

---

# Predatory Conferences

---

**Predatory conferences** (sometimes referred to as bogus / fake conferences or predatory meetings) pretend to be legitimate scientific conferences, but their purpose is to profit from registration fees **without any qualitative contribution** to the scientific community. This unfair practice often abuses the need to participate in international conferences of beginning scientists.

Predatory conferences take two forms:

1. The conference **does not take place** at all
  - The conference is announced on its website and often by unsolicited e-mails, but after paying the registration fee, all communication ends and the event never takes place.
2. The conference **takes place, but in inadequate quality**
  - The event actually takes place, however, its quality does not meet well-established standards. It is often accompanied by a weak organization, changes in the programme, missing presenters and too general presentations without a logical connection between them.

By registering and potential participating in a predatory conference, the author can not only lose a significant amount of money, but also **damage his/her scientific reputation**. Some predatory conferences are organized by predatory journals / publishers, which organize conferences (sometimes up to thousands per year) to artificially increase the credibility of speakers and the number of published articles by automatically publishing accepted articles in their open access journal, thus preventing authors from publishing the article with a trusted publisher after the conference.

## Characteristics of a predatory conferences

Typically, predatory conferences show several of the following characteristics:

- They are to take place in **tourist attractive destinations** (Paris, Dubai, Rome, Tokyo, etc.)
- In the title they use general words like **global, international**, etc.
- Invitations and communication with the organizers contain numerous **grammatical errors and typos**
- Invitations are sent as unsolicited e-mails (**SPAM**) or via private messages on social networks (LinkedIn, Facebook, etc.)
- Invitations are sent from a **public email account** without affiliation to the institution (Gmail, Hotmail etc.)
- In the invitation you are asked to **invite your colleagues** to the conference (also for active participation)
- You are invited to a conference of a **topic that does not match your area of research** and expertise
- The conference deals with a large number of thematic **areas without any logical connection between them**
- The conference takes place **only online** (so-called virtual conference) - NOTE: in response to the COVID-19 epidemic, even legitimate conferences move into the online environment
- **Important dates change** frequently and repeatedly (submission of abstracts, conference date, registration deadline)
- The conference is preceded by an **unusual process** of accepting a paper (without a selection and review procedure)
- The method of payment of the registration fee is different from payment by credit card with a non-refundable policy, i.e. in case of cancellation it **does not return the money** or returns it in the form of credit to another of their conferences
- The conference organizer provides **false information about indexing or affiliation to a major publisher or service**
- Information about the conference **programme is unclear** and changes frequently
- The invitation email states "**you are invited**" in the subject line
- The organizer will send you a **certificate of participation after paying** the registration fee

## How to avoid predatory conferences?

Attending conferences of questionable quality conflicts with the Code of Ethics of Charles University, damages your reputation and the reputation of CU.

If you are interested in a conference, **we recommend that you evaluate whether it is a predatory conference before registering**, using the following steps:

- Check the identity of the conference organizer to see if it is a predatory publisher
  - Assess whether the given conference does not show characteristics of a predatory conference
  - If the conference organizer reports indexing in known databases or services, verify that it is truly searchable
- Other specific steps to verify trustworthiness of a conference are provided the application Think. Check. Attend.

**If you are unsure of the credibility of your chosen journal**, contact OA Central Support or consult your supervisor, faculty library, or field colleague.

## Useful resources

ASADI, Amin, Nader RAHBAR, Mohammad JAVAD REZVANI a Fahime ASADI. 2018. Fake/Bogus Conferences: Their Features and Some Subtle Ways to Differentiate Them From Real Ones. *Science and Engineering Ethics* [online]. (24), 779-784 [cit. 2020-06-09]. DOI: [10.1007/s11948-017-9906-2](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11948-017-9906-2) . ISSN 1471-5546.

BOURGAULT, Annette M. 2019. Predatory Conferences: Not the Meeting You Expected. *Critical Care Nurse* [online]. **39**(5), 10-12 [cit. 2020-06-09]. DOI: [10.4037/ccn2019805](https://doi.org/10.4037/ccn2019805) . ISSN 0279-5442.