

Exhibitions and advertising policy for the Conference

Basic Information

Contact Name and Details	Ben Bradley, Events Coordinator, 020 7467 3767 bradleyb@methodistchurch.org.uk
Status of Paper	Final
Action Required	Decision
Draft Resolution	The Council accepts the Exhibitions policy as set out in Appendix 1
Alternative Options to Consider, if Any	None

Summary of Content

Subject and Aims	The report creates a single policy for all wishing to book space at the Conference or in related publications
Main Points	Exhibitors should have links to the Methodist family or reflect Methodist values
Background Context and Relevant Documents (with function)	This policy was requested by Notice of Motion 229 at the 2009 Conference, and also reflects concerns raised by Notices of Motion 211 and 212.
Consultations	Conference Planning Executive

Summary of Impact

Standing Orders	None
Faith and Order	None
Financial	Minimal impact on income from exhibitions and advertising.
Personnel	None
Legal	Having a policy reduces the risk of being accused of discriminating against any potential exhibitor by making the process clear.
Wider Connexional	None
External (e.g. ecumenical)	Possible initial hostile reaction to the process. Likely appreciation that there has been a vetting of organisations exhibiting alongside them.
Risk	None

Exhibitions and advertising policy for the Methodist Conference

Background

1. Notices of motion NM211, NM212, NM229 in 2009 raised concerns about exhibitors at the Conference, and requested that the Council formulate an exhibitions policy. This work was passed to the Events Coordinator in the Connexional Team.

Policy aims

2. The policy aims to address the general concerns raised by the notices of motion, as well as taking the opportunity to create a single policy for all potential exhibitors at the Conference. Exhibitors should reflect Methodist values or statements, and preferably have links to or be part of the wider Methodist family. Exhibitors are also a useful source of income to the Conference, but financial considerations will be secondary to the values and mission of the Church. It also addresses those seeking to buy advertising space in Conference publications, and those booking space to host fringe events. The policy gives the Conference Planning Executive the final say as to which exhibitors can book places.

Who it applies to

3. This policy applies to those purchasing space (physical, print and electronic) to promote their group, entity or their organisation's work and includes exhibitions, advertising, sponsorship and fringe events. It also applies to all entities both internal and external to the *Connexional Team* and *Methodist Church of Great Britain* and is intended only to be applied within the context of the Conference as an event. Previous Conference decisions inform this policy, and their interpretation is assumed as part of the selection process.

The Rationale

4. Why are Exhibitions, Advertising, Sponsorship and Fringe Events important to the Methodist Conference as an event? Various perspectives will give different rationale for the provision of tangible inter-organisational relationships at the Conference. A range of reasons for the Conference (as the decision-making body of the Methodist Church) welcoming such a presence include:
 - I. **Enabling Advocacy** - The Conference is humble in recognising it is not all-knowing. External groups not only highlight issues that the Conference could be tackling, but offer different perspectives and solutions.

- II. **A Body of Many Parts** – Para-Church and internal entities undertake many areas of beneficial work for the church. A presence at the Methodist Conference enables Conference members to gain an awareness of such work.
- III. **Funding Stream** – The Conference Arrangements Committee is responsible for delivering the many facets of the Conference as an event at the best value. Income from such relationships enhances the Conference as an event. It currently totals around £15kpa. It is for this reason that the Committee oversees the management of these relationships.
- IV. **Affiliation and Association** – Formal associations and affiliations are hard to manage within the governance structures of the Church. Acceptance of entities taking advertising or sponsorship denotes a relationship is in place (at the very least a financial relationship). It is for this reason that acceptance of advertising or sponsorship cannot be delegated.

Gatekeepers and barriers for entry

5. The Methodist Church is a values-based organisation. It must, at all times, reserve the right to exclude marketing, profile and association that might damage the reputation of the Church.
6. The organisers of the Conference have a duty to exclude entities that either currently hold or historically held stances that are incongruous with the values of the Church. As this policy applies only to the Conference and publications thereof, this judgement remains the sole responsibility of the Conference Planning Executive, but decisions will take into account consultations with relevant members of the Connexional Team.

Implementation

7. The Events Coordinator has already received requests to book exhibition space at the 2010 Conference, therefore the proposed policy is currently being used as guidance in responding to such requests. If the Council rejects or amends the policy, then the Conference Planning Executive will work to the amended policy from the date of the Council onwards.

Resolution

The Council accepts the Conference Advertising and Exhibitions Policy as set out in Appendix 1

Appendix 1:

Conference Advertising and Exhibitions Policy

The Process

1. Organisations and entities are invited to apply for Exhibition, Advertising and Sponsorship opportunities (please see below for Fringe Events). All details regarding these opportunities shall be published on the Conference Website and made available through the Conference Arrangements Team.
2. Of those who apply, a list potential of sponsors, exhibitors and advertisers is assigned in draft form to the available space, whether physical, print or electronic. The list is then presented to the Conference Planning Executive.
3. The Conference Planning Executive will take into account previous resolutions of Conference, investment guidelines, other appropriate materials available and the advice of relevant members of the Connexional Team, in assessing the suitability of entities to be part of the Conference.
4. When there is oversubscription, discrimination will be on grounds of balancing the various types of organisation to create the highest quality end product.
5. This list will be signed off by the Conference Planning Executive, who will also be presented with the names of those entities that have not been successful in their application(s).
6. No contractual arrangements shall be undertaken until this list has been approved.
7. It is at the discretion of the Conference Planning Executive as to how many “commercial” or “retail” stands to allow in the exhibition.
8. Decisions taken regarding applications shall stand for that year’s Conference only.
9. Potential sponsors, exhibitors and advertisers should be clearly informed that an application does not guarantee presence at the upcoming Methodist Conference.
10. The Conference Planning Executive’s decision is final.
11. The rates for all exhibition, advertising and sponsorship shall be set by the Conference Planning Executive. There shall be no differential between Methodist and non-Methodist organisations.
12. Fringe Events are categorised as either Official or Unofficial. An Official Fringe event is one put on as part of the Conference business on behalf of the Conference and is under the oversight of the Conference Business Committee. All other events are Unofficial. The

Conference Planning Executive reserves the right to give space and/or profile to Unofficial Fringe events.

13. The Conference Planning Executive will act to ensure a high standard of Official and Unofficial Fringe events are put on for representatives to attend. The Conference Planning Executive's judgement may reflect the relevance of the event's subject to that of Conference themes and major areas of conferring. They will also work with the Conference Arrangements Team to arrange a Fringe programme that utilises the available meeting spaces and minimises representative travel to such events.
14. The Conference Planning Executive reserve the right to pass onto entities any specific costs incurred in the staging of Fringe Events.