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| Royal Musical AssociationRMA conference hosting formANNUAL CONFERENCE | RMAlogo |

## Conference aims

The RMA’s Annual Conference aims to celebrate the quality and diversity of current scholarship and research in music by bringing together as many as possible from home and abroad with an interest in the investigation and discussion of the subject’s many branches.

RMA sees the conference as a vital complement to the impressive range of specialist conferences, symposia, study days, and training sessions taking place around the world.

Through the conference the RMA seeks to encourage networking and the provision of opportunities for students and new entrants to the world of musical scholarship and research to meet leaders in the field and vice versa.

Finally, the conference aims to support RMA’s endeavour to raise awareness of musical scholarship and research and be an effective advocate with government and other policy making bodies on behalf of the entire UK community concerned.

## Objectives

**Partnership.** In pursuit of the above aims the RMA seeks partnerships with universities, conservatories, and other interested bodies across the UK in the promotion of its Annual Conference. The RMA supports each conference through the work of its Council members and officers, with a grant, and through financial support for the Dent and Le Huray lectures, which provide for prize-winners of the Association’s awards to deliver keynote addresses.

**Programming.** The RMA encourages programming that prioritises breadth and inclusivity, aiming to reflect the entire scope of current scholarship and research in music.

* To that end the RMA will work proactively with hosts to secure a range of speakers with varying academic and professional experience.
* Thematic strands are encouraged, however, e.g. by linking one or more sessions to keynote lectures or to a public event associated with the conference.
* In addition to sessions comprising individual presentations, RMA encourages themed panel sessions in a variety of imaginative formats (some of which may address current affairs issues of burning topical concern), workshops, and poster sessions.
* To lend celebratory intensity to the occasion conference programmes include the RMA-sponsored Dent medal award and lecture and the Le Huray keynote lecture, as well as the RMA’s Annual General Meeting.

**Location.** Conference venues cover a geographical spread and have good transport links. For ease of access, the conference normally takes place in London once every three years.

**Timing.** Following extensive consultations, and taking note of several practicalities, the month of the conference – fluctuating until a few years ago – is now stabilised at September.

**Affordability.** Conference attendance is price sensitive. To ensure that the conference is accessible to all, hosts are encouraged to seek additional funding to achieve the level of registration fees suggested in the attached budget spreadsheet.

## The form

This form is designed to serve as template for drawing up:

**An initial expression of interest.** This will normally be required far in advance of the proposed conference. Please complete Sections A–C in outline, supply what’s required in Section E, and submit to the RMA Flagship Conferences Coordinator, Michelle Assay ([flagship@rma.ac.uk](mailto:flagship@rma.ac.uk)) by the date indicated above or in the current open call for expressions of interest. Following preliminary consideration of applications, the RMA Flagship Conferences Subcommittee may designate a representative to visit institutions prior to communicating its decision.

**A full business plan and budget.** This will normally be required 18 months in advance. Please update information already proposed in Sections A–C, complete Section D, append a detailed budget (Section E) and confirmation of institutional approval (Section F), and submit to Michelle Assay by the date requested.

**A close-out report and financial statement.** See Section G. This will normally be required at latest three months after the conference.

The immediate purpose of the form is to provide all concerned with a clear understanding of what is planned and with what financial implications. In the longer term it reflects RMA’s wish to build up a fund of conference planning experience that it can share with future hosts to the benefit of all. Please read the RMA Annual Conference Handbook <<http://www.rma.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/RMA-AC-Handbook.pdf>> when completing all parts of the form. Questions can be addressed to Michelle Assay at any time.

**Confidentiality.** The plan, budget, report, and financial statement will be made available to RMA Council members and officers and may be passed to the organisers and programme committees of future RMA sponsored conferences to assist planning. The information will not be disclosed to ordinary members of the RMA or put into the public domain (save that in due course it may be added to the RMA’s long-term archive deposited at the British Library).

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| Section A: Host Institution and Contact Details |

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| (1) Host Institution: |  |

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| (2) Contact Details | Name |  |
| Email |  |
| Telephone |  |

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| (3) Conference dates Three days in September (Thu–Sat or Fri–Sun). | [day] [date] to [day] [date] September 2021 |

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| Section B: Academic Arrangements |

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| (4) Conference management | Indicate who will run the conference: |
| The RMA is looking for stability and wishes to be confident that implementation will not be dependent on any single individual. For the initial expression of interest please indicate, then:  1) the institutional framework within which the conference will take place,  2) the individuals who will manage the conference from day to day, and  3) individuals likely to participate on the programme committee, together with their subject expertise.  The final composition of the management team and the programme committee will be determined in consultation with RMA when drawing up the full business plan, the aim being both to maximise host ownership and to meet RMA’s conference objectives. |  |

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| (5) Event summary | Give a headline summary of conference content |
| E.g. record guest speakers, linked public and/or other special events, etc. RMA will be in a position to notify you of the Dent lecturer in May/June of the year before the conference. |  |

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| Section C: Domestic Arrangements |

The notes provide a guide to normal expectations and are not absolute requirements.

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| (6) Meeting rooms Usually five AV-equipped rooms for parallel sessions, whereof one should seat at least 100, the others around 50 each. Also a single common area where bookseller and other exhibits can be displayed and refreshments served. And a committee room for private meetings (e.g. RMA Council and committees). | Indicate the number and seating capacity of the meeting rooms you will provide / have booked: |
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| (7) Delegate accommodation Delegates value the flexibility to choose between a variety of overnight accommodation options or to make their own arrangements. We suggest that local organisers limit their involvement in overnight accommodation to identifying a booking agency (e.g. conference office at the host institution or a local tourist office). Alternatively organisers may make arrangements with specific providers which delegates can book direct. Delegates should not be locked into packages that tie conference registration to accommodation. | Indicate overnight accommodation arrangements and how these will be managed: |
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| (8) Catering Delegates appreciate flexibility regarding meals. We suggest making use of local/campus restaurants, etc. whenever feasible. There is no obligation to promote a conference dinner. In our experience dinners booked with institutions tend to offer poor value for money, exclude delegates on small budgets, and involve conference organisers in extra work and risk-taking. Most organisers find it convenient, however, to provide delegates with tea/coffee/biscuits gratis from general conference income. | Indicate catering arrangements including refreshment breaks and meals, and how they will be managed: |
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| (9) Social Events We suggest that the Dent and Le Huray keynote lectures be followed by drinks receptions, free of charge to delegates. RMA may be able to assist in obtaining sponsorship (especially from its own publishers) so that such events do not call unduly on central conference income. | Indicate planned social events: |
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| Section D: Milestones (not needed until submission of full biz-plan) |

Please indicate planned milestone dates (reporting *after* the conference on the actual out-turn), including the following:

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| Advance bookings confirmed E.g. meeting rooms, accommodation allocations. Please indicate what, if anything, remains to be booked and by when | As far ahead as possible (normally before the full business plan is drawn up). |
| Date planned:  Out-turn: |

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| Programme Committee Meeting I To agree (note) keynote/guest invitations, associated public events, plan for pro-active programming, CfP text, planning schedule and procedures, etc. | Normally 15 months ahead |
| Date planned:  Out-turn: |

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| **CfP copy and advance publicity ready for dispatch and conference web-site set up and linked to RMA site**  CfP copy to journals and newsletters, for example (RMA Membership Development Officer will advise). Copy to include announcement of keynote speakers and other special conference features. | Normally a month before the previous year’s annual conference |
| Date planned:  Out-turn: |

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| **CfP and advance publicity published and distributed** | Normally at the previous year’s Annual Conference |
| Date planned:  Out-turn: |

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| Programme Committee II To review Meeting I actions, agree publicity, procedure for handling proposals for papers and works, etc. | Normally at the previous year’s Annual Conference |
| Date planned:  Out-turn: |

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| Deadline for submission of proposals | Normally 10 months ahead |
| Date planned:  Out-turn: |

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| Programme committee III To agree responses to proposals for papers and works, draw up conference programme, confirm remaining arrangements, etc. | Normally at the RMA Research Students Conference, 8 months ahead |
| Date planned:  Out-turn: |

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| Notifications of proposal acceptances / rejections dispatched, along with chair invitations | Normally 3 weeks latest after Programme committee III |
| Date planned:  Out-turn: |

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| Speaker and chair confirmations received, including revisions to abstracts where applicable; booking form copy agreed | Normally 2 weeks latest before conference announced and bookings open |
| Date planned:  Out-turn: |

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| Conference programme announced / bookings open Programme copy, with prefatory blurb, posted to conference website and sent to RMA Newsletter.  News release dispatched by RMA Press Officer to list. Also dispatched by conference host to list of potential commercial advertisers. | Normally 6 months ahead and before Easter |
| Date planned:  Out-turn: |

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| Guest travel arrangements confirmed Especially travel and accommodation for overseas guests. In consultation with RMA for the Dent and Le Huray keynotes.  **Meeting rooms confirmed, AV and catering booked** | Normally 6 months ahead |
| Date planned:  Out-turn: |

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| Abstracts edited and posted to Conference website | Normally 4 months ahead |
| Date planned:  Out-turn: |

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| Final arrangements Conference assistants confirmed, reviewer for RMA Newsletter report fixed, etc., etc. | Normally 6–8 weeks ahead |
| Date planned:  Out-turn: |

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| **Conference programme booklet pdf to printer** | Normally 2 weeks ahead |
| Date planned:  Out-turn: |

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| Section E: Budget |

Please complete/adapt Sheet 2 (Supporting notes) of the attached Budget/Financial Statement spreadsheet. Its totals cells are designed to generate Sheet 1 (Summary budget) automatically.

* For the **preliminary expression of interest** an indicative headline budget is all that is needed.
* For the **business plan** (18 months before the conference) a full budget forecast is required.
* For the **close-out financial statement** please add the actual figures, including any outstanding commitments (e.g. the RMA grant), to the Out-turn column.
* In all cases please list cash items only, using Supporting Note 18 to record any income and expenses in kind.
* Please note: the full budget once set and approved by RMA should not change. Be sure to monitor income in the run-up to the conference and in the event of any anticipated shortfall to take timely action to adjust expense commitments accordingly.

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| Section F: Institutional Approval |

Please confirm that what is proposed above and in the accompanying budget has appropriate institutional approval.

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| Section G: Report |

## Close-out report and financial statement

After the conference, and with the needs of future conference organisers chiefly in mind, please:

* Annotate Sections A–C above to show any significant departures from the plan, adding comments as appropriate
* Complete the out-turn rows and columns in Section D, commenting on any significant variance
* Complete the Out-turn columns in Sheet 2 (Supporting Notes) of the appended Budget/Financial Statement spreadsheet. including any outstanding commitments (e.g. the RMA grant),
* Comment on any significant variance between budget and out-turn in the Financial Statement
* Give an indication of the number of proposals received and the number accepted, categorized by panel sessions, workshops, individual papers, poster sessions, etc
* Give an indication of the total number of speakers, nationalities represented, and how many were RMA members
* Comment on any significant departures from the Business Plan, Sections A–C above
* Comment on any significant variance between the milestones plan and out-turn in Section D above
* Tell us what went well and should be emulated in future
* Let us know what went not so well (to be avoided in future)
* Send us the results of your post-conference delegate feedback survey
* Send us e-copies of the conference programme and any other documents potentially useful to future conference organisers (e.g. call for proposals, acceptance/rejection letter templates, registration form, info sheets re any specially negotiated accommodation offers, instructions to speakers/chairs, etc)

#### Note:

RMA would like to learn more about conference support facilities at host institutions. Please include any comments here or attach them in a separate note.

## Newsletter Report

RMA requires a brief narrative report of the conference for publication in its web-published Newsletter. Please send copy (either by yourself or someone you designate in advance) within four weeks of the conference to the editor, Mike Byde ([mikebyde@gmail.com](mailto:mikebyde@gmail.com)). Stunning conference photos also welcome!