

Guidance for Expressions of Interest (EOI) to Host an ESCRS Winter Meeting

Introduction

The European Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgeons (ESCRS) was founded in 1991 to promote education and research in the field of cataract, 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 a high-quality educational meeting designed primarily to support the early-career development of young ophthalmologists, residents, trainees and early-career cataract and refractive surgeons.

The event emphasises interactive learning, close engagement with internationally recognised faculty, and opportunities for mentoring, discussion and professional development.

The Winter Meeting complements the annual ESCRS Congress. Rather than replicating the larger congress format, it provides a focused educational experience while also strengthening relationships with affiliated societies and expanding ESCRS's educational reach.

Industry participation is an important component of the meeting, providing opportunities for meaningful engagement with young ophthalmologists, ESCRS faculty and leadership in a more focused setting than is typically possible at the Annual Congress.

Each Winter Meeting may include an educational theme linked to regional clinical priorities or educational needs. Applicants are encouraged to propose a suitable theme, which ESCRS will refine with the successful host society.

Through this call, ESCRS is seeking Expressions of Interest from eligible affiliated societies interested in hosting a potential ESCRS Winter Meeting in 2028.

The Winter Meeting is typically held over three scientific days in late February or March, with venue build-up taking place during the preceding week. A typical programme schedule is available [here](#).

Peak hotel nights are Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

The meeting includes an industry exhibition and educational networking spaces. While previous Winter Meetings have welcomed approximately 2,000 delegates, ESCRS remains open to different scales and formats where there is a compelling educational, strategic and financial case.

ESCRS has appointed MCI as its Professional Congress Organiser (PCO). MCI will work closely with ESCRS and the selected host destination and venue in organising the Winter Meeting and coordinating with local partners.

Eligibility criteria

Expressions of Interest are invited from:

- ESCRS-affiliated National Societies
- ESCRS-affiliated international ophthalmic societies

Societies that are not affiliated with ESCRS at the time of submission will not be eligible to apply. Societies interested in becoming affiliated with ESCRS for future Winter Meetings should contact the ESCRS Head Office at escrs@escrs.org

Educational Objectives and Target Audience

The primary objective of the ESCRS Winter Meeting is to support the education and professional development of:

- Young ophthalmologists
- Ophthalmology trainees and residents
- Early-career cataract and refractive surgeons

Applications must demonstrate:

- Expected attendance from local doctors and trainees, and how they will engage and attract these audiences
- Estimated total number of ophthalmologists in their country
- Their communication reach within trainee and young ophthalmologist networks e.g. links to other local societies or relevant groups
- Existing educational initiatives or partnerships supporting early-career professionals
- Any preferred days to attend such events if different to ESCRS usual timings and advice on local registration fees.

Applications that demonstrate strong local engagement opportunities and educational impact for younger ophthalmologists will be prioritised.

Winter Meeting Destination and Venue

Please note ESCRS events follow MedTech Europe Code of Ethical Business Practice. As such, the event location and venue should not become the main attraction of the event.

Suggested venues must not be luxury, or tourist/holiday-oriented, or entertainment venues.

The Winter Meeting destination will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Ease and affordability of access for delegates
- Potential to attract local and regional ophthalmologist attendance
- Alignment with ESCRS educational strategy and early-career development objectives

- Opportunities for thematic educational programming linked to regional clinical or educational priorities
- Ability to accommodate the preferred timing (late February or March)
- Availability of a venue capable of supporting the proposed educational programme, networking activities and industry exhibition.
- Geographical rotation and diversity of meeting locations
- General security and accessibility of the destination
- Local destination support (financial or in-kind)
- Sustainability measures at the venue and destination

The final selection decision rests with the ESCRS Council of Management.

Venue Requirements

Typical venue requirements include:

- Capacity for approximately 2,000 delegates, although alternative formats may be considered where there is a strong educational and strategic case.
- Proximity to an international airport with good connections at that time of year
- Exhibition area suitable for industry engagement and educational activities. Space requirement approx.: 1,500 sqm. It should be able to hold
 - 500 sqm of sellable exhibition space
 - Cash catering areas
 - E-Poster Area
 - ESCRS Theatre (with 40 seats)
- Plenary room for approximately 1,200 delegates
- 1 smaller breakout room for 400 delegates
- Additional meeting rooms for committee and faculty use
- Catering facilities available for delegate purchase
- Sufficient hotel accommodation within walking distance or accessible public transport links

Submission Requirements

Expressions of Interest must be submitted using the online EOI form: [ESCRS Winter Meeting 2028 - Expression of Interest \(EOI\) Application Form](#).

Before starting your application, applicants are encouraged to download and review the full list of questions [here](#) to understand the information that will be required.

Applicants should ensure they provide sufficient detail to demonstrate how their proposal aligns with the objectives and evaluation criteria set out in this document.

Submission Deadline

All expressions of interest must be submitted by **31 August 2026** and will be reviewed by ESCRS during the final quarter of the year. The final decision will be made by the ESCRS Council by the end of **November 2026**.

All applicants will be informed of the outcome as soon as possible following this meeting.