

We give **priority to**
activities that make
the biggest
contribution to
achieving our
mission

Mission

The ICO's mission is to uphold information rights in the public interest, promoting openness by public bodies and data privacy for individuals.

Vision

By 2012, we will be recognised by our stakeholders as the authoritative arbiter of information rights, delivering high-quality, relevant and timely outcomes, responsive and outward-looking in our approach, and with committed and high-performing staff – a model of good regulation and a great place to work and develop.

Values

We are:

Committed

We care about upholding information rights

Team workers

We work together as one ICO team, sharing information and expertise

Focused

We give priority to activities that make the biggest contribution to achieving our mission

Effective

We work productively and efficiently to produce high quality and timely outcomes, offering best value for customers and citizens

A model of best practice

We do not ask others to do what we are not prepared to do ourselves

Alert

We are alert to the perspectives and needs of all our stakeholders – and to the potential impact of new developments in our business

Fair

We treat everybody we deal with fairly and with integrity and respect.
We are inclusive in our approach

Always learning

We are always learning and developing professionally.

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1 Introduction

The ICO receives an increasingly high number of requests for speakers to attend events around the country and internationally. As we are unable to accept all invitations, this policy is written to demonstrate how we prioritise requests effectively, ensuring we use the opportunities that allow us to strategically communicate key messages to priority groups.

2 Processing requests

The ICO External Relations Officer processes all speaker requests. Where speakers are approached directly, the request is re-directed to the External Relations Officer. This is for the following reasons.

- The External Relations Officer maintains an overview of the ICO stakeholder strategy and which audiences we speak to and can therefore ensure the invitations we accept support strategic priorities.
- It avoids providing more than one representative at the same event. Event organisers may directly approach several staff members simultaneously to increase the chances of successfully securing a speaker. In the past, this has meant that a number of ICO representatives have been unaware that they have all agreed to speak at the same event. This is not effective use of ICO resources.
- It ensures that evaluation¹ of ICO speaking engagement activities can be accurate.

The only exception to this is when a member of the executive team or head of department is approached directly and decide themselves that the opportunity supports ICO strategic priorities.

¹ ICO Corporate Affairs department quarterly reports

Information required from the event organisers

The information we need from event organisers to help make a decision about accepting an invitation is listed below. This information needs to be provided in writing, by email or letter.

- Subject matter required, time of speaking slot, of nature of contribution (e.g. keynote speech, panel session, lecture, workshop lead, presentation)
- Details about the audience – size, jobs, experience, profession.
- Scale and nature of event.
- A date and notice period: a minimum of three months is preferable. If the notice period is significantly less than this the organisers should be informed that their chances of securing a speaker are reduced.²
- Location.
- Whether travel and accommodation expenses can be funded by the event organisers (ICO do not charge organisations for providing a speaker).

Considerations

The ICO may not provide a speaker when any of the following scenarios apply.

- The organisation hosting the event profit from delegates' attendance and will not reimburse travel and accommodation expenses necessary for an ICO representative to attend.
- The event promotes an organisation's commercial product or service. And this may apply even if the ICO is speaker is not expected to refer to the product or service because our attendance can be interpreted as ICO endorsement of a commercial organisation over those of competitors;
- The ICO is the sole contributor and the event organisers charge delegates to attend.
- The event falls during a pre-election campaign period, when the ICO is required to suspend any activity which could call into question its

² This period of time is required to enable staff internally to consider the opportunity, secure diary space, create materials and conduct necessary research. Immediate responses to a request are rarely possible due to ICO representatives and the External Relations Officer being out of the office at external meetings or speaking events, annual or flexi leave allocation and time dedicated to internal meetings and other work commitments.

political impartiality or could give rise to the criticism that public resources are being used for party political purposes.

Other considerations include:

- an ICO speaker has had an experience at a previous event which gives them reason not to recommend future attendance by the ICO, eg failure to reimburse travel expenses, poor delegate attendance;
- the time required to spend on travel and preparation for the engagement;
- current workload;
- no one is available;
- if the engagement can be fitted around other business already scheduled for the day, in the same area;
- frequency of similar events or opportunities to speak to the same audience; and
- the engagement is not a considered a strategic priority but is an ideal development opportunity for an ICO member of staff.

3 Allocating requests

Personal invitations to ICO representatives

Where an invitation is personally addressed to a member of staff, the ICO may accept the invitation but offer another ICO representative. This particularly applies where the subject and/or audience is a specialist one and needs may be better met by an ICO speaker who has the relevant area of expertise.

Many requests for speakers specifically invite the Commissioner or his deputies. Due to many demands on their time they will only attend public engagements where their attendance meets the most important strategic priorities of the ICO.

The allocated speaker will depend upon issue, area of responsibility, availability, nature of event, level of other speakers and speaking slot.

4 Declining invitations

If the ICO is not able to accept a speaking invitation, alternative forms of support can be provided.

- Online speaker toolkit – there is a dedicated area of the ICO website providing tools and resources, such as PowerPoint presentations, guidance, publications (which can be ordered free of charge) and press releases.
- If members of an organisation have specific questions or issues they would like answering, they can forward these on to the External Relations Officer who can source responses internally and send them back.
- The ICO can consider providing filmed presentations of ICO staff, where questions are provided by the requester in advance. This reduces time spent out of the office and is subject to budgetary constraints.
- The ICO holds its annual data protection officer conference and several other events throughout the year. The External Relations Officer can provide further information on when ICO events are expected to take place and details on how to register. These events allow practitioners to find out more about the ICO's view on topical issues, and to network and share best practice with other people in the information rights field.

5 Evaluation

Event organisers will often ask delegates to evaluate speakers. We will usually make contact some time after the event to ask for the feedback given to ICO speakers. This will be passed directly to the speakers. This is beneficial to individual staff for their personal learning and development and can also assist in deciding whether or not to accept future invitations at the same event in the future.

6 Use of the ICO logo in external events

As the ICO is an independent organisation, while we can provide speakers at external events we cannot be seen to formally 'support' an event where we have had no control over the agenda or other arrangements.

Below are some guidelines on how event organisers may use the ICO logo on their promotional materials.

Correct use

- The ICO logo is clearly displayed next the ICO speaker in the agenda.
- When the ICO logo is displayed but is clearly labelled as a 'contributor'.
- The ICO logo is displayed as part of a presentation submitted to the organisers on the ICO PowerPoint template.

Incorrect use

- The ICO logo is being used to 'decorate' or 'brand' the event promotional materials on its own or alongside other logos.
- The ICO logo is displayed on its own or alongside other logos, where it is labelled as a 'supporter'.
- The ICO logo is displayed on its own or alongside other logos where there is no label at all.