

LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS ACTIVITIES– Page 18-1

Lead: Local Arrangements Chair

Local Arrangements Committee:

Equipment and Technology Chair Monitoring & Evaluation Chair
Hospitality and Gifts Chair Special Events & Entertainment Chair
Meals and Beverage Services Chair

Contributors: Conference Coordinator Program Chair
Conference Treasurer Registrar
Pre-conference Coordinator IG Coordinator
Exhibits Chair

POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

The Local Arrangements Chair is the official liaison for the hotel or conference center concerning use of meeting and exhibitor facilities, food and beverage service, sleeping rooms, hotel equipment and other contractual or special obligations. Although others from the conference committee will meet with the site staff, the Local Arrangements Chair is ultimately responsible for the operational decisions.

The Chair establishes Local Arrangements Committee in coordination with Conference Chair, delegates responsibilities, sets schedules, and oversees committee activities. These subcommittees usually include:

- Equipment and Technology
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Hospitality and Gifts
- Conference Meals and Beverage Services
- Entertainment and Social Events
- Other, as needed for conference

Acts as prime contact with other sites and services used by the conference. During conference, handles emergencies and questions from registrants, conference committee members, and hotel staff in coordination with Conference Chair.

Responsibilities

Local Arrangements Chair

Attends all Conference Committee meetings, assuring that members are aware of hotel/conference center requirements, capabilities, and costs. Communicates with conference chair and others as needed between committee meetings.

Sets meeting dates, agendas, and chairs Local Arrangements Committee meetings. Sets Local Arrangements schedule, oversees activities, and provides assistance as needed. Reviews the *Conference Manual* sections related to local arrangements with the committee. Agrees upon different or new responsibilities that may result from the conference site and committee arrangements.

POLICIES AND GUIDELINES, continued

Responsibilities, continued

Local Arrangements Chair acts as the primary contact for all arrangements with hotel, convention center, or other sites used by conference, promptly communicating schedules, meeting room assignments, catering arrangements, new or revised decisions, and creating in coordination with the conference hotel staff the master list of services which will be the basis for the hotel/convention center billing to the WLA.

Promptly communicates general and specific information about the conference site, meeting schedules, revisions, and special needs to conference committee.

Coordinates with Program Chair to assign programs to meeting rooms, and with the Equipment and Technology chair to assure that equipment and special needs are met.

Reviews agreements for equipment rentals or other similar costs for Conference Chair approval. Orders communications lines for exhibits and meetings in coordination with Conference Chair, Equipment Chair, Exhibits Chair, and or hotel/conference center.

Coordinates with Pre-Conference Chair to plan meeting rooms, equipment, communications, and meals.

Coordinates with Registrar, providing information for registration form and making arrangements for the registration facility at the conference.

Assures that all conference programs and events meet ADA requirements. Assures that requests to WLA for ADA accommodations are contracted for and meet attendee needs.

Provides for pre- and post- conference tours or entertainment as decided by the conference committee. Assures that information is available for spouses or about services the attendee may need. For example, lists of day care centers that will take drop-ins, tours or activities of interest to spouses, etc.

Reviews conference hotel/center master billing for payment, corrects errors, negotiates revisions, and forwards to conference chair for approval.

Prepares final Local Arrangements narrative report that incorporates reports from Local Arrangement Committee members and includes evaluation. Assures that conference statistical reports are completed and forwarded to Conference Chair within thirty days of close of conference.

Local Arrangements Chair Relationship to Conference Hotel or Convention Center

Assures that hotel and/or conference site contractual agreements are met by WLA.

Assures that liability insurance is provided (if needed), working with Association Coordinator and Association Treasurer.

Assures ADA accessibility for all conference meetings and events.

Promptly communicates general and specific information, meeting schedules, revisions, special needs to hotel conference and catering staff. Signs off after review of master list of arrangements, meals, and services.

POLICIES AND GUIDELINES, continued

Local Arrangements Chair Relationship to Conference Hotel or Convention Center, continued

Coordinates with hotel conference staff for placing registration desk, conference office, association exhibits, social events, making arrangements for special events, as well as program setups throughout the conference schedule.

The Conference Chair and Local Arrangements Chair review all conference arrangements with hotel and/or convention site staff and sign off on the master list during the week prior to conference. Changes after the review will usually be charged to the WLA.

The review usually includes the following:

- Scheduled uses for all meeting rooms for every day and timeslot during conference.
- Every room setup seating style, speaker podiums, tables, etc.
- Equipment provided at each meeting without cost, rental agreements, and equipment placement within the rooms.
- Meal and beverage set ups, final menu selections, and guaranteed plate numbers.
- Social event arrangements including placement of bars, number of bartenders.
- Sleeping room block numbers current and anticipated.
- Identification of complimentary suites and meeting rooms based on sleeping room block numbers.
- List of guests and guest room dates that will be charged to conference master billing.
- Liquor, fire marshal, or other required licenses.
- Security arrangements related to exhibitors, other equipment, etc.
- Communications or other fees that will be charged to conference.
- Decision whether master billings will be reviewed daily or following conference.

PROCEDURES

Tour Conference Site

Visit the conference site as early as possible to view the facilities, meet the site staff, review the contract, collect information, and begin to identify and negotiate conference arrangements. If possible, bring along the Conference Chair, Program and Pre-conference Chairs and the Exhibits Chair, arranging a tour for the entire conference committee at a later date.

Collect Information about Conference Site

In addition to a complete tour of the facility, the initial visit is helpful to review the contract and collect basic information about the capabilities, procedures, and expectations of the hotel or convention center. Collect information such as the following with enough copies for subcommittee chairs and other conference committee chairs.

- Physical facility – Floor plan with actual dimensions and number of people each meeting room or exhibits area will hold using different set ups. Identify potential sites and requirements for a registration area, conference office, exhibits arrangements, storage, association membership tables, etc.
- Sleeping guest rooms – Rates, reservation deadlines, availability of reservation cards to include in registration packet, number of rooms blocked for each night of conference. Arrangements with other hotels if hotel is overbooked.
- Complimentary rooms – Formula for identifying complimentary rooms including suite for WLA President, meeting rooms, registration area, exhibits hall, reception areas, etc.
- Charges for access or services – Identify upfront any charges that might be imposed such as access to telephone lines, Internet, operational costs for use of special facilities, or other services such as draping registration tables, etc.
- Meals and beverage services – List of banquet menus and costs, information about meal guarantees and dates for reporting number of plates ordered. Menus and costs for beverage and snack services during breaks. No-host bar services, costs and minimums. required. Choices for banquet table draping, and basic decorations provided.
- Equipment and facility capabilities – List of items provided without charge, list of costs for renting equipment. Names of local equipment providers. Status of wiring that will ensure Internet access. Determine cost schedule for photocopying, faxing, or secretarial services.
- ADA access - Assure ADA access exists for all meeting rooms and exhibits areas.
- Security arrangements – Determine security arrangements for hotel as well as exhibitor materials and equipment. Availability of hotel safe for registration moneys if needed, etc.
- Miscellaneous – Does the hotel or convention center have other obligations that might impact the conference? For example, another major convention sharing the space during WLA? Hotel remodeling planned? What accommodations will the site make for WLA?

Follow up with written confirmation of significant changes or agreements such as sleeping room block numbers, room rates, and deadlines.

PROCEDURES, continued

Other Activities of the Local Arrangements Committee

Please review the following *Conference Manual Sections* for descriptions of the subcommittee activities.

Planning, Scheduling, and Decisions for Conference

Local Arrangements Chair will need to meet frequently with the hotel/conference center site staff as the program plans begin to solidify. Discuss the draft schedule and room assignments for programs, meals, and social activities so catering staff can make suggestions based on their experience. Make sure to give catering staff all revisions. Check and double-check to be sure that communications and agreements are clear.

Every conference will be different, but the Local Arrangements Chair and Committee are key to a successful conference. Some of the arrangements decisions will neither make, nor break, a conference. Other arrangements are critical to success. For example, if the registration table is tucked away in a narrow corridor, or the schedule doesn't allow adequate time between meetings to reset room seating, or the speakers don't have the equipment that they needed for their program, then attendees and speakers will rightfully register their discontent and complaints.

Planning overkill is a virtue on the local arrangements committee. Smoothly running conferences will show the result of very careful planning for all possible details and contingencies. Track the programs and decisions carefully and use the conference group e-mail to make sure that everyone stays up-to-date. Ask multiple questions of hotel/convention site staff and recheck status even though you think that you've made everything perfectly clear. For example, if you call the banquet catering with a verbal plate guarantee, follow up with a fax, and then call later to double check the numbers on the plate guarantee.

There will always be emergencies, or unexpected glitches to handle during conference but careful planning lays a solid foundation for the conference.

Provide Information for Registration Packet

By late Fall the Local Arrangements Committee needs to be ready to provide information to the Registrar for the December printing of the WLA annual conference *Registration Form*. Information for both the annual and the WALE conference will include at least the following:

- Hotel reservations information including costs, hotel reservation card if available, telephone, internet address.
- Conference meal choices and costs.
- Descriptions of special events or tours and their costs.
- Special instructions including driving instructions.
- Other, depending on the site.

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PROCEDURES, continued

Provide Information for Conference Website

- Work with Program Chair and Webmaster to provide information online. In addition to the above information, identify appropriate links to the hotel, convention center, or local resources.
- Update Web information as appropriate with new or revised information.

Provide information and Materials for the Conference Packet and Program

Provide information to the Communications Committee for inclusion in the program. Collect items for insertion in the conference tote bag or packet and deliver to the Registrar. Materials may include:

- Maps of hotel/convention center meeting rooms, exhibits area, etc.
- In-depth information about special events.
- Information about bus or other transportation to special events.
- Brochures, coupons, gifts etc., from local area businesses and attractions.

Activities During the Week Before Conference

Meet with catering staff to review and approve the master list of scheduled rooms, meals, and contracted services.

Provide meal guarantee numbers to the hotel, usually 72 hours before conference.

Review equipment contracts for accuracy if not included in the hotel master list.

Schedule rooms for the inevitable last minute programs or meetings and assure that information is available in a flyer for registrants. Also make sure that flyers or other inserts are available if programs are moved to a different meeting room.

Work with others, such as the Information School staff, who may be using the conference site for their receptions or workshops to assure that their billings and arrangements are clearly separated from WLA.

Complete room and activity signage in coordination with Communications Committee.

Prepare list of hotel contacts, telephone numbers on disk and conference member room numbers so the Registration Desk can make emergency contacts.

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PROCEDURES, continued

Previous conference comment: *Schedule at least two small rooms that can be used by informal groups that want a place to meet during conference. The Registration Desk can keep a sign up schedule for these rooms.*

Responsibilities During Conference

During conference the Conference Chair and Local Arrangements Chair are usually the only two decision makers who approve emergency arrangements and their associated costs.

The Local Arrangements Chair needs to be available at all times to answer questions, handle emergencies, work out solutions to problems with the hotel, etc. The Equipment and Technology Chair also needs to be immediately available to handle equipment problems.

Check program rooms, check set ups, check equipment, check room temperatures, check for things that are not working right, check exhibitors arrangements. In short, actively look for problems so they can be solved before they can impact the conference attendees!

Post-conference Activities

Collect conference equipment or materials, signage, etc. and return to owners, to Association Coordinator, or to next year's conference chair.

Review the master charge billing from the hotel/convention center for accuracy. Negotiate with hotel to correct inaccuracies.

Collect conference evaluations for compilation and distribution.

Submit Local Arrangements Report, highlighting conference statistics as well as changes made in process, what worked, what didn't work, with suggestions for coming years conferences.

EXAMPLE: PROGRAM AND FACILITIES SCHEDULE – Page 18-8

FRIDAY, APRIL 23	Ballroom # 1	Ballroom # 2	Ballroom # 3	Convention Center Exhibits	South Room	Economic Development Room
7:00-7:30	ALA/PNLA	BREAKFAST				
7:30-8:00	Set up:	Rounds/100			TSIG/DOC SER	
8:00-8:30				EXHIBITS	BREAKFAST	
8:30-9:00				Opening	Set Up:	DYNIX
9:00-9:30					Rounds/70	Theater/50
9:30-10:00	AMERICAN	TALES OF	ANSWERS			GOLD WATCH
10:00-0:30	LIBRARIES	OLYMPIA	TO ACT ON			Theater/50
10:30-1:00	Rounds/60	Rounds/100	Theater/100			
11:00-1:30				Break in	IG COUNCIL	
11:30-2:00				Exhibits Area	Theater/50	
12:00-2:30	WASHINGTON	IN SONG				
12:30-1:00	LUNCHEON					
1:00-1:30	Set Up:	Rounds/200				
1:30-2:00						STATEWIDE
2:00-2:30					SUMMER	CHILDREN'S
2:30-3:00	STAFF DEVEL	STREET SMART			READING	COORDS.
3:00-3:30	LAIG	SRRT		Break in	Theater/100	Theater/50
3:30-4:00	Theater/60	Theater /100	WLA Mtg.	Exhibits Area		
4:30-5:00			Theater/30	Close Exhibits		
5:00-5:30					IFIG MEETING	PRF MEETING
5:30-6:00					Theater/100	Theater/50
6:00-6:30	PRESIDENTS	RECEPTION	GALA			
6:30-7:00	Piano	No-host	Bar			
7:00-7:30	PRESIDENTS	BANQUET				
8:30-9:00	Speaker:	Rollins				
9:00-9:30	Set Up:	Rounds/200				
9:30-10:00						