

**INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF MIDWIVES**

# **Call for Bids to Co-Host the 36th Triennial ICM Congress and Associated Meetings in 2032**

**Guidelines for Submitting Expressions of  
Interest**



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# Invitation to Bid for Congress 2032

## Overview

Every three years the International Confederation of Midwives (ICM) invites member associations to consider co-hosting an ICM Triennial Congress together with ICM. The co-host selection process operates on a **five year cycle**, providing adequate time for arranging and planning this unique global event for midwives, partners and stakeholders.

Council delegates attending the ICM Council meeting in Lisbon in June 2026, will vote to select the two top bids submitted from member associations who express their interest in co-hosting ICM's Triennial Congress 2032 (which we will refer to as Congress 2032 in this document).

The two finalists will then be independently assessed against stated criteria by ICM's Congress Management Team and the ICM Board will make the final decision about co-hosting and the Congress location within 18 months (by December 2027). A successful bid enables an ICM Member Association to co-host the Triennial Congress with ICM and welcome midwives from around the world to their country for an exciting event that will allow the co-host association to share their knowledge and culture with the global midwifery family.

This document has been prepared by ICM Head Office to guide Member Associations who wish to bid to co-host Congress 2032. It provides a general overview of the Congress and the key information that must be included in the Congress Co-Host Bid Document to be submitted to ICM for consideration.

**ICM Member Associations interested in co-hosting a Triennial Congress are invited to submit a Congress Co-Host Bid 2032.**

This Invitation to submit a Congress Co-Host Bid 2032 supersedes any previously issued guidelines or handbooks.



# Objectives of the ICM Triennial Congress

1. To provide a forum where advances in midwifery, sexual, reproductive, maternal, newborn and adolescent health can be shared, evaluated, promoted and monitored. It is also a place where midwives from around the world can draw on the skills, knowledge, and experiences of colleagues for application in their own settings.
2. To promote ICM's mission, to 'strengthen midwives' associations and to advance the profession of midwifery globally by promoting autonomous midwives as the most appropriate caregivers for childbearing women in keeping birth normal, in order to enhance the reproductive health of women and the health of their newborn and their families'.

Every successful ICM Triennial Congress makes a significant contribution to the status and profession of midwives in the co-host country and internationally.

## Frequency and Location of ICM Triennial Congress

The ICM Triennial Congress is held every three years, not earlier than two years and nine months, and no later than three years and three months after the previous ICM Triennial Congress.

Any ICM full member association (having fully paid membership fees) may bid to co-host the Triennial Congress. Rotation between ICM's six regions each three years is desirable, but Council and Board Members also consider all aspects of the complete bid including, as much as possible, access for the world's midwives to the co-host country.



## **Responsibilities of the Co-Host Midwives' Association**

Responsibilities of the Co-Host Association include:

- Establish a National Co-Host Planning Committee to work with ICM.
- Communicate regularly and effectively with the ICM Congress Management Team, ICM Chief Executive or her delegate and the wider ICM Team as required.
- Identify and invite key stakeholders to the opening ceremony.
- Support the ICM Congress Management Team in obtaining appropriate cultural entertainment.
- Support the Congress Management Team to obtain appropriate participants for the multi-faith service (if confirmed by the Board).
- Support the Congress Management Team in identifying local suppliers and services as needed (e.g. merchandise providers, print shops, etc)
- Actively promote the conference to its members and relevant stakeholders.
- Provide stewards to assist ICM's Congress Management Team with logistical support at the Congress venue and associated events and ensuring that stewards will pay 50% of the discounted early-bird registration fee.
- Seek coverage of the Congress with local media and in coordination with ICM Communications Team.
- Timely submission of budgeted invoices for agreed expenses that are budgeted as Congress expenditure.

## **Responsibilities of ICM and its Congress Management team**

- All responsibilities, not listed above for the Co-Host Association, are the responsibility of ICM and its Congress Management Team. These include:
  - General overall management, including all agreements and contracts
  - Budget setting
  - Fee setting
  - Financial management
  - Reporting
  - Congress website and app
  - Registration process



- Venue selection, technical support, food and beverage and management
- Hotel accommodation
- Abstract management, scientific programme including plenary speakers and networking events
- Marketing and promotion, including Press liaison
- Sponsorship and exhibition
- Security
- Transport
- Liaison with Co-Host Association

### **Benefits to Co-Host Association**

- Allocated contribution towards hotel costs of National Co-Host Association Planning Committee, including the President
- Allocated number of complimentary Congress registrations (usually up to 10)
- Allocated number of discounted registrations (50% of early-bird rate) for association members agreeing to act as Stewards and fulfil required tasks
- 25% of commercial exhibition and sponsor income from pre-agreed Co-Host Association sponsors, obtained through the efforts of the Co-Host Association and not overlapping with those sponsors and exhibitors being approached by ICM
- A fixed fee contribution to assisting with the Co-Host Association exhibition stand, from which the Co-Host Association may sell pre-agreed local merchandise and retain any profit.
- Any Congress surplus is transferred to ICM, following the final audit. Should the Congress result in a financial deficit, ICM absolves the Co-Host Association from sharing in any loss.



## Getting Help with Your Bid

Compiling a bid to host such a prestigious event can be daunting! Remember, most associations are in the same situation and have little or no experience with large international events. But you don't need to do it alone!

- Contact the following organisations in your city and country, who are usually happy to help and help prepare the bid:
  - The host city or country Marketing and Convention Bureau or Board of Tourism
  - The host city Mayor's Office
  - The conference venue or company that owns the conference venue where you are proposing to hold the ICM Congress
  - Host country government departments such as the Department for Tourism, Health or national civil servants responsible for midwifery or SRMNAH services

The decision to appoint a local PCO (Professional Congress Organiser) sits with ICM. Therefore, **member associations are asked NOT to make any contacts or commercial commitments to potential local PCOs**. The local PCO procurement process will follow once the Congress destination is selected by the ICM Board. All procurement is managed by ICM according to policy.

All sponsors/exhibitors must comply with ICM policies and any sponsors to be contacted by the co-host Association must be pre-agreed with ICM. See above in responsibilities sections.



## Past Congress Locations

|      |                            |      |                        |
|------|----------------------------|------|------------------------|
| 1981 | Brighton, England          | 2005 | Brisbane, Australia    |
| 1984 | Sydney, Australia          | 2008 | Glasgow, Scotland      |
| 1987 | The Hague, The Netherlands | 2012 | Durban, South Africa   |
| 1990 | Kobe, Japan                | 2014 | Prague, Czech Republic |
| 1993 | Vancouver, Canada          | 2017 | Toronto, Canada        |
| 1996 | Oslo, Norway               | 2020 | Virtual                |
| 1999 | Manila, The Philippines    | 2023 | Bali, Indonesia        |
| 2002 | Vienna, Austria            |      |                        |

## Upcoming Congress Locations

- 2026 Lisbon, Portugal
- 2029 Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates



# Overview of the Bidding Process

## *Step 1*

A call for Bids to co-host the Congress will be circulated by ICM Head Office on or before 12 September 2025.

ICM Member Associations bidding to co-host the Triennial Congress 2032 should return completed bids to the ICM Head Office by email no later than 16 January 2026. Bids must be sent to: [council@internationalmidwives.org](mailto:council@internationalmidwives.org)

## *Step 2*

After the submission deadline, the ICM Congress Management Team, or delegate, will make contact (by email, telephone or Teams) with the venues and destinations proposed by the interested co-host Associations and a preliminary evaluation will be made based the Congress location criteria. A site visit may be made.

## *Step 3*

Before the end of March 2026 the ICM Congress Management Team will present a short list and analysis of submitted bids to the ICM Board.

By the first week of **April 2026** the Board will shortlist **up to four bids** to be considered by the ICM Council taking place Lisbon in June 2026.

## *Step 4*

During the first week of April 2026, the ICM Congress Management Team will share the short list with all the ICM Member Associations who have submitted a bid. These Member Associations are expected to present their bids in person at the ICM Council Meeting taking place Lisbon in June 2026.

The ICM Congress Management Team will prepare and share the initial analysis of each of the final shortlisted bids with ICM's Council delegates, as part of the Council papers, 30 business days before the Council meeting. The date and time of bid presentations and Council voting will be included in the June 2026 Council Agenda. Member



Associations who have been shortlisted will be notified of the time and date of their presentation.

Each shortlisted association will present their bid to the Council, after which Council delegates will vote electronically for two finalists to co-host Congress 2032.

During the six-month period following ICM Congress 2026, the ICM Congress Management Team, or delegate, will independently assess the two finalists and evaluate local facilities and capacity to co-host a successful Congress.

As part of the assessment, the ICM Congress Management Team, and possibly the ICM Chief Executive, may visit the locations and potential Congress venues at an appropriate time. It is standard practice that MAs who are bidding to co-host the Triennial Congress will arrange funding for economy travel (from Europe) and accommodation (four stars) for up to three persons for this visit. Associations are encouraged to approach local partners (boards of tourism or conferences) to fund this visit.

**Inability to secure funding for this visit does not disqualify a member association from the bid process.**

The ICM Congress Management Team will report their findings to the Board.

The Board will make the final decision on the winning bid and will notify the participating associations of their decision. The decision is expected by the end of June 2027.

ICM and the Co-Host Association will sign a Co-Host Agreement, setting out their respective responsibilities, Co-Host Association benefits and procedures for working together.

The selected Co-Host will attend the 2029 ICM Council meeting and Congress, at their own cost, and formally welcome delegates to attend the Congress in 2032. These presentations will be built into the Council and Congress programmes.



# Preparing and Submitting a Proposal

## Contents of the bid

Bids must include the following information:

- Proposed location and name of the proposed Congress venue, which must fulfil the following criteria:
  - Capacity for 4000 – 5000 participants, including a plenary hall with seating capacity for 4000
  - Up to 20 rooms for concurrent sessions able to accommodate 150 – 400 participants.
  - Capacity to accommodate 500 sqm (net) of exhibition space for 100 poster boards (double-sided)
  - Sufficient lunch and refreshment seating capacity for 4000 – 5000 participants, this does not have to be in one place, it can be spread across the venue.
- Confirmation of sufficient hotel capacities of different quality and wide price range, including a list of hotels.
- A sample coffee break and lunch menu with current-day costs at the proposed venue, showing a range of food options suitable for all dietary requirements and including details of additional charges for country/local tax and any service charges.
- Confirmation that external food and beverage suppliers can be accommodated at the venue (e.g. food trucks for the welcome reception).
- Options for location of pre-Congress networking event such as a march or a dance of all delegates, including possibility of food trucks at this venue/location
- Confirmation that suitable venues are available near the Congress venue to host a Gala night event with a minimum of 1800 people.
- Availability between May – June 2032, with mid-June as preferred date.
- A resumé of the bidding association's experience and level of involvement in their own national events and conferences; include any involvement with supporting or organising international conferences.



- Written evidence that the association's bid has the support of appropriate government departments, convention bureau, tourism authorities and relevant city authorities such as the mayor and/or city manager.
- An indication of any subsidies / financial support that will be offered to ICM (for example, grants, subsidies, tax relief or other financial incentives)
- A statement of around 100 words from the bidding association indicating what it will mean to the midwifery profession in their country and region, if they are selected to co-host Congress 2032.

## Additional information

Associations are welcome to submit additional information which they consider may give further support to their bid. Detailed information regarding facilities, accessibility, and local logistics **is not** required at this stage as the ICM Congress Management Team will obtain this information as indicated in Step 2 of the process described above.

## Submission Language

Bids must be submitted in English.

## Submitting a bid

The completed bid submission document expressing interest in co-hosting Congress 2032 must be received by email at ICM Head Office no later than 17:00 on 16 January 2026 (Central Europe Time). **No bids, additional documentation or bid amendments will be accepted after this date.**

Bids must be sent to [council@internationalmidwives.org](mailto:council@internationalmidwives.org) with the subject line 'Congress Bid 2032'.

Remember, early submission gives ICM time to provide advice and ask questions if the bid is missing any information!

The completed bid submission must be made on the Member Association's official letterhead and be signed by the Association's President, Chair or Secretary.

Questions relating to this document or the bidding process will be answered up until 16 December 2025. Questions should be sent by email to the ICM Congress Management



Team at: [council@internationalmidwives.org](mailto:council@internationalmidwives.org). Please note that ICM will not accept or answer questions after 16 December 2025.

## Evaluation Criteria

Bids will be evaluated and shortlisted according to the following criteria:

### *Administration*

- The bid is received by the deadline (17:00 on 16 January 2026, Central Europe Time).
- The submission is complete and signed by the Association's President, Chair or Secretary.
- The proposed venue has the capacity described above.
- There is a wide range of hotel and accommodation options across a broad price range.
- Food and beverage costs at the proposed Congress venue are provided and the venue offers a range of food options suitable for all dietary requirements.
- Options for external suppliers of food and beverage (e.g. food trucks for the welcome reception and pre-Congress networking event) are outlined.
- There is an identified venue capable of holding a gala evening for 1800 people minimum.
- Any outstanding features or factors about the bid, venue, or destination are described.
- The submitting association's experience with organising, supporting or managing national and international conferences is described.
- The submitting association shows they have the capacity to undertake the co-host responsibilities.
- There is documented evidence that the bidding association has the support of appropriate local and national government departments.
- There is documented evidence of support from the local convention bureau and tourist authorities.
- The 100-word statement in support of the submission is included, providing evidence of the benefit to local midwives and the midwifery profession of co-hosting the ICM Congress in the country.



*The Congress Management Team will also conduct an independent assessment of the following:*

- Ease of access to the host country and within the host country (e.g. visa approval and transport costs).
- Issues of concern that might detrimentally affect a Congress (e.g. conflict, political instability, environmental risks, gender inequality).



# Rules and Regulations Governing the Bidding Process

The bidding procedure is strictly governed by the following rules and regulations:

1. All submissions will be dated on receipt at Head Office; bidding associations will receive written acknowledgement that the bid has been received.
2. The bidding association may not offer any inducement to any individual with any direct or indirect influence over the selection/voting process, nor to their relatives or companions.
3. The same standard at (ii) above applies to any company, travel service or third party associated or having a connection with the bidding association.
4. Only those bids shortlisted by the ICM Board will be forwarded to Council to vote for the two top bids.
5. Bidding MAs, or their agents, will not offer any promotions or marketing items to Council delegates, including the ICM Board. This includes the offer of any other direct or indirect benefits to Council delegates. Gifts to Council delegates in the Council room may not be given by bidding associations or their agents.
6. The two bids receiving the highest number of votes from Council delegates will be consider finalists and advance to the final stage of due diligence evaluation.
7. The two finalist member associations are expected, if possible, to cover the costs of transport, accommodation and per diem fees for the site visits carried out by the ICM Congress Management Team, however inability to raise funds to cover the cost of the visit does not exclude a MA from the bid process.
8. The Board will make the final decision on the successful bid once the due diligence assessment process is completed.
9. The two finalist associations will be informed of the Board's decision by the end of December 2027. The final announcement on the location of Congress 2032 will be made by ICM in the same month or in January 2028.



## Timeline Summary

|                                               |                                                                                                            |
|-----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| On or before 12 September 2025                | Calls for Congress Bid distributed to Member Associations                                                  |
| 16 December 2025                              | Opportunity to submit questions closes                                                                     |
| 16 January 2026 (17:00 CET)                   | Final date for submitting Congress Bids                                                                    |
| Before end March 2026                         | Congress Management Team reviews submissions and recommends shortlist to ICM Board                         |
| End March 2026                                | ICM Board approves shortlist of up to four bids                                                            |
| First week of April 2026                      | All bidding Associations are notified of outcome                                                           |
| 23 April 2026                                 | Shortlisted Congress bids are sent to Council delegates together with Council papers                       |
| 10 -12 June 2026<br>Council Meeting in Lisbon | Shortlisted bids are presented to Council delegates<br>Council delegates vote to choose two finalists      |
| Before end October 2027                       | The Congress Management Team completes due diligence evaluation and makes recommendations to the ICM Board |
| By end November 2027                          | The ICM Board considers report and makes final decision                                                    |
| By end of December 2027                       | Finalist associations are notified of decision.<br>ICM member associations are informed.                   |

Early submission gives ICM time to provide advice and ask questions if the bid is missing any information.

**Questions relating to this document or the bidding process** should be sent by email until 16 December 2025 to the ICM Congress Management Team at: [council@internationalmidwives.org](mailto:council@internationalmidwives.org). Please note that we will not be accepting questions after that.

**Completed bids** must be sent to [council@internationalmidwives.org](mailto:council@internationalmidwives.org) with the subject line 'Congress Bid'.

**We look forward to receiving your bid!**