

Developing Your Event Budget

Virtual and hybrid events



Event Types

Spectrum of formats and participation

Traditional Event



All event elements and all attendee participation take place in-person at a physical location.

Smaller and local

Hybrid Event



Some event elements & some attendee participation take place in-person at a physical location, while others take place virtually.

Limited physical attendance, broad virtual outreach

Virtual Event



All event elements and all attendee participation take place virtually.

Entirely online, planned from the start



2021 Budgeting by Event Type

Traditional Event



- ▶ Plan as usual, but be prepared to cancel and scale back if things persist
- ▶ Be aware likely no IEEE cancellation insurance in the future and closely examine your force majeure clauses to ensure you can absorb a loss
- ▶ Have very clear refund/non-refund policies in place to eliminate questions

Hybrid Event



- ▶ Consider the budget/pricing from the start
- ▶ Book less space with reduced attendance
- ▶ Consider impacts of social distancing
- ▶ Implement iron clad force majeure, cancellation, & refund policies
- ▶ Budget for your virtual component
- ▶ Ensure pricing covers costs and provides needed OU funding, supports authors in publishing, & includes charges for non-author participants to encourage incremental participation
- ▶ Market from start to build demand
- ▶ Check in with IEEE partners often to monitor the situation and minimize obligations/risk

Virtual Event



- ▶ Consider being bold and going virtual from the start
- ▶ Budget to cover costs for authors and invest to engage more sponsors
- ▶ Don't be confined to the traditional schedule
- ▶ Utilize our services & learnings to support the community and minimize obligations until the physical environment permits more safe gathering

Common Virtual Event Costs

Event Size / Complexity

Expense Category	Small/Simple (up to ~100 presentations <150 attendees)	Medium/Average (<1000 presentations 150-1000 attendees)	Large/Complex (1000+ presentations <150 attendees)
Platform/Tool	\$2,500-\$10,000	\$5,000-\$25,000	\$25,000+
Support Services <ul style="list-style-type: none">•Train authors/presenters•Develop Virtual Program•Event Build•Presenter Support & QA•Engagement Management•Daily Pre-record	\$2,500-\$10,000	\$10,000-\$25,000	\$35,000+
Production Services <ul style="list-style-type: none">•Building the event in the system•Publishing/Hosting•Pre-recorded playback•Concurrent live tracks•Live Event Technical Support	\$2,500-\$10,000	\$10,000-\$50,000	\$50,000-\$300,000+

Source: IEEE MCE Digital Events

Virtual Vs. Physical Event Costs

Key differences

▶ **Determine virtual event expenses**

- Fixed - publicity, organizing overhead, paper submission / review process, website, digest production / distribution, financial management, audit, some buffer,
- Variable - virtual event tools, registration,
- Lower / less need - event planning ...

▶ **Likely not a virtual cost (vs. physical event)**

- Space rental, AV, food & beverage / breaks, printing, travel/lodging,

Add Expenses to desired Surplus (OU funding need) to determine revenue goal

**Divide (Expense + Surplus) by attendees or authors → Base Registration Fee
(depending on registration model)**



Surpluses / Sponsoring OU Funding Needs

Recommendations

- ▶ The traditional 20% surplus may not work with reduced expenses
 - With lower surpluses, sponsoring OUs would be under funded and would need to cut services – Chapter support, scholarships/fellowships, distinguished lecturers, support for affinity groups, webinars, publishing free content online,
 - Sponsoring OUs are billed overhead for conference support activities (not billed to conferences)
- ▶ A better goal for annual events, might be “traditional” surplus, what was returned in 2-3 years prior to COVID-19 (*this should be discussed with sponsoring OU*)
 - Work with your sponsoring OU
 - This change is not temporary, even post COVID-19, there is likely to be less in person attendance and conference revenues for many years

Hybrid Vs. Virtual Expenses

Adjust budgets accordingly

- ▶ Hybrid events will incur both the physical event expenses plus share common expenses with the virtual option
 - Try to set fees for the attendee type – don't subsidize one for the other. Allocate expenses to the proper attendee type.
 - This reduces problems if ratio of attendee types is different than expected
 - Trick is determining what are shared expenses and how to allocate
 - F&B is major on-site expenses
 - Consider discount for on-site live presenters
 - Have travel costs compared to remote presenters
 - Will attract other on-site attendees

Financial Planning for Different Event Types

Revenue	Traditional	Hybrid	Virtual
Participation Fees (incl. Tutorials/Workshops) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authors • Attendees 	Full Price	Full Price for Authors Small to significant reduction for Virtual Attendees	Reduced Price for Authors Small to significant reductions for Attendees
Exhibitors	Full Price	Full/Reduced Price	Evaluate Based on Offering
Sponsors	Full Price	Full Price (maybe more)	Evaluate Based on Offering
Expenses	Traditional	Hybrid	Virtual
Professional Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event Planning • Attendee Registration • Peer Review Management 	Full Cost	Full Cost (maybe more)	Reduced Costs
Local Arrangements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting Rooms • Catering • Audio Visual 	Full Cost	Reduced Cost	No Cost
Virtual Technology & Production Costs	If any, limited to a few sessions	Full Cost (maybe more)	Full Cost