaging faculty in this role, also introduce all academic and research related U21 events to them. It is a good opportunity for U21 PR on campus.

Tours

Finalise numbers, locations, payment and produce document with times and group numbers to be distributed to those involved.

Finalise programme for printing

This should include:

- Welcome from host university
- Schedule of events
- Emergency number
- Presentation schedule
- Abstracts (these should have been emailed to you by students)
- Conference Co-ordination Team
- Names of student presenters
- Names of faculty and staff accompany the student presenters
- Guidelines for submitting a paper to the 'Oculus'.

Dinner invitations

- Draw up a list of guests from host university (to be approved by working party) and a formal invitation be sent out from the university's protocol office
- Produce schedule of events
- Find out who will be giving speeches at the dinner and if scripts need to be written.
- Finalise table decorations
- Finalise catering numbers

Produce name tags incorporating U21 Logo

Make sure you create name tags for university visitors and conference delegates.

Inform your university security division about your event and provide the 24 hour security number to delegates.

Revise Budget

Two Weeks Prior

Staff Briefing

Hold briefing meeting with Student Ambassadors/ student tour guides.

Dinner

- Finalise seating arrangements and fax to functions organiser. Mix VIPS with delegates
- Arrange music, if desired
- Organise to have U21 banner at the dinner.
- Produce run sheet for MC

Email participants

- Request for power point presentations
- Details for upon their arrival - who will meet them at hotel and take them to the university
- Visa - check for last minute problems.
- Medical and travel insurance reminder
- List of what to bring and what the weather is like
- Snap shot of local tours

Hotels

Supply hotel with final list of delegates and their arrival and departure details

Conference Week

During the conference

- Make sure there are at least two Host University Staff members present during all activities. You will need at least two pairs of hands at all times.
- Make sure that the delegates are familiar with your campus (could offer an orientation tour on arrival) and provide them with maps and contact phone number
- Encourage delegates to wear name badges throughout the conference. Although they will get to know each other quickly, new hosts/faculty/mentors will not know everyone.
- Photos - make sure you get a group photo and if possible a series of photos taken during the conference.
- Organise to have U21 banner during presentations.
- You may wish to present visiting staff members with a gift.
- Have the phone number of local doctor handy in case of medical emergency/ keep first aid kit on hand at all times.
- Think about where you will keep the luggage after students have checked out of their hotel on the final day.
- Presentations - take along bell, laser pointer, jug and water for the presentation sessions

Notes on presentations

- Provide a computer for presentations (not everyone will have a laptop.)
- Tell participants what operating system and version of software this computer will have to ensure files will open and display correctly. Get presentations in advance, and test them on the computer.
- If it is not possible to get presentations in advance, ask participants to send a draft presentation, with samples of the most complicated formats they'll use (fonts, animations, etc.) to ensure these work on the host university's system.
- Allow people to use their own laptops when needed (custom software, different software versions, files too large to transfer, problems such as lack of fonts, etc.). However: discourage this and do it as the exception rather than the rule to reduce the amount of "set up" between presentations. Wherever possible preload presentations onto one computer.

Notes on posters

It is very helpful to have all the posters right outside the presentation meeting venue, so that the students can go to the posters and discuss them whenever they want to, even with only a few minutes' free time.

Final Day

The Host University's U21 Representative will formally hand over the hosting of the event to the next university.

Post Conference

Reports

- Host university to prepare a formal report for the *Universitas 21* Secretariat, including at least one photo.
- Collect post-conference comments from student delegates for U21 Report to be given by host university U21 representative at U21 Annual Meeting.

Budget

- Finalise budget and make sure all vendors are paid.
- Invoice the Secretariat for the U21 contribution (if this has not already been invoiced)

Make sure the U21 Banners are returned to U21 Secretariat.

Appendix B – Initial letter of invitation

Example from Queensland URC

Date:

Dear Colleagues

The University of Queensland is pleased to host the second U21 Undergraduate Research Conference from 25-29 September 2007. On behalf of the University, may I extend a formal invitation to all U21 institutions to visit Australia to participate in this year's conference.

The Conference will provide the opportunity for three outstanding undergraduate or Honours students from your institution to showcase their research to an international audience of fellow students and staff.

A special feature of the inaugural U21 Undergraduate Research Conference held at the University of Virginia in 2005 was the breadth of research presented, from political science and the humanities to physics, mathematics and biology. We anticipate that the 2006 Conference will provide a similarly rich experience for participants.

The 2006 Conference will also provide an opportunity for accompanying staff (faculty) to engage with their U21 colleagues on topical undergraduate learning, teaching and research issues, as well as establish new professional networks.

The Conference will be held at the University's St Lucia Campus (a short distance from the Brisbane City Centre) and will then reconvene at UQ's Moreton Bay Research Station on North Stradbroke Island for two days. The Island's diverse marine and terrestrial habitats are the focus of educational and research programs at the University.

Whilst in Australia, Conference participants will have the opportunity also to arrange optional visits to some world-renowned attractions, such as the southern Great Barrier Reef, Australia Zoo, surf beaches and the rainforest hinterland, which are within easy reach of Brisbane.

The University looks forward to welcoming you in September in true Australian style. (Details of conference attached)

Please advise your participation to Lisha Allen by 30 April 2006.

Yours sincerely

Secretary and Registrar

Appendix C – Visa check list

EVENT DELEGATES - DATA COLLECTION SHEET									
Passport nationality	Passport number	Date of birth	Last name as it appears in passport	First and middle names (in full)	Invited by event organiser?	Invitation letter issued?	Registration fees paid	Full business addresses and contact details	Other information

Appendix D – Finance (example)

(You must account for all expenses related to the conference)

This includes how you deal with the payment of invoices within your institute and also the invoicing of other institutes for expenses like accommodation.

Typical budget items

INCOME

U21 contribution to conference

Delegates paid for own accommodation and flights

EXPENSES

Catering

Conference Dinner

Music at Dinner

Ground Transport

Visits to local attraction

Airport transfers

Entry to museum

Casual staff pays

Postage

MARKETING

Development of website, including artwork

Website maintenance unable to be done in Faculty

Design of program

Design of 4 page brochure

PRINTING & Sundry Expenses

Conference packs and “goodies”

T-shirts for participants and any helpers

Printing of Programme

Appendix E - Schedule of Events (example)

It is useful to have a working sheet that lists every detail for each day of your conference.

Presentations should be scheduled 20 minutes apart. This allowed time for the presentation, questions and change over. (Talk 12 minutes). The Chair of the session was provided with a bell to ring after the 10 minute mark.

Make sure you allow set up time prior to presentation beginning for students to make sure their PPT presentations work. As backup ask for all presentations prior to arrival and store on CD.

Date	Time	Activity	Venue	Staff to attend
Monday 25 September	11.00 – 11.15	Delegates to meet at entrance of hotel	Delegates to be checked off and given name tags.	Lisha Allen
At 9.00am a student/s can collect satchels from BACS and take to St. Leo's	11.15 – 11.45	Delegates are transferred from Toowong Villas by bus to UQ St. Lucia Campus.	Bus to depart Toowong Villas (9 Ascog Terrace Toowong) at 11.15am. Bus to deliver delegates to Building 47A on College Road.	Lisha will escort group to Building 47.
A student will need to make sure room and computer is set up prior to 12.00pm	12.00 – 12.30	Welcome and briefing Host: Prof. Susan Hamilton to introduction to key people to delegates. Also give briefing and list days events	Building 47A, Room 141 <i>Protocol have a slide presentation that could be used here.</i> Students to escort group to St. Leo's for lunch	Professor Michael Keniger and Mr Douglas Porter to give brief welcome speech.
	12.30 – 14.00	Lunch and Conference Registration Host: Professor Hamilton	Duhig Dining Room at St. Leo's College Includes presentation from IED Registrations will be in the Boardroom	Registrars Lisha and students
Briefing OH & S Toilets, Emergency ph.	14.00 – 15.00	Brief tour of St. Lucia Campus	Students to escort group from St. Leo's and tour the campus for 45 minutes before returning to QBP to meet bus at 15.00.	
	15:00 – 15.15	Prepare to leave by bus and transfer back to Toowong Villas	Bus to depart at 15.15 from bus stop outside Queensland Bioscience Precinct.	Building 80 UQ Map
	18.00 - 18.30	Transfer by bus to Customs House	Bus to depart from front of Toowong Villas at 18.15	

Appendix F – Follow up letter

Example from Queensland URC

Dear Colleagues

I would like to thank those universities, who have agreed to participate in the Second U21 Undergraduate Research Conference to be held on 25 to 29 September, 2006. I am particularly pleased by the enthusiastic response of the students who will be presenting their research at the conference. Sessions so far include presentations from the disciplines of medicine, social sciences, management, science and economics.

Registration Reminder

As planning is now in the final stages, could I encourage those universities who have not yet registered their participants to do so no later than 21 August 2006. On-line registration is available from the conference website. The deadline for the receipt of abstracts is also 21 August 2006.

Visa requirements

Formal letters of invitation will be provided to those participants who require more detailed documentation to obtain a visa for Australia. It is important to finalise visa arrangements early to ensure you can get your visa on time. If a letter of invitation is required you should contact Ms Lisha Allen at lisha.allen@uq.edu.au

Appointments with colleagues at the University of Queensland

If you have a colleague that you wish to met with while at UQ you should arrange this prior to your visit as the week of the conference is a non-teaching week at the University. If you require assistance to arrange appointments in advance contact Ms Lisha Allen at lisha.allen@uq.edu.au

This will be an exciting conference and I very much look forward to meeting your staff and students here in Brisbane.

I should be grateful if you would forward this circular to those dealing with the Conference at your University.

Yours sincerely

Secretary and Registrar

Appendix G – Useful contacts

Universitas 21 Secretariat

Sue Dengate, U21 Student Experience Manager
sue.dengate@universitas21.com

Clare Noakes, Administration Manager
clare.noakes@universitas21.com

Tarlok Singh, Finance Administrator
tarlok.singh@universitas21.com
+44 121 415 8232

Website: www.universitas21.com