**Tips for Planning IHSLA’s Annual Meetings**

**An Adaptation Courtesy of**

**The Wisconsin Health Science Library Association**

Planning the IHSLA annual meeting is no small task. While meeting committees have flexibility and are able to try new things, it’s often good to try to follow the model of past meetings in order to reduce some of the time it takes to figure out if something will work.

The IHSLA guidelines contain certain rules and information about planning the meeting and the function of the committee. This document explains a little further and gives some tips to help you plan a successful meeting.

**The Committee**

Our by-laws state that the “President-elect will chair the Program Committee” for our annual Conference. However, this responsibility has often been assumed by the current President.

The meeting committee usually consists of 4-5 people who will work on the meeting consistently for the duration of the assignment. The committee will usually begin its assignment about a year before the meeting.

There are several major project areas that have to be headed by various members of the committee. The Program Chair (President-Elect or President) will appoint the following subcommittees (these may be comprised of a single individual or several):

**Host Committee** is responsible for all local arrangements, i.e. hotel, food, tables for food, displays & registration, audiovisuals, giveaways. They will also provide nametags for registrants, speakers, and vendors.

**Program Committee** is responsible for the CEU, speakers, theme, program schedule, and publicity.

**Vendor Committee** is responsible for contacting vendors, securing fees and audiovisual requirements.

**Treasurer** will provide all funds as needed; receive and deposit all registrations & vendor donations; pay all bills as required; and meet with hotel at end of Conference to settle any outstanding payments (or work with Host Committee to ensure outstanding payments are settled). Treasurer will also provide mailing labels for Conference Programs/Publicity; receive & acknowledge all registrants, and Treasurer will then disburse any profits as outlined in by-laws.

**The Format and Schedule**

Several years ago, IHSLA re-designed the annual meeting format to try to make the meeting cost effective, easier to plan, and more attractive to possible attendees. While meeting committees can alter the schedule with the approval of the board, this format is currently fairly successful. Location is a prime consideration and IHSLA makes every effort to see that each Annual Conference is rotated throughout our consortiums. For example, if the Conference is held by the Northwest Consortium one year, , the Southwest Consortium would host the following year, to be followed by the Central Consortium, and then north again. Hopefully this will help ensure that no part of the state is neglected nor are members “forced” to drive great distances each year. Past Conferences (i.e. program, schedule, budget, etc.) are posted on the IHSLA website for reference.

The meeting consists of ½ day (afternoon) of CE, followed by a Board meeting open to all members. Dinner on your own or together for those interested. The next day, the meeting continues with speakers, other events, and concludes with the general business meeting.

When creating the schedule, try to build in ample break time. The number one reason people come to meetings is to network, so there needs to be time for people to visit with each other. Plus, some sessions will undoubtedly go over and break times can be cut short in order to keep subsequent sessions on schedule.

Also, depending on how many rooms you have and meeting space requirements, you may have to use the same room for sessions that are one after the other. You may need break time in order to swap AV or set up for the next speaker.

Following is a sample schedule: **(Past Program Brochures – located on IHSLA’s website – can provide a template for this task)**

***Preconference:***

People coming in from out of town might like to have someone to go to dinner with on the night before the conference. This might be tough to coordinate on-site. Perhaps an e-mail could be sent to the IHSLA list or to all conference registrants with a request that interested persons e-mail to register for dine-arounds. Or, several conference committee members could just be on-call at the hotel to look for IHSLA members who are looking to join a group.

***Half-Day CE:***

MLA approved CE courses should be scheduled for the afternoon of the first day. Due to our relatively small number of attendees we have found afternoon courses most attractive. Keep in mind that many people will usually drive to the Conference the morning of the CE and plan to leave by mid-day on the second day. Cost average for CE speaker, travel, etc., should not exceed $1000.00.Any amount over $1000 needs Board approval?

Board Meeting is held the evening before the Conference, usually in the President’s suite. Six to eight people usually attend. In the past, snacks and refreshments have been provided by the President. This is not a requirement.

***Day of the Conference:***

***6:30-7:45 a.m. Registration & Breakfast***

*The Registration table is set up around 6:00 a.m., or even the evening before the Conference. Folders, nametags, giveaways, brochures, etc. are available. It is best to leave the table up throughout the Conference – it may or may not need to be covered that entire time.*

*Breakfast is the hosting committee’s choice – continental, buffet, order from menu, etc. – are all popular options*

*Below is a template for the day’s events:*

***8:00-8:15 Welcome & Introductions***

***8:15-9:00 First Session***

***9:00-9:10 Break***

Have sodas, bottled water, something sweet (candy or cookies) and something with protein (cheese, sausage, nuts). Make sure the hotel leaves the break table up and doesn’t take away the food/beverages until the end of the day. Having coffee/tea available throughout the Conference is a must!

***9:10-10:30 Second Session***

***10:30-11:00 Break with Vendors***

***11:00-12:00 Updates/Member News***

Updates usually include those from the GMR, MCLS,

Midwest Chapter/MLA.

***12:00-1:30 Lunch with Vendors***

Lunch can be buffet or plated. Buffets are often nice in that people can choose what they’d like to eat. (You can often have two entrees with buffets.) Plate meals are often easier on attendees in that they don’t have to stand in line and juggle plates. Work with the hotel to determine which might be your best option based on the space available, the time you have, and their menu.

Have the hotel set the room for banquet style or half rounds if there is enough room. The business meeting will be held in the same room as lunch. So, if the room is set for banquet style, some people will have to turn around away from the table when the business meeting begins.

Vendors should be invited to introduce themselves and make a 5 minute “sales pitch”.

Gifts and special awards are given at this time. Drawings are popular.

***1:30-???? Business Meeting****.*

The time needed for the business meeting varies depending on what’s on the agenda that year. The IHSLA president may decide to start the business meeting a little early while people are still eating if there is too much to get through.

**OVATION AWARD** – presented at the business meeting – the President will have put out a call for nominations in ***January*** – meeting planners may need to remind current President of this duty.

**Finances**

The goal of the IHSLA annual meetings is not to make a profit. It’s great if it does but that is not our reason for meeting. Aim to have the conference break even. This is usually a difficult task since there’s so much that can change from the time the registration fee is set to the end of the meeting. See IHSLA’s by-laws for details concerning “Profit/Loss Agreement”.

Draft a budget with estimates of how much everything will cost as early as you can. A total budget (including food, AV, meeting rooms) should not exceed $3500.00. Some fees (such as food charges) will be per person charges. Some costs will be fixed (such as a keynote speaker’s fee, the cost of AV, and room rental charges) no matter how many people register for the meeting. Try to get a best guess of how many people you think will be paying for a full conference registration based on past meeting attendance and current membership and divide into the fixed costs. That should give you an idea of how much you should be charging for registrations and will give you an idea of how many people you need to register in order to have the conference break even. Refer to past Conferences for guidance.

IHSLA Annual Meeting committees usually don’t set up special bank accounts for meetings. Registration checks will be deposited into the regular IHSLA treasury and the treasurer will issue checks when needed.

The committee is allowed a cash advance to pay for meeting costs before registration checks start coming in. If large amounts of funds are needed, the IHSLA president can authorize payments.

Establish with the hotel early how you will pay for the conference. IHSLA does not usually have direct billing set up with hotels. The hotel may want a check for the estimated total in advance. They may want a check the day of the conference. Or you may be able to use a credit card as long as the holder has a large enough credit balance. If a check needs to be issued, be sure to communicate with the treasurer and the hotel to ensure that a bill will be ready when the treasurer will be available to make out a check. Be sure to warn the treasurer and establish when he needs to have his checkbook with him.

IHSLA is tax-exempt in the state of Indiana. Be sure to establish that with hotel and vendors. The treasurer will have the tax-exempt document as well as the W-9 form for vendors, if needed.

**Vendor support**

SAMPLE FORMS AND CONTRACTS AT THE END OF THIS DOCUMENT

Contact vendors several months before the Conference and ask for financial support for the meeting. Establish a list of what they’ll get for what. For instance, for $100 you’ll put their name and logo in the conference program as a sponsor and for $250 you’ll also put promotional information from them in the registration bags. Establish a “level” of sponsorship. For instance, for $100 they will be “friends,” for $250 they will be “benefactors,” and for $1000 or more they will be “champions.” Vendors are often pleased to sponsor breaks, or “special treats”, or giveaways for drawings. IHSLA members and their institutions may be happy to provide prizes as well. Make sure to check recent past years’ rates to help set/determine vendor rates.

You can also have events which vendors can sponsor. For example, if a vendor pays for the business lunch, you will give them some time during the meeting to address the registrants. You could also build in a time for them to have a breakfast seminar.

2016 rate

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Exhibit Fee | $150 |
| Sponsor Break | $125 |
| Sponsor Lunch | $200 |
| Send materials for table (no human) | $40 |

**Free registrations & rooms:**

Who should and should not be offered a free registration/room to the meeting is often a confusing issue. Keep in mind that for every person who attends the meeting without paying for registration, you will incur food charges and perhaps other charges that will have to be covered by other income. You will need to budget for free registrations.

It is an IHSLA tradition to pay for the IHSLA’s President’s room for one night, their registration, mileage, and food. A suite is often the best choice because the Board Meeting is usually held there. The charge for the room can often be added to the hotel bill at the end of the conference. The cost of the President’s room should not exceed twice the cost of the registrants’ rooms. Securing this room is the responsibility of the Hosting Committee.

Check with the president and make sure that he/she wants you to book the room on their behalf. The charge for the room is usually tacked on to the final hotel bill to be paid for by the Treasurer. (Make sure the hotel knows that the room is for the president of your association. Some hotels will send a little gift to the room to welcome VIPs.) Often one complimentary room is offered.

One stipend (including registration, room, food and mileage) is usually offered to a member. Application and guidelines can be found on the IHSLA website. Make sure this is publicized when the invitation for attending the conference is sent out.

The keynote speaker should receive free registration & room. Generally, the keynote speaker is paid, so it doesn’t make sense to make him/her pay for registration. This should be worked out on an individual basis.

The person representing the GMR usually does not get a free registration. While this person will be a speaker as they will be giving the GMR Update, this is a function of the GMR and they budget and plan for people to attend state meetings to promote the GMR and NNLM activities.

CE instructors should be given free registration & room. Usually, no one should attend a CE course at no charge (except of course, the instructor).

Previous year’s registration costs (2016)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| All inclusive – members | $110 |
| All inclusive - non members | $140 |
| All inclusive students | $60 |
| Friday only, members | $70 |
| Friday only, non-members | $85 |
| MLA CE (thurs) only, members | $50 |
| MLA CE (thurs) only, non - members | $60 |

**The Hotel**

Choice of a hotel for an IHSLA meeting is essential to its success. Several factors will play into your decision:

**-Location, location, location**. A hotel near shopping is always a plus. Meeting registrants will want to find a little time to visit local shops that they might not have in their home town. (Be sure to mention what’s near the hotel in your publicity information.) Or, you may want to choose a hotel near a local attraction if you are considering using that attraction as a venue for a social event. Or, you may want to choose a hotel near a committee meeting planner’s institution if you might need to use a local institution’s computer lab for a CE course. It is highly recommended to have all events at the hotel. Transportation to and from can be a challenge but carpooling is often an alternative if necessary.

**-Cost.** Hotels have institutions that they do business with on a regular basis. A hotel near a medical center may gain a lot of their income from meetings for medical center staff and sleeping rooms for patients and families. Do a little investigation to see if any of the committee members are at institutions that have a relationship with a hotel. IHSLA will have no pull with a hotel, but a medical institution may. Use that to your advantage if you can and assign the committee member who works at that institution to work with the hotel. The hotel representative may throw in a lot of perks and give discounts in order to make the committee member happy with the goal of generating positive word-of-mouth at their institution for the hotel.

**-Beauty, comfort and cleanliness.** Choose a hotel that looks modern and clean. People will not only have to eat in this hotel, they’ll have to sleep there. Even if the hotel is a little more expensive, you might want to choose a newer, cleaner hotel over one that’s older and not as well kept.

Here are some other tips about the hotel:

-Some hotels will offer free meeting space in exchange for a guaranteed number of sleeping rooms nights booked. This is a little risky in that you never know what will happen. Be careful when budgeting and if you are in danger of not meeting your requirement, be prepared to book some sleeping rooms if that will end up being cheaper than paying for the room rentals. You may want to come up with a flat room rental charge and go with that rather than working with an unknown.

-Most hotels will give you a meeting room for free if you have a food event associated with the event. Think about buying food rather than paying the rental. Of course, food in hotels is exorbitantly expensive. So, this may not work in the long run.

-Don’t be afraid to haggle a little bit. Just be open and ask them if there’s a way that you can reduce costs and ask them for options. Renting hotel rooms for a meeting is like buying a car—you have to deal.

-You will want a room that the committee can control access to in order to store registration bags, AV, etc. (Be sure to book the room beginning the night before the first day so that you can transport registration bags, boxes, AV equipment etc. to the hotel the day before the meeting.) The best thing is to try to get an executive suite with a sleeping room. The committee member in charge of working with the hotel should probably stay on-site and the suite will allow enough room for all the boxes you’ll be bringing in. See if you can get them to throw in a two-night stay in one of these rooms. If not, see if you can get a regular room with two double beds (you’ll want the extra bed to hold all the materials). Or perhaps they’ll reduce the rate even further for you.

-Try to get a free sleeping room for the IHSLA president. The Host Committee should arrange for a room for the president. If free is not possible, IHSLA will pay for the President’s room. Check with the President and make sure that he/she wants you to book the room on their behalf. The charge for the room is usually tacked on to the final hotel bill to be paid for by the Treasurer. (Make sure the hotel knows that the room is for the president of your association. Some hotels will send a little gift to the room to welcome VIPs.)

**Speakers**

Good speakers are essential to your meeting. Make sure that someone you trust recommends the speaker you are considering. Be careful about inviting speakers or instructors that haven’t had experience with giving speeches. Be sure to provide “thank yous” to all speakers: these can be gift baskets, certificates, mileage reimbursement, etc. – this cost should be rolled into actual expenses of Conference. For the recent several years, many of our speakers have been IHSLA members, so we have saved on this expense.

**Food**

Ask people if they have dietary restrictions on the registration form. With a smaller meeting, it shouldn’t be a big problem to provide vegetarian meals for the few people who tell you they are vegetarians.

Ask the hotel for help in deciding what to have at events. They do this all the time, so listen to their advice.

Hotels/caterers will usually guarantee that they can accommodate 5% over the number that you tell them you will have. However, if you only tell the hotel/caterer that you will have 50 people for lunch, 5% of that is 2 people. So, your numbers have to be pretty accurate.

**AV**

Hotels usually have something in their contracts that say that you must use their on-site AV vendor. But, if pressed, they will admit that they can reasonable ($25 for a flip chart) and you should pay for it for the convenience. Other AV is extremely high ($300 for a data projector) and you might want to bring your own in order to reduce costs.

The Program Committee should send an AV request form to presenters so that they are sure to tell you what they need.

Also, make sure that you only order what you need and you’ve got everything you need. Talk with the presenters and make sure that they are going to use what they’ve asked for and that they have thought of everything. Make suggestions if they didn’t ask for something and you think they need it.

**Optional Events**

When surveyed, most IHSLA members report that they are in the association for networking opportunities, so make sure to have these opportunities built in. It is best to keep these events simple and informal – mix and mingle is the goal. Group dinners are popular, especially where members can relax and share. These are usually planned the first evening after the CE.

Library tours are a good optional event. The opportunities for tours may depend on the rest of the schedule and the location for the conference.

Try to include the cost of the social events, etc. in the cost of registration. If it’s included in registration, you’ll get a better turnout. Some institutions will only pay the cost of registration and nothing extra for social events or meals. Making it part of registration will better enable IHSLA members to attend.

**CEs**

CE classes have proven to be very important to the financial success of the meeting. Make sure to work with the Professional Development committee and offer classes on popular topics.

Usually one individual from the Program Committee takes on this responsibility. This will include selecting the “best” topic, contacting the presenter, securing all financial considerations, obtaining CE credit from MLA, working with the Hosting Committee with regard to room needs, seating, audiovisuals, etc. We’ve also reached out to the Indiana State Library to secure LEUs, which are important for public library professionals. This information is available on the State Library website.

**Registration**

Make up a meeting survival box for the day of the meeting and keep it at the registration desk. Include office supplies such as tape, scissors, paper clips, a ruler, a box cutter, glue, folders, paper, a sign holder, envelopes, markers (white board and flip chart), batteries, liquid paper, blank badges and anything else you might need. Hotels are usually good about loaning/giving you a few supplies or making a few photocopies if you need them, but will tire of you if you ask for a lot.

**Many Hands Make Light Work**

IHSLA meetings are hosted by the consortium in which they are held. So, while there are 4-5 people consistently working on the meeting, there are a lot of people in the consortium that you might be able to ask for help. Here are some tasks that you can get help with:

-Finding promotional products for registration bags. Everyone likes to find pens, gizmos, etc. in their registration bags. Ask people in the consortium to see if they can get any of these types of items from their institutions.

-Taking photos. If there’s a shutterbug in the consortium, you may want to ask them to take photos at the meeting. The committee members are often busy and have enough to keep them busy without having to worry about getting to all the sessions to take pictures. Ask someone to be the official meeting photographer.

-Stuffing registration bags.

-Hosting dine-arounds or carpooling. Depending on what you have for social events, you might want to get other local librarians to help you with carpooling or escorting meeting registrants to local restaurants.

**A special thank-you to WHSLA for granting permission to adapt/adopt their original document.**

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**[EXHIBITOR LETTER SAMPLE]**

***Indiana Health Sciences Librarians Association***

***2006 Annual Meeting***

Dear Exhibitor,

I would like to invite your company to exhibit at***: Public Health is Contagious: - Spreading the Word,*** the 2006 annual meeting of the Indiana Health Sciences Librarians. This year we will be meeting on April 28th, in Muncie, Indiana. Attendance at the annual IHSLA meeting usually runs between 40 and 50 attendees. There are several new librarians in the state and many old friends to see again.

The exhibit area will be open on Friday at 10:15 a.m. with scheduled time with the exhibitors from 10:30-1:30 which will include a break and lunch with the exhibitors (compliments of IHSLA.) Each exhibitor will also be able to speak for one minute (during lunch) to the entire group about their newest product or service. The exhibit area will have 6 foot tables, and has electrical and Internet connections.

We would also like ask each that each exhibitor donate one item for a “winner must be present” raffle to be held at the end of lunch.

We always look forward to seeing the new products and services that our old friends have to offer, and we always enjoy meeting new exhibitors and seeing new products and services.

Rooms have been held for the meeting at the Roberts Hotel at $69.00 per night for two double beds or a King or Queen. Please mention the Indiana Health Sciences Librarians groups when making your reservation. These rooms will be held at that price until March 26th. Please call (765) 741 – 7777 or (800) 213-9323 to make your reservations.

Please make your checks out to the Indiana Health Science Librarians and return the check and your paperwork to me upon receipt of this letter or **before March 10, 2006.**

I hope to work with your company at the meeting.

Exhibits Chair

Email

Phone

**[EXHIBITOR AND SPONSOR CONTRACT SAMPLE]**

**INDIANA HEALTH SCIENCE LIBRARIANS ASSOCIATION**

**2006 ANNUAL MEETING-**

April 28, 2006 Muncie, IN

To secure your exhibit area, please sign below and return the completed form and your check for $ 150.00 payable to Indiana Health Sciences Librarians Association or IHSLA by **March 10, 2006.**

Exhibits Chairperson

Address

Phone

Email

Please print your company’s information as you wish it to appear on conference materials:

NAME:

TITLE:

COMPANY:

ADDRESS: PHONE:

CITY, STATE, ZIP FAX:

Will you exhibit require:

Number of electrical outlets: (We suggest you bring extension cords)

Number of chairs:

Other:

Official exhibitor badge(s) should be prepared for the following personnel who will staff the exhibit booth:

Please accept one complimentary lunch, courtesy of the IHSLA membership at “Lunch with the Exhibitors.”

ITEMIZATION OF CHECK AMOUNT:

**$ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Exhibit fee $150.00**

**$\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Further personnel at lunch with exhibitors ($10.00)**

**$\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Sponsorship**

**My company will be donating a prize for a “winner must be present” raffle to be held at the conclusion of “Lunch with a Vendor.” \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_\_\_No**

**Authorizing signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**SPONSOR CONTRACT EXAMPLE**

**INDIANA HEALTH SCIENCE LIBRARIANS ASSOCIATION**

**2006 ANNUAL MEETING-**

April 28, 2006 Muncie, IN

To sponsor an event at the 2006 IHSLA meeting, please complete the information requested below, sign and return this sheet and your check made out to IHSLA to:

Joan Zivich

Exhibits Chair

Community Healthcare Systems

Community Hospital

901 MacArthur Blvd.

Munster, IN 46321

phone:  219.836.4503     fax: 219.852.6429

[jzivich@comhs.org](mailto:jzivich@comhs.org)

**SPONSOR OPTIONS**: (please check your choice)

\_\_\_ Sponsor one break @ ***Check previous year for $$ amount***

\_\_\_ Sponsor lunch @ ***Check previous year for $$ amount***

\_\_\_ Unrestricted donation of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ My company will not be able to exhibit, but we would like our materials passed out to the participants ***@ Check previous year for $$ amount***

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Future correspondence should be directed to:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**ITEMIZATION OF CHECK AMOUNT: *see above for amounts***

**Sponsor break - $ $\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Sponsor breakfast - $ $\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Sponsor lunch - $ $\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Materials only - $\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Unrestricted donation $\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Authorizing signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Helpful Hints**

**Website information**

Information that should be posted to the IHSLA website. Update website as soon as concrete information becomes available.

* Info on previous year’s meeting, including the program, CE, & Location.
* Date of Conference
* Hotel/Conference room name and street address, contact info & room rates
* Mailing instructions for vendors
* Costs of meeting attendance and exhibitors
* How to reserve hotel room, how to register
* Program
* Speaker spotlight
* Names of officers and committee members

**Suggested Timeline for Planning**

Preceeding year

**May**

* Select meeting date & book conference center
* Advertise meeting date (place on website)

**August**

* Book speaker

**September**

* Apply for CE with MLA as soon as speaker and topic are selected
* Apply for LEU with State Library

**November**

* Call for papers/posters
* Call for exhibitors
* Call for Ovation Award nominations
* Call for officer nominees

**December**

* Notification of acceptance for papers/posters
* (Potential) – date may need to change

**January**

* Registration open

**Feb/Mar**

* Send reminders of registration
* Food selections complete

**March**

* Design and print necessary meeting signage

**Meeting day prep**

* signs and easels
* pens
* folders
* nametags
* projection units
* wifi passwords
* sponsorship signs
* extra programs
* tape
* scissors
* laptop
* dongles
* microphone
* push pins

Check conference space is set up correctly.

***Sample Business Meeting Agenda***

* Call to approve agenda
* Call to approve previous year’s minutes
* Old Business
* (calls to approve, seconds)
* Inspire Update by board member
* New Business
  + Membership report
  + Treasurer report
  + Meeting monies
  + Membership dues
* Call to approve proposed budget
* Ovation Award presentation
* Elections
* Invitation to next year’s meeting
* Celebrations of retirees and other persons
* Thank yous to current committee members & officers
* Presentation of gavel