

Side Events

Side events are a practical method to “piggy-bag” with some existing major event. The major benefit is that the participants do not need to specifically travel to your event. However, timing and location can be challenging in such events. In some cases (e.g. EGU), the event organiser even has a system to reserve rooms for these purposes. Considerations to keep the meeting inside the main event (convenience, access), or outside of it (no need to e.g. registration fees, but need space, etc.).

Advantages: Lighter to organize than an own event. Synergy with the main event. Visibility.

Challenges: Attract people to participate. Participants often need to register for the main event even only planning to participate the side event.

Resources: Similar than in organizing own event, but less expensive and less working hours. Planning of the event, advertising it and participation to the event (traveling costs).

Recommendation: Synergy with other methods.

Potential means to approach new SMEs was tested by COOP+ in Grenoble, France, 15 - 19th May 2017 during the 4th ENVRI week. As part of this conference, there was a side event 1st EU Environmental Research Infrastructures – Industry Joint Innovation Partnering Forum. The one and half day conference with industry will be organized in four sessions on technological innovation, metrology and standards, and public-private partnership. The purpose is to find new ways for RI-SME collaboration and on the other hand increase the knowledge of European SMEs on the range of environmental RIs. Here a potential challenge that we will also closely follow is how to get SMEs present to the event. It will naturally be advertised widely, but as the SMEs need to cover their expenses, they need to be able to see the potential of the conference. As this forum will be held as part of the ENVRIweek, the costs will be slightly smaller than if it would be organized of its own.

In GEO Week 2018 both ICOS and ENVRI organized a side events. ICOS organized “Translating the Paris Agreement into observatorial needs” side-event. This event was organized as a workshop and put the needs for observational data at the center of the discussions. They approximated the expenses to be around 10 thousand euros excluding traveling costs. ENVRI and COOP+ organized a side event called “In-Situ observations by European Research Infrastructures for Sustainable Development: The ENVRI approach”. In this session, ENVRI wanted to demonstrate the relevance and importance of environmental in-situ data for sustainable development. This side event also included involving invited guest speakers (2) to the event. This approach can be important to get necessary speakers, but was considered to be quite expensive, as travel, accomodation and participation fees for these delegates were significant. Overall these were in the range of 4000 € for two invited speakers. Additionally, costs of organising an event (even if the space was provided for free) were significant in person-hours.

An example of side event in a conference was Townhall meeting organised in the EGU conference related to change of administration in US and the impact on environmental research. This was advertised in the booth using leaflets (see figure below), and the ENVRI community invited key speakers for the event and organised refreshments. This was connected with coordinated dissemination efforts (twitter, etc.).

TOWNHALL MEETING II
THU 27 APRIL AT 19.00 | ROOM L2

Environmental challenges do **not** stop at the borders!

Global environmental observations UNDER PRESSURE
New responsibilities for scientists?

How can existing global cooperation **support** sustainability of **Earth Observations**?

How can European and other regional networks and global organisations **support** their **colleagues** under pressure?

The session invites key European, US and global researchers, science policy experts and research infrastructure representatives to **reflect and discuss options**.

PANELISTS
Eric A. Davidson, AGU President & U. of Maryland Cent. for Environ. Sci
Wolfgang Wagner, Global Climate Observing System & TU Wien
Barbara Ryan, Secretariat Director, Group on Earth Observations (GEO)
Johannes Fleming, ECMWF Copernicus Services

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