

Continuing Medical Education (CME) Program

GUIDELINES

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1. GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The Continuing Medical Education (CME) Program aims to advance the sharing and dissemination of knowledge by supporting faculty presenting at local and regional nephrology-related meetings in resource-low countries. ISN-supported speakers are approved by the ISN, which sponsors the travel expenses of up to 3 experts who supplement local speakers. If applicable, and in addition, ISN may sponsor (a) Nurse Ambassador(s) to deliver talks that are pertinent to the region and address issues related to allied health professionals in nephrology. ISN-supported speakers participate in the events on a voluntary basis and do not receive honorarium. They are dedicated to sharing their knowledge with doctors, specialists, and nurses.

Every year, the ISN CME Program brings essential teaching and training to some 14,000 doctors and healthcare practitioners. ISN typically supports around 40 to 50 local CME nephrology meetings each year across the world.

Since 1993, the ISN CME Committee, as well as the ISN Regional Boards, have supported local event organizers in building suitable scientific programs matching the needs of the local nephrology community. These meetings are organized by either ISN affiliated national, regional societies or credible scientific/medical society.

The goals of the CME Program are (1) to stimulate the interest of the local and regional nephrology communities in expanding their programs and developing relationships with experts who can provide additional information and support; and (2) inspire young professionals to become part of the ISN community and contribute to our advocacy, research, and training activities.

IMPORTANCE OF REGIONAL MEETINGS

The ISN CME Program supports integrated proposals that cover a wider geographical region in order to maximize impact. Indeed, regional meetings are platforms where nephrologists should strategically discuss the available local/regional resources and the best way to expand nephrology services. Promoting a dialogue amongst the nephrology communities in a region is particularly helpful.

2. APPLICATION GUIDELINES

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- **ISN membership:**
It is a key requirement that both the meeting organizers and speakers are ISN full/associate members in good standing. Priority consideration will be given to organizing societies that are affiliated with the ISN.
- **Meeting organizers' Country Classification as per World Bank**
Applications are thus open to meeting organizers that are **ISN members** from lower, lower-middle, and upper-middle income countries according to **World Bank classification**.

- **Scientific program & target audience:**

A formal scientific program of the meeting must be provided (even if preliminary) and target an attendance of at least 100 participants (preferably with an international/regional scope). Classroom type courses for in-house faculty are not considered eligible. A one-day CME meeting can be incorporated into a national or international conference of nephrology. A stand-alone meeting should have a program of at least 2 full days.

The incorporation of sessions and activities for other kidney health professionals (nurses, technicians, etc.) in the scientific program is highly encouraged.

- **Speakers:**

Although speakers may be suggested by meeting organizers, the CME Committee will take such suggestion under advisement only and will have the final word on the sponsored speakers. Relevant topics and needs of the region must be clearly addressed in the application. Selected and sponsored speakers may be either local, regional, or international.

Support requested for international speakers may be limited to one. Local and regional experts are therefore preferred.

ISN-supported speakers give at least 2 lectures per meeting (minimum of 25 minutes each), participate in other activities such as visits to centers, hospital rounds, informal meetings with trainees, etc., and agree to provide feedback on the relevance and impact of the meeting to the ISN, as well as report on the status of the nephrology in the region. Meetings with representatives of the Health Ministry of the region are highly encouraged. Speakers are active ISN full members and should act as ambassadors of ISN's vision, mission, and goals. ISN staff will provide slides on ISN which are required to be presented at the meeting. ISN-supported speakers are voice and play a key role in promoting the ISN network and activities to the local communities.

- **Application documents:**

Meeting organizers are requested to submit the duly completed CME application form together with the (draft) scientific program of the meeting **at least 3 months prior to the start of the meeting**. They must clearly indicate the topics for which they need ISN support and may suggest names of speakers.

Although local meetings may be accepted for support, the CME Committee will give priority consideration to applications from regional meetings as well as from meeting organizers involved in other ISN Programs (Educational Ambassadors, Sister Renal Centers, etc.). Meeting organizers are strongly encouraged to involve neighboring regions in their program.

The ISN CME Program will not provide support for industry employees or industry-planned programs.

HOW TO APPLY

There is no specific application deadline. Applications to the CME Program are accepted all year long. However, **applications must be sent 3-6 months prior to the start date of the meeting**. Fill in the application form and submit the scientific program of your meeting to cme@theisn.org.

Applications must be submitted 3-6 months prior to the start date of the meeting via cme@theisn.org

3. SUPPORT

The ISN CME Program offers support to meeting organizers in the following form:

- Help and advice in establishing a suitable scientific program developed to meet the needs of the local/regional nephrology communities;
- Select expert speakers in relation to the scientific program;
- Fund the travel of the ISN-supported speakers;
- Involve ISN Regional Boards or other Supporting Groups for advice and support.

In order to remain international and geographically equitable, the ISN cannot provide support for the same meetings for more than 2 consecutive years at a time.

4. TOPICS OF CME MEETINGS

The ISN CME Committee will consider applications on any nephrology topic, but strong preference will be given to topics that align with ISN's strategic priorities. The scientific value of the event should be evident, as reflected by the selection and status of the speakers and their expertise in the field, as well as the quality of the scientific content. Meeting organizers are expected to develop programs specifically related to relevant local challenges and clinical program development rather than generic nephrology teaching.

ISN is interested in improving the knowledge base and profile of nurses and allied health professionals in low-resource countries and of increasing their awareness of ISN initiatives. ISN will, therefore, consider favorably the requests to provide support to nurse speakers who will present at the meeting concerned, and at associated nursing or other workshops in cooperation with local nephrology nurse leaders.

List of CME Topics include:

- Acute Kidney Injury
- Chronic Kidney Disease
- Clinical Trials
- End Stage Kidney Disease
- Epidemiology
- Genetic Kidney Disease
- Hemodialysis
- Interventional Nephrology
- Onconeurology
- Pediatric Nephrology

- Peritoneal Dialysis
- Renal Pathology
- Transplantation
- Risk Factors

Fill in the application form and submit the scientific program of your meeting to cme@theisn.org.

5. SPEAKERS

PRACTICALITIES

The CME Program supports speakers' travels to the CME meetings (but accommodation is to be covered by the organizers).

- ISN can help speakers in booking the tickets.
- Tickets should be booked at least 30 days in advance to avoid expensive fares.
- The reimbursement request forms must be filled out and sent back (together with electronic tickets and/or scanned copy of all expenses/invoices) to the Program Coordinator within 30 days after the CME meeting.
- Expenses items without receipts will not be reimbursed.

Important notes:

- Applications must be submitted 3-6 months prior to date of meeting even if speakers have not yet been identified. The CME Committee can recommend expert speakers according to the topics and needs described in the application form.
- Support requested for international speakers may be limited to one. Local and regional experts are therefore preferred.
- The ISN cannot be held liable for any untoward consequences or risks related to traveling or staying abroad. The responsibility for procuring health/accident and travel insurance remains with the supported speaker. The supported speaker or his/her relatives cannot hold ISN responsible in the event of untoward events or experiences.
- The ISN will not reimburse tickets purchased less than 21 days before travel.

6. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The CME Committee led by Chair and Deputy Chair, often reaching out to ISN Regional Boards or other Supporting Groups for advice, review, and comment on the CME applications along the following criteria:

- **Profile of Local organizers**

Meetings should be organized by a credible scientific/medical society such as ISN affiliated national, regional societies. Meeting organizers must be ISN full members in good standing.

- **Scientific quality of the agenda and alignment with ISN's strategic priorities.**
The scientific program needs to be fully detailed on sessions and topics, and the speakers' names whenever possible. The scientific value of the event should be evident. The topic(s) of the meeting should be in line with ISN's main goals and strategic priorities. The program should contain at least one topic that is strategic to ISN.
- **Relevance and sustainable impact of the meeting within the region**
Meeting organizers are expected to develop programs more specifically related to relevant local challenges and clinical program development rather than generic nephrology knowledge. Local and regional health needs should be fully described in the application form so to allow the CME Committee to have a global overview of the past, present and future actions/challenges of the host country.
- **Selection of speakers and relevance of financial support requested**
ISN CME Committee takes into consideration the proposed speakers (if any) by the meeting organizers. The reviewers are free to suggest other speakers that they would feel more appropriate to the relevant topics and needs of the region in question. Local and regional experts are preferred.
- **Target audience**
The meeting will be of additional value if it reaches out to young people, other healthcare providers such as nurses and technicians. It is expected that activities such as workshops directed to these professionals are organized.
- **Sponsors**
Other sponsors and funding sources should be listed in the application form: this kind of information allows the CME Committee to check if the meeting is commercial and it will weigh the intervention of the CME Program.
- **Declaration of Istanbul**
Meeting organizers must endorse the principles of the Declaration of Istanbul and ensure that all scientists, presenters, and topics discussed are not in conflict with its principles.
- **Synergies with other ISN programs**
Applications submitted by [Sister Centers](#) or past [Fellows](#) or in conjunction with an application to the [Educational Ambassadors Program](#) are given some priority consideration and are more inclined to be supported as ISN tries to maximize its local impact.

The CME Chair and Deputy Chair make a final decision on the application based on the collected feedback. Applicants are notified of the outcome of their application maximum one month after the submission of the application.

7. REVIEW PROCESS

Each application may take up to 1 month to be reviewed and follows the steps below:

1. Administrative review
 - a. Check all the necessary documents were submitted and are completed;
 - b. Check eligibility criteria is met.
 - c. Check past support and post-meeting reports (if applicable).
2. CME Committee members' review
 - a. Each application is sent to Chair, Deputy Chair who represent their own regions, 1 representative of the region of the application, 1 representative of a neighboring region and 1 neutral representative who provide their input and whether they endorse or not the application;
 - b. Ideally the application is reviewed by 5 or more members;
 - c. Final decision falls on the Chair of CME Program.
3. Further details can be requested to the meeting organizer at any point of the reviewing process.
4. Final decision is communicated via official document.

8. ISN REQUIREMENTS FOR SUPPORTED MEETINGS

ISN would cover the travel and visa expenses of the speakers, while the event organizers are requested to cover accommodation.

ISN will provide successful applicants with a formal acceptance letter, the ISN logo for inclusion on printed and online material, and a post-meeting report which must be completed and returned to ISN within 3 weeks after the meeting. ISN will also include the name of the sponsored event on the ISN website's [Calendar of Events – ISN Stakeholders](#). Note that the ISN logo should NOT be included on event materials (including the event's website) until AFTER application has been approved and is to be used specifically for the sponsored event only. In addition, the following statement should accompany the logo: *ISN's endorsement is for the promotion of education in general, therefore the specific content of the event/course is the responsibility of the organizer.*

ISN VISIBILITY

In order to help promoting the ISN to the meeting delegates, event organizers (or ISN-supported speakers) are required to do the following:

- Actively recommend that delegates coming to the meeting, course, or workshop join the ISN community and receive the bi-weekly ISN Insight e-newsletter by utilizing one of the following methods:
 - Manual registration: collect the name, surname, country, and email address of the delegates who agree to receive ISN Insight; provide this list to ISN (excel list preferable)
 - Prominently display the hyperlink to the ISN website on the event's web page: <http://www.theisn.org>

- Feature the name, disclaimer statement above, and logo of ISN appropriately on all publications of the event and provide copies of all relevant official publications to ISN
- Provide ISN with a copy of the event pricing table listing the delegate/attendee registration fees
- Return the completed post-meeting report to ISN within three (3) weeks of event; failure to provide post-meeting report will result in refusal of future sponsorship requests.

Organizers of sponsored events are requested to do the following, if feasible:

- Offer reduced registration fees to ISN members
- Allow the showing of intermission slides about ISN's upcoming programs and activities
- Promote upcoming ISN events, especially the upcoming WCN
- Provide ISN with photos from the event.

For certain events, ISN will contact meeting organizers to discuss options for promotional or educational activities, such as: joint scientific sessions; including ISN information in the onsite delegates' bags or registration documents; providing an ISN booth or table at the event for announcing ISN's conferences and promoting research, education, advocacy, and membership; and inclusion and promotion of selected proceedings on the ISN Academy (ISN's educational portal). Note that the publication of summaries, presentations, or conference audio-visual material on the ISN Academy requires a separate editorial review and approval process.

REPORTS

The meeting organizers must submit a post-meeting report within **3 weeks** after the meeting. The report should include pictures and/or videos.

The post-meeting report helps ISN to assess the benefit and impact of its support. It is also a way for ISN to gather information on the main challenges and barriers for developing nephrology in host regions and the role of ISN in present and future challenges.

Non-submission of such report might lead to rejection of ISN support for next years.

ISN welcomes any pictures/videos and short stories about the meetings at any time during or shortly after the meeting. This greatly helps ISN publish short news article about the meetings and regional activities as well as share successes and challenges within the global kidney community.

9. PROMOTION OF SUPPORTED MEETINGS VIA ISN

ISN will include the name of the sponsored event on the ISN website's [Calendar of Events – ISN Stakeholders](#) together with a short description.

10. ANNEX

CME TRAVEL POLICY

FLIGHTS

ISN will reimburse Economy Class only with restricted travel fare up to a maximum as stipulated. This should be booked at least 30 days in advance to avoid expensive fares.

The invitation letter to each speaker will include the expected cost of an economy class ticket from the speaker's home region to the region where the meeting is taking place - based on published ticket price ranges. The speaker will be requested not to purchase a ticket above that guide price without prior contact with ISN HQ.

Important notes:

- The ISN cannot be held liable for any untoward consequences related to traveling or staying abroad, including those related to Covid-19. The responsibility for procuring health/accident and travel insurance remains with the speaker. The supported speaker or his/her relatives cannot hold ISN responsible in the event of untoward events or experiences.
- The ISN will not reimburse tickets purchased less than 21 days before travel.

ISN WILL ALSO COVER:

- Transfers between home, terminal and transit hotels (please provide receipts).
- Auto mileage at \$0.585/mile tolls and parking.
- Normal visa fees.
- Tips related to above services.

WHAT ISN WILL NOT COVER:

- Business class travel for CME speakers.
- First class travel for Executive Committee members.
- Honoraria for participation in ISN programs/activities.
- Hotel and accommodation expenses.
- Meal expenses
- Between meal bar bills.
- Room service (unless there is unexpected acute illness)
- Personal phone calls and fax charges.
- Transportation to/from destinations that are not involved in ISN activities.
- Gym or spa fees.
- Theatre or entertainment tickets or in-room entertainment.
- Rush charges for visa or passport (unless the trip is officially requested at the last minute).
- Spouse/partner travel expenses
- Valet cleaning and other personal services.

CME REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

The reimbursement request form together with proof of expenses and financial statement must be submitted **maximum 30 days** after the meeting takes place. After this time, the ISN will no longer reimburse the expenses. All the documents are provided by ISN HQ together with official letter.

- ISN reimbursement forms must be filled in completely.
- W8 form for non-US residents.
- W9 form for US residents.
- Scanned documents are acceptable as well as E-ticket. Original documents are also accepted.
- Travel receipts are accepted.

LOST RECEIPT

Receipts must be submitted for each expense. In case of lost receipt, ISN will not reimburse the expense.

Unless otherwise designated, the ISN will use foreign currency exchange rates from Oanda Foreign Exchange reference available at www.oanda.com. Rates will be calculated on the day of expenditure. Please note that some events may plan reimbursements in EUR only or USD.

Please do not convert your expenses. Please submit them in the original currency you incurred them in.

Specify whether you prefer a check or a wire transfer - please provide all necessary bank details. Checks are only issued in USD within the United States.