

# The International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies Conference Planning Guide

## Introduction

The International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) is a not-for-profit corporation whose membership is drawn from governmental human rights agencies concerned about and willing to work for the goals of the Association in the cause of equal opportunity for all people.

## I. Policy

It is the policy of IAOHRA to convene an annual education and training conference for representatives of member agencies as well as for non-member agencies engaged in the field of human rights.

It is the policy of IAOHRA to solicit formal bids to host the annual conference. The annual conference is held between the months of July 1 and September 30 of each year and to the extent possible, will be coordinated with the annual meeting of the Association. Each agency holding paid memberships in IAOHRA is eligible to submit a bid to host the annual conference in accordance with the association's guidelines. An Intention to Bid or a Formal Bid (Appendix A) for hosting the Annual Conference must be submitted by an IAOHRA member agency having staff support, local governing support, and fund raising capabilities to successfully execute conference activities and responsibilities.

It is understood that the Annual Conference has two specific purposes. First, to provide training designed to strengthen member agencies and to enhance the professional development of human/civil rights career personnel. The second purpose is to serve as the major fund raising project of the Association.

The IAOHRA Officers, Board of Directors, Conference Planning Chair and Conference Planning Committee acknowledge the tremendous commitment and effort required in hosting an IAOHRA Annual Conference. We extend our appreciation in advance for the willingness to undertake this endeavor and pledge our support and encouragement for a successful and rewarding experience for member agencies.

## **II. Conference Planning Committee (CPC)**

The IAOHRA annual conference requires the dedicated effort of every board member. The critical role and importance of the annual conference to IAOHRA and its agency members is underscored by the inclusion of the CPC in the bylaws of the Association. The President of IAOHRA shall appoint a chair that will direct the activities of the CPC.

The CPC, through the Chairs of the Committee is responsible for recommending to the Board of Directors the time, place and facility for the annual meeting and conference. It is also responsible for working with the Local Host Committee (LHC) to plan the program and make arrangements for the annual conference subject to the approval of the Board of Directors. The CPC shall in conjunction with the Treasurer of IAOHRA assure the fiscal accountability of each conference and shall so advise the Board of Directors.

The CPC will meet with the LHC and shall convene conference planning meetings at the site of the proposed annual conference, at any location appropriate or by other means including electronic/phone to carry out the business of the committee. The CPC shall make available to the LHC outreach mailing lists for the conference.

The CPC shall have the primary responsibility of supporting the efforts of the LHC. The CPC Chair shall have direct oversight of every aspect of the activities of the local host committee and shall be in monthly contact with the LHC chair or coordinator. The CPC Chair shall submit written monthly reports to the President and Executive Committee of IAOHRA that will include an update of the status and progress of the local host planning efforts. The Chair shall resolve all issues and disputes and offer solutions to insure the success and integrity of the conference. All unresolved issues shall be reported to the President and the Executive Committee of IAOHRA for an immediate decision before planning resumes.

Such decisions shall be made known to the board at the next scheduled meeting. Decisions regarding funding commitments shall be referred to the Board of Directors Executive Committee and be ratified by the entire board at the next scheduled meeting of the board. Every effort should be made by the conference planning committee and the Board of Directors to fully support the LHC with the necessary resources to ensure a successful conference.

### **III. Local Host Committee**

Upon the notification of the acceptance of a Formal Bid to host the IAOHRA Annual Conference, the hosting agency will complete a signed Memorandum of Understanding between the host agency and IAOHRA outlining expectations and responsibilities of each party.

The host agency must designate a Local Host Committee (LHC) contact or coordinator. This person must be authorized to make all key decisions or otherwise express the interest of the host agency. If a joint proposal is submitted by two or more member agencies, then a designated lead agency must be determined with primary responsibility for host activities. It is required that at least one member of the host agency attend or participate in IAOHRA Board meetings, conference planning meetings and is authorized to keep the Association informed about local planning efforts and to report on all program and fiscal matters related to the conference.

The host agency should designate a fiscal coordinator who will work closely with the Treasurer of IAOHRA. A proposed budget must be submitted to the CPC and the Treasurer of IAOHRA outlining proposed income and methods of generating income, proposed expenditures and associated activities. The budget will be submitted to the Board of Directors for approval before any implementation. The LHC fiscal coordinator will work with the IAOHRA treasurer to facilitate receipts and request payments according to procedure. The host agency must provide a "registration support committee" inclusive of clerical and technical support staff for the duration of the conference. This committee will assist with registration, processing of Association resolutions, preparing registration packets in souvenir bags or binders, dissemination of copies and other related clerical tasks. This committee can be agency staff or volunteers.

The host agency should work with the selected host hotel and deal with other conference logistics including arrangements for exhibitors, the selection of menus for meals, and local transportation for conference activities. The host agency will ensure that the hotel selected meets with the requirements as stated in "Hotel requirements" (Appendix B).

The host agency should plan a one day program that reflects the theme and focuses on key issues and interest of the local community. This program is designed to involve local

businesses, labor and key groups in the community in the IAOHRA Annual Conference. Final program approval must be received from the Chair of the Conference Planning Committee before any commitments are made concerning topics, speakers or presentations for this program. All other conference programming should include keynote speakers and presenters. Workshops and plenary sessions will be the responsibility of the Conference Planning Committee. The local host agency may be called upon to assist with contacting local resource persons for consideration for the program.

The host agency will identify potential attendees in the area and if necessary take care of traditional and digital mailings for the conference. This may include conference brochures, proposed conference agendas and registration materials, and other mailings needed for the conference (i.e., reports, committee updates, Board of Directors notices, etc.).

The hosting agency will assemble and coordinate the printing of the conference materials which may include the program and other materials with the guidance and approval of the CPC. Funding for the printing should be part of the projected Conference budget.

The host agency is encouraged to set up other local committees to carry out the work of conference planning. These committees may include the following:

1. Facilities - works with the host hotel on logistics, room set up and other related logistical matters.
2. Fund Raising - coordinates local fund-raising efforts in conjunction with the Chair of the CPC and the IAOHRA Treasurer.
3. Publicity - coordinates publications and other print material and media relations for the conference.
4. Program - works with the CPC on conference program content including identifying local speakers and resources.
5. Registration - works on conference registration in conjunction with IAOHRA Treasurer.

6. Hospitality -handles set up and other logistics for the hospitality suite at conference, works on donations for refreshments and in-kind gifts to stock hospitality suite.
7. Program Booklet -works on design and acquisition of advertisements and sponsorships.
8. Volunteer – Identifies and coordinates the activities, recruitment, assignments of volunteers.
9. Transportation -works with local transportation outlets for conference transportation needs.

Other committees will be determined based on need in conjunction with the Chair of the CPC.

#### **IV. JOINT Responsibilities of the CPC and LHC**

- A. The selection of a conference theme will be developed by the LHC in consultation with the CPC Chair for approval by the Board prior to beginning any planning activity. The conference program content and format should include keynote speakers and topics. Workshops and other activities should be designed and selected to reflect and carry out the approved theme and support the IAOHRA mission and goals.
- B. The identification of keynote and plenary speakers, training/workshop topics and leaders will be collaborative between the LHC and The CPC to identify and recommend all keynote and plenary speakers to IAOHRA Board of Directors. All speaker recommendations should include terms and conditions of payment for services and any other special remuneration. Speaker fees and remuneration should be built into the budget and agreed to by the Treasurer of IAOHRA. To the extent possible IAOHRA encourage the securing speakers and presenter at little or no cost. Any services requiring financial commitment by IAOHRA must be reviewed and approved by the IAOHRA Treasurer.
- C. The Conference Planning Committee shall have the primary responsibility for the conference program content and format with input from the LHC. The

conference program will extend over a three to four day (3-4 days) period. The conference will begin with special workshops for new directors and commissioners of member agencies. The program format will include an opening ceremony with the posting of the colors of each member's country, the President's Luncheon, the meeting of the Corporation and other sessions and events that support the mission of IAOHRA and its member agencies consistent with the theme of the conference. The CPC will coordinate efforts with the Awards Committee for award presentations throughout the conference. While there is flexibility in the placement of program elements, final format and program design should be recommended to the Board of Directors for their approval prior to implementation.

- D. The approval of all printed materials concerning the conference: They shall work together to ensure that all advising and marketing printed material represents the highest quality and content consistent with acceptable standards of the IAOHRA Board of Directors. The Board shall approve all proposed graphics and other artist renderings and presentations. The development of the conference souvenir program booklet: They shall work together to develop and design a conference souvenir program booklet to commemorate the annual conference. The solicitation of advertisements and sponsorships to increase fund raising is suggested. The CPC shall determine the cost of ads. The placement and content of program information, photographs, letters of greetings, continuing resolutions and other pertinent data. All proofing and final oversight is the responsibility of the Conference Planning Chair.
- E. The Chair of the CPC will work with the LHC to ensure that the Board of Directors is informed through written/verbal reports about conference site proposals, planning strategies, progress reports, and the financial status of all conference activities. Written monthly reports will be sent to the President and Executive committee. Both written and verbal reports will be presented to the Board of Directors at the regularly scheduled meetings. Weekly reports will be submitted to the President beginning two (2) months prior to the conference. A preconference report will be submitted to the Board of Director's meeting prior to the convening of the annual conference. A preliminary report will be submitted at the Board of Director within 60 days following the conference. A final written report will be submitted and presented at the winter Board of Directors' meeting or no later than six months (6 months), after the end of the conference. The

report will include conference attendance numbers, the number of paid registrations, the highlights of all keynote speakers, the awards and recognitions, the financial reports and the recommendation for future annual conferences.

## **Appendix A- Formal Bid Package Criteria**

The Formal Bid Package consists of information about the proposing agency (host committee), the city, state, country or province and the proposed host sites (hotels). This material will be considered by the Conference Planning Committee and compared with other submitted proposals. The Conference Planning Committee then makes a recommendation to the IAOHRA Board of Directors. Based on the Board's determination of the best and most responsive bid, a host site will be selected.

1. The bid must include written assurances that the proposal has the full support of provincial, state and or local officials, the agency commissioner, chair or director of the agency and other public and private organizations who can support and attest to the agency's ability to host the annual conference.
2. A written assurance that the proposing agency understands that it must commit to raise sufficient funds to cover the cost of hotel meeting space, meals; to include a minimum of an opening reception (hosted locally by the hotel or some other sponsor), daily continental breakfast, 2-3 luncheons and social activity costs and transportation, advertising and publicity, exhibitions and other related costs. A projection of 100-150 conference participants should be used for this purpose. Proposing agencies can meet this requirement through direct fundraising efforts, in-kind services or other resources of the agency or through sponsorship by the public and private sector. All funds raised should be payable to the IAOHRA Annual Conference and will be applied to pre-approved conference expenses.
3. Proposals for consideration should include at least three (3) proposed hotel sites with their projected "Best Rate" for single and double occupancy rooms. Note: hotels should be informed these are government employees and attempts should be made to be consistent with the federal government per diem rates. The proposal should also include meeting space specifications, diagrams, audio-visual resources and cost break down, room/ suite availability, complimentary policy and amenities, accessibility accommodations for persons with disabilities, cancellation and liability policy, non-discrimination policy and the hotels' latest EEO-1 report. Hotel projections should be based on 100-150 conference participants. If possible video or graphic presentations should be made by the hotel, Convention and Visitors Authorities or a designee of the proposing agency.



4. A calendar of social activities that will indicate all conference events along with the cost of each event should be included. All proposed conference events should be itemized on the projected budget noted in item (2).
5. A digital proposal should be submitted to the Conference Planning Committee for consideration within 30 days of the date of this posting.
6. All funds over expenses will go to the IAOHRA Treasury.
7. All proposing agencies will receive consideration and a response on the success of their proposals.

## Appendix B- Host Hotel Requirement

1. The hotel must have the ability to commit one hundred fifty (150) rooms to this conference during the length of the conference. Generally, this commitment will include 3 -4 nights. Conference attendance will begin with approximately fifty (50) rooms on the first night and will peak on third night with approximately one hundred fifty (150) rooms. If rooms are needed for 4<sup>th</sup> night it will drop to 75-100 rooms.

The hotel must be totally accessible and conform to the ADAAA for accessibility standards. In addition, the hotel must show a policy of non-discrimination in its employment policies, including a copy of its most recent Equal Employment Opportunity Workforce Profile. It is also preferable that the hotel employs organized labor. The proposed hotel must provide its current rack rates for all guestroom accommodations, along with its proposed best rate for the IAOHRA Conference. This rate must include a list of any proposed amenities, which might be offered to IAOHRA Conferees.

The hotel must be available for pre-conference meetings, which include the IAOHRA Board of Directors Meeting.

An outline of the hotel's complimentary room policy should be provided. An explanation of the formula used to determine accumulation and distribution of room night credits should be included.

The association requires that the hotel selected as the Conference's site must provide one deluxe (Premium) Suite for the exclusive use of the Association's President on a complimentary basis for the duration of the conference activities. This suite is to be provided above and beyond the hotel's complimentary room policy in exchange for the decision to select the hotel as the Conference Site. Additionally, the hotel must provide a large parlor Hospitality Suite during the conference. It must be provided on the same basis as the suite for the President. It is preferred that the Hospitality Suite be located on a separate floor.

In addition to the block of 150 sleeping rooms, the hotel must be able to provide the following space:

- a) A minimum of 3-6 classroom style breakout rooms capable of accommodating between twenty-five (25) and fifty (50) participants.
  - b) A room capable of accommodating approximately 100-200 persons for Plenary Sessions (theater style) and banquet function (banquet round often). It is preferred that this item be accommodated in two separate rooms. If the hotel has only one room, which would fit these requirements, please indicate the average turnaround time required for luncheon functions, which might be preceded or followed by plenary functions.
  - c) The hotel should provide a description of its restaurant facilities including: hours of service; days when service is unavailable; average daily staffing and any special conference arrangements which may be considered when there are no planned conference meal functions taking place. This would include buffet breakfasts, luncheons and dinners that would be paid for individually by conferees.
  - d) All meetings space must be provided gratis. It is understood that any such rental be offset by planned meal functions that would be held in the hotel.
  - e) Room availability should be considered separate and apart from any discussions of guestroom pick- up.
  - f) If necessary, the hotel should provide space for up to twenty tabletop exhibits or vendors. This can be provided in a meeting room, ballroom, and foyer or lobby area.
2. The hotel must be able to reserve meeting space and guest rooms for a meeting of the Board Directors. This meeting is usually held in January but may be in early spring over a two and one half-day period, beginning on Friday afternoon and ending on Sunday morning, prior to the actual conference. The meeting space should be provided gratis, the cost being offset by meal and break functions, which will be paid for by the association. The guestrooms should be available at or below the rate confirmed by the hotel for the Annual Conference.
  3. The hotel should provide upgraded accommodations for IAOHRA Board members during the Annual Conference. These accommodations should be made to the

concierge or club level, whichever is available. The amenities normally provided in this section of the hotel should be available for all IAOHRA Board members.

4. The hotel should provide a description of the AV and digital equipment services in each of its room. The list should also other items for meetings including microphones, screens, electrical outlets, and any other items. If the hotel uses an outside vendor to supply audiovisual equipment, it must provide a list of available equipment and the associated rate schedule.
5. The hotel must be able to provide a secure space to be used as the conference office throughout the week. This room must be capable of providing storage, a tabletop workspace, and sufficient outlets and to operate necessary equipment.
6. The hotel must provide parking accommodations for Conference attendees on a gratis or reduced rate basis.
7. The hotel should indicate whether there is transportation available to and from the airport, shopping and area attractions.
8. The hotel must agree to host and pay for a reception to be held at the Annual Convention the year prior to the conference they have been awarded. The purpose of this reception is to introduce the conferees to both the hotel and the community, which will host the next Convention. This is a conference marketing tool and should be budgeted at a level that is appropriate and coordinated with the local host committee.

***Questions and more details are available by contacting 202-902-6808 or email [iaohra@iaohra.org](mailto:iaohra@iaohra.org)***