IEEE MCE Guidelines on Coronavirus to Conference Organizers

Sam Karikalan

EPS VP of Conferences

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IEEE MCE Advisory

▸ IEEE's Event Emergency Response Team (EERT) is monitoring the Coronavirus outbreak and its potential risk to IEEE's global event business. The safety and well-being of all conference participants is IEEE's top priority. It is important for IEEE's conferences community to be both informed and ready to respond as inquiries arise.

▸ The World Health Organization (WHO), U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and other regulatory bodies have reassured the public that the risk is low outside of the virus epicenter. IEEE is currently monitoring travel advisories issued by these organizations.

▸ We are looking beyond events located in the affected regions, to consider where travelers originate from, as we welcome participants including speakers, authors, and other dignitaries to the event.

▸ **Action Planning**
IEEE has developed a set of scenario-driven action plans and communications. EERT will provide procedures and tools to address event community needs and offer consultation and guidance.

IEEE MCE Recommendations

- **Engage IEEE prior to any decisions to relocate, postpone, or cancel a conference** for guidance on financial impacts and contractual obligations to preserve any insurance that may be available

- **Review attendee lists regularly** to identify participants who may be negatively impacted due to travel restrictions related to Coronavirus

- **Consider relaxing attendee cancellation and refund policies**

- **Provide virtual presentation options** to impacted author(s) and/or keynote presenter(s). IEEE MCE's digital events team is prepared to assist conferences with this approach.

- **Provide flexibility related to author non-presented paper policies** for affected authors

- **Engage EERT for consultation and guidance** to ensure a consistent approach to communications

IEEE MCE's Answers on Remote Presentations

1. *Does the IEEE allow remote presentations of papers in the conferences, through WebEx or other means?* **MCE: Yes**

2. *If the answer for # 1 is "yes", those WebEx arrangements should be done through IEEE WebEx system, right?* **MCE: Webex specifically is not required, but certainly is an option. MCE's digital events team could consult on support options for this need. Also, do you plan to include the recorded presentation as part of the XPlore compliant submission? This is recommended by MCE to do this. We believe you are using CPS for production services and we can work with them on the multi media submission.**

3. *Could we charge a reduced fee for such remote authors who would join only the particular session in which their paper features?* **MCE: The fees and categories are at the discretion of the conference organizing committee to determine.**

4. *If the answer for # 3 is "yes", would these papers be still considered legitimate full conference papers and published in Xplore?* **MCE: Yes**

5. *Does the IEEE allow web streaming of their conferences to remote conference rooms and allow attendees to join the conference in such remote conference rooms?* **MCE: 'Viewing parties or watch parties' are at the discretion of the organizing committee as to how they want to structure their event and it's content.**

Steps to Minimize Risk at IEEE Events

▸ **Ensure attendees are aware of the safety guidelines** set out by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC)

▸ **Ensure participants know the signs of infection**: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/symptoms.html

▸ **Provide an onsite point of contact** for individual concerns and **publish contact information** widely through communication channels for the event

▸ **Ensure you have a list of contact information for the nearest hospital** and centers for disease control

▸ **Create a communication plan** for how to inform and reassure other attendees in the event that a suspected case does occur

Communications and Action Plan

- Use the General Statement Language at https://eps.ieee.org/images/files/Conferences/COVID-19_General_Statement_for_Conferences_1_1.docx, that is approved by the IEEE Legal and IEEE Communications

- Replace red text in the above template to conference specific information; place a copy of this statement on your website

- Do not use your own language or take actions that are not reviewed and approved by the IEEE EPS and IEEE MCE

- Create an Event Emergency Action Plan, based on the template at https://www.ieee.org/content/dam/ieee-org/ieee/web/org/conferences/ieee-event-emergency-action-plan-template.docx and keep it accessible for all team members

Recommendations for On-Site Preparedness

To mitigate risk and create reassurances for attendees of the event:

1. Make sure attendees are aware of the safety guidelines as set out by WHO and CDC (signs can be made, posted)

2. Ensure attendees know signs of infection as outlined by WHO and CDC (signs and flyer at registration desk)

3. Provide a point of contact for anyone who is concerned about the recent developments

4. Give attendees access to basic supplies like hand sanitizer (venue might have this in place already), masks if asked

5. Ensure that you have a list of contact information for the nearest hospitals and centers for disease control (the hotel will provide this)

6. Institute a no handshake policy at the conference to alleviate fears of spreading germs

7. Ask your a/v provider to change out microphones for each speaker in an effort to avoid spreading germs; sanitize microphones thoroughly after each speaker as well

8. You may want to investigate hiring a local EMT to be onsite at the conference. This is precautionary but will demonstrate further the care and concern to attendees to immediately respond should a need arise.

Resources

▸ IEEE references recognized public health organizations for fact-based resources and updates on the virus to help guide planning and response. Primary agencies both within the U.S. and globally include:

▸ World Health Organization's website on the Coronavirus (https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus)

▸ Centers for Disease Control's reference materials (https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html)

▸ National Health Commission of the People's Republic of China (http://en.nhc.gov.cn/)

▸ **Additional support**

▸ If you have questions or are in need of additional guidance on managing Coronavirus communications and inquiries please reach out at eert@ieee.org

IEEE ELECTRONICS PACKAGING SOCIETY

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IEEE Insurance Policy

▸ In order for a conference to qualify for coverage under the IEEE Event Cancellation Insurance Policy, the following conditions MUST be met:

- The conference must be 100% financially sponsored by one or more IEEE Society and/or organizational unit,

- The conference must be approved by IEEE and included in the IEEE Conference Database, and

- A detailed conference budget MUST be submitted and included in the IEEE Conference Database.

▸ All other conferences (not wholly owned by IEEE) continue to have the option to purchase individual Event Cancellation Insurance policies.

▸ The Event Cancellation Insurance protects the conferences from lost revenue and/or additional expenses incurred as a result of an unforeseen cancellation, postponement, or curtailment of an event. Examples of such disruptions might include natural disasters (hurricanes, tornadoes, blizzards, etc.), fire or flood damage to a venue, airline or hotel staff strikes, and other unforeseen causes of event cancellation.

▸ FAQs