SUSTAINABILITY AWARD

2024

Die eingereichten
Projekte

Bundesministerium
Bildung, Wissenschaft
und Forschung

Bundesministerium
Klimaschutz, Umwelt,
Energie, Mobilität,
Innovation und Technologie

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The global multi-hub academic conference: Sustainable and inclusive – Universität Graz

Verantwortliche Einrichtung

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Kurzbeschreibung

Global conferences emit enormous amounts of CO_2 and exclude colleagues who cannot afford registration, travel, and accommodation. A multi-hub conference can solve both problems simultaneously. Many academic disciplines have regular regional conferences on different continents. They can be held simultaneously and electronically networked, mixing face-to-face and virtual communication throughout (cf. International Conference on Music Perception and Cognition ICMPC; Argentina, Australia, Austria, Canada, 2018). Real-time interaction can be maximized by situating three hubs eight hours apart, with other hubs close to them in time. To maximize connectivity, the working day at each hub is divided into two 4-hour sessions separated by a 4-hour siesta. Speakers and remote audiences communicate using widely available equipment. A typical conference might have 1000 active participants at 7 hubs (e.g. North & South America, Europe, Africa, India, East Asia, Australia).

Kreativität, Innovation, Vorbildcharakter

1. The project challenges colleagues to change how they think about global conferences. The proposed format is neither "virtual" nor "hybrid" in the usual sense.
2. Colleagues need to personally experience a well-run multi-hub conference to objectively evaluate its advantages and disadvantages. After that, they are more likely to follow our lead.
3. The project is egalitarian (all hubs have equal status) with an innovative approach to time-zone differences. Local programs include a daily siesta to enable constant real-time communication with other hubs. Real-time communication between any two specific hubs lasts at least 4 hours per day.

Ergebnisse und transformative Ebene

1. The proposed format measurably and sustainably improves inclusivity. Colleagues from almost anywhere participate equally. Emissions per participant are reduced by c. 70 %.
2. The project will change how academics think about conferences and issues of inclusion and sustainability.
3. Once colleagues accept the advantages of multi-hub conferences, regular conferences will retrospectively seem exclusive, environmentally destructive, and anachronistic.
4. The project has implications for the global organization of all academic disciplines, helping colleagues on all continents to create or strengthen regional societies.
5. Direct results include less CO_2 and more inclusivity. Indirectly, participants are empowered to improve sustainability and inclusion in other areas.

Zielgruppen

All academics everywhere, but especially those who currently cannot afford international conferences or prefer not to fly for environmental reasons.

Start und Dauer

The project began with the ICMPC in 2018. There were four hubs with 300 participants in Graz, 150 in Montreal, 100 in Buenos Aires, and 50 in Sydney. One goal of the present project is to ensure that the 2027 ICMPC is multi-hub. It will be organized by the European Society for the Cognitive Sciences of Music (ESCOM), of which the applicant is ex-president.

Budget und Finanzierung

A typical conference budget is 100,000 €. The costs are covered by a combination of grants and registration fees.

Partnerorganisationen

- City University of Hong Kong (Dr. PerMagnus Lindborg, School of Creative Media)
- International Institute of Information Technology, Hyderabad, India (Dr. Vinoo Alluri, Kohli Center on Intelligent Systems)
- Universidad Nacional de La Plata, Argentina (Prof. Isabel Cecilia Martínez, Laboratory for the Study of Musical Experience)
- University of Pretoria, South Africa (Dr. Clorinda Panebianco, School of the Arts: Music)
- University of Sheffield, UK (Prof. Renee Timmers, Department of Music)
- University of York, UK (Dr. Andrea Schiavio, School of Arts and Creative Technologies)