



Why fees for an online conference?

2 February 2021

We have received several messages about the fees we charge for the ICRC 2021. Perhaps some are misled to believe, that organising an online meeting has no cost, because some online tools are free to use for individuals and small meetings.

The situation is very much different for a large conference such as the ICRC. The ICRC is large (about 1000 participants) and long (2 weeks), with a wealth of papers, presentations, discussions, with plenary and parallel sessions, and with the aim to archive **all** the materials (proceedings papers, discussions, presentation slides and recordings) from the start of the conference for a long time. With all being digital, and with 1000 participants streaming and downloading at the same time, bandwidth and smooth performance during the conference will be of paramount importance. This requires a professional technical setup, much more demanding than for in-person conferences. **And technology and technology services are not cheap.** Thus, also online conferences do cost money and organisers need to be able to recover at least part of it, as they do for in-person meetings¹. If a big online conference is offered without a fee, the cost is just coming from other pockets.

The ICRC offers a very good plenary program and access to all contributions, which is valuable for experienced researchers as well as for scientists fresh to the field. The proceedings papers will be indexed and open access and fringe sessions with industries and on peripheral topics like diversity, career, sustainability and more are offered. All contributions will be easily findable and are at your disposal at any time. **Thus, the conference is very good value for money**, at about 1/3 of the fees to be paid for an equivalent in-person conference. Still, estimates of the participation are very uncertain under these new and untested conditions.

The fees for participation and paper submission have been estimated to cover those items, we have to purchase specifically for the conference, and assuming about 700 participants and contributions (about 30% less than at the last ICRC). With a participation of more than about 700 persons/contributions, our income will allow a reduction of the fees. **We will give an appropriate discount**, once all abstracts are assessed and we know the income better, and before invoices for payments are sent out (around end of April).

With kind regards

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¹ See e.g. <https://aas.org/posts/news/2020/12/if-its-virtual-why-does-it-cost-anything-all>
<https://eas.unige.ch/EAS2021/index.isp>