



12th AFLAR CONGRESS

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Shaping the future of Rheumatology



Travel Brief

APRIL

2027



Dear Participant,

The AFLAR 2027 conference planning committee is pleased to host the upcoming 5-day meeting scheduled to be held in April 2027, in Accra, Ghana.

This travel brief outlines the essential details for your upcoming trip to Ghana. It highlights information on logistics, entry requirements and resources to help you have a productive and enjoyable trip.

Please review this document and do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

APRIL
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BRIEF OVERVIEW OF ACCRA

Accra, the capital city of Ghana, is a wonderful fusion of a long history, a diverse ethnic population, and a vibrant metropolitan environment. The city borders the Gulf of Guinea at southern part of the country. Serving as Ghana's economic and administrative hub, the city provides a compelling experience that deftly blends heritage and contemporary culture and lifestyle.



Photo credit: <https://rb.gy/p8gxog>



The city is home to a diverse population, representing various ethnic groups and international communities.

This multicultural atmosphere is reflected in the local cuisine, music, art, and festivities, providing a unique opportunity to immerse yourself in the vibrant tapestry of Ghanaian culture.

ACCRA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

You will be arriving at Terminal 3 of the Accra International Airport (AIA) in Accra. You should plan for about 45 minutes from touchdown to exit the airport, although it often does not take long.

Upon exiting the airport after immigration procedures, a team member will be at arrivals to welcome and facilitate your onward journey to the meeting venue.

You may be ushered to a comfortable waiting place near the airport to allow for other arriving participants to be assembled before setting off to the hotels.



GHANA VISA APPLICATION GUIDE

1. Who Needs a Visa?

Most travellers require a visa to enter Ghana unless they are:

- Citizens of ECOWAS countries (visa-free entry)
- Holders of diplomatic/service passports with bilateral agreements
 - Always confirm with the nearest Ghana embassy before travel.

2. Types of Ghana Visas

Short Stay (Most Common)

- Tourist Visa – sightseeing, visiting family
- Business Visa – meetings, conferences (most relevant for your attendees)
- Transit Visa – passing through Ghana

3. Application Methods

A. Standard Embassy Application (Most Reliable)

Apply through a Ghana Embassy/High Commission in your country.

B. Online Application (Where Available)

Many missions use the official portal:

Ghana Immigration Service Visa Application Portal

Even with online forms, submission is usually completed at the embassy.

4. Required Documents

Prepare these carefully—this is where most delays happen.

Mandatory Documents

- Valid passport (at least 6 months validity, 2 blank pages)
- Completed visa application form
- Passport-sized photos (recent, white background)
- Flight itinerary (return ticket recommended)
- Proof of accommodation
 - Hotel booking OR host invitation letter
- Financial proof (bank statement)

Supporting Documents (VERY IMPORTANT for conferences)

- Invitation letter from host organization
- Proof of purpose of visit (conference registration, agenda, etc.)
- Employer letter (for business travellers)



GHANA VISA APPLICATION GUIDE

5. Special Health Requirement

Yellow Fever Vaccination

- Mandatory for all travelers
- Must present the Yellow Card on arrival
- No certificate = risk of denial of entry or vaccination at the airport



6. Visa Fees & Processing Time

- Fees vary by country and visa type
 - Single entry: approx. \$60–\$100 USD
 - Multiple entry: higher

Processing Time

- Standard: 5–15 working days
- Express: 2–5 working days (if available)
 - Apply at least 3–4 weeks before travel

7. Entry Requirements on Arrival

At the airport (e.g., Accra International Airport), travelers must present:

- Passport with valid visa
- Yellow fever certificate
- Proof of accommodation
- Return ticket
- Evidence of sufficient funds (occasionally requested)

8. Key Tips for Travelers

Use exact names across all documents

Ensure invitation letters are signed and stamped

Carry printed copies (not just digital)

Keep visa + documents in carry-on luggage

For conferences: include a contact person in Ghana

GHANA VISA APPLICATION GUIDE

VISA ON ARRIVAL INFORMATION

- Ensure to keep both hard and soft copies of your emergency visa on arrival letter which grants you entry access via the AIA.
- Your passport will be checked and the visa issued into it at the airport by the Ghana Immigration Service.

For self funded participants:

- Please prepare to make a payment of **200 USD in cash**, at the immigration service desk. The cash should preferably be in 100 dollar bills with no markings or signs of wear and tear.



MEETING VENUE



Kempinski Hotel Gold Coast City

ACCRA GHANA

The Kempinski Hotel Gold Coast City is a premier five-star hotel located in the heart of Accra's central business district. Ideally positioned near the International Conference Centre, National Theatre, and the Kwame Nkrumah Mausoleum, the venue offers both convenience and cultural access.



With 2,500 sq m of meeting space, it provides an excellent setting for high-level engagements. Delegates will benefit from luxurious accommodation, diverse dining options, and wellness facilities, including the renowned Resense Spa. The venue has been carefully selected to ensure a comfortable, efficient, and memorable conference experience.

✉ reservations.accra@kempinski.com

☎ **+233 242 436030**

📍 **Ministries PMB, 66 Gamel Abdul Nasser Avenue, Accra**



MEALS



Food Allergies:

Food allergies can be serious and potentially life-threatening. Common allergens include nuts, shellfish, fish, dairy, eggs, soy, and wheat. Reactions can vary from mild symptoms like itching or stomach discomfort to severe reactions such as difficulty breathing or anaphylaxis.

What You Need to Do:

Carry Emergency Medication: If you have a severe allergy, please bring your prescribed emergency medication (e.g., an epinephrine auto-injector) and keep it with you at all times.

Communicate at Meal Times: When dining, kindly remind the staff of your allergies and verify that the food being served is safe for you to consume.

Our Commitment:

The Local Planning Committee is dedicated to ensuring that all attendees have a safe and comfortable experience during the event. Your prompt cooperation in providing this information is essential to helping us achieve this goal.



OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

TIME ZONE

The time zone in Ghana is the Greenwich Mean Time (GMT).

WEATHER

Accra in April is hot, humid, and marks the start of the rainy season. Daytime temperatures typically range between 30-32°C, with warm nights around 24-26°C. Rainfall increases significantly during this period, often occurring as short but intense showers, while humidity remains high (80-90%). Despite this, visitors can still expect several hours of sunshine daily, especially in the mornings.



MONEY/CREDIT CARDS

The unit of currency in Ghana is the Cedi. Shops, restaurants and other vendors hardly accept foreign currencies. Some vendors have POS devices which accept payments via VISA and Mastercard. We therefore advise you to change some money into Cedis if you anticipate making any purchases. Participants can log on to <https://www.oanda.com/> for up-to-date currency exchange rates for planning purposes. Currency exchange rates may vary based on the Forex Bureau you patronize.

LANGUAGE

English is the official language that will be used for the entire meeting module. If you require any particular language support, kindly speak with the workshop coordinators.

ELECTRICAL PLUG

Electricity sockets in Ghana supply 220-240 volts.

Generally, the socket type used in Ghana is the British BS-1363 or "Type G". Although flexible power sockets are becoming common, it is safer to keep a travel adapter if your devices come with different plug types. Travel adapters simply change the shape of your appliance's plug to match whatever type of socket you need to plug into.

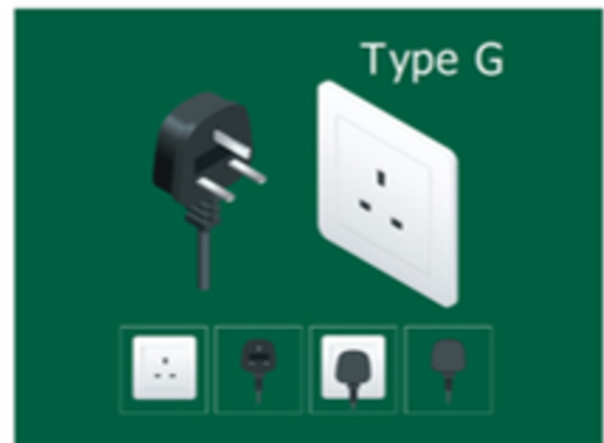


Photo credit:
<https://www.netio-products.com/en/glossary/type-g-uk-electrical-socketelectrical-plug>

LOCAL TRANSPORTATION



For additional activities, ride-hailing services can be secured by downloading applications such as Uber, Bolt and Yango, all of which are available on both the Google Play and App Stores, to facilitate movement in and around Accra.

Commercial taxis are also available but prices are negotiated with the driver based on your destination before the trip begins.

HEALTH INFORMATION

COMMON DISEASE CONDITIONS & PREVENTIVE MEASURES:

Malaria:

Risk & Prevention: Malaria is prevalent in tropical regions like Ghana. To minimize risk, use insect repellent containing DEET, wear long-sleeved clothing, and sleep under an insecticide-treated mosquito net. Consult with your healthcare provider about starting antimalarial prophylaxis before your trip.

Symptoms: Be aware of symptoms such as fever, chills, headache, and muscle pain. If you experience any of these, seek medical attention immediately.

Traveler's Diarrhea:

Prevention: Common in travelers, this condition can be avoided by consuming only bottled or filtered water, avoiding ice in drinks, and eating food that is thoroughly cooked. Avoid street food and eat at reputable establishments.

Hygiene: Wash your hands frequently with soap and water, especially before eating. Carry hand sanitizer for situations where handwashing facilities might not be available.

Treatment: In case you develop symptoms, rehydrate with oral rehydration salts (ORS) and seek medical attention if symptoms persist.

Heat-Related Illnesses (Heat Exhaustion, Dehydration):

Prevention: The climate can be hot and humid, leading to a higher risk of heat-related illnesses. Drink plenty of water throughout the day—aim for at least 8-10 glasses—and avoid excessive sun exposure during peak hours (11 AM to 3 PM). Wear lightweight, breathable clothing and a hat or use an umbrella for sun protection.

Symptoms: Watch for symptoms like excessive sweating, weakness, dizziness, nausea, and fainting. Move to a cooler place and rehydrate immediately if you experience any of these.

Respiratory Infections:

Prevention: Common colds, flu, and other respiratory infections can spread easily in group settings. Practice good respiratory hygiene by covering your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing, and avoid close contact with anyone showing symptoms of illness.

Vaccination: Ensure your vaccinations are up-to-date, including the flu vaccine.

HEALTH INFORMATION

Medication Reminder:

Remember to bring all necessary medications, including daily prescriptions, emergency medications (e.g., inhalers, EpiPens), and any over-the-counter medications you regularly use.

Prescription Details: It's advisable to carry a copy of your prescriptions, including the generic names of the drugs, in case you need a refill or medical assistance.

Storage: Keep your medications in a cool, dry place. If they require refrigeration, inform the resort staff upon arrival.

NEARBY HOSPITAL:

Location & Accessibility

In the event that more specialized or emergency care is required, there is a well-equipped hospital located just a 10-minute drive from the hotel. The conference planning team are on standby to arrange transportation if needed. The hospital is equipped to handle a wide range of medical conditions and emergencies, with trained medical personnel available 24/7.

NATIONAL AMBULANCE SERVICE:

For any medical emergencies requiring immediate attention, the National Ambulance Service is on standby to provide rapid response and transport to the nearest hospital.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS:

+233 247 909 152

aflar27@rheumasocietygh.org

These contacts are available to assist you promptly in case of any emergency.



Tourism Sites in Ghana

SHAI HILLS ADVENTURE



Photo credit: <https://fcghana.org/shai-hills-resource-reserve/#>

Shai Hills is a blend of savannah plains and striking rocky hills, offering rich biodiversity and a fascinating glimpse into Ghana's ecological and cultural heritage. The reserve is home to various wildlife species, including antelope, baboons, and over 150 bird species, making it a perfect destination for nature enthusiasts.

The guided tour will include:

- A hike to view the scenic landscapes and wildlife.
- A visit to some of the ancient caves that were once home to the Shai people.
- Bird watching and other nature-based activities.

What to Bring

- **Comfortable clothing:** Lightweight and breathable attire suitable for hiking and warm weather.
- **Footwear:** Sturdy walking shoes or hiking boots.
- **Sun protection:** Sunscreen, hats, and sunglasses are recommended.

OTHER TOURIST ATTRACTION SITES

ROCK CITY



Photo credit: <https://rb.gy/5irqil>

Rock City is located in the western region of the country, specifically in the town of Akwesas. It's known for its stunning rock formations and natural beauty, making it a great spot for nature enthusiasts and adventure seekers. The area is characterized by its unique granite rock structures and lush vegetation.

Activities include hiking and exploring caves. The site also has cultural significance and is often associated with local legends and folklore.

AKOSOMBO

Akosombo is in the Eastern Region along the Volta River. Famous for its iconic dam and hilltop views, it offers engineering marvels and serene landscapes. The area features Lake Volta and lush, rolling mountains.

Activities include boat cruises, fishing, and hiking for panoramic vistas.



Photo credit: <https://www.pinterest.ca/pin/a-bridge-in-akosombo-ghana--206954545349014539/>

The site holds immense national significance as the country's hydroelectric heart.



Photo credit: <https://apatasetours.com/tour-item/boti-falls/>

Kindly note that these tours are not organized by conference planning committee

CAPE COAST CASTLE

The Cape Coast Castle, constructed by the Portuguese in 1555, transformed into a grim site for the transatlantic slave trade, holding up to 1,000 male and 500 female slaves in appalling conditions. Despite the darkness of the dungeons, the castle also housed lavish chambers for British officers. This stark contrast highlights the detachment from the suffering inflicted.

Today, the castle is a significant tourist attraction in West Africa. Additionally, other forts and castles along Ghana's coast, like Elmina Castle and others in Accra, stand as historical reminders of this dark period.



Photo credit:
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Barack_Obama_a_in_Cape_Coast_Castle.jpg

LAKE BOSOMTWE

Located about 40km southeast of Kumasi in the Ashanti region, Lake Bosomtwe is one of six meteoritic lakes in the world. It is situated within an ancient impact crater that is about 10.5 km in diameter. The southernmost section of the site overlaps the northern section of the Bosomtwe Range Forest Reserve creating a combination of forest, wetland and mountain ecosystems. The biosphere reserve sustains 35 tree species and it is one of the major tourist attraction sites in the Ashanti region.



Photo credit:
<https://www.trip.com/things-to-do/detail/225055337>

Kindly note that these tours are not organized by conference planning committee



KAKUM NATIONAL PARK

The Kakum Conservation Area in Ghana's Central Region comprises the Kakum National Park and Assin Attandanso Resource Reserve, covering 360 square kilometers. Notably, visitors can embark on an exhilarating seven-bridge canopy walk suspended 30 meters above ground level.

The area offers various activities like nature walks, animal and bird viewing, tree house camping, and a children's park, providing diverse experiences for nature enthusiasts and families alike.



Photo credit:<https://www.myjoyonline.com>

WLI WATERFALLS



Photo credit:<https://www.myjoyonline.com>

Wli Waterfalls, located in the Volta region, stands as West Africa's tallest waterfall at about 80 meters high. Nestled in the Agumatsa Wildlife Sanctuary, this site boasts diverse wildlife including butterflies, birds, fruit bats, monkeys, and antelopes, attracting nature enthusiasts.

Visitors can hike with local guides, learning about the area and eventually cool off in a refreshing pool at the waterfall's base. It's a serene escape from urban life, perfect for rejuvenating your spirits. Nearby, attractions like Mount Afadja, Tafi Atome Monkey Sanctuary, and Fort Prinzenstein offer additional experiences to explore.

Kindly note that these tours are not organized by conference planning committee



MOLE NATIONAL PARK

The Mole National Park is Ghana's first and most prestigious protected area. The Park is located in the Savannah region and is 146km from Tamale. It covers an area of 4,577km² of fairly undisturbed Guinea Savannah vegetation.

Mole is rich in biodiversity and home to some 742 vascular plant species, over 90 mammal species including 5 primate species, of which species of conservation and tourist interest include Elephant, Buffalo, Kob, Western Hartebeest, Roan Antelope, Defassa Waterbuck, Oribi, Bohor Reedbuck and Red-flanked Duiker. Rare and endangered species include the Yellow-backed Duiker, Black and White Colobus Monkeys, Leopards and Lions. The Park is also home to 334 bird species, 33 reptiles, 9 amphibian species, and some 120 butterfly species.

The Park has the most viable elephant population in Ghana, and as such, is a hotspot for elephant conservation.

It is also said that the Park has a unique breed of elephant, which are not hostile, not aggressive or insecure, compared to other elephant populations in other African countries. In addition to savouring the precious flora and fauna through game viewing, bird watching, informative walks and camping, visitors to the park can also visit some of the neighbouring communities, and experience their rich cultural heritage, architecture and traditional livelihood activities, among others.

Nearby attractions include Bui National Park, Gbele Resource Reserve, Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary, Paga Crocodile Pond, Paga Pio's Palace, Wa Naa's Palace, Pikworo Slave Camp, Ancient Mosques (particularly Larabanga, Bole and Nakose), the Kraal buildings, Tongo Hills, Larabanga Mystery Stone, Wuling Mushroom Rock, and Daboya Smock Village.



Photo credit:
<https://www.flyingfourchette.com/2013/11/10/mole-national-park/>



Photo credit:
<https://haunsinafrica.com/2018/06/23/elephants-in-june-at-mole-national-park/>

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NZULEZU STILT SETTLEMENT

The spectacular scenery of the 400-year-old stilt propped water settlement of Nzulezu in the Western region stands out as a magnificent interplay between man and his environment.

According to tradition, ancestors of the village were brought to their present place under the guidance of a snail. The serene ambience of the surrounding landscape, coupled with the general activities of life point to a dynamic relationship between man and nature.

The perfect adaptation of traditional village life to the watery conditions leaves visitors in awe.

One of the highlights of a visit to this serene environment is the journey. Nzulezu is situated within the Amasuri Wetlands, a Ramsar site and the largest inland swamp forest in Ghana.

The journey is about 90 km west of Takoradi to the visitor centre in Beyin. A one-hour dugout canoe trip from the visitor centre to Nzulezu passes through a pristine series of marshes, swamp forest (the largest stand left in Ghana) and open pools rich with wildlife, including crocodiles, egret, heron and kingfishers.

This natural area has been designated as an important bird area based on criteria from Birdlife International.



Photo credit: <https://www.viator.com/tours/Ghana/Experience-Nzulezu-A-village-on-stilts/d4439-229021P1>



Photo credit: <https://hadithi.africa/nzulezo-ghanas-venice/>



Photo credit: <https://edition.cnn.com/travel/article/nzulezo-ghana-stilt-village-intl/index.html>

In addition, the beach adjacent to the visitor centre is the site of a marine turtle conservation project in cooperation with the Ghana Wildlife Society. The project seeks to protect three endangered turtle species that nest on the beach. Evening tours are offered to see the massive turtles laying eggs and their tiny hatchlings making their way to the sea. Other nearby attractions are the Ankasa Nature Reserve, Fort Apollonia in Beyin and the Egyambra Crocodile Sanctuary.

Kindly note that these tours are not organized by conference planning committee

OTHER CONTACTS FOR SUPPORT

Ghana Tourist Information Office: The Ghana Tourist Information Office can provide general information, assistance, and guidance for travelers. They can be reached at **+233 302 764 305** or visited at their office in Accra.

Embassy/Consulate: If you require consular assistance or support during your travel, contact your country's embassy or consulate in Ghana.

In case of other emergencies contact

- **Ghana Police Service:** 191; 18555
- **Ghana Fire Service:** 192
- **Ghana Ambulance Service:** 193



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SAFE TRAVELS AND A PLEASANT STAY IN GHANA!