

Check List: Signs for a **Predatory Conference Invitation**: "soft" and "hard" criteria

1. The mail starts with somewhat awkward phrases like "I hope you have a good day", "I hope this message finds you well" etc.
2. The mail makes empty platitudes like "your achievements"
3. You receive multiple "invitations" without reference to the former
4. The invitation refers to titles from your published papers (or even conference abstracts)
5. **The conference's subject is not your (core) expertise**
6. A "program manager" is contacting you, without any *scientific organizer* on cc
7. You don't know the *organizers*... then, why should they know you? ...or are you *that* famous? (in particular, if you are a young researcher)
8. You don't know the *keynote/plenary speakers*
9. **There are no (or a few) poster/oral presentations, but only invited & keynote/plenary talks**
10. Invited speakers pay a (considerable) fee
11. The conference fee is rather high for the length of the event
12. **There are some (very) dubious and/or low-profile board members** (other, arbitrary fields; arbitrary regions of the world, unknown people)
14. **The chairs also board members are also keynote/plenary/invited speakers**
15. **Plenary speakers appear in countless similar events (with different topics)**
16. **There is only a "conference board", but no "local organizing team"** (with affiliation at the place where the conference takes place)
17. **The conference covers too many topics for the duration and size of the event**
18. **In previous events** [which are often highlighted to pretend success & tradition], **they had dubious or low-profile invited speakers**, often with too short careers to be "invited"
19. **Photos of previous events show a fairly small number of people**, not agreeing with spectacular announcement as "world conference" etc...
20. **The company has sent you invitations before to other events unrelated to your expertise**
21. **The company is organizing other conferences at the same time & venue**
22. **Local organizers were contacted by the company**, *not* - as usual - *vice versa* (there is no original "Scientific" Organizer, only that company...)
23. **The company address is from a country far away from that of the venue**
24. **The company address is fake**
25. **The company appears in blacklists¹**

Attention:

Don't trust names [board members, plenary/keynote speakers]: Predatory organizers often trap well-known researchers (even Nobel prize winners) as "decoy plenary speakers", "chairs" or "board members", who are too busy etc. to carefully check their invitations

Don't rely on venues [e.g. University address]: Predatory organizers sometimes rent rooms at universities without having any scientific connections to the institution

Don't be fooled by promises [e.g. discounts, awards, publications, session chair...], or **locations**

Don't believe a priori quality certificates, endorsements, scientific integrity statements etc.

¹ see e.g. <https://www.evscienceconsultant.com/blog/predatory-meetings-and-how-to-avoid-them>, <https://kscien.org/predatory-publishing/>, <https://beallslist.net/>, but be aware, that these companies often invent new names to fool their prey.