

## **Request for Expressions of Interest (EOI) to Host ESCRS Winter Meeting 2026**

### **Introduction**

The European Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgeons (ESCRS) was founded in 1991 to promote education and research in the field of implant and refractive surgery and to advance and promote the study and practice of ophthalmology. ESCRS has over 7,500 members from 130 countries worldwide.

### **ESCRS Winter Meeting**

The ESCRS Winter Meeting is at the forefront of promoting education in the field of cataract and refractive surgery. It has a clear and enthusiastic mission: to nurture a forward-looking and robust scientific community within our field, while enhancing the educational process. Providing high-quality education is a hallmark of ESCRS and we are dedicated to ensuring that knowledge is shared equitably among countries and societies seeking collaboration. Our primary objective is to move away from passive learning, offering an immersive and dynamic learning experience.

To achieve its goal of sharing knowledge equitably, ESCRS wishes to run its Winter Meeting in collaboration with National Societies which are affiliated to ESCRS and wish to combine their national meeting with an ESCRS Winter Meeting. Through this Expression of Interest process, ESCRS aims to encourage applications from all motivated National Societies which are aligned with its educational objective.

The Winter Meeting takes place over 3 days in late February or March. The pattern over the congress days is as follows:

- Tuesday: Setup commences.
- Thursday: Setup finalisation; possibility for National Society sessions.
- Friday, Saturday, Sunday morning: Winter Meeting sessions and industry exhibition.
- Sunday afternoon: Industry exhibition dismantling.

The peak nights for hotel accommodation are Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

The ESCRS Winter Meeting has an industry Exhibition Area of 3,500 sqm gross, which will also include other delegate moments such as presentation theatres, round table discussions etc.

ESCRS appointed MCI as its Professional Congress Organiser (PCO) in 2021. MCI will be closely collaborating with ESCRS and the chosen destination and venue in organising the Winter Meeting. MCI will be working with local partners in the host destination.

## **National Society applicant criteria**

To submit an Expression of Interest, the National Society must be affiliated to ESCRS at the time of submitting its EOI. If your National Society would like to be affiliated, please contact the Head Office team by email on [escrs@mci-group.com](mailto:escrs@mci-group.com)

## **Winter Meeting Destination and Venue**

The Winter Meeting Destination is selected based on:

- Ease and cost of access to proposed location for delegates;
- Ability to meet the expected local doctor attendance numbers (minimum 250);
- Ability to accommodate ESCRS' preferred timing (late February or March);
- Availability of suitable venue, preferably within a hotel complex (if the available venue is a hotel venue, it is important that it is capable of differentiating between the conference and the accommodation with respect to pricing, and not linking both, and that it can offer a cash-based catering service, as ESCRS does not provide catering to delegates);
- Geographical rotation of the Winter Meeting location;
- General security level of the proposed location;
- Support by the destination (financial or in-kind);
- Sustainability measures at the proposed venue/destination.

The final selection decision is taken by the ESCRS Council of Management.

Venue requirements:

- Able to accommodate 2000-2500 delegates in total;
- International airport nearby;
- Exhibition hall 3500 sqm gross;
- Plenary room with approx. 1000 seats;
- 5-6 smaller rooms (approx. 100-200 seats each);
- 4 additional rooms (approx. 100 sqm each);
- 4-5 meeting rooms;
- Ability to offer catering for purchase by delegates (ESCRS does not provide catering to delegates);
- Sufficient hotel rooms/beds in walking distance or with easy access via public transportation for delegate numbers.

## **Deadline: Expressions of intent for local host**

Expressions of intent should be addressed to the ESCRS Executive Committee and sent by email to the ESCRS Head Office at [escrs@mci-group.com](mailto:escrs@mci-group.com) the Subject **"Expression of Interest to Host ESCRS Winter Meeting 2026"** by **Friday 17 May 2024**.

The Expression of intent should include:

- A brief description of the National Society, including member numbers, usual timing of national meetings and historic attendance numbers.
- The vision and rationale behind collaborating on a combined meeting with ESCRS.
- Information regarding the proposed destination and venue criteria mentioned above (ease of access, timing, ability to meet venue requirements, general security level, destination support (financial or in-kind), sustainability, hotel room capacities).
- Expected local doctor attendance and any specific requirements for local doctor registration fees.

All expressions of interest will be reviewed from mid-May to end August 2024. The final decision rests with the ESCRS Council and will be taken by the end of September 2024. All applicants will be notified at that point.