

## **2009 Best Practices in Building University/City Relations Conference Proposal Guidelines**

### **Introduction**

These guidelines are designed to help institutions proposing to host as well as institutions that have been selected to host the annual Best Practices Conference. All organizers are required to prepare a wrap-up report to pass on to the next host.

### **Annual Spring Conference**

The Annual Spring Conference has been traditionally held in mid-June, after students have left school for the summer. The conference may consist of program sessions, workshops, a business meeting, vendors fair, daily keynote speakers, social events and activities.

### **Bid Requirements**

Proposals to host the conference must contain the following elements:

- Program and Theme
- Schedule and Proposed Dates
- Budget (including tentative fees)
- Contact Person (and Committee members)
- Host Institution(s) Information
- Entertainment and Side Trips (where applicable)

To be eligible for consideration, a copy of the proposal must be submitted to the Proposal Review Committee by 5:00 pm, Monday, July 7, 2008. Submissions may be mailed to Cynthia Gay, Director of External Relations, Texas A&M University, 1372 TAMU, College Station, TX 77843-1372 or emailed to [cyngay@tamu.edu](mailto:cyngay@tamu.edu).

### **Program and Theme**

Your bid submission should include the theme under which your event will be planned. Please provide a general idea of a theme. Refinements can be made as the planning progresses.

- Is your theme diverse enough to appeal to all facets of town and gown relations?
- Are your keynotes and workshops tied to this theme?
- How do your special events/banquet tie into this theme?
- Will your keynotes be of interest to all participants regardless of their role?
- How do you anticipate meeting the programming needs of all facets of town and gown (neighbors; city employees; university representatives)? How will the committee work with the membership in order to ensure a wide variety of topics are covered?
- How will you accommodate various functions that occur at the event (e.g. the business meeting, vendor fair and roundtable discussions)?

### **Schedule and Proposed Dates**

Please submit a tentative schedule for the conference, including the proposed dates of the conference and any back up dates. While there is some flexibility in the actual dates, please keep in mind that mid-June is typically the best time of the year for most schools.

### **Budget**

A proposed budget, including registration and accommodation fees must be submitted with your bid. The budget should be conservative and be your best guess and take into consideration a range of attendees. Some items to include in your proposed budget are:

- Food and hospitality
- Entertainment
- Speakers and workshops
- Accommodations

- Registration and administrative costs
- Volunteers or presenter recognition
- Transportation (e.g. shuttles)
- Contingency fund

### **Contact Person and Committee Members**

The contact person is normally the author of the bid and then becomes the main contact for the Bid Review Committee. Given the complexity of organizing an event, it is advisable to make use of a committee structure. At this time, the Proposal Review Committee will be looking for basic operating structure and not necessarily the assignments of specific tasks to individuals within the planning committee. Consider the following points in your bid submission:

- Who is the main contact for the event?
- What is the composition of the host committee?
- What type of support (administrative, planning, programming, etc.) do you require from the general membership?
- Do you have institutional/financial support from other departments within your university/college? If so, who?
- Has your institution/department previously hosted a large conference event? If so, when?

### **Host Institution Information**

The Bid Review Committee will consider the issues of accessibility and cost. The following points should be considered in your submission:

- What type of living accommodations are available for the conference delegates?
- Can a variety of dietary needs be accommodated (e.g. vegan, lactose intolerant, religious needs, etc.)?
- Where will the meals be held?
- What types of workshop/program facilities are available for use (e.g. classrooms, lecture halls), and what is the room/furniture set up?
- Where will the keynote addresses be held?
- What type of exhibit hall facilities are available (if necessary)?
- How accessible is your campus transportation-wise for your colleagues from across the country?

### **Entertainment and Side Trips**

While it is not critical to supply finalized plans for entertainment and side trips, it is important to provide an indication of what may be available to choose from in planning for the event. Keep in mind the following:

- Will special transportation be required for the event?
- Will there be provisions made for individuals who wish to arrive or leave early?
- Can the dietary needs of the delegates be met?
- Is the location/transportation accessible to persons with disabilities?
- Are there any additional costs associated with the event? Are individual delegates expected to cover their own costs? Will receipts be issued?
- Is the cost of the special event covered in the overall registration fee?
- Is the special event open, welcoming and inclusive of all members?
- Will the event/side trip highlight your institution or community?

Good luck with your bid submission! Should you require any further clarification or additional information in the preparation of your bid, please feel free to contact any of the Proposal Review Committee members or Cynthia Gay at [cyngay@tamu.edu](mailto:cyngay@tamu.edu) or 979-845-6605.