



**ERA LTD**

Professional Congress Organizer

Modus Operandi | [www.era.gr](http://www.era.gr)



**Introduction**  
*Modus Operandi*



# 7 Few words about ERA

## ABOUT OUR AGENCY

ERA Ltd was founded in 1998 by three of the most active business tourism professionals in Greece. They decided to join forces and take Greece's MICE industry to the next level and to higher standards. To date, ERA has grown to become one of the leading PCOs in Greece, with a team of 26 skilled and trained professionals, a great network of partners and local suppliers and a record number of more than 1100 congresses, meetings and business travels.



**IRENE CHARALAMBOUS**

Executive Partner

Irene Charalambous has specialized in the business travel, incentives, company events and international congresses sectors since 1995. She is responsible for the overall coordination, supervision and human resource management of ERA's projects.



**RENA TOLIS**

Executive Partner

Rena Tolis started working in the MICE industry back in 1981 and has since been responsible for the organization of more than 1000 Greek and international congresses. She is the Managing Director of ERA and President of the Hellenic Association of Professional Congress Organizers.



**ANDRÉ LANCELIN**

Executive Partner

André Lancelin, with more than 30 years experience in the tourism industry, has been involved in more than 1000 congresses over the course of his career. He is the CFO of ERA and in charge of the financial management of all congresses and events the company undertakes.

## What ERA can do for you

Carrying a legacy of nearly 20 years in the MICE industry, yet with a dynamic and refreshing approach, ERA has consistently proven itself efficient and effective in the successful organization of major congresses, symposiums, conferences, educational meetings, business meetings and events.

The broad range of skills and experience of our team, the strength of our networks of partners and collaborators, allow us to identify the divergent interests and expectations of our clients. In cases where expertise is required for a specific area, we have in our disposal a group of suitable consultants from all Member States highly qualified in the field of event handling and organisation and work closely them. In doing so, we are able to find the best possible solution for the tasks at hand.

We go beyond our client's needs and expectations and we are proud to have a high percentage of recurring clients! Our long list of clients include International & European Associations, Multinational Corporations,

**A team of 25+ qualified professionals** comprising of Senior & Junior Event/ Conference Managers, Events consultants, Sales & Marketing experts, Event Assistants, Travel Specialists, Journalists, Web & IT Developers, ensure the smooth functioning of the project in terms of organisation, management and quality control. This guarantees the efficient planning of tasks and resources, respect for deadlines, as well as effective monitoring of project processes.

University Institutions, Academia, Local Government, Letters & Art Foundations, along with a large portfolio of local medical and technological societies (small sample of previous and current cooperation and clients can be found below and on our website [www.era.gr](http://www.era.gr)).

At ERA we know the different needs, objectives, challenges and organizational tasks of events and conferences and we are confident that we can deliver impeccable results in the shortest possible deadlines. Our long list of successfully delivered projects is testament to our ability to provide, at any given time, a complete overview of event venues and meeting facilities and their technical specs in the whole of Greece and in the main EU Member States Capitals.



# What ERA can do for you

For the success of any action in this domain ERA has identified three vital factors:

- ▲ A good internal company structure and procedures.
- ▲ A strong and rapid understanding of the issues and of the client's priorities.
- ▲ An experienced and passionate group of professionals with service oriented state of mind.

Our aim is no other than to offer innovative and flexible solutions and to anticipate and address the clients' needs and objectives in a timely manner. This level of service and response extends to all levels of operation and management of a meeting, from the direct communication with the client and all involved partners to addressing the individual needs of each and every single delegate and invited speaker.

To ensure that we are up to date with the industry's trends and remain technologically savvy, we invest in international networking and best practice exchange with peers from other countries. ERA retains membership at the finest MICE associations globally and we are also members of ASCONET a private network of PCOs (see more in paragraph Accreditation).

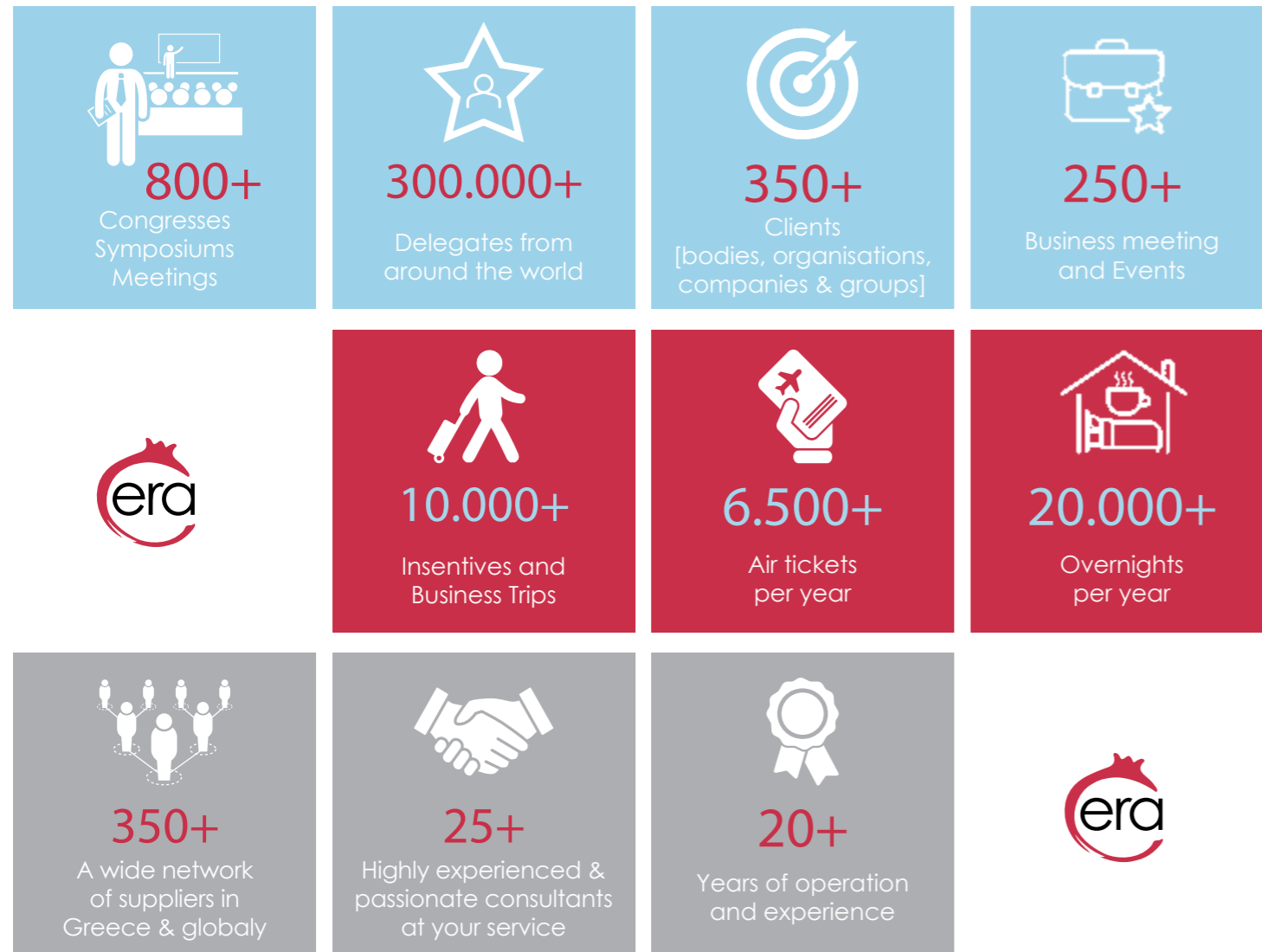
The objective for ERA is to provide a jargon free and smooth organization period, throughout the preparation of a meeting, by absorbing and handling on behalf of the client all management, logistics, communication issues that might arise. Our prevalent goal remains to provide the utmost meeting experience for organisers and delegates.



## Some of our Clients



# ERA in numbers



ERA Ltd PCO

## ACCREDITATION

Having been at the forefront of the events industry for more than two decades, we seek to continuously expand our network of partners and clients at Local, Regional and International Level. Our dynamic engagement in various organizations enables us to educate our team and partners and to raise higher standards throughout the MICE sector as a whole. ERA is a member of



Furthermore ERA has been selected to represent the Greek partnership at the ASCONET network.

ASCONET is a global network of professional, conference organizers, with expertise in every aspect of the conference management process. Each partner is carefully selected for proven thought leadership and organizational experience in their country of operation, bringing a strong reputation, the stability of a long and successful track record, and a wealth of local knowledge. ASCONET members have established common standards and practices and they are collaborating by sharing resources and know how whenever they organize congresses in another member state.

Currently the ASCONET network has presence in Austria, Italy, France, Switzerland, Spain, UK, Germany, Denmark, Norway, Greece and Singapore.

# ELECTRONIC MANAGEMENT - IT INFRASTRUCTURE

We consider that in addition of our vast experience in the areas of congresses and events organization, our dedication and perseverance in Technology, Quality and Project Methodology is a key element for the establishment of ERA as one of the leading PCOs in our region. For each one of these three facets we have invested heavily both in the development of our human resources skills and abilities and in the exploitation of enterprise IT systems, aiming always to maintain high standards of performance and to provide elaborate services and solutions.

ERA leads the way to efficient event management applications for Congress Organisers and Meeting Planners by incorporating a new cloud software system. Since March 2018 we back our operations using EventsAIR by Centium Software which is a cloud solution designed for event organizers who want to manage events more efficiently. It is built on the powerful and scalable Microsoft Azure cloud environment, and offers the industry's highest level of security and productivity. Designed by meeting planners who understand the challenges of event management, EventsAIR offers tools and processes that let us work smarter and more efficiently.

We can accommodate every type and size of event, from small, one-time meetings through multi-class training courses to large-scale global events. Some of the landmark world events that have been supported by EventsAir solutions include three Olympic Games, Rugby World Cup, G20, APEC and CHOGM political meetings, as well as the United Nations World Summit.

Our systems infrastructure contains all those features that combined with our proficiency and expertise guarantee a successful event management.

The functionality areas covered by the system include:

- ▶ Financial Management
- ▶ Online Registrations & Payment Gateway
- ▶ Workshops management
- ▶ Social Events Management
- ▶ Accommodations
- ▶ Electronic Surveys
- ▶ Communications (both bulk marketing and personal

emails that can be dispatched automatically, triggered by attendees actions e.g confirmation emails upon a registration submission)

- ▶ Conference Mobile App (including Live Polling and Q&A functionality)
- ▶ Electronic Voting
- ▶ Web Site
- ▶ Reporting (including online reporting functionality of OC members)
- ▶ Abstracts Portal
- ▶ OnSite Portal (including badges & certifications of attendance)
- ▶ Exhibitors and Sponsors portal (e.g online reservations of exhibition booths, view floor plan, view sponsorship manual, book online sponsorship options).
- ▶ Access Control
- ▶ Self Service Registration Kiosk
- ▶ CRM (Customer Relationship Management) functionality

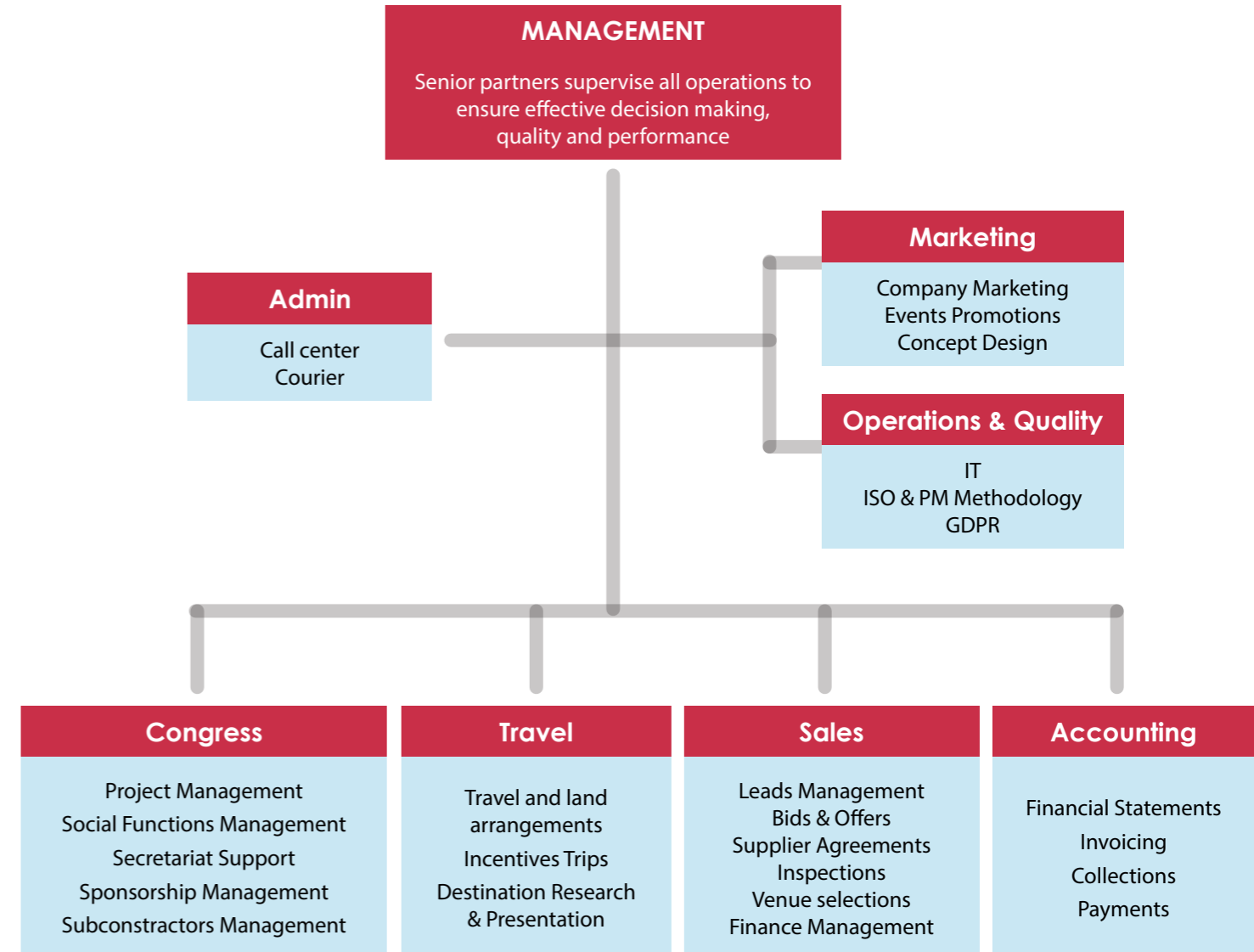
The system has been upgraded recently with the new OnAIR module that facilitates the organization of virtual and hybrid meetings and congresses. It allows attendees, speakers, sponsors, and exhibitors to meet in a secure space and present, showcase, learn and discuss business.



**Every Challenge is an opportunity for innovation**



## ERA Ltd Organization Chart & Dept Functions



## PROVEN TRACK RECORD

A very short indicative list of national and international congresses and meetings of different scales is provided hereinafter.

A detailed list is available upon request.

### Short Indicative list of congresses / meetings

EVENT
World Dermoscopy Congress 2018 Thessaloniki, Greece, 2500 participants Organized in cooperation with the Interantional Dermoscopy Society
Panhellenic Congress of Regional Anaesthesia, Pain Management & Palliatvie Care 2019 Ioannina, Greece, 500 participants
Panhellenic Ophthalmology Congress 2019 Athens, Greece – 1000 participants
Human Brain Project 2020 Athens, Greece – 750 participants HBP is one the biggest research projects funded by EU, aiming to put in place a cutting-edge research infrastructure that will allow scientific and industrial researches to advance our knowledge in the fields of neuroscience, computing and brain related medicine
1st World Biogas Association Congress 2019 Athens, Greece – 250 participants
Vulnerable Patient Meeting (VPM) 2019 Stresa, Italy - 80 VPM is an annual event hosted by Cardialysis over the last decade. Participation is by invitation only and includes a selected faculty of opinion leaders, regulators, industry experts and decision makers
4th International Conference of the Sylvia Ioannou Foundation Nicosia, Cyprus – 350 participants
Virtual Congress - 2020 34th International Congress of the Hellenic Society of Intraocular Implant & Refractive Surgeresy 1300 attendess



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# Project Management Principles in ERA

# Planning & Monitoring

In ERA we are managing and monitoring our projects according to the principles of PRINCE2 (PRoject IN Control Environment) project management methodology. We had chosen to adopt PRINCE2 methodology because it is a method that can be applied regardless of project scale, type, organization geography or culture and is also aligned with our ISO 9001:2015 quality system.

Furthermore the head of our operations & quality department is a certified PRINCE2 Practitioner with previous experience in PM processes in IT and Financial Institutions having the knowledge and the experience required to tailor the methodology to suit our projects environment. We have established a central corporate management process that monitors and approves all the individual project plans and ensures that resources are not over allocated.

We believe that planning can only be done to a level of detail that is manageable and foreseeable. A great deal of effort can be wasted on attempts to plan beyond a sensible planning horizon. Therefore a core part of our project management methodology is the “manage by stage” principle. That means that our projects are planned, monitored and controlled on a stage by stage basis.

These stages provide senior management with control points at major intervals where corrective actions can be taken to ensure that the stage remains within tolerance including in staff turnover cases. At the end of each stage, the next detailed Stage Plan will be produced and the Project Plan will be updated and reviewed by the central directing project process.

The total number of stages varies depending on the complexity and the risks of each project. However there are at least two management stages. The initiation stage that ensures that there is a firm basis for the project and at least one other management stage to cover the remainder of the project.

Depending on the event requirements and complexity additional management stages may be needed to enable the project management team to have an optimal level of planning and control.



2.1

## INITIATION STAGE

For every event we create we start at the beginning. With equal parts inspiration, ambition and vision we assemble our team and start the project journey.

The objectives of the Initiation Stage is to ensure that:

- ▶ Review the project mandate and check understanding. In cooperation with the customer we verify that sufficient information is available to define and confirm the scope of the project. Therefore time is not wasted initiating a project based on unsound assumptions regarding the scope, timescales, acceptance criteria and constraints.
- ▶ Appoint a project manager and confirm his/her availability.
- ▶ Confirm that lessons from previous similar projects have been reviewed and incorporated.
- ▶ Identify the main risks (if any) that might affect the viability of the project and discuss and agree with the customer the way around.
- ▶ Obtain or commit the resources needed by project (these will be released to the Project Manager on a stage by stage basis).
- ▶ Review the budget that has been submitted during the bid phase.
- ▶ Prepare the overall plan.
- ▶ Confirm the validity and achievability of the high level project plan (focus at this stage on key milestones).
- ▶ Prepare the detailed plan for the first managed stage.





# Planning & Monitoring



## 2.2

### MANAGING STAGE(S)

During a managing stage the actual project work is done and monitored. The project work is broken down to work packages. Some work packages might be completed within one stage (e.g venue inspection) whilst others might span several managing stages (e.g managing registrations or managing abstract submissions).

The project manager has the responsibility for delegating work packages and for monitoring their progress. Although we leave a level of autonomy within a project team it would be chaotic to have the people working on the project starting activities whenever they think fit. It is therefore important that work only commences and continues with the consent of the project manager. If any forecasts indicate that a work package is likely to exceed the agreed time plan tolerances then the possible deviation should be referred to the central corporate review board lead by a senior partner to get decisions on corrective actions.

The PM defines at the beginning of each project and based on its complexity the types and the frequency of checkpoint reports and maintains a set of project registers and logs. Close to the end of each management process the PM prepares the final stage report to assure the central corporate review board that all work packages for the current stages have been completed or remain in tolerance in order to be continued in the next stage and also prepares the detailed stage plan for the next stage.

## 2.3

### CLOSING A PROJECT

We believe that any successful organization learns from their experiences with projects. Therefore closing and evaluating a project is an essential process of our PM methodology. The objective of this step is to assess how successful the project has been in comparison with the original intent as agreed in the initiation stage.

The PM prepares the End Project Report that includes:

- ▶ A summary of the project performed
- ▶ A review of the project performed against its planned targets including a financial review
- ▶ A review of team performance



# Project Team Structure

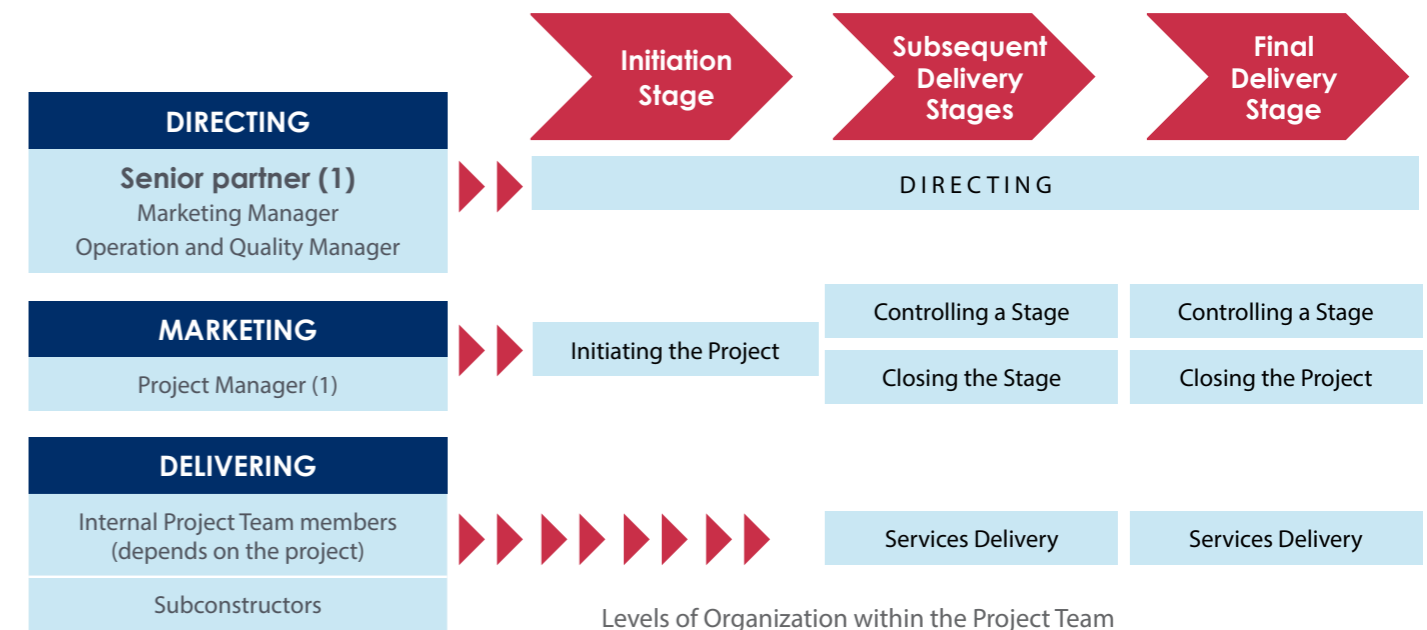


We assign to each event an explicit project management team structure consisting of defined and agreed roles and responsibilities for the people involved in the project and a means for effective communication between them. Furthermore, our project managers have extensive experience and excellent managerial skills to ensure the smooth functioning of the project in terms of organisation, management and quality control. This guarantees the efficient planning of tasks and resources, respect for deadlines, as well as effective monitoring of project processes.

## 3.1 PROJECT INTERNAL TEAM

Each project team has three levels of organization:

- ▶ Directing
- ▶ Managing
- ▶ Delivering



### 3.1.1 DIRECTING PROJECT

A senior partner is responsible for the overall direction and management of the project. He / She approves all major plans and resources, approves the completion of each stage and authorize any deviation that exceeds or is forecast to exceed stage tolerances (in cost, scope, time, risk, quality). The senior partner is not involved on a day to day basis with the project but he has the experience and the authority to ensure effective decision making and effective communication both within the project team and with external stakeholders. Depending on the complexity of the project and especially during the initiation phase our operations manager also participates in directing review meetings to verify that all the technical aspects of the project can be accommodated or to indicate the requirements for which customizations might be needed. An equal importance role in the review meeting has the head of the marketing department that plans the marketing activities to increase event awareness among prospect delegates.

### 3.1.2 MANAGING PROJECT

The Project Manager is responsible for the day-to-day management within the constraints set by the Directing Level. The PM's prime responsibility is to ensure that the project produces the required services and deliverables in accordance with the project goals. The role of PM is essential for the successful implementations of our projects and for that reason PM responsibility is assigned only to senior congress planners and consultants (i.e more than 7 years of experience) that have been trained also to our PM methodology.

### 3.1.3 DELIVERING

Team members are responsible for delivering the project's services to an appropriate quality within a specified timescale.

## 3.2

### ASSIGNING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In order to be flexible and meet the needs of different events we do not allocated management jobs to people on a one-to-one basis. We define roles each of which has an associated set of responsibilities. Roles might be shared or combined according to the project's needs and the responsibilities must always be allocated (e.g two people might share the responsibilities for accommodation and travel arrangements, or one people might take care the aforementioned responsibilities and the management of the registrations). When we combine roles consideration is given to verify that the person has the capacity to undertake the combined responsibilities and that no bottlenecks might be created as a result.

## 3.3

### PROJECT STAKEHOLDERS

We acknowledge that each event has the following three primary categories of stakeholders and the interests of all three must be satisfied if the project is to be successful.

- ▶ Customer
- ▶ Era Ltd
- ▶ Sub-contractors

Therefore throughout the project duration we always work closely with the customer representative that endorse the event objectives and ensures that our services provide value for money, and of course we work side by side with our sub-contractors that provide the resources and expertise required by the event and that do not directly covered by a Professional Congress Organizer (e.g AV, Interpretation, Construction etc.).

# GDPR Compliance



Committed to providing top-notch services and to preserving our partners' and clients' rights to privacy, ERA Ltd is implementing effective internal data processing in full compliance with the new GDPR. Our data protection policy is available on our web site at <http://era.gr/personal-data-policy/>. Our event management software provides special features to ensure GDPR compliance:

## 4.1

### DATA PROCESSING CONSENT

For each event we can create Data Processing Consent policies / statements shown to contacts and obtain their consent prior allowing them submitting personal information.

These statements describe how we plan to use a contact's personal data, including:

- ▶ Our organization's contact details
- ▶ Our Data Protection Administrator's details
- ▶ The purpose in collecting personal data
- ▶ Any third parties that would view or receive personal data
- ▶ Any additional information regarding your use of the contact's personal data





# Quality Assurance



4.2

## ANONYMIZE CONTACT DETAILS

We provide the option an attendee to can ask for their data to be forgotten (removed). Although this might conflicts with the need to keep financial data for many years our platform includes the ability to Anonymize contacts, which removes any personally identifiable fields.

Anonymizing a contact record allows us to keep all the non-personal data about an attendee. All the module information (eg. hotel booking, function tickets etc) is retained. By anonymizing a record, the system removes all personal fields including name, email, address, photo, social media accounts etc, and all fields marked as "Contains Personal Data". The contact is renamed Attendee + ID (eg Attendee5632). As all the module information is retained, we can still run statistical reports (eg. number of tickets sold) and any list, although anonymized records will appear as "Attendee5632" for example.

When a contact is anonymised, their name, email, and phone number are stored in an encrypted field that is only available for Data Administrators to search and only from the Attendee Panel. This is used to access historical financial information which must be kept for many years, while respecting the contacts right to be forgotten.

4.3

## DATA PROCESSING STATEMENT

Another special function related with the GDPR is the ability to create a Data Processing Statement. If an attendee wants to see all personal data stored about them (potentially across multiple events), a Data Processing Statement contains everything. Due to the high sensitivity of the information in this document, it can only be created by Data Administrator, who should follow a documented procedure to verify the identity of the individual requesting this data.

ERA adheres to the principle that quality must run through all the stages of a project and that our customers get consistent, good quality services, which in turn brings many business benefits.

Our quality system is certified with **ISO 9001:2015** and is an integrated part of our project management processes. The ISO 9001:2015 standard is based on a number of quality management principles including a strong customer focus, the motivation and implication of top management, the process approach and continual improvement.

Our Quality is supported and guaranteed by:

- ▶ A strong management team.
- ▶ The preparation and strict adherence to detailed activity time schedules for the project.
- ▶ The functional allocation of human and technical resources.
- ▶ The commitment to provide solutions to its customers within 24 hours from relevant requests.
- ▶ The focusing on feedback received from its clients.
- ▶ Provision for even the tiniest detail in any service provided to our customers.
- ▶ Personalization of services and establishment of loyal relationships with the customers.
- ▶ Rigorous selection of suppliers based on strict quality and reliability criteria.

Our company meets the licensing requirements defined by the Greek National Tourism Organisation and we are a certified member of IAPCO (International Association of Professional Congress Organizers) and HAPCO (Hellenic Association of Professional Congress Organizers).

We emphasize on keeping our personnel informed about new regulations that might affect our operations. This allows us to always act proactively to minimize the impacts of local complexities and specificities. Furthermore we have established on-site inspections to venue premises and regular meetings with our local suppliers where we examine new type of services that we can offer to our customers.

Finally on June 2018 we announced our membership to the International Congress and Conference Association -ICCA and our henceforth active involvement in the Association's events, seminars and works. The ICCA Membership reflects the company's prospect on managing a greater number of international congresses and events and on its intention to keep investing in the exchange of know-how and best practices among meeting planners.



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