



Call for Hosting the Sixth World Congress for Middle Eastern Studies in 2025

After the great success of the World Congresses for Middle Eastern Studies (WOCMES) in Mainz/Germany in 2002, Amman/Jordan in 2006, Barcelona/Spain in 2010, Ankara/Turkey in 2014 and Seville/Spain in 2018, it is planned that the Sixth WOCMES will be held in 2025.

What is WOCMES?

The World Congress for Middle Eastern Studies (WOCMES) is a gathering of scholars, researchers, students and professionals drawn from a broad range of educational and other institutions, organizations and associations from around the world. What brings this global community together is a common interest in the study of the Middle East, North Africa and the Muslim states of Central Asia, in addition to those areas of the world directly or indirectly affected by developments in these regions.

WOCMES is intended to provide Middle Eastern specialists from all branches of humanities and social sciences with the opportunity to meet and exchange research, experience and ideas, and to address – and attempt to reconcile – some of the challenges that arise when methodology meets theory and praxis meets politics. It involves numerous academic panels and roundtable discussions approved, in advance, by an academic committee, as well as keynote addresses by prominent scholars, scholarly exhibitions, and cultural and other events relevant to the field.

One of the principal long-term goals of WOCMES is to build and strengthen regional and global networks for joint research and the dissemination of findings and interpretations. As a major international academic congress, WOCMES also gives the far-flung members of various academic associations a place where they can meet and discuss organizational business in executive meetings and plenary sessions. Moreover, local and international media and high-ranking decision-makers involved in politics, economics and culture are able to attend many of the proceedings in order to acquaint themselves with new information, concepts and perspectives that can inform their respective endeavours.

Former WOCMES Events

Based upon an initiative by the Middle East Studies Association of North America (MESA) and organized by the Centre for Research on the Arab World (CERAW) at the University of Mainz/Germany in September 2002, the First WOCMES was a joint congress of the European Association for Middle Eastern Studies (EURAMES) and the German, British, French and Italian Middle Eastern studies associations (DAVO, BRISMES, AFEMAM and SeSaMO), as well as their equivalents elsewhere in Europe and the Arab and wider world.

WOCMES-1 brought together some 2,000 scholars and experts from 52 different countries for six days of activities. The academic program involved more than 400 panels, workshops, symposia and exhibitions comprising 1115 individual presentations.

The Second WOCMES was organised by the Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies (RIIFS) in Amman with HRH Prince El Hassan bin Talal as President of WOCMES-2. It took place in June 2006 and was also a great success.

WOCMES-3 was held in Barcelona in July 2010 and was organized by the European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed). Over 2,700 renowned experts, academics and researchers from 72 countries presented their studies, debated and shared points of view during five intensive working days. The program contained more than 500 academic sessions, held in blocks of 30 sessions and based on the proposals and contributions of 2,421 academics.

The Turkish Social Sciences Association and the Middle East Technical University (METU) hosted the the Fourth World Congress for Middle East Studies on the campus of METU in Ankara in August 2014. About 1500 registered scholars from more than 60 countries took part in this most important global event in Middle Eastern studies in 2014. They praised the excellent organization and the high quality of the presented papers.

The Fifth WOCMES was the most important global event in this field of study in 2018: The total number of registered participants was 3.184 – this was a new record compared to the former World Congresses. A total of 1.785 individual papers and 405 panels were proposed. The World Congress was organized by the “Three Cultures Foundation of the Mediterranean Foundation” in Seville. It was opened with a speech of the King of Spain and was a tremendous success (see <http://wocmes2018seville.org/index.php/en>).

Call for Hosting WOCMES-6

All academic and research institutions which are focusing on studies in Social Sciences and Humanities related to the Middle East, North Africa and the Muslim states of Central Asia or the impact of this region on other parts of the world and which are interested in hosting the Sixth World Congress for Middle Eastern Studies in 2025 are kindly requested to contact the Chairman of the WOCMES Council and to provide the following information:

- Name and address of the institution; persons responsible for the organisation of the World Congress;
- Previous experience in hosting major conferences;
- Proposed location of WOCMES-6 (potential visa restrictions, accessibility and distance to nearest international airport, availability of lecture halls for up to 30 parallel sessions and up to 2500 participants);
- Accommodation (number of hotel rooms close to the WOCMES location, range of hotel prices, availability of low-cost accommodation for students);
- Financial matters (expected registration fee; prospects of financial support from public sources or private institutions; chance to get reduced airfares; availability of travel grants for low-income paper presenters);
- Proposed date of WOCMES-6 (taking into consideration regular major conferences on the Middle East, holiday seasons, start and end of university terms, major religious festivities, weather conditions);
- Possibility to arrange an attractive program of cultural events and sightseeing tours.

Please send this information as email attachment to the Chairman of the International Advisory Council of WOCMES before **31 January 2023**:

Prof. Dr. Guenter Meyer
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The final decision about the location of WOCMES-6 will be taken by the WOCMES Council which comprises more than 60 scholars from different disciplines in social sciences and humanities and representatives of Middle East studies associations worldwide.