

NomadIT academic conference service

NomadIT has twenty-five years' experience of running international academic conferences worldwide, on behalf of both individual academics and professional associations. During that time not only have we dealt with a wide variety of locations, formats, sizes and requirements, but we have also developed purpose-built software for managing such events. NomadIT can thus offer guidance and advice, full organisation, and online administration, to help you run your event, whether it be face-to-face (F2F), fully virtual or fully hybrid (online access to >90% of the conference content).

The options

NomadIT currently only offers its 'gold' service. In essence this means that we do everything, leaving you to make academic decisions, and provide some local contacts and advice. You would not need to invest a lot of time in the preparation of this event: you'd provide some key interventions early on, make decisions during the lead-up to the event and then be active in the couple of weeks before. The 'options' in service are thus mostly around the event's format: f2f/virtual/hybrid.

Breakdown of elements

Budgeting and timetabling

NomadIT will advise on the timetabling of the conference process, with regards to Calls for Panels, Calls for Papers, and registration deadlines. We'll provide you with our timetabling tool, to facilitate discussion on this. We will also advise on how to adapt a usual f2f timetable to better suit virtual delivery.

NomadIT will handle the conference budget and accounts – starting by advising on the construction of the budget, determination of appropriate registration fees, and accurately forecasting possible outcomes; then proceeding with handling and logging of all invoices and payments, finishing with provision of final accounts for the event.

Website

NomadIT will design a responsive conference website that can have its own style, or mimic that of your centre/association. The site would convey all information regarding the conference (paper/panel proposals, registrations, travel, accommodation, the programme, etc). Alternatively we can build a subsection/set of pages within your existing website.

Panel and paper proposal forms

NomadIT has its own software for managing conferences (abstract management and registration) which provides forms for online gathering of panel/paper proposals. While our system is designed so panels are proposed first with papers then proposed directly to accepted panels, there is flexibility in how we deploy this, so it is possible to gather fully-formed panels, if that is required. We can also restrict the number of proposals an individual can make where they are defining themselves as the 'presenter'.

We offer use of a configurable short abstract (typically max 300 characters including spaces) and a configurable long abstract (typically max 250 words) to allow flexibility in production of both website and a possible printed programme. The presence of short/long and the character/word limits are customisable. Panels can have a choice of formats, they can be streamed thematically, and have other customisable tags/labels applied.

Our system gathers AV requirements for panels/papers, so as to consider this when allocating rooms and equipment during an event.

Login for users - live updates to abstracts

We provide a log-in environment where panel convenors can edit/update their panel abstracts and control their panels (accept/reject, edit and order papers, issue timing requests); or where paper authors can edit/update their proposals, upload PDFs of their paper to share, or embed a YouTube/Vimeo video of their presentation.

The log-in environment allows delegates to monitor their registration and payments; to download signed, headed PDF letters of acceptance (useful for visa and leave applications), invoices, receipts and after the conference, certificates of attendance (which state the title of their presentation and other relevant data).

Reviewing tool

Our system allows Scientific Committee members to review proposed panels/papers and score/mark and comment – all online (albeit downloads can be provided if needed). Reviewers can be allocated to a stream, format, subset or to all panels/papers proposed. The marking is customisable from Accept/Reject, to one or more scores with specific weighting in the overall total. We advise on the extent of the content to be accepted, based on its likely relationship to venue/event capacity, and then implement the decisions reached, communicating with all involved.

Registration forms

Our system provides an online registration form which offers different registration categories (including allowing for day registrations) and the opportunity to book dinner/banquet tickets, gathers data as to dietary and access requirements - so that this information can be passed to caterers and factored into planning. The form allows pricing in a single currency only.

The registration form can offer accommodation booking, through reselling the rooms to delegates which the conference has block-booked with a provider. (This entails a certain level of risk and needs to be carefully managed to ensure that the conference only ends up paying for rooms it manages to sell.)

If using external accommodation that cannot be resold (or if asking delegates to book institutional accommodation directly from the institution) then the registration form would not offer accommodation; instead the options would be listed on the accommodation page of the website and delegates would be prompted to book directly.

Registration rates can have a VAT amount and descriptor added; and for online participation, the system can apply the appropriate VAT rates and descriptors for B2B/B2C and EU/non-EU circumstances. (We can advise on whether this might be a requirement for your event.)

Panel explorer

The event timetable and content (panels and papers) are displayed using our fully responsive panel explorer (works well on mobile devices), which is displayed directly on our server and can be embedded into another site. Papers can have video content embedded and/or a PDF upload; panels can have video content embedded (for example the recording of the panel post-event), a PDF (coming in summer '24), and a comment stream. The content displayed can be determined by whether a visitor is public/logged in/panelist/delegate - allowing fine-grained control in sharing of video/PDF and comment content before/after the conference. Similarly, links to virtual locations (e.g. Zooms) can be displayed to specified viewers, as required. The explorer content is fully searchable and can be filtered by stream, format, video/PDF presence. Logged-in users can also star/favourite panels/papers and timetable items so as to build a personal conference schedule. All items have 'add to calendar' functionality. News items can be displayed at the top of the explorer, allowing for highlighting items or late/emergency news. This full feature set obviates the need for a separate conference app.

Invoicing/chasing/payment logging/receipting

The registration process concludes with the delegate receiving an emailed PDF invoice and being directed to a payment page (albeit invoicing can be set to manual if it's felt necessary for checking prior to payment). Not everyone pays immediately or on receipt of an invoice, and we routinely remind those delegates whose fees are outstanding.

Incoming payments are logged in our system which issues email PDF receipts. To do this we need to know about incoming payments, requiring a weekly update of payments received, with all relevant information supplied (names and references). Getting adequate information from the bank/credit card solution you use, is the client's responsibility. However if your card processing service is Stripe or PayPal we can set up the payment page so that online card payments are automatically logged in our system (and signed, headed PDF receipts sent to delegates).

A note on finances

NomadIT accounts (bank and Stripe) can be used to receive the conference registration fees (charged at 1.5% of the amount received, in addition to any bank or card processing fees).

If clients' own accounts are to be used, then the following is important. 80% of delegates prefer to pay online using a credit card, and if a pre-existing solution is unavailable, we'd recommend clients to set-up and make use of Stripe or PayPal. We advise on this process as getting this right is crucial to the smooth running of the event: incoming bank payments needs to be very easily identifiable (often not the case with institutional accounts) and the setting up of the Stripe or PayPal account (deceptively simple) needs to be gone about correctly (as an institution and not as an individual, with all the necessary supporting paperwork uploaded) to avoid restrictions later on. If the financial setup causes NomadIT to spend more time than 'normal' on the financial aspects of the conference, we would seek to bill an additional amount based on our hourly rate.

Delegate travel arrangements

We prefer not to get involved in sorting out the travel arrangements for delegates. We would of course publish information and advice on the website.

Delegates often require advice on visa applications, and this can be placed on the website. Delegates frequently request letters of acceptance – these can be downloaded directly from our log-in environment. Such letters are advisory and are not guarantees. They may also require more tailored letters of invitation (usually from the host institution) for visa applications, and we can deploy a form to help automate that process, too, if provided with host headed paper and a signature file.

Panel timetabling

NomadIT works out the best-fit timetabling solution for your panels, in relation to the number of rooms, sessions, days, convenor timetabling requests, and multiple roles.

Conference programme (printed)

Some conferences wish to produce a printed programme for their delegates. We generate an extract of the programme from our system as a DOCX file and then add the remaining content of the book (other information that is not in our system - such as side events, travel info, etc); we do the design and layout and organise the printing/delivery. Alternatively and increasingly common, is for the printed programme to be a far smaller summary programme, acting as a back-up or alternative for those not able/keen to use the online programme.

Conference app

Many clients ask about a conference app. While we do not have a standalone app available, our conference websites are not only fully responsive but have content that responds to a log-in state, so

delegates can use a customised schedule, receive news, and view the up-to-date programme on their mobile devices, while at the event. The panel explorer is, in essence, a web app.

Organising the programme; communicating with panel convenors, authors, delegates

While our clients generally have a devolved responsibility structure for their panels, it remains necessary for there to be close communication between the conference convenors and the panel convenors, authors and delegates. We provide reports for the conference convenors regarding panels/papers and registrations, and carry out communication (where necessary) on the conference convenors' behalf. We would also advise on ways to best achieve the clients' aims, given the response from the public.

Logistics: dealing with suppliers (venue, caterers, accommodation, technicians, entertainment, printer)

We are responsible for the conference logistics, communicating directly on behalf of the conference convenors with the various suppliers, negotiating prices, finalising invoices, and organising payment.

On-site event delivery, organising reception and troubleshooting

We are present at the event to coordinate and train any volunteer staff, to staff the 'conference office' (taking payments where fees remain outstanding), to ensure that things run smoothly, to sort out problems with AV equipment, caterers and other things that arise. Depending on the size of the event we might also work on the reception desk issuing badges and conference programmes; at larger events that role is taken by volunteer staff. Volunteers are given access to a Front Desk web app (on their phones), to enable an efficient checking-in of delegates. We also ensure that the event runs to schedule, making relevant announcements and ushering delegates into the next session, when appropriate.

- Depending on the level of service and the size of the conference, NomadIT staff will arrive on-site from 1-7 days before an event to prepare.
- Obviously a fully virtual event will not require on-site support or some of the elements listed above (book, logistics, etc.). A hybrid event will require both a team on-site and a team online to manage and support both aspects of the event.

Virtual/hybrid delivery

If NomadIT is contracted to deliver a virtual element (hybrid/full) for a conference, we ordinarily suggest using Zoom and would therefore carry out the following tasks:

- Provision of licenses at cost
- Advice on timetable, budget, networking, formats
- Training of volunteers
- Event creation
- Technical support throughout the event
- Upload of event recordings to our YouTube account and embedded on the conference site
- Editing of recordings as necessary (billed as optional extra)

Use of Zoom reduces the need for training and advance file-gathering while bringing familiarity for participants. Zoom doesn't offer direct networking options, so we might opt to supplement with a networking chat space (embedded in the conference site). It is possible to alternatively deploy a wrapper (such as Whova) around the Zooms, however this adds cost and complexity for delegates (a new log in), which we prefer to avoid. If a client has a preference for a different platform, we can consider this and the fee charged would alter accordingly.

Pricing (for 2027 events)

This gold service costs £6680 (set-up fee) plus

- £57/delegate* for face-to-face events
- £64/delegate for virtual events delivered using Zoom
- £67/delegate for hybrid events using Zoom.
- Virtual platform licence fees are additional.
- We are a VAT-registered company based in the UK, and so must charge 20% VAT on our services. However we do not need to charge VAT if invoicing a VAT-registered client in the EU, or a company outside the EU.

**Per delegate here refers to all registered delegates, not including those present purely as volunteers.*

Please note that if the number of active participants (authors, convenors, discussants, chairs) exceeds the number of registered delegates twice or more, thus creating an extreme workload throughout the Calls and Registration periods, a surcharge of 10% will be added to the final fee.

Due to the core tasks involved in any conference, our pricing is based around a minimum charge of 400 delegates. If your event attracts fewer delegates, we can discuss if there's any scope for flexibility with this lower pricing limit.

Add-ons:

- NomadIT's system generates printed badges of a specific size, which fit a specific plastic pouch (and lanyard). These are billed at cost price to the conference – currently about £1.20/delegate.
- Any expenses incurred by NomadIT (postage, travel, printing, accommodation and food) are charged to the client.
- Use of NomadIT accounts (bank and Stripe) to receive conference registration fees is charged 1.5% of the amount received, **in addition to** any bank or card processing fees.
- Zoom license fees are £25/account used; webinar and higher capacity meetings are as per the Zoom site.
- Download, edit, and upload of event recordings, is billed as per our editor's time, which is ~£300 per 8-9 panels.

NomadIT team numbers on site

The number of NomadIT team members working on-site depends on the delegate number, layout of the venues, complexity of the timetable and the delivery mode (f2f or hybrid). In ideal circumstances, the size of the team would be:

- <400 delegates: three for f2f or five for hybrid
- 400-800 delegates: five for f2f or seven for hybrid
- 800-1200 delegates: seven for f2f or ten for hybrid
- 1200-1600 delegates: nine for f2f or twelve for hybrid

Conferences exceeding 1600 delegates (or with a very complicated venue layout) will have additional team member hours added to the fee at £42/hour/person.

Invoicing/payment

Ordinarily NomadIT do not bill for their conference services until towards the end of the conference cycle, acknowledging that many events do not have funds until registration fees begin to come in. The necessity of invoicing for an initial deposit will depend on the specifics of each client, the size of the event, and our current cash flow.

NomadIT's methodology

NomadIT comprises a team of freelancers who work together remotely and flexibly. Apart from initial site visits, possible training visits, and attending conferences, the majority of our work is done remotely from wherever we happen to be, using email (RocketChat, NextCloud Talk & Teamwork) as our main medium of communication. We also make use of online meeting environments to speak with clients, but prefer the majority of discussions to be via email (or RocketChat, NextCloud Talk or Teamwork), due to the ability to store and subsequently retrieve the conversation.

We can issue a contract for our work, once an agreement has been reached over email, that refers to this service document.

Mutual respect and professional conduct

NomadIT has always worked with its clients in a spirit of mutual respect, professionalism, and good faith to ensure the successful delivery of the services. As a part of the agreement offered by this service document, we are committed to treating the client and their respective employees, contractors, vendors, and event participants, with courtesy and fairness at all times.

In turn, we ask that the client acknowledges that the NomadIT team is to be provided with a safe and respectful working environment and agrees to ensure that the client's management, employees, representatives, speakers, sponsors, and attendees engage with the team in a professional and constructive manner. Conduct that is abusive, threatening, intimidating, discriminatory, harassing, or otherwise inappropriate will not be tolerated.

If either party becomes aware of conduct inconsistent with the above, we will seek to address the matter promptly and in good faith. Where such conduct materially impacts the team's ability to deliver the services or creates an unsafe working environment, the team reserves the right to suspend services until the issue is remedied and, if necessary, terminate this agreement upon written notice.

Conclusion

We hope this document provides you with reasonable detail as to what we can offer your conference. Obviously how this service is customised or adapted will depend on how much work you envisage local staff doing on the event, and we are more than happy to discuss that further with you. If you wish to consult existing/previous NomadIT clients as to our service do let us know and we can put you in touch. You can see a set of testimonials [here](#). Please note that the service we can offer is also partly dependent on other bookings we have in place.

Yours,



Triinu Mets,
On behalf of the NomadIT team