

Request for Proposals (RFP) to organise

Regional and World Sustainable Built Environment (SBE) conferences & events for the 2025-2026 cycle

The SBE Partners and Permanent Co-hosts, consisting of the four international non-profit organisations:

- International Council for Research and Innovation in Building and Construction (CIB, www.cibworld.org)
- International Initiative for a Sustainable Built Environment (iiSBE, www.iisbe.org)
- International Federation of Consulting Engineers (FIDIC, www.fidic.org)
- United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP, www.unenvironment.org)

... are inviting proposals for the 2025-2026 cycle of the Regional and World Sustainable Built Environment, SBE25s and WSBE26 Conferences, respectively.

The SBE Conference Series is the world's premier – and one of the longest running – scientific and technical conference series that brings together the best expertise and the latest knowledge and research evidence to support sustainable development and management of the built environment at all scales¹ in collaboration with stakeholders of the built environment value chain across the world – from local to national, regional and global, and vice versa.

With its global footprint, the SBE Conference Series is unique in running a linked set of various regional conferences in the year prior to a world conference in a 3-year cycle – the only continuous conference series on the topic that have been doing this since 2000²!

This RFP document provides guidance in preparing a submission for the following types of events:

- Type 1: Local one-day SBE seminar-forum (or 1SBE)
- Type 2: Regional or national SBEs
- Type 3: World SBE (or WSBE)

Proposals for 1SBE will be accepted twice a year, allowing for about 6 months of preparation until the actual event.

Proposals for SBEs (for 2025) will go through two stages: Stage 1 is an initial assessment about the distribution and balance of geographical spread and conference themes, while Stage 2 involves more detailed information for approved proposals.

Proposals for WSBE (for 2026) will go through three stages: Stage 1 is an assessment based on the first set of criteria outlined herein. Stage 2 involves submission of more detailed information for the most prospective proposals only and Stage 3 involves an interview with the top remaining candidates only.

¹ The whole-life and multi-scale scope of SBE conferences range from materials and products, buildings, neighbourhoods, cities and regions to countries and planet. Empirical, theoretical, modelling and practical assessment and management methods involve explicit or intentional focus to meet not only their technical and functional performance objectives but also the economic, social, environmental and governance outcomes that are needed to support sustainable development. For further information, see Appendix 1 and the SBE Conference series website below.

² For further details about the history, background and impact of the SBE Conference series, visit: <https://sbe-series.org>



General information

Consortium leadership. All proposals MUST have a science- or research-oriented organisation play a leading role in the organising team or consortium. Such organisations could be universities, research institutes or other non-commercial and research-focused entities. Partner organisations in a consortium will have demonstrated strong commitment to sustainability.

Assessment. Submissions are carefully reviewed and assessed by the representatives of the SBE Partners, the Series Coordinator, and invited or guest external advisor(s). Selected proponents are invited to sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the SBE Partners, followed by a conference organisation payment to the SBE Partners as stipulated in Appendix 2.

Planning and implementation. Although the SBE Partners carry out overall oversight and management of the series – including providing organisational and technical advice and tapping their networks to help ensure large multidisciplinary audiences – the planning and management of the individual events and conferences is the responsibility of the selected proponent team. Depending on local conditions, conferences may be planned as Live Face to Face (F2F), Hybrid or Virtual events. We encourage conferences to demonstrate sustainable and low carbon practices in the event planning and operation, and to facilitate venue accessibility for the participants.

Linkages and inclusiveness. Active participation and links between the local 1SBE seminar-forum, the regional SBE conferences and WSBE are expected. All SBE events and conferences should have registration policies that are designed to encourage the attendance of students and delegates from developing countries.

Partnerships and collaboration. Because of the conference series's reputation, other organisations have held events before, after or concurrently with SBE conferences thereby maximizing the benefit for delegates while providing host organisations with increased visibility and effectiveness also in their own regions and beyond. Many core sessions – especially the plenary forum or roundtable sessions and some technical sessions – are sometimes co-organised or co-hosted with other organisations. Conference organisers will also participate and liaise with the organiser(s) of WSBE26.

Publications and outputs. The SBE Conference series has partnered with IOP Publishing³ in the abstracts and paper review process and publication of peer-reviewed technical papers in an open-access SBE conference proceedings. A separate SBE report written by the conference organiser will cover a summary of conference themes especially in relation to regional issues and trends and a collection of summary notes of special forums and roundtable discussions. Conference organisers will also administer a survey to conference delegates about their conference experience and provide the data to the SBE Partners.

Submission. Final proposal documents in PDF format – or enquiries and questions – should be sent, by their respective deadline dates, to the SBE Coordinator, Prof Greg Foliente at greg.foliente@unimelb.edu.au

Acceptance and MOU. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) shall be agreed and signed with the proponents of successful submissions. Appendix 2 and Appendix 3 outline the key elements of the MOU covering what the successful organisers will provide to the SBE Partners and vice versa, respectively.

³ Visit: <https://iopublishing.org>



1SBE: One-day SBE seminar-forum

Purpose and concept

The 1SBE "Seminar-Forum" is envisaged to focus on local or national priority themes related to sustainable built and urban environments, and aim for strong local stakeholder engagement, dissemination of global SBE developments and overall capacity development.

The successful organiser has flexibility in organising a day's event with a mix of plenary talks, roundtable or panel discussions and technical sessions.

This type of event do not require peer reviewed proceedings, but a summary report of the roundtable or forum and related presentations – especially as they relate to the conference theme and to global issues/trends – should be submitted to the SBE Series Coordinator.

Required information

The 1SBE event proposal shall include the following information (maximum of 2 pages in A4 format):

- Name of the host and organising team members, with clear lines of roles and governance; provide a brief profile of significant persons (esp. the Chair) or organisations involved
- Event purpose and theme (provide a brief background or rationale about the proposed theme and sub-topics, if any)
- Location and proposed date
- Program concept (especially how they support the event purpose and theme)
- Stakeholders involved and/or to be engaged, and the one-day event's target audience(s)
- Where the event will be held, key logistics and funding arrangements
- Expected outcomes of the event and specific deliverables (if appropriate) from the event
- Contact person's name and information

Assessment

Proposals for 1SBE events are non-competitive. The assessment will focus on the proposed geographical location (esp. *vis a vis* past and recent SBE events and global importance), relevance of the proposed theme(s) and program, its link to global issues, the quality of organisation and the organising team and the approach to meet one or all of the event-type objectives (see above).

Timing and dates

Ideally, 1SBE events should not be held +/-3 months a WSBE event. There are no scheduling restrictions related to SBE events because of the more local or regional nature of both 1SBE and SBE events.

The cycle and deadline dates for 1SBE are as follows:

- By 10 March 2024 – for 2024 1SBE events scheduled from October to December 2024
- By 15 July 2024 – for 1SBE events scheduled from January to June 2025
- By 15 January 2025 – for 1SBE events scheduled from July to December 2025
- By 15 July 2025 – for 1SBE events scheduled from January to June 2026
- By 15 January 2026 – for 1SBE events scheduled from July to December 2026



SBE25: Regional SBEs for 2025

Purpose and concept

The regional or national SBE25 is envisaged to:

- Provide a forum to present and discuss regional or national issues, challenges and opportunities amongst stakeholders and decision makers;
- Provide opportunities to present and discuss the latest research developments and trends, tools, guidelines and standards, and experience or case studies relevant to the region; and
- Engage local, national and regional stakeholders and decision-makers and support capacity development.

The successful organiser has flexibility in organising a mix of plenary talks, roundtable or panel discussions, technical sessions, field visits, etc., over 2 to 3 days. We also recommend organising a “PhD Forum”, usually a day prior, for post-graduate and PhD students to share or present and discuss their projects, and provide further opportunities for professional development and networking.

Internationally recognised scientists/researchers or experts should be given important or influential roles in conference planning and programming. A select group will form a Scientific Committee that will lead the development of the scientific program and drive the peer-review process of technical papers.

The accepted papers will be published in an open-access IOP conference proceedings. A brief summary report of the roundtables or forums and related presentations (not in the IOP proceedings) – especially as they relate to the conference theme and to global issues/trends – should be submitted to the SBE Series Coordinator.

Required information

The finalisation of SBEs is a two-stage process that will involve feedback and perhaps some adjustments.

The Stage 1 SBE25 Conference proposal shall include the following information (maximum of 3 pages in A4 format):

- Name of the host(s) or the consortium, together with:
 - The overall governance structure with clear lines of roles and responsibilities of key people and committees. If the consortium host is multi-organisation, multi-city or multi-country, describe the collaboration arrangement(s)
 - Resource allocation: an outline of funding, time commitment of key people, etc.
 - Biographical profile of the Conference Chair(s), the Scientific Chair(s) and other significant persons and key organisations involved
 - Description of previous experience, contribution or participation in past SBE and/or WSBE events.
- Location and target (tentative) dates, including the location and distances to nearest railway, seaport or airport facilities
- SBE theme (provide a brief background or rationale about the proposed theme and sub-topics, if any, and how these may link with global issues and future WSBEs)
- Program concept, including preliminary structure and key activities
- Stakeholders involved and/or to be engaged, and the target audience(s)
- A statement on how the conference will minimise GHG emissions and demonstrate sustainable practices.



- Contact person's name and information

Assessment

Proposals for SBE25 events are non-competitive. The key considerations in the Stage 1 proposal assessment are the quality, capabilities and experience of the proposed host(s) and consortium, the proposed theme and program concept, the geographical location (esp. distribution and regional coverage *vis a vis* other SBE25 proposals), scheduling and accessibility.

Timing and dates

- 01 April 2024 – SBE25 Stage 1 proposals due
- 15 April 2024 – SBE25 full or detailed Stage 2 proposals due
- 29 April 2024 (latest) – Successful SBE25 proposals announced



WSBE26: World SBE for 2026

Purpose and concept

The World SBE (WSBE26) is envisaged to:

- Provide a high-level international symposium amongst stakeholders, researchers, academics and decision-makers to: (a) discuss and advance issues, challenges and opportunities of global priority importance to the sector and its value-chain ecosystem (i.e., “a global agenda” focus), and (b) synthesise the common issues and/or themes from the regional SBE conferences and how these can be addressed in further R&D and/or future SBE conferences;
- Provide opportunities to present the latest research developments and trends, tools, guidelines and standards, and experience or case studies related to the key theme(s) of the conference (item (a) above) – allowing both top-down and bottom-up approaches to program development; and
- Engage diverse groups of stakeholders, decision-makers, entrepreneurs and organisations that could have major roles or influence in addressing the agenda theme or hastening the transformation of the sector through innovations and collaborations/partnerships.

The successful organiser has flexibility in organising a mix of plenary talks, roundtable or panel discussions, technical sessions, etc., over 3 days. An extra day or two for field trips may be added.

Internationally recognised scientists/researchers or experts should be given important or influential roles in conference planning and programming. A select group will form a Scientific Committee that will lead the development of the scientific program and drive the peer-review process of technical papers.

The accepted papers will be published in an open-access IOP conference proceedings. Papers that have been rated at the top and recommended by the reviewers and editors will be eligible for best paper award(s) and will be part of the selection list for full journal article development and publication (fast-track path) with our selected partner journals.

A brief summary report of the roundtables or forums and related presentations (not in the IOP proceedings) – especially as they relate to the conference theme and relevant global issues/trends – should be submitted to the SBE Series Coordinator.

Required information

Selection of the next WSBE26 organiser is a three stage process: Stage 1 is an assessment based on the first set of criteria outlined herein. Stage 2 involves submission of more detailed information for the most prospective proposals only and Stage 3 involves an interview with the top remaining candidates only.

The Stage 1 WSBE26 Conference proposal shall address the assessment criteria (next section) and include the following information (maximum of 5 pages in A4 format):

- Name of the host(s) or the consortium, together with:
 - The overall governance structure with clear lines of roles and responsibilities of key people and committees. If the consortium host is multi-organisation, multi-city or multi-country, describe the collaboration arrangement(s). This should also address risk management.
 - Resource allocation: funding arrangement, time commitment of key people, etc.
 - Biographical profile of the Conference Chair(s), the Scientific Chair(s) and other significant persons and key organisations involved
 - Description of previous experience, contribution or participation in past SBE and/or WSBE events.
- Location and target (tentative) dates, including the location and distances to nearest railway, seaport or airport facilities



- WSBE26 theme(s) (provide a brief background or rationale about the proposed theme and sub-topics, if any)
- Program concept, including preliminary structure and key activities
- Stakeholders involved and/or to be engaged, and the target audience(s)
- A statement on how the conference will minimise GHG emissions and demonstrate sustainable practice.
- Contact person's name and information

Assessment

Stage 1 of the WSBE26 assessment will be based on the following criteria:

- Strength and experience of the proposed WSBE26 host(s) and consortium, esp. governance and risk management (including financial), personnel and partnerships and previous SBE/WSBE experience, contribution and/or participation – 50%
- Proposed WSBE26 theme and program concept – 40%
- Context, location (need and/or potential impact considerations), accessibility and overall proposal package – 10%

Timing and dates

- 01 April 2024 – WSBE26 proposals due (Stage 1 only)
- 08 April 2024 – WSBE26 proposals selected or invited for Stage 2 submission informed; unsuccessful proposals in WSBE Stage 1 will be invited for consideration as SBE25 events instead
- 06 May 2024 – Full WSBE26 Stage 2 proposals due
- 13-17 May 2024 – Top WSBE26 candidates will be interviewed
- 22 May 2024 – Successful WSBE26 proposal will be informed (privately); unsuccessful proposals in Stage 2 will be invited for consideration as SBE25 event
- 14 June 2024 – Successful WSBE26 organisers will present a short video-clip presenting and inviting delegates to the 2026 event in the closing session of WSBE24



Summary of key dates

- By 10 March 2024 – for 2024 1SBE events scheduled from October to December 2024
- 01 April 2024 – SBE25 Stage 1 proposals due
- 01 April 2024 – WSBE26 proposals due (Stage 1 only)
- 08 April 2024 – WSBE26 proposals selected or invited for Stage 2 submission will be informed; unsuccessful proposals in WSBE Stage 1 will be invited for consideration as SBE25 events instead
- 15 April 2024 – SBE25 full Stage 2 proposals due
- 29 April 2024 (latest) – Successful SBE25 proposals announced
- 06 May 2024 – Full WSBE26 Stage 2 proposals due
- 13-17 May 2024 – Top WSBE26 candidates will be interviewed
- 22 May 2024 – Successful WSBE26 proposal will be informed (privately); unsuccessful proposals in Stage 2 will be invited for consideration as SBE25 event
- 14 June 2024 – Successful WSBE26 organisers will present a short video-clip presenting and inviting delegates to the 2026 event in the closing session of WSBE24
- By 15 July 2024 2024 – for 1SBE events scheduled from January to June 2025



Appendix 1. Sustainable Built Environment (SBE)

Societal development is underpinned and enabled by our built environment. The Sustainable Built Environment (SBE) Conference series fosters the exchange and application of science-informed and evidence-based knowledge and innovation, seeking a balanced approach in the whole-life design and management of our built environment where the exploitation and use of resources, the nature and direction of investments, the orientation of technological development and institutional and governance structures and systems are organised and managed to meet the current and future needs of society.

The whole-life and multi-scale scope of SBE conferences range from:

- materials and products,
- buildings (new and existing),
- building clusters and stock and related infrastructure at local neighbourhoods, cities and regions ... to ...
- countries and planet.

The series covers a wide array of topics, including urban and landscape planning, architecture, the engineering disciplines, systems modelling, geospatial and digital technologies, AI and advanced analytics, life cycle assessment (LCA) and related topics in the environmental, economic and social sciences and more, addressing crucial issues like climate change mitigation and adaptation, urban systems challenges, resource, material, water and energy flows, sufficiency, efficiency, circularity and regenerative concepts and practice, along with socio-economic factors, challenges and impacts. It emphasizes the importance of holistic sustainability assessments that ensure that technical, functional, economic, social, environmental, and governance outcomes support sustainable development – at both global and local levels. The ultimate aspiration is to achieve and maintain quality living (in socially equitable ways) within our planetary boundaries, while also considering climate extremes and potential disasters. Thus, resiliency to chronic stresses and disruptions is a necessary consideration in sustainable development.

Recognising that the decisions and actions of all stakeholders across the sector and across the globe are of utmost importance, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approaches are necessary and, thus, highly valued.



Appendix 2. Selected organiser agreement and MOU

The selected organiser(s) will agree and sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the SBE Partners that will include the following:

- a. An amount of 2,500 Euro (for SBE25) or 5,000 Euro (for WSBE26) payable upon acceptance of the MOU (*note: a 50% discount applies to developing countries*). These contributions are required to help finance the core operations of the not-for-profit and non-salaried SBE Partnership;
- b. Free registration for the SBE Series Coordinator plus one other representative of the SBE Partners (two persons total), and an allowance of up to 2,500 Euro for travel expenses, payable upon presentation of applicable receipts;
- c. A registration discount to apply to members of the SBE Partner organizations;
- d. Free exhibit booth for the SBE Partners (one booth), if an exhibition is planned;
- e. A representative of the conference organisers will participate (in person or by web conference) in a virtual planning meeting for SBE 25 regional conferences;
- f. All publicity materials, whether on websites, electronic or hard copy, should display logos and links to the websites of the four international partners;
- g. A representative of the SBE Partners will be invited to join the Organizing or Advisory committees, and that SBE may nominate some of the keynote speakers for the event, but with selection remaining in the hands of the organisers;
- h. All papers submitted for presentation will be evaluated through a double-blind peer-review process and that accepted papers will be indexed and included in a conference proceedings to be published through IOP;
- j. Commencing no later than six months after the conference, the four international SBE Partners will have non-exclusive rights to use the conference papers for non-commercial distribution, unless authors specifically assign exclusive rights to others;
- k. Conference organiser will be asked to deliver a post-conference survey that will cover issues related to the content of papers, delegate profiles, reaction of local or regional key groups, etc.
- l. Conference organiser will prepare a separate SBE report that covers a summary of conference themes especially in relation to regional issues and trends and a collection of summary notes of special forums and roundtable discussions. An informal post-conference and debriefing/lessons report for future SBE organisers should also be sent to the SBE Coordinator.



Appendix 3. SBE Partners support

The support to be provided by the SBE Partners to the successful SBE conference organisers will include:

- a. Permitting the use of the name and logo of the SBE conference series (with the SBE Partners as a group)
- b. Facilitating communications with the international co-promoters by appointing a Series Coordinator to represent the SBE Partners.
- c. Ensuring that the Series Coordinator and other SBE organiser(s) are available to give advice on organization and detailed program content, on a cost-recovery basis;
- d. Providing lists of potential volunteers for scientific committees or on-site support,
- e. Assisting with links to possible collaborators and sponsors,
- f. Providing access to mailing lists, where permitted by laws and list owners,
- g. Providing publicity through their own networks and channels;
- h. Providing links to conference websites;
- i. Placing documents from previous conferences on the CIB database and on the SBE website (sbe-series.org);
- j. Leadership in the development of a long-term marketing strategy for the series;
- k. Advice on the structure and format for the conference based on previous experience and the SBE Partners' plan for its future development;
- l. Facilitate the organisation and publication of the conference proceedings with IOP⁴. Each conference organiser will be responsible for the costs of indexation of the papers in their own event. (The estimated cost for publication of each paper is currently 25 Euro plus VAT.)

⁴ Extensive information for organisers, including guidelines, can be found here:
<https://conferenceseries.iop.org/content/organisers>

