

Hosting MASC or ECR MASC

Last edited: 6/2/2026

Congratulations on being selected to organize and host a MASC meeting! Given below are some guidelines assembled by previous MASC organisers and committee members. This document is meant to help you put together a successful meeting. While not a strict guideline, the MASC Committee (MC) does recommend you follow these helpful tips and suggestions based on prior experiences.

12 months before the event: See points: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 18, 19, 20, 23, 24, 25, 27, 38

6 months before the event: See points: 13, 14, 21, 22, 28, 31, 32, 36, 37, 39

3 months before the event: See points: 12, 17, 26, 33

General points

1. When planning your dates, consider when academic term time ends and when school holidays start. This can influence the ability of your speakers and delegates to attend your event. Also consider the effects of any events covering similar material that may be being hosted in the period either on a national or international level. This may affect the number of people that can attend.
2. MASC is traditionally hosted in mid-December and ECR MASC is traditionally hosted in June/July.
3. We advise that you form a local organising committee. This is a good opportunity to formalise the contributions of PhD and Post-Doctoral staff. Also consider adding a university admin assistant to this committee. This should be formed a minimum of one year before your event.
4. We advise that you confirm the dates for your event a year in advance, this gives adequate time for planning and also enables you to advertise your event at both MASC and ECR MASC events the year before.
5. We strongly advise against parallel sessions.
6. Please make yourself aware of RSC GDPR policy and those of your own institution.
7. Please make sure you are aware of, and quote costs either exclusive or inclusive of VAT.
8. A member from the organising committee for both MASC and ECR MASC events is asked to join the MASC committee if not already a member. The term of membership is 4 years.
9. Create a timeline of meetings, events, and milestones for the year running up to the meeting (and stick rigorously to it).
10. Coordinate your online and email advertising to public events and milestones in the aforementioned timeline. For example, you will want to provide updated

speaker lists on the website and in advertising emails as your registration deadline approaches.

11. You are strongly encouraged to reach out to prior organizers given the wealth of experiences over the years of successful MASC/ ERC MASC meetings.
12. Allow time in the schedule for the MASC AGM (December meeting) – typically over a lunch session.
13. Think about incorporating a WISC or panel discussion as part of the main programme of events.
14. Think about incorporating a hybrid option if possible – think about advertising this option after registration closes.
15. Any profits made from the events should be returned to the MASC interest group to support future meetings etc.
16. Think about testing computer linkups and sound in the venue before the event.
17. Please add a code of conduct, this can be supplied upon request to the MASC Chair, Treasurer or Secretary. *[Please ensure any discussion/action following code of conduct violations includes the MASC chair, or colleague deputising]*

The Venue

18. A venue with a capacity of 300 should be considered for MASC and a venue with a capacity of 150 should be considered for ECR MASC. Please think about the accessibility (train, bus, airport) of your venue and distance from accommodation, restaurants etc. when making your final venue selection. You may also want to consider bag storage, a quiet room (green room) for your delegates to access, WiFi, childcare amenities, accessibility for those with visible or hidden disabilities.
19. Please consider space for posters (boards may need to be hired), these are normally 120 for MASC and 60 for ECR MASC.
20. Please also consider space for exhibitors, sponsors, refreshments, lunch and the conference dinner.
21. When hosting the conference dinner please consider two types of tickets, one that includes alcohol, and one does not.
22. Please consider offering a wide range of foods that cater for dietary requirements.

Speakers

23. Begin forming your speaker list and sending out invitations a year before your event, especially for speakers that may have busy diaries, caring responsibilities, or need to gather financial support. Please consider the previous speaker lists to prevent repetition, accessing the speaker lists for previous events (available on the MASC website in the coming months). Please also consider ensuring representation of minority groups within STEM. Do your best to maintain this

speaker spread if “first choice” speakers become unavailable and so consider scheduling minority groups within STEM as a priority. Please consider the following speaker spread for MASC: 20% early, 40% mid, 40% established. ECR MASC traditionally has one established plenary speaker, supported by ECR talks.

24. It is up to you to decide how you wish to split up the talks – prize talks (1 hr invited (25-30 min) vs. contributed (15-20 min)). MASC 2023 only had prize, invited and contributed talks.

Sponsorship

25. You should begin trying to attract sponsors for your event 12 months in advance, due to external budgeting need. You can ‘sell’ speaker slots to industrial exhibitors, but please make sure that any talk is relevant and of interest to the delegates. Speaker slots (15 mins) have previously been sold at: £1000-£1500. Stand pitches have previously been sold for: £500-£750. Poster prize sponsorships have previously been sold for £200, but please consider any potential conflicts of interest that prize sponsorship might cause. These ranges were estimated in 2023-2024.
26. There is a fund you can access through the RSC brand centre, for pens, paper, lanyards etc. the limit of spend for the interest group is £400 per year. For access, please contact the RSC MASC Chair, Secretary or Treasurer.
27. Contact the MASC committee or previous event organisers for a list of previous sponsors and amounts (list to be compiled in 2024).
28. The MASC interest group will donate a float of £1500 to support the MASC meeting and £500 to support the ECR MASC meeting. To access these monies please send an invoice, with relevant banking details to MASC Treasurer.

Prizes

29. The MASC interest group sponsors the PhD thesis prize (to the amount of £200), there is no sponsor for the Bob Hay lectureship, Cell Press sponsor the Supramolecular Award (to the amount of £2000).
30. Traditionally the organisers have underwritten the registration, conference dinner and accommodation costs associated with the attendance of invited speakers and prize winners (excluding poster prize winners). Any additional travel support is at your discretion for these individuals.
31. Persons responsible in the selection of MASC interest group prizes will send you the names of the awardees in the September of the year of your meeting. Be certain to leave space in your program for these award lecturers, which are typically 1 hour each. This includes the award process. These prize presentations do not typically include any time for questions.

Registration fees and timelines

32. MASC has previously offered travel bursaries upon application to the conference organisers. To date this has been for a total of £1500 per year. This amount depends on need, and MASC interest group budgets. Applications for these monies must be made to the Chair before being submitted for vote to the MASC committee group board. These should be advertised alongside your event, so should be confirmed 4 months prior your event.
33. Think about closing registration one month before the event to ensure that you have time to finalise any arrangements. Be prepared for lots of late requests to attend, and last-minute dropouts. Refunds are at your discretion as are late registrations.
34. As of 2024 the RSC have stipulated that you advertise both a RSC members and non-members registration rate. The RSC member registration should be advertised at 15 % less than the non-members registration rate.
35. About 1/3 of our delegate list (2023) were RSC members.
36. MASC registration rate guide. Student registration: £60 for undergraduate/masters; £100 for PhD students; £125 PDRA, academic, other. Numbers correct for 2022
37. ECR MASC registration rate guide. Registration has typically been free for all attendees. Recently a nominal fee has also been charged, with the aim of avoiding budget waste from non-attendance [for similar reasons, we recommend that attendance confirmation, if any, only be provided after the event].
38. The RSC networks team ask to see any contract with a venue before you sign it.

Advertising and announcing your event

39. Please gain access (contact the person running the website, contact details to be provide by the MASC board) to the MASC website as soon as you can and upload details of your event. We advise that this is no less the 6 months before the event. You can gain extra support in advertising your event through communication with the MASC board, e.g. MASC and vMASC mailing lists and MASC twitter/X social media. We advise that you reach out to the board no less then 6 months before your event.

Financial Responsibility and Recordkeeping

40. Local organising committees' organisation should typically take financial responsibility for events. We have more details notes in a separate document.
41. Keeping thorough financial records for the local organising committee is important. We have more details notes in a separate document.