

Worldwide Biography Conference (WBC) “Guiding Light Principles” - December 2019

The following statements and recommendations are to be understood as guidelines; i.e. a summary of the core principles which the organising coordination of WBC 2019, *Anna Romanova, Victor Streza, Eszter Kökény-Hámori, Anna Tóthfalusi, Christopher Bee*, want to pass on to *Hannu and Jaana Tuovinen* representing the organising coordination of WBC 2021, for their autonomous consideration and discretionary implementation.

Continuity

The WBC is developing, in collaboration with the [General Anthroposophical Section of the School of Spiritual Science at the Goetheanum](#), as an international organ promoting collegial networking and exchange of professional experience and skills, in an open community of participants who strive individually and collectively to nurture and sustain a spiritual ecology which embraces the practise of ‘social artistic and moral techniques’, in order to promote and serve the diverse impulses in the many different cultures and language regions around the world, where colleagues are working professionally with the spiritual scientific and social artistic application of biographical development in the spirit of “freedom”, “equality” and “humanity”.

The WBC is organised every two years with the aim of bringing together colleagues who are professionally involved in biography work based on anthroposophical spiritual science, in order to serve and nurture the development of the ‘being of biography work’ as a living organism.

The WBC is striving to provide a practical, inclusive approach to the contents of the Michael School, enabling all conference participants to engage freely and openly in a respectful exchange about their esoteric research and practises and how they integrate and articulate this in their professional work.

The realisation of a constantly evolving archetype for the WBC is aimed for. Both during and between conferences a ‘vessel’ is formed, whose structural integrity enables and ensures that WBC content is uniquely created by its participants; in such a way that they may freely share their professional research, experience and skills with one another, through respectfully supporting a unanimous and enduring commitment to conference processes, which promotes a culture of rhythmical exchange and meeting, in a ‘middle realm’ which embraces ‘powerlessness’, ‘acceptance’ and ‘potential’.

Organising Coordination : General Administration

Apply the principles of social threefolding as much and as far as possible.

Take into account cultural and linguistic differences in a practical way. Establish contact with representatives of principal language regions (e.g., German, Japanese, Russian, Spanish), in order to coordinate translation of WBC communications and programmes, as well as to solicit provision of regionally sponsored interpreters for conference plena; for which competently managed multi-channel audio interpreting facilities are provided.

Maintain by way of functional communication a relationship with the *International Trainers Forum*, which usually holds its annual meeting at the venue of the current conference before it begins.

Practise due diligence in the conduct of financial arrangements, planning and management of the conference event, including: professional conduct concerning legitimacy of registration; maintenance of a transparent accounting system internally; recognition of real and justifiable costs; recompense for real and justifiable expenses and administrative responsibilities; management of dependable procedures for the organising coordination in compliance with the prevailing legal standards of the venue and its national location.

Autonomously establish, practise and evaluate modalities of internal and external communication in such a way as to assure respect and discretion in relation to personal privacy and confidentiality within the organising coordination as well as towards all WBC participants. Cooperate with whoever is responsible for maintaining the database and online registration facilities for the conference community, respecting international rights for data protection at all levels of communication. Restrict use of the WBC database exclusively to promoting initiatives which are connected with the current conference programme.

Calculate the individual financial contribution of participating colleagues to assure covering all costs of the current organising coordination, by setting this as low as possible and as high as necessary. Application of contribution modalities such as “solidarity fee”, “standard fee”, “basic fee” are recommended.

To uphold a professional standard of commitment and legitimacy, it is fundamental that ALL participating colleagues, without exception, register individually and pay in advance their financial contribution in full, without expectation of discount or reimbursement, also including colleagues who serve in the organising coordination.

Nurture a culture of organising coordination which promotes collegial solidarity within and between regions and countries internationally, where it concerns the issue of travel bursaries or sponsorship for financially weak participants. The organising coordination of any one conference cannot be expected to accurately evaluate or take responsibility for evaluating the financial circumstances of colleagues living and working professionally in globally diverse cultural and economic regions. Only accept financial gifts to a current conference when offered without a predefined purpose.

Practise responsible management when passing financial liquidity from the last conference to the next conference. For the purpose of handling conference finances use an independent trustee, non-profitable project bank account provided by a charitable institution which is fully recognised by its local tax authorities to ensure 100% tax relief (including value added tax). The legal and tax jurisdiction of this banking facility need not be situated in the same country as a conference. In this respect the current organising coordination is solely responsible for deciding what is appropriate.

Organising Coordination : Programme Development

Select a mantra from the complete work of Rudolf Steiner as an inspirational basis for the conference.

Design the form of multimedia communication appropriate to the current conference, including the creation of a unique website and ongoing maintenance and development of online registration, payment and profile facilities. To secure equitable representation of all participants as well as protect profiles from being exploited in the public realm, restrict online access to profiles to registered participants only through password protection.

Develop the thematic focus of the current conference by communicating coherently with the conference community at an early stage, in order to nurture cooperation and communal work regionally around the world which promotes the spiritual scientific foundations of biography work and its professional application.

Design the conference programme in such a way as to: a) involve as many participating colleagues as possible by requesting their cooperation or advice in alignment with the current organising coordination; b). facilitate exchange about professional development and networking, regional self-organisation and spiritual scientific research, in order to promote development and application of professional biography work.

When opening and closing a conference allow for a moment of observance for the protective spirits, the living and the deceased. Be open minded towards colleagues worldwide, including those without a background in anthroposophy.

Encourage potential initiatives for the hosting of future conferences early on, by seeking out and proactively engaging such collegial enterprise to support their being able to formally make a hosting offer from their countries and regions in alignment with the current organising coordination.

Ensure that the financial and organisational management of pre-conferences events, whether of a cultural or educational nature, are conducted completely independent of the organising coordination of the current conference programme. It is strongly recommended that invitations to offer pre-conference workshops or seminars be restricted only to those colleagues who commit to participating fully in the conference itself.

Organising Coordination : Conclusion and Transition

Solicit colleagues in good time to write: a) a conference review suitable for translation and distribution to the conference community; b) a short report (max. 5,000 characters incl. spaces) for the journal "Anthroposophy Worldwide" in English and German.

Prepare a financial balance and statement appropriate for inclusion in a brief closure report from the current organising coordination for distribution to the conference community before the end of the same year.

By way of preparation for the transition, review and modify these "Guiding Light Principles" in the light of current experience, in order to promote collegial development of organising coordination for future conferences. They should serve as a basis for exchange with next organising coordination; also share these with the conference community by posting this document on the website of the next conference.

So as to be able to release and dissolve the current organising coordination, prepare to transmit responsibilities to next organising coordination latest at the beginning of the following New Year, in cooperation and alignment with circumstances of those colleagues who need to be involved in the transition process. Cultivate a culture of letting go of responsibility. It may help for an experienced colleague to become part of the next organising coordination; but this is not always necessary or even advantageous.