

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR THE JOINT
26TH INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES RESEARCH &
25TH WORLD IUSTI
MEETINGS**

The International Society for Sexually Transmitted Diseases Research (ISSTD) and the International Union against STI (IUSTI) solicit proposals by qualified investigators to conduct ISSTD's 26th biennial meeting in conjunction with the 25th World IUSTI meeting in 2025. It has been decided by the Board of ISSTD and the Executive Committee of IUSTI that this conference is planned as a joint conference of both organizations like the conferences in Vienna in 2013, Brisbane 2015, Rio de Janeiro 2017, Vancouver in 2019, the virtual meeting organized by Amsterdam and the planned conference in Chicago 2023.

KEY DATES

- 15 May 2021** Application deadline
1 June 2021 Selection and notification of finalist applicants
13 July 2021 ISSTD Board meeting, oral presentations, announcement of results

INTRODUCTION

The ISSTD, founded in 1977, organizes biennial, interdisciplinary scientific meetings at venues that historically have alternated between Europe and North America, and have recently been extended to other continents. The ISSTD meetings have emerged as the world's premier scientific conferences on STDs and their health consequences for populations around the globe. The IUSTI was founded in 1923 and is organized on both a global and regional basis. It is the oldest international organization with the objective of fostering international cooperation in the control of sexually transmitted infections including HIV/AIDS.

The meetings address the breadth of STD research, including the intersection between HIV/AIDS and other STDs, and encompass microbiology, virology, immunobiology, pathogenesis, and other basic sciences; clinical sciences, social and behavioral sciences, epidemiology, and prevention; and research in health services, public health, and prevention policy. The meetings are global in scope and are designed to meet the needs of scientists, trainees and students from academia, public health agencies, nongovernmental organizations, key population organizations, other institutions and agencies. Expanded information about the two organizations is available at www.isstd.org and www.iusti.org. Information on the 2021 meeting is available at <https://www.stihiv2021.org>

ISSTDR MEETINGS

Leadership. Application of an investigator to chair an ISSTDR meeting constitutes nomination and willingness to serve as the Society's President before, during or after the conference. However, the Board plays a role in electing the President. Historically, the person chosen to serve in this capacity assumes the role of President-elect upon selection of the venue, assumes the presidency at the subsequent meeting, and serves as President until conclusion of the meeting for which s/he was elected President.

Organization. The meeting chair and his or her local organizing team assume all responsibility to plan and conduct the meeting. They are also responsible for fundraising and for the financial soundness of the congress. However, the ISSTDR Foundation, a sister organization established to financially support the organization of the ISSTDR meetings, will provide start-up funds to the conference organizers if needed. For combined meetings the IUSTI will also provide start-up funds. These start-up funds are to be returned after the Congress. A guide to IUSTI's expectations regarding World Congresses is stated in a procedural document available at http://www.iusti.org/about/statutes/pdf/IUSTI_Procedures.pdf although it should be noted that there is room for negotiation in the case of joint ISSTDR-IUSTI meetings.

Scientific Content. The ISSTDR meetings emphasize research presentations in both oral and poster format, selected from competitively submitted abstracts. Research presentations are supplemented by topical symposia and plenary/keynote presentations by invited speakers. Additional symposia, key population initiatives, sponsored by commercial supporters or consortia of scientists with special interests related to STD/HIV, also have been appended to recent meetings. Expanded information about recent meetings is available on the website of ISSTDR, including the program and abstracts since the 15th meeting.

Venue. The ISSTDR meetings are held biennially in odd-numbered years and consecutive meetings are held on separate continents. Organizations bidding for the Congress must be able to demonstrate that they are able to provide world class conference facilities and a strong and active local professional society.

Scale. The last three ISSTDR meetings, have attracted between 1,000 to 1,400 attendees from up to 108 countries, with approximately 700-1,300 submitted research abstracts. In principle the meeting commences on a Sunday evening with a keynote address and welcome reception, followed by the main meeting content which occurs over the following 3 days (Monday – Wednesday). Several organizations normally host satellite workshops and symposia in the 1-2 days leading up to the main Congress.

Social Program. Traditional social events have included an opening reception for all registrants, typically following an afternoon or evening opening ceremony; the Presidents' dinner for ISSTD and IUSTI World Board members and other dignitaries; a speaker's dinner for meeting organizers and invited speakers; and a main Congress banquet to which all registrants are invited. The American Sexually Transmitted Diseases Association (ASTDA) traditionally hosts an annual awards luncheon, to which all ISSTD conference registrants are invited. The organizers of each ISSTD meeting have considerable latitude in designing attendant social programs.

Specific financial issues. The ISSTD Foundation has no-liability for a failed conference. The Chair of the Congress conference must present a formal budget and enter into an agreement with the ISSTD Foundation and IUSTI. The Chair must agree a sum with the ISSTD Foundation to pump prime the conference and agree to the amount to be returned to the Foundation following the meeting. Since the conference in 2025 is planned as a joint meeting, IUSTI will also provide seed money to support starting the activities of the conference. The Chair of the Congress can approach the ISSTD Foundation in case of financial difficulty due to no fault of his/her organization.

The minimum amount of the starting funds will be 25,000 Euros by the ISSTD Foundation and 15,000 British pounds by IUSTI. Any profit from the Congress will be shared by the ISSTD Foundation, the IUSTI, and the host organization according to a formula that will be mutually agreed prior to the Congress. The process for the organization of future joint meetings is under discussion with both ISSTD, ISSTD Foundation and IUSTI and is evolving. In addition, IUSTI full members expect to receive a discounted registration fee; in the event that ISSTD offers a similar paid membership option at the time of future Congresses, including the 2025 meeting, ISSTD full members should also be granted a discounted registration fee. The concepts discussed in this paragraph are open to further discussions and may be modified.

PROPOSAL

Criteria for Selection. Formal criteria have not been defined for acceptance of a proposal, nor is there a quantitative scoring system. However, applications should address several major and secondary criteria for the Board's consideration.

Major Criteria

- STD-related scientific expertise of the chair and the local organizing team
- Experience and expertise in organizing scientific meetings
- Experience and promise in raising external funds in support of the meeting
- A letter of support from the relevant IUSTI Regional Director to include as part of their application package.

Secondary Criteria

- Geographic considerations (country, city, climate, etc.)
- Proposed timing of the meeting
- Travel considerations (transportation links, visas, etc.)
- Facilities (meeting venue, hotels, etc.)
- Social program

Format. Using a minimum 11 point font, the body of the text of the proposal must be a maximum of 5 pages (A4 or 8.5 x 11”), plus a maximum of 3 figures and/or tables. These limits are exclusive of cover letter, letters of support, appendices, and other supporting materials. A tentative budget, although not required, is encouraged. It is not necessary to submit extended (multiple page) promotional materials provided by cities’ visitors bureaus, conference centers, and similar materials. All elements of the application must be submitted electronically, in pdf format. Applications should be sent by e-mail to the current ISSTD President, Henry de Vries at STIHIV2021@ggd.amsterdam.nl

Deadline. Applications must be received electronically no later than 15 May 2021. The current ISSTD president (Henry de Vries) can also be contacted prior to this date for discussions with interested applicants at h.j.devries@amsterdamumc.nl. Please use the following text in the subject line “2025 ISSTD Congress”.

SELECTION PROCESS

Selection of Finalist Candidates. Selected members of the ISSTD Board will screen applications and select a limited number of applications (probably 2-4) as final proposals. All applicants will be notified no later than by 1 June 2021 whether or not they were selected as finalists.

Final Selection. Finalist applicants will be invited to describe their proposals in 20-30 minute presentations during the meeting of the ISSTD Board, in the co-presence of a selected number of IUSTI Officer-Bearers, to be held on-line through Zoom on 13 July 2021, in conjunction with the 25th ISSTD Congress. Final selection of the Chair of the 2025 Congress and the ISSTD President will be announced during the 25th ISSTD Congress Closing Ceremony.

Henry de Vries
ISSTD President
Co-Chair of the STI & HIV 2021 World Congress
Amsterdam, <https://www.stihiv2021.org/>

On behalf of the Board of ISSTD www.isstd.org

In cooperation with IUSTI World www.iusti.org