

# LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS ACTIVITIES: EQUIPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY – Page 19-1

<b>Leads:</b>	<b>Equipment Chair</b> Coordinating: Program Chair Exhibits Chair Corporate Contributions Chair	<b>Local Arrangements Chair</b> Conference Chair Pre-Conference Chair
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## **POLICIES AND GUIDELINES**

### **Responsibilities**

As a member of the Local Arrangements Committee, plans for and provides audiovisual and technology capabilities at conference. Works within the established conference budget.

May establish a committee of library experts who can help negotiate technology needs with the hotel and assist with troubleshooting during conference.

Works with conference hotel and or convention site to assure that contractual and union obligations are met regarding equipment set ups, program coverage, etc.

Works before conference with program speakers, pre-conference presenters, and exhibitors to assure that they have the equipment and connections needed for successful presentations. Reviews requests, negotiates changes as needed with program people.

Prepares a written equipment plan for every conference session and coordinates with the Local Arrangements Chair and Program Chair to assure that programs are assigned to the rooms equipped with appropriate equipment and technology.

May work with Corporate Contributions Chair to acquire donations of equipment or funds to support rental of equipment or leasing of services.

Identifies equipment that will be rented and coordinates the availability and the set-ups with catering staff or staff of a local rental service.

Sets up equipment and troubleshoots problems during conference in coordination with conference site staff, the rental service, and the conference "Technology Squad."

Prepares for emergencies by having extra power cords, projectors, bulbs, etc.

Provides for security of equipment and return of equipment.

Prepares a final report including the expenditures for equipment and technology, suggestions for future conferences, and submits to the Local Arrangements Chair thirty days after the close of conference.

### **Technical Expertise and Costs**

#### **Previous Conference Comments**

*Expenditures for computer presentation equipment/software and other audio-visual equipment are a major challenge for conference committees. Many hotels and convention centers are not prepared to meet the needs of a WLA Conference and its exhibitors. Others may be able to meet conference needs, but their fee schedule for installation, access and use may need major renegotiation.*

*Recent conference committees recommend establishing a "Conference Technical Squad" of Information Technology specialists from local and other libraries to evaluate conference site capabilities and provide advice, assistance with negotiations, and hands-on technical expertise.*

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## **POLICIES AND GUIDELINES**

### **Support from Local Libraries**

Local libraries may be willing to loan slide projectors or other equipment if the Equipment Chair can transport the item, provide for secure storage, and skilled use of equipment. However, borrowing has become less of an option because many presenters are using laptop computers with digital projection units. There are also advantages to having a single source for equipment because it makes planning and coordination easier and the rental company provides for its own support and security. If equipment is borrowed, be sure to label it for return.

### **Contractual Agreements for Equipment**

Conference sites often have agreements, sometimes sole source agreements, with local businesses that rent audio-visual and other equipment. Be sure to review and negotiate the conference contract to assure that WLA and exhibitors can bring in their own equipment without additional charges.

## **PROCEDURES**

### **Tour Conference Site and Meet Staff**

Meet with the conference site catering staff responsible for information technology and audio-visual equipment.

- Review the contractual obligations including timelines, union requirements, etc. Determine whether the hotel has a single source agreement with a local equipment rental agency. Assure that library equipment can be brought in for programs without penalties or additional fees.
- Acquire price list or fee schedule for rental equipment, Internet access, technology staff support, etc.
- Tour site and determine what equipment and information technology capabilities are available and installed at the conference site. Identify and begin to negotiate temporary installations if necessary.
- Agree upon a site for secure storage of conference equipment.

### **List of Standard Equipment**

A *Program Equipment and Set-Up Preferences Form* is given to the Interest Group or other program planners in conjunction with their *Conference Program Proposal Form*. Work with the Conference Program Chair, Pre-conference Coordinator and the Interest Group Coordinator to assure that the list is distributed and program planners are told to contact the Equipment Chair to discuss questions.

Recent annual conference committees decided against providing laptops, modems or software, such as Powerpoint, because of the cost and the complexity of assuring compatibility. The conference will need to provide wired AV carts to hold and connect presenter equipment.

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## PROCEDURES

### **Review Program Request Forms and Equipment Set-up and Preferences Forms**

Begin identifying equipment and connection needs as soon as pre-conference and conference programs are selected. It will be necessary to contact many, perhaps even most, of the planners to confirm, or discuss and agree upon Internet access, AV and other set-ups. Requirements need to be reconfirmed about two weeks before conference.

Work with the Program Chair and Pre-conference Chair to be sure that presenters are told what type of Internet access will be available and that they know they are to bring their PCs “network ready.” Ask presenters using laptops and Internet access to check in with the Equipment Chair to resolve any problems well before their scheduled presentation.

When reviewing requests, evaluate their requests to determine:

- Will the requested equipment be sufficient? For example, one viewing monitor for a large program room probably isn't adequate.
- Whether alternative configurations should be suggested, or inappropriate equipment has been requested.

### **Previous Conference Comment**

*Before renting expensive equipment reconfirm need with speakers to assure that the equipment is going to be used during the presentation. Presenters change their programs and may not remember to notify the conference that equipment is no longer needed.*

### **Prepare a Written Equipment Tracking System**

Work with the Local Arrangements Chair to set up your tracking system in order to:

- Assure that programs are assigned to rooms with appropriate technology or equipment so the conference can avoid additional equipment rental or installation and use charges.
- Assure that Internet connections are kept to a minimum and that equipment does not have to be moved between meeting rooms.
- Be ready to order equipment and services from catering staff or rental services. If the hotel is providing the services, be prepared for the pre-conference review of all equipment needed, at what times, and in which meeting rooms.
- Schedule installations.

### **Contact Local Libraries and Establish a “Technical Squad”**

The technical squad will be essential in setting up Internet access, and troubleshooting connections and problems with PCs/laptops prior to and during the conference. Have enough members on the Tech Squad to be able to assign them to meet one-on-one with each presenter who needs Internet connections and to solve any connection problems before their scheduled presentation.

### **Exhibitor Communication Needs**

During the 2001 conference, 13 of 54 vendors required direct Internet access and 7 required dial-up service to their own provider. Vendors are usually billed by WLA after the conference to recover their connections costs. If the hotel requires vendors to individually lease lines from a local vendor, that information needs to be communicated at least three months before conference so vendors have time to make arrangements. Expect some vendors to arrive without their network cards, cords, etc. Coordinate with the Exhibits chair for installations, and decide ahead of time how much support conference will be able to provide.

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## **PROCEDURES, continued**

### **Internet Access**

Conference sites are beginning to upgrade their facilities to support the level of communications that are typically needed by a WLA annual conference and exhibitors. However, it is not unusual for sites to believe they are “wired” when they are not.

*Following are comments from Merri Hartse, 2001 Annual Conference Chair that describe a situation that conferences are quite likely to encounter.*

If Internet access is not readily available through the facility, then it's up to the conference planning committee to figure how to meet this need. In 2001 we faced a multitude of problems. We were first promised DSL service in the meeting rooms at \$400 a day for each room. Then the DSL provider went bankrupt in February. The exhibits hall had no wiring in place. At first we were told that each vendor could lease a phone line, but it became apparent too many vendors needed phone lines (over 20) so this wasn't feasible. After calling several local communications companies such as Qwest and X/O, one company was willing to provide a partial T-1 line and Internet service for free, provided we promoted their company. The donated T-1 line provided Internet service for both the exhibit hall and for the four meeting rooms in which we needed Internet access. However, the local libraries had to provide the proxy server and the router.

In addition to securing the Internet connection (DSL, T-1, dial-up, etc.) arrangements then must be made for cabling to be run, if it is not already in place, and for any additional pieces of hardware such as the routers or proxy services. This may require contracting with a cabling company if a local library doesn't have the staff or resources to provide the service and/or equipment. Bids should be gathered as needed. It's best to involve hotel/facility staff in planning, providing maps, and ensuring access for outside companies. Several onsite visits will be required. I found it best to have all involved parties including the Internet company, cabling company, hotel technical people, and library technical people, meet together to hash out who will be responsible for what parts and to agree upon the schedule. There may be other events going on in the hotel that preclude early access to running cables etc.

Many decisions need to be made including exactly where each room connection will be placed and when every player with their different piece of the whole needs to show up.

In 2001 the local libraries provided the on-site tech support. It became apparent this was absolutely necessary. Every presenter had a slightly different type of network card and cable. Also, vendors showed up ill-prepared to connect. Although presenters were told what type of Internet access they would have, and were asked to provide a “network ready” laptop, some showed up without a network card. The conference committee had a small supply of network cards and cables on hand to loan. The committee provided a tech person to attend to each presenter before his/her program began to ensure they could hook up to the network.

### **Be Prepared for Emergencies**

Test room connections each day before meetings are scheduled. Bring extras, such as:

- 3 or 4 heavy duty 25-50 foot power cords.
- 4 to 6 power strips/surge protectors.
- 1 laptop unit for backup.
- 2 or 3 phone jack and network cables.
- 1 LCD projector (Make sure it is state-of-the-art and downwardly compatible.)
- Overhead projector.
- Network cards for loaning.

WASHINGTON LIBRARY ASSOCIATION  
PROGRAM EQUIPMENT AND SET-UP PREFERENCES  
(Please complete and send this form with your Program Proposal)

Program Coordinator Name, Library, Telephone, E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Program: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE NOTE:** *The Conference Committee will make every effort to meet your equipment and set-up preferences. If the Committee is unable to fulfill your request, we will notify you as soon as every option to reasonably meet your request has been exhausted. You will be contacted to discuss this initial request after programs are selected for the conference and speaker needs are finalized.*

**YOUR ESTIMATED ATTENDANCE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**MEALS OR OTHER CATERING NEEDED? Please Circle: Yes No**

- \_\_\_ Breakfast
- \_\_\_ Lunch
- \_\_\_ Dinner
- \_\_\_ Reception

**ROOM SET-UP PREFERENCE**

- \_\_\_ Theater style (This is the standard set-up)
- \_\_\_ Classroom style (Writing tables and chairs)
- \_\_\_ Rounds (Seating for 8 at each table)
- \_\_\_ Podium Needed? Please Circle: Yes No
- \_\_\_ No platform needed for speakers
- \_\_\_ Speaker(s) seated on a platform. Number of chairs needed on platform for speakers: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Table for handouts or displays Please describe size of tables & numbers needed and whether to locate at back of room or front of room: \_\_\_\_\_
- Description of Other Room Set-up Needs: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE FOLLOWING EQUIPMENT WILL BE NEEDED FOR THE PROGRAM**

*Note: The conference will not provide laptop computers because of compatibility issues. Presenters are encouraged to bring their own LCD projectors to assure their compatibility.*

- \_\_\_ Power strip extension cord(s)
- \_\_\_ Overhead projector
- \_\_\_ Screen
- \_\_\_ Slide projector
- \_\_\_ Videocassette player
- \_\_\_ Computer projection unit
- \_\_\_ Internet connection
- \_\_\_ Telephone jack and modem connection
- \_\_\_ Display easel Please note if need more than one easel: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Flip chart and pens Please note if need more than one flip chart: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ *The presenter will bring the following equipment:* \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ *Other Needs, Please describe:* \_\_\_\_\_

**MICROPHONE SET-UP PREFERENCE**

- \_\_\_ Microphone at podium
- \_\_\_ Microphones for panel members seated at tables. Please note number of speakers: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Hand-held microphone
- \_\_\_ Lapel microphone
- \_\_\_ Aisle microphone(s) for audience use
- \_\_\_ Other, please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDITIONAL NEEDS, Please Describe:** \_\_\_\_\_