Theme Forum Information

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Dear IAIA09 Theme Forum Convener:

Thank you for your submission to convene a theme forum at IAIA09 in Accra. As you already know, your proposal has been preliminarily accepted and is included in the preliminary program, so you are therefore a potential theme forum convener! The final decision on the theme forums to be included in the final program will be made following the provision of further information by potential theme forum conveners, as discussed in more detail below.

As I am sure you are aware, theme forums have become a very important element of IAIA conferences in recent years, usually addressing cross-cutting issues of relevance to a wide range of impact assessment practitioners. For this reason, a maximum of 3 theme forums will be scheduled to run concurrently at IAIA09. They are expected to add considerable value to the IAIA conference experience and therefore higher standards are generally required of theme forums relative to concurrent sessions in terms of the issues addressed, the quality of presenters and the way in which the session is organized and chaired.

Theme forum presenters will usually be invited to contribute by theme forum conveners, although any conference participant may submit a paper abstract for possible inclusion in a particular theme forum through the online submission process. The final selection of speakers is at the discretion of the theme forum convenor, but please note that even invited contributors are required to register and pay for the conference! You will receive instructions on how to review submissions in a separate communication.

If you are recruiting speakers, please also ensure that their abstracts are submitted online – *only abstracts submitted online and prior to the abstract submission deadline of 31 January 2009 will be included in the final program*. Presenters may enter the abstracts themselves, or you may do it on their behalf, but if you do so, please be certain to forward the confirmation of submission notice to them. The online submission form includes a space for "additional information." I strongly recommend that you advise invited individuals to note in this space that they have been invited by you to present in your theme forum.

In accordance with a IAIA Board decision in 2006, theme forum conveners will be requested to provide the following information to Jonathan Allotey, IAIA09 program chair (jallotey@epaghana.org and jan_allotey@yahoo.com) and copied to Jennifer Howell jen@iaia.org, by 15 February 2009:

1. Objective(s) of the theme forum and what participants will learn.
2. How the theme forum addresses the theme of the conference, "Impact Assessment and Human Well-Being." Preference will be given to theme forums that address the conference theme.
3. A list of confirmed speakers including a short biography of each (note: online submissions require a short bio; you may use these).
4. Abstract of each speaker's contribution (or list the abstract numbers as submitted online).

5. Format of the forum, i.e., how will the information be presented in the 1.5-hour time frame. Options include paper presentations, debates, panel discussions or other formats, and preference will be given to innovative formats that wide audience participation.
6. Who will benefit from attending and why.

This information will be reviewed by the IAIA09 program chair and Steering Committee, and the selection of the final theme forums will be made based upon the following criteria:

- Relevance of the topic to our international audience and to the conference theme.
- Quality of speakers.
- Innovation in format.

Consideration will also be given to the "mix" of theme forums, to avoid overlaps and to ensure that a wide range of the most topical impact assessment issues are addressed and different perspectives are presented. As a potential theme forum convener, you are encouraged to review the provisional list in the preliminary program and actively seek opportunities to combine or revise proposals towards these objectives. Please contact Jonathan Allotey for any further guidance and any assistance you may need.

Following the final selection process, any sessions that cannot be included in the final program as theme forums will be included as concurrent sessions.

Thank you for your efforts so far towards the success of IAIA09, and we look forward to working with you over the coming months as you plan your theme forum!

Regards,
Jonathan Allotey
IAIA09 Program Chair