Flavor Physics and CP Violation (FPCP)

Suggestions for Local Organizing Committees

I.   Introduction

The purpose of this document is to pass knowhow regarding conference organization to local organizing committees (LOCs) of FPCP. Rather than a coherent and strict set of rules, this document is to be seen as a loose collection of suggestions for organizing an excellent conference, based on the experience of former LOC and International Advisory Committee (IAC) chairs and members.

II.   Roles of the LOC and the IAC

The selection of the site for organizing the conference was approved based on the submitted proposal. While it is understood that things might have to change, any major change, such as change of venue, increase in registration fee or major change in LOC should be brought to the attendance of the chair of the IAC as soon as possible.

FPCP is organized by a different LOC each year, necessitating significant interaction between the LOC and the IAC to ensure that experience from previous conferences and the range of scientific expertise within the IAC are fully exploited. This allows the conference series to maintain its character while also give space for evolution.

The initiative for logistic organization and setting the scientific program should come from the LOC. It is also the LOC that carries the responsibility for the success of the conference. The IAC advises, monitors, serves as a resource, and can be considered the "owner" of the conference series over the long run. The practice of adding the LOC chair [1]to the IAC organically integrates the local and international elements of FPCP.

III.   LOC-IAC Interaction

The style of conference organization and the interaction of the LOC with the IAC vary based on the composition of the LOC and the experience and expertise of its members.

Generally, the LOC is expected to propose to the IAC a first draft agenda, at least 6 months before the conference. The draft should contain the LOC's thoughts and ideas regarding session topics and their rough time slots, individual talks within the sessions, and potential theory speakers and experiments assigned to each talk. The agenda is then finalized by the LOC over the subsequent weeks, with some tweaks potentially needed as late as a few weeks before the conference.

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[1] Note that the LOC should have only one chair.

The social program, as well as the final registration fee and what it will include (closely tied to what was presented in the LOC's original proposal to host the conference), should also be presented at this stage.

LOC-IAC interaction should take place both before and during the process of building the agenda. Email is useful for ensuring that all IAC members (and LOC members, at the discretion of the LOC chair) are in the loop. However, in addition, live meetings by electronic means are strongly recommended as an efficient means of discussion. In recent years, 2-3 such meetings took place during the process of agenda building. It is advised to alternate meeting times to allow participating members from different time zones. While IAC members may hold a variety of opinions on, e.g., choice of speakers for a given topic, votes on such matters are generally not taken. Rather, the LOC chair should make decisions that take into consideration the opinions expressed by IAC members.

In addition to email and meetings with the entire IAC, the LOC chair may wish to consult individual IAC members on their specific areas of expertise or based on their membership in a particular experiment. In case of doubt, the chair of the IAC should be contacted.

IV.   Building the Agenda

A.   Sessions

The sessions are generally topical, with each session containing a balance of theory and experimental talks as relevant. The average ratio of theory to experimental talks has been about 1/3, although this is not a hard rule and depends on the recent developments in each area. There should be mainly plenary sessions, with a few time slots devoted to parallel sessions. (FPCP was a plenary-only conference before 2018.)

B.   Plenary

Except for "hot-discovery" talks, which are rare, an important characteristic of FPCP is that each plenary-session talk is a review talk, not just a report of specific results. Ensuring this requires significant interaction of the LOC chair with both individual speakers and the collaborations that send experimental speakers. In the case of theory, this means that the speaker should present the topic and progress in it as a whole, rather than focus on a single paper. In the case of experiment, speakers should be asked to review recent results from all relevant experiments. Since experimental talk speakers are selected by the collaborations, it is important to impress upon the collaborations that plenary-talk speakers should be good speakers (although not necessarily senior), who are capable of integrating different results into an interesting and instructive topical talk.

The agenda of each session is best constructed such that the talks complement each other to make a whole. The LOC should provide speakers with friendly instructions, letting them know of other speakers and topics in their session or related topic in another session, and encourage them to coordinate, cross-reference each other, and avoid repetition.

Theory speakers are selected individually. The IAC has to agree to the list of suggested speakers, to be presented by the LOC with several backups for each topic. The LOC will then contact the proposed speakers and seek confirmation. Ideally, this should be done about 5 months before the conference, to secure desirable speakers.

An important task is selecting experimental talks and assigning them to collaborations. It is suggested that the LOC contact all the relevant collaborations (obtain list of contacts from previous LOC chair + internet) 6-9 months before the conference and ask which relevant results they wish to present. IAC members from that collaboration can help, but it is best for the LOC to rely on direct communication. Of the results, those that have been published (after the previous FPCP) and results promised for the near future are obvious candidates for presentation. If possible, it is best to construct each plenary talk from a mix of assured results and future results with various degrees of completion certainty, to avoid a case where a talk ends up having no new content whatsoever. It is important to stay in contact with the collaboration and make adjustments as analyses mature before the conference.

While a plenary talk reviews results from different experiments, it still needs to be assigned to one collaboration. It is best to assign the talk to the collaboration that provides the most significant new results shown in that talk. Inevitably, there will always be topics that are more or less important to each collaboration, so it is good to ask the collaborations for their preferences. Sometimes there is contention, and the LOC chair needs to make an informed yet decisive choice in favor of one collaboration, hopefully compensating the other in another talk. The number of talks allocated to each collaboration should be in rough proportion to their activities in areas covered by the conference. Collaborations should be informed of their assigned talks 3-4 months before the conference, and should be asked to provide the LOC with speaker names no later than 6 weeks before the conference.

C. Parallel and poster sessions

Abstracts for parallel-session talks (usually 12+3-minutes long) and posters should be invited, e.g., on the conference web site, as well as by direct communication with the collaborations, theorists in the field, and local groups. In particular, posters are a good opportunity for local students and postdocs to highlight their research and obtain experience and exposure. Submissions should be reviewed by referees (LOC and/or local/national experts). A session of very short (~1-minute-long) introduction talks for each poster may be considered.

V.   Advertising

It is important that the conference dates and website be advertised on http://inspirehep.net as soon as the dates are fixed, well over a year before the conference. It is also customary (but not required) to send posters to a list of representatives in a large number of

institutions (the LOC should get the mailing list from the previous LOC chair) 4-6 months before the conference.

VI.   Proceedings

The submission deadline can be announced during the concluding day of the conference. It is left to the LOC to pick the exact format (through a journal, eConf, Zenodo, …). However, electronic-only proceedings are encouraged, and the proceedings must be available as Open Access with the authors retaining the copyright. In the past, proceedings have been subject to a light-weight review by the LOC members.

VII. Budgeting and financial support

The LOC is encouraged to obtain financial resources in addition to the registration fee. Desirable speakers (particularly the summary speakers) may require a registration-fee waiver and travel support, and this needs to be considered in the budget. Furthermore, support for (usually local) students may be considered, in order to encourage local participation.