

Practical Course Organizer Guidelines

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Eligible Countries

A	EMBC Member States	Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Türkiye, and United Kingdom
B	EMBC Associate Member States	India, Singapore
C	Countries / territories covered by a co-operation agreement.	Chile, Taiwan
D	Countries / territories eligible for co-funding by EMBO and The Company of Biologists	Brazil, Canada, China, Japan, Mexico, Republic of Korea

EMBO subject areas

Cell Cycle, Cell & Tissue Architecture, Cellular Metabolism, Chromatin & Transcription, Development, Differentiation & Death, Evolution & Ecology, Genome Stability & Dynamics, Genomic & Computational Biology, Immunology, Membranes & Transport, Microbiology, Virology & Pathogens, Molecular Medicine, Neuroscience, Plant Biology, Proteins & Biochemistry, RNA, Signal Transduction, Structural Biology & Biophysics, Systems Biology

Contact: courses_workshops@embo.org

1. About

EMBO Practical Courses promote the transfer of new methods and emerging techniques to a large number of laboratories. The primary objective is to enable participating students to implement novel techniques in their home laboratories.

2. Funding

The maximum funding available for an EMBO Practical Course is €41,500 (€35,000 of core funding plus €5,500 exclusively for travel grants and registration fee waivers and €1,000 for childcare grants). Decisions on the amount of funding are made on a case-by-case basis. Organizers are therefore required to justify all major costs in the budget section of the application form. It is expected that participants (other than the speakers) will pay for their travel, accommodation, and a modest registration fee. EMBO funds must not be used to cover *per diem* expenses, gifts, poster prizes, or dinners organized exclusively for speakers.

EMBO funds can be used to cover:

- Travel (economy), accommodation and subsistence costs of the speakers;
- Catering costs during the meeting;
- Administrative costs up to €4,000 for in-person meetings and up to €8,000 for virtual and hybrid meetings;
- Room hire, Audio-Visual (AV) and IT facilities essential for the course;
- Materials and consumables.
- Social activities (e.g., excursions) up to max €3,000.

For hybrid meetings, an additional grant of €10,000 will be provided. The funds can be used to cover:

- Rental of a virtual platform to host the virtual part of the meeting;
- Rental of additional AV equipment and personnel costs;
- Additional administration costs up to a total of €8,000.

EMBO funds do not cover overheads.

To reduce environmental impact, organizers are encouraged to consider distributing the abstract book in electronic format via the course website and to print only a minimum number of hardcopies, if necessary.

It is understood that, as an organizer, you do not render any services on behalf of EMBO. The organizing institution is responsible for the EMBO Practical Course. It is supported by EMBO with a grant, provided that the event is organized as described in the initial application (except for any further modifications that are subsequently approved in writing by EMBO), and that promotion of the event and submission of the final documentation complies with the funding conditions.

If you are holding your workshop in hybrid or virtual format, please refer to [organizing hybrid or virtual events for a summary of options and points to consider](#).

Please inform us as soon as you have decided upon any changes to the original plans, via courses_workshops@embo.org.

3. Payment of the grant

The funds will be transferred to the account specified by you and to which you have access. EMBO will not be able to transfer the funds to 3rd parties. We recommend that you open a separate account, preferably at your institute, with the name of the Practical Course (but please do not use the term EMBO in the naming of the account, since this implies to our auditors that this account is managed by EMBO).

80% of the allocated funding will be transferred to organizers approximately four months prior to the start of the practical course. EMBO must be notified of any significant changes to the practical course budget and/or scientific programme after it has been initially approved.

Once the final financial statement and reports have been approved by EMBO, the remaining funds (up to 20% of the allocated funding plus the amount spent on travel and childcare grants) will be transferred. Please list the travel and childcare grant recipients separately in the final report.

Since EMBO offers to set-up a website and registration system, design a poster and provide meeting bags and pens at no additional charge, any expenses incurred for these services will not be covered by EMBO funding and will be deducted from your final payment with the exception of the COMS payment service.

The final documentation must be submitted to EMBO within three months following the end date of the practical course. Failure to do so will result in the final payment being forfeited.

EMBO reserves the right to claim unspent funds based on the financial statement.

4. Beware of rising fraud cases

Due to a recent fraud case involving an EMBO meeting organizer, Organizers are asked to be vigilant when making any financial transactions. Please counter check to ensure that funds transfers involve only bonafide vendors or service providers' bank accounts. Be especially cautious and seek to verify information if funds transfer details are changed suddenly. Please note that EMBO is unfortunately not able to offer any additional funding to compensate for losses through fraud.

5. Travel and childcare grants

Travel grants can be used to cover travel, accommodation, visa costs and/or registration fees. Organizers should announce the travel grants and registration fee waivers to participants in advance of practical course, as soon as registration opens.

Organizers receive an additional €6,500 for their events to cover the following:

Type of grant	Amount allocated	Available for registered participants working in laboratories in	Explanatory notes
Travel grants and registration fee waivers	€2,500	All countries	Applicants should specify their needs in the registration form. Maximally €500 per participant can be allocated.
Childcare grants	€1,000	All countries	To cover additional childcare costs incurred by participants or speakers when participating at any EMBO-funded meeting including virtual and hybrid meetings. Eligible costs include fees for a baby-sitter or child-care facility, travel costs for a caregiver, or travel costs for taking the child to the meeting, etc. Applicants should specify their needs in the registration form. Maximally €500 per participant can be allocated.
Special travel grants & registration fee waivers	€3,000	Associate EMBC Member States (Chile, India, Singapore and Taiwan)	Exclusively for participants of any nationality working in laboratories in Associate EMBC Member States. Registration fee waivers and travel grants should cover the cost of attendance for participants who need

			it. Applicants should specify their needs in the registration form. Maximally €1,000 per participant can be allocated.
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Organizers may consider awarding fee waivers to applicants from lower income economies.

The EMBO travel grants shall be allocated based on the quality of the abstract submitted.

Please contact the eligible participants to offer them the grant or registration fee waiver and **reimburse the recipients directly for their travel costs**. It is the organizer's responsibility to select the awardees and directly reimburse them for their expenses as EMBO does not process reimbursements.

After your meeting, please provide us with the name, country of residence and amount awarded to each recipient as part of the final documentation you will send to EMBO. Please keep a copy of all participant travel receipts. **We will reimburse you for the total amount of the travel and childcare grants along with the final payment.**

6. Registration fees

Organizers should keep in mind the VAT (Value Added Tax) in the country in which the course is taking place when setting the registration fees.

Registration fees:

- should be charged up to a maximum of €385/550 (<5 days/>= 5 days) per academic participant, including accommodation.
- should be charged at a minimum of €1,100 for participants from industry (including accommodation).
- should be paid directly to the organizer (or the organizer's nominee) and included as income in the final financial statement (please note that EMBO does not collect registration fee payments, however, fees can be collected via the website set up by EMBO, see [Registration Fee Collection](#)). The income from the registration fees is considered as EMBO funding.
- Please include simple terms and conditions for refunds in case of cancellations. This is in order to ensure transparency and manage the expectations of those registering for the meeting.

7. Participants

When selecting speakers and participants, organizers are requested to ensure a wide geographical representation and gender balance. At least two-thirds of the participants should be based in EMBC Member States (A - see list on page 2), with no more than 25% of participants residing in the country where the course is being held.

In the case of courses held outside Europe (B, C or D - see list on page 2), a greater representation of scientists based in the respective continent/country is encouraged.

Participation should not be restricted to pre-defined participants (whether this be an EU-network or other defined groups).

Participants can provide information regarding any special needs in the registration form. These may include any dietary requirements or accessibility needs. Organizers are please requested to accommodate these needs where possible. Should it not be possible to provide the requested services, please inform the applicants.

It is at the discretion of the organizers to define their own policies on participants using social media (e.g., X, formerly Twitter) or taking photographs or recordings of presentation slides or posters during the meeting. Please inform participants of the policies that you would like to adopt via your meeting website (there is a section on the website made by EMBO) and other communication channels. Also see the Code of conduct section below. This text will also be displayed on the website created by EMBO.

You may want to consider organizing satellite meetings that are open to the local scientific community. You can apply for funding for up to €2,000 to organize a satellite meeting. The funding can be used to cover:

- Extra accommodation nights for speakers who are already participating in the EMBO-funded practical course
- Transportation for speakers to the satellite meeting venue
- Meals for speakers
- Audio-Visual for the meeting

If additional funds are necessary, please contact us via email at courses_workshops@embo.org. Please note that the programme should indicate that the satellite meeting is supported by EMBO.

8. Alert for speakers / instructors

Please note that speakers at EMBO Courses and Workshops have been contacted (via email or phone) by companies who wrongfully claim to be responsible for hotel and/or travel bookings and request credit card information. Please alert your speakers to this and inform them about the procedures you will use for the organization of your meeting.

9. Publicising & co-funding

The practical course will be entitled "EMBO Practical Course". The (main) title of the practical course may not mention other organizations or institutes that support the course. Organizers should also refrain from using excessively long titles and numbers referring to previous meetings.

The website, poster and all materials should include the EMBO logo and the [EMBO Practical Course stamp](#). The EMBO Press logo should be featured with other supporter logos on website and poster.

Sponsors cannot be mentioned in the title of the meeting, but can be acknowledged on the website and the poster. Sponsors who provide €20,000 or more towards the meeting can also be recognized as co-sponsors. The co-sponsors logos can be displayed prominently on the website.

EMBO does not consider funding practical courses when the other co-funder/sponsors insist on the proceedings being published (although publications can arise from EMBO Practical Courses, provided that all contributions are given voluntarily).

All EMBO Practical Courses are announced on the EMBO poster, EMBO website and social media channels and through selected other print and online media.

Further advertising is left to the organizer's discretion. It is a strict condition of EMBO funding that any additional publicity, as well as the programme and abstract book, should clearly indicate that the meeting is an EMBO Practical Course, without subtitles relating to previous similar meetings or other organizations.

The scientific programme of your meeting, as submitted at the time of application, was reviewed and approved by the EMBO Course Committee. Responsibility for subsequent changes to the programme, and the organization and execution of the event, lies exclusively with the event organizers.

Furthermore, EMBO hosts the website, where organizers opt for this, but does not take responsibility for the content provided by the organizers of the meeting. Organizers are responsible for ensuring that all content and images provided by them for the websites comply with German copyright laws. Fines resulting from copyright infringement will be the organizer's responsibility and will be deducted from the final payment of the awarded EMBO funding.

Organizers shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations, standards and guidelines, including GDPR ([see also Data Protection below](#)), in the advertising of an EMBO funded meeting. Organizers shall also ensure that all processes and procedures used relating to the organization of the meeting comply with all local laws, regulations, standards and guidelines that apply in the jurisdictions in which the meeting takes place.

10. Poster and website

EMBO will create the course website (including an online registration system), design a poster and abstract book cover at no additional charge where organizers opt for this. EMBO hosts the website but does not take responsibility for the content provided by the organizers of the meeting. Organizers are responsible for ensuring that all content and images provided by them for the websites and posters comply with German copyright laws. Fines resulting from copyright infringement will be the organizers responsibility and will be deducted from the final payment of the awarded EMBO funding.

For information on various methods of collecting registration fees, please see [Registration Fee Collection](#). Please note that EMBO does not offer these services and does not handle registration fee payments, but only provides information that may be useful to organizers.

Please note that EMBO does not print or mail the posters or abstract books designed for your practical course.

Organizers who make their own websites and posters have to adhere to the EMBO brand guidelines (please refer to "[Guidelines for organizers creating their own web pages and posters for EMBO Courses or Workshops](#)").

Full details will be supplied to organizers shortly after acceptance of the funding conditions has been confirmed.

11. Code of conduct

At EMBO, we believe that harassment and discriminatory behaviour are unacceptable in any setting. This code of conduct will be applicable for all participants of EMBO events and will be published on the website of your course.

We know that individual communities will have different ways to deal with the use of social media and data communication. You may want to edit and adapt the policy on media and communication as appropriate and agreed to by your community.

Please find below a general code of conduct for your EMBO Practical Course.

Anti-harassment and non-discrimination policy

This EMBO meeting shall maintain an environment free of harassment and discriminatory behaviour for everyone, regardless of gender, gender identity and expression, age, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, ethnicity, beliefs (religious or otherwise) or manner of articulation.

Harassment and discrimination of attendees in any form, either in person or online is not tolerated.

Attendees are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner and all communication and behavior should conform to a respectful environment for all.

Media and communications policy (*adapt as appropriate*)

Unpublished data may be presented at this meeting and presenters may not want their results to be communicated beyond the audience in attendance at the event. Participants must seek approval from the presenter before quoting or passing on any of the data presented.

Furthermore, the recording or communication of the scientific content presented (e.g. talks, discussion sessions or posters) by audio, video, photographs or any other means, or communication via social media needs to be agreed upon by all concerned.

Attendees violating this Code of Conduct may be asked to leave the workshop, practical course or lecture course without a refund at the sole discretion of the organizers.

Attendees are expected to respect the media and communications policy during this EMBO event.

12. Encouraging Sustainable Meetings

EMBO would like to promote the reduction in CO₂ emissions in order to lessen environmental impact by encouraging the organizers of EMBO Courses and Workshops to implement, to the

best of their abilities, some measures that should keep the CO₂ footprint of the course or workshop at a minimum.

We are aware that these measures may neither seem nor be significant on their own, but we do hope that they will create awareness and will help to change many people's minds and behaviours. Only together can we make a difference to the climate and the future of the planet and our children. We would therefore welcome that organizers encourage debate about this topic at the meeting.

Reducing long-distance air-travel: It is recommended to include at least one remote presentation at the meeting. This should not be given by an additional speaker, but should replace a regular speaker in your programme. The money saved for travel and accommodation (max. €1,500) as a result can be used to cover additional travel grants for participants travelling to the venue by train from the available core budget. Please indicate this in your budget estimate. Please note that this is not a binding requirement for Practical Courses.

Train travel: Encourage speakers and participants to take trains within Europe for distances, for e.g., under 800km or under 6–8 hours of travel time. As above, organizers may use the money saved by introducing remote speakers to offer travel grants or subsidies to participants travelling by train (max €1,500 total).

Provide catering with lower CO₂ impact: Serve vegetarian food preferentially and reduce meat options from the meals. You might consider the following:

- a) On at least one day of the meeting only vegetarian food is served.
- b) Catering should be served in non-disposable wares.
- c) If possible, try to avoid (plastic) bottled water and plastic cups.

Electronic programme and abstract book: Organizers should distribute the abstract book in electronic format via the course website and to print only a minimum number of hardcopies, if necessary. Via the EMBO provided meeting website organizers can export the abstract book in electronic format. This can then be made available, password protected, on the course website.

Voluntary CO₂ compensations: Organizers may consider collecting voluntary CO₂ compensation payments from participants and donate to accredited compensation brokers.

Central locations: Consider venues that are centrally located and easily accessible by public transport.

Plastic-free badges: Organizers should consider using paper badges.

EMBO promotional items: EMBO provides notebooks (FSC certified paper), bags (from recycled materials), and pencils for meetings on request. Notebooks are perforated to encourage their continued use after the meeting. You will be contacted prior to the meeting to inform us of your needs.

13. Participant feedback

If EMBO creates and hosts the website for a practical course, feedback from all participants is automatically collected after the meeting. Participants who filled out the questionnaire automatically receive their certificate of attendance via email. Organizers will have access to the anonymised feedback forms.

Should you be using your own registration system, EMBO will request a complete list of participants, including speakers. They will be contacted by EMBO with the request to fill out the feedback questionnaire. Organizers will have access to the anonymised feedback forms.

14. Data protection

As the majority of EMBO Courses and Workshops take place in Europe or include speakers and attendees from Europe, you have agreed to comply with the European General Data Protection Regulation ([GDPR](#)). Under the GDPR, you hold the position of “data controller”, meaning that you are the decision-makers regarding the personal data that is collected and processed for the organization of your event. As a data controller, you must familiarize yourselves with the GDPR and your obligations to your data subjects. Specifically, you must agree only to collect personal information that is necessary for organizing your meeting and ensure that the people whose information is collected are aware of the ways in which it will be used. Any person whose personal information (including names, email address, institutional addresses etc.) is to be used in the promotion of the meeting must explicitly agree to their information being used in this way. You must also ensure that subjects are aware of their [rights under the GDPR](#), including the right to be made aware of the data you hold about them and to correct, erase or receive a copy of this data.

An appropriate disclaimer informing users of their rights under the GDPR will be included in all online registration systems supplied by EMBO. If you are not using the websites or registration platforms provided by EMBO, it is your responsibility to ensure that the participants are made aware of their rights.

If you are planning to contact event participants after your course, you must obtain their active consent during the event (e.g., through a sign-up list). Please be aware that under the GDPR, you have an obligation to document that they have given this consent, so please keep the corresponding documentation.

15. Final documentation

Templates for the final documentation will be provided after the 1st installment of the grant has been paid, approximately four months before the meeting. The following documents will be expected:

- A short report (1–2 pages) about the practical course, including a short scientific overview, participants' reaction to the location and organization, and any other relevant comments.
- Final financial statement, which should include all income and expenditure for the course. Please note that the organizer must retain receipts for ten years after the course, for auditing purposes.
- If the meeting was hybrid, a separate hybrid component financial statement
- Total number of applicants, and the number, gender, nationality, and country of residence of academia & industry participants, and of instructors and speakers.
- Programme and/or abstract book (preferably electronic).
- If applicable: List of travel grant, childcare grant, and registration fee waiver awardees (including name, institute, nationality (if known), country of residence and amount awarded for travel and childcare grants. Please note that the organizer must retain receipts for ten years after the practical course, for auditing purposes.

All of the above documents must be submitted to EMBO within three months following the end date of the practical course. Failure to do so will result in the final payment being forfeited.

16. Additional guidelines for EMBO | The Company of Biologists Practical Courses

EMBO | The Company of Biologists Practical Courses are meetings taking place in countries eligible for co-funding by EMBO and The Company of Biologists (D – see list on page 2).

- The website and poster of the Practical Course will be designed by EMBO.
- The organizers should acknowledge EMBO and The Company of Biologists in equal measure to EMBO in all materials produced.
- Any use of The Company of Biologists' name and logo shall be in accordance with the brand guidelines of The Company of Biologists, which is sent as a separate document.
- Organizers authorize EMBO to provide to The Company of Biologists the following documents:
 - o a copy of each successful application, where funding was approved by EMBO; and
 - o a copy of the final documents submitted by organizers to EMBO
- Organizers shall allow a representative of The Company of Biologists to attend each meeting for the purpose of writing reports which The Company of Biologists may publish on its websites or in its journals, in such form as it may determine at its sole discretion.

17. Registration fee collection

This brief overview is intended to provide information on the possible avenues for setting up a payment system for your EMBO funded event.

You may want to get advice regarding tax implications of your meeting. These may arise for example from collecting registration fees, sponsorships etc. These implications may differ between the place from which you organize the event and where the event is taking place.

Please note:

- EMBO does not guarantee nor take responsibility for the services of any of these providers.
- EMBO does not offer to set up or provide support in the use of these services—questions about the platform and how to work with it should be directed to the support services of the respective providers.

- Some services charge a commission for the transaction of each payment. You should check the amount of the fee and consider whether to adjust your pricing accordingly.

Payment module via EMBO supplier	Online transactions (PayPal, Stripe, WorldPay etc.)	Bank transfer
Can be used with a standard checking account	Requires that you have a business bank account	Requires that you have a business bank account
The registration system matches the payments to the participants.	Payments and participant registration have to be manually matched.	Payments and participant registration have to be manually matched.
Credit card payments are possible.	Credit card payments are possible.	Credit card payments are NOT possible.
Included with the EMBO website, but not set up by EMBO.	PayPal and other online payment services generally charge a commission for each transaction.	There may be additional charges for international transfers.
For set up and support, please contact: m.mandl@conference-service.com	For support, please contact your service provider. For a brief tutorial on how to use PayPal for online payments, please see here .	For support, please contact your bank.

IMPORTANT

Please note that your chosen payment provider may not be available in all countries and may not accept all credit cards, debit cards, or payment methods. EMBO cannot help with any problems relating to the platform you use.

Please also note that only the payment module via the EMBO supplier will allow for matching the payments with the registrants' data. For all other methods of accepting registration fees, you will need to manually match the payments with the registrant's data.

18. Organizing hybrid conferences

Conferences in hybrid format allow scientists to participate when they are unable to attend in person. Possible reasons include health-related issues, care obligations, lack of funding, or difficulty to obtain a visa.

One of the goals of EMBO is to stimulate scientific exchange across a broad audience. We therefore encourage the organizers of EMBO Courses and Workshops to opt for a hybrid format. Additional funding of up to 10,000 € is provided for expenses related to a hybrid set-up for e.g., AV support, virtual platform, administrative support, etc.

EMBO works with a third-party conference management service that can provide a virtual meeting platform as well as a mobile app. Depending on the number of users and the amount of support needed, the cost for this platform will range from 1,100 – 2,200 Euros. In addition to that, EMBO can offer you a bespoke mobile app for your meeting, which allows participants to easily communicate with each other. The cost for this mobile app for your event is 1,100 Euros as a stand-alone or 1,900 Euros together with the virtual platform.

Based on feedback from previous organizers of hybrid EMBO meetings, below are some suggestions for setting up a hybrid meeting:

- Designate someone as responsible for interacting with the virtual participants
- Invite and support participation of virtual participants in the Q+A session: Appoint an additional session chair to monitor questions from the virtual participants
- Consider selecting virtual participants for short talks
- Enable online networking activities, such as online poster and discussion sessions, or flash talks, amongst virtual participants. These can be hosted via Zoom breakout rooms or other social networking platforms, for e.g., Wonder.me, Gather.Town, SpatialChat, Topia, and others
- Support participation of virtual participants in discussion sessions or other on-site sessions
- Speakers must be informed and asked for consent if talks are recorded
- Recording of the talks helps virtual participants to deal with the time difference and screen fatigue, they should be available as soon as possible on a dedicated platform or website. Talks should be recorded individually, not as a full session. This will make viewing and excluding talks that are not to be recorded easier. Advertise activities for virtual participants in the meeting programme.

***Disclaimer:** This document is intended to assist organizers set-up virtual meetings and offers mere suggestions and advice. EMBO does not endorse any software or services and does not take any responsibility for third-party services that the organizer may choose to use.*