

# Roles and Responsibilities of Committees Involved in CHEMRAWN Conferences

## *Introduction*

CHEMRAWN conferences are special in several respects. Generally, the topics are wider in scope, and although there is a solid scientific basis and traditional scientific lectures are an important part of the program, political perspectives and discussion of practical solutions of the problem(s) under consideration are just as important items. The tasks to handle for organizers of CHEMRAWN conferences are therefore more varied and complex than those organizers of traditional scientific have to consider and take care of. This merits a document that provides an outline of how to organize CHEMRAWN conferences. For the most part it is simply “organized common sense”, but it may save some time for organizers and, hopefully, provide a roadmap to success.

To plan and organize a CHEMRAWN conference takes much longer time and involves more stages than required to prepare for a traditional scientific meeting. This is clearly borne out by two documents that should be consulted, one called The CHEMRAWN Conference Pathway (see [link](#)) and another entitled Checklist for Organizing CHEMRAWN Conferences (see [link](#)).

History shows that organizers of CHEMRAWN conferences have had a number of committees in action at various stages of the preparation and execution of the meetings. The most important and visible committees are the Organizing Committee, the Scientific Program Committee, the Finance Committee, the Registration Committee and the Future Action Committee. In the following the various committees are dealt with separately.

## ***Organizing Committee***

1. This committee should be brought together by the General Chairman and Assistant Chairman approximately three years before the meeting. The General Chairman should be known for his/her organizational skills and ability to select and work with other capable members of the Committee. He/She will report on the progress of the conference to the CHEMRAWN committee.

2. The General Chairman should appoint the Program Chairman promptly. He/She should have contacts in the region where the conference will be held in the areas of concentration of the CHEMRAWN conference. Just as the General Chairman, the Program Chair needs to be familiar with all aspects of the meeting plan and is the representative of the committee to speakers and session chairpersons.

3. The Finance Chairman should be appointed to assist in developing the proposed meeting budget. Registration may be handled by this person or may be delegated to a Registration Chair. Solicitation of technical programming grants may be organized by the Finance Chair and/or the Program Chair.

4. The Exhibits Chair is important to the financial success of the meeting. In economically developed countries, the Exposition can generate a significant portion of the meeting's revenue. This individual should already be acquainted with many of the instrument, book and service companies in the area and could be an experienced exhibitor.

5. The Printing and Publicity Chair is responsible for arranging for the Website, the "Call for Papers", advertisements, "Final Announcement", notices in publications, press releases, abstract book printing, etc. These duties may be divided between two individuals. Because experience has shown that publicity through a variety of sources will result in higher attendance, the individual delegated for this position must have quite a bit of time to devote to the project.

6. The Arrangements Chair is responsible for overseeing the set-up of meeting rooms, registration area, audio-visual equipment, projectionists, signs, arrangements for banquets, meals and/or mixers. The Arrangements Chair may coordinate lodging or a Housing Chair may be appointed.

7. The General Chair should make sure that each committee also has a Co-Chair who is able to share committee responsibilities. Several workers serve on each committee.

### ***Scientific Program Committee***

1. The Program Chairman should select well-established individuals in the fields of chemistry to be covered by the CHEMRAWN conference to organize the technical program. Persons from both academia and industry should be chosen. IUPAC Divisions may be contacted to suggest symposia and organizers.

2. In determining the areas of chemistry for the program consider:

- a. Aspects of chemistry to be emphasized in the CHEMRAWN conference.
- b. One or two symposia with "renowned" speakers as "drawing cards".
- c. Invited symposia vs. contributed papers. (Consider carefully the financial implications of organizing too many invited symposia.)
- d. Non-chemical or interdisciplinary topics.
- e. Technician programs.
- f. Instrument seminars.
- g. Programs for education.
- h. Special programs for industrial chemists.
- i. Special workshops for scientists from developing countries.

3. Funds from local industry or agencies may be obtained to supplement registration and exhibit fees. Grants may be solicited from local companies or multinationals with local branches. The payment of honoraria is strongly discouraged; however the meeting can decide to pay for a speaker's travel, meals and/or registration fee. Available funds may be divided among symposia chairmen for distribution or administered by the Program Chairman. The committee's policy as to what speaker expenses will or will not be paid needs to be set well in advance of the meeting.

4. Write to all invited speakers specifying expenses which will and will not be reimbursed so they can make financial plans well in advance.

5. Prepare a preliminary call for papers for distribution as early as possible.
6. A “Call for Papers” is usually mailed to potential participants and placed on the conference Website about one year to nine months prior to the meeting. A “Final Announcement” is sent three to four months before.
7. The deadline for abstracts should be four to six months prior to the meeting to allow adequate time for assembling the program and publicizing it.
8. Authors should submit abstracts for papers on a standard abstract form, which is available electronically, to the Program Chair. He/She should send a copy to the appropriate session organizer.
9. It is suggested that a Review Committee be established to assist the Program Chair in assessing contributed papers and determine acceptance or rejection.
10. The Program Chair can use electronic mail to acknowledge receipt/acceptance or rejection of abstracts to the authors.
11. Topical organizers arrange papers in half-day sessions. Allow a minimum of 15 minutes per contributed paper to be given orally. Poster papers are usually displayed for a full or a half-day session, but the programs should indicate the hour or specific time when each author will be in the poster area to discuss his/her work. As an example, each three-hour poster session may be divided into three segments of an hour each for presentation. Suggested “Instructions for Poster Session Authors” are attached.
12. The Program Committee meets to discuss when each half-day session should be presented and the projected attendance at each session. It is important to coordinate room assignments with the Arrangements committee.
13. Assemble the program.
14. Number the Abstracts. Maintain a copy of the complete set and give copies to the person preparing the abstract book.
15. Work with the Printing and Publicity Committee in preparing the abstract book.
16. If there are guest symposium speakers entitled to free registrations, a list should be provided to the Registration Committee before the advance registration deadline. Make sure the reimbursement policy for expenses for all speakers, if any, is completely understood by all.

### ***Finance Committee***

The Finance Chairman is responsible for administering the CHEMRAWN meeting budget, paying approved meeting expenses and monitoring the finances and accounting for disbursements. Each committee should submit an estimated budget to the Finance committee for

review and incorporation in the composite document. The Organizing Committee should review a preliminary budget at least one year before the meeting.

### Accounts

An account must be set up for accepting and disbursing funds. It can either be established by the Finance Committee Chair either through IUPAC or in a private bank.

### Budgeting Expenses

#### 1. Program expenses

- a. Payment of honoraria to speakers is strongly discouraged.
- b. The finance committee should decide whether speakers' registration fees are waived or paid by the speaker and then reimbursed.
- c. The finance committee should work with the program committee to determine the extent to which speakers travel, lodging and sustenance can be paid.
- d. As soon as speakers are invited, or abstracts are accepted in the case of contributed papers, speakers should be advised of the expense policy. A letter or e-mail message detailing these procedures should be sent to each individual, which will avoid unpleasant surprises when the meeting convenes.
- e. Standard procedure is to exempt CHEMRAWN committee members from the registration fee.

#### 2. Exposition expenses.

- a. Hotel or convention center rental fee for exposition area.
- b. Exposition decorations.
- c. Set-up time, shipment charges, customs or other fees charged by the decorating company.
- d. Promotional materials, postage and telephone charges.

#### 3. Printing and publicity expenses:

- a. First and final announcements
- b. Abstract books
- c. Advertisements
- d. Website development
- e. Badge inserts, forms, meeting room signs, receipts, etc.

#### 4. Projection equipment rental, copying services and computers

5. Personnel for registration and projectionists if needed. Expenses for students or professional help may vary considerably. Union personnel must be used in some cities.

6. Housing expenses for participants are usually directly offset by income.

7. Mixer and coffee or refreshments expenses should be included in the conference budget, but other special events should be self-supporting.

8. Charges for meeting rooms and/or university or institute fees must be included.

9. Publication of the Perspectives and Recommendations volume.

10. Expenses including travel, lodging and sustenance for several meetings of the Future Actions Committee and any other committees.

### Budgeting Income

After compiling the estimated expenses, the Finance Committee should make revenue projections. A balanced budget is important. If the preliminary budget indicates that revenue will not cover the anticipated expenses, review the expenses and possibly reduce them. If revenue exceeds projected expenses, the organizing committee may consider adding previously rejected ideas in order to enrich the program or may reduce the registration fees. Conference surpluses can also be used very effectively to support the work of the Future Actions Committee.

The Organizing Committee and Finance Committee must keep the CHEMRAWN Committee informed of the status of expenses and revenues. No spending commitments may be made without an equal commitment that supporting funds will be received. Failure to satisfy the CHEMRAWN committee that this is the case may result in delay or cancellation of the conference.

1. Some CHEMRAWN meetings have been successful in obtaining grants from government agencies and industry. Appropriate recognition of such contributions and grants must be made, especially in the conference program.
2. Exhibits can be a major source of revenue. Fees should be set in proportion to projected attendance; therefore, larger meetings may charge higher fees.
3. Registration fees should be set well prior to the meeting.
  - a. Most CHEMRAWN meetings offer reduced fees to students, high school teachers, technicians and/or other groups. These can amount to 40% or so of the registrants. In setting the lower fees for these registrants, consider the cost of the mixer, abstract books, coffees and use of facilities.
  - b. One-day fees are not recommended for CHEMRAWN meetings. Since many symposia are scheduled for a single day, a significant portion of the registrants may be in attendance only one day. If the committee must set a one-day fee, it should be at least two-thirds of the regular fee, and perhaps for the last day only.
4. Housing and special events should be priced to break even.

### Payments

1. The Finance Chairman usually is responsible for paying all meeting bills. All expenditures should be appropriately documented and approved by the responsible committee chair prior to payment.
2. The Organizing Committee will develop rules for distributing funds which remain after all the expenses are paid. The basic rule is that the Future Actions Committee will be allowed to use most of the remaining funds (according to a plan which has to be approved by ten CHEMRAWN Committee), but some will go to the CHEMRAWN committee to build up support for future conferences.

### Reports

1. The conference will supply quarterly reports of financial status to the CHEMRAWN committee chair who will in turn advise the IUPAC Executive Committee as to whether the conference is meeting its financial goals.
2. A final financial statement should be included in the meeting's final report.
3. No IRS reports are required (USA).

### Insurance

Insurance requirements vary considerably from country to country. The organizers should verify travel, cancellation and liability requirements with the hotel or conference center being used.

### Responsibility

IUPAC and the CHEMRAWN Committee accept no responsibility to cover costs or liabilities incurred by CHEMRAWN conferences beyond any specific amounts granted by IUPAC to the conference.

### ***Registration Committee***

The selection of the Registration Chairman is very important to the smooth operation of a CHEMRAWN meeting. Most of these responsibilities will be carried out during the months immediately before and during the meeting itself. The individual in charge of registration must be “detail oriented” and have a staff or other individuals able to assist with the routine processing of applications and telephone or e-mail inquiries.

### Advance Registration

1. Design registration forms which will be easy to complete and to process. If hotel sleeping rooms will be used, ask the properties to supply a few copies of a housing form for reproduction in flyers and on the Web.
2. Process registrations promptly. All registration forms, including campus housing, should be returned to a single mailing address and a single e-mail address, although exceptions are sometimes necessary due to campus housing policies. When using a hotel, it is usually more convenient to have room reservation requests returned directly to the hotel.
  - a. Verify that the payment corresponds to the amounts(s) indicated on the registrant’s form. Circle the amounts, initial and date.
  - b. Record each receipt on ledger sheets or in a computer file. Each entry should specify registration payment(s), ticket(s) and housing.
  - c. Separate checks from forms and prepare bank depositis. Record all deposits. Each should equal the total receipts since the previous deposit.
  - d. Makd frequent bank deposits. A rubber stamp imprinted with “For Deposit Only” and the account number can save time.
3. When campus housing is included with meeting registration, attach the housing portion or make a photocopy and send it to the Housing Chairperson. If registration and housing are on the same form, make sure that the individual’s name is on both portions before splitting the record.
4. Send a receipt postcard or e-mail address promptly. Dormitory housing may be included or handled separately by the Housing Chairperson. Meeting badges are usually included in the registration packet, also including cases, abstract books and any additional material, which is picked up at the meeting.
5. Begin producing badges well in advance. Badges should include name, company or university affiliation (and city or state if room permits.)
6. A large envelope or folder (frequently provided by universities of convention bureaus) should be prepared for each advance registrant.
  - a. Write in large letters (rather than type) the registrant’s name at the top, not in the standard mailing position. This makes the envelope easier to locate when filed in a large box.

- b. Insert badge and meeting announcements. Abstracts may be distributed separately, if they would make the packets too bulky.
- c. Alphabetize and place in large boxes for easy mailing.
- d. Use the ledger and computer records to prepare a ticket envelope for those who have purchased meal and event tickets. This ticket envelope should be included in the packet.

#### Distributing Packets to Advance Registrants

1. An area within the registration location should be clearly marked as “Advance Registration” and staffed by committee members, convention personnel and/or student assistants.
2. Packets for persons who owe fees should be handled separately. If payment was not made by the deadline, a higher, on-site charge should apply. These irregularities should be grouped into an alphabetized “problem file” to be handled by the Registration Chairperson or designee.
3. Be prepared for speakers. The organizing committee should establish a clear policy regarding fee payment for speakers long before the meeting begins. If a few speakers are to be the meeting’s guests, advance registration should be prepared for their pick-up. The Program Chairperson should be asked to provide a list of all guest registrants.
4. Have the alphabetized files of registration forms available to verify payments and receipt dates if questioned by the registrant.

#### Selecting the Registration Area

1. Traffic flow is an important factor in choosing a registration area. A portion of the exposition area, hallway or room with multiple doors is recommended.
2. Because of lines or informal gatherings of registrants, the best location for the registration area is usually not adjacent to the building entrance. Signs can easily direct participants to the registration area.
3. Combining registration with the exposition provides additional exposure for exhibitors and night security for registration materials.
4. Depending on the anticipated number of registrants, two to four six-foot tables or registration counters (provided by some convention centers and hotels) may be required. Place these about six feet from a wall to allow adequate space behind the counters for workers. Additional storage tables may also be positioned against the back wall. Arrange area to restrict access to only the registration staff.
5. Put a table for completing registration forms nearby. A sign should instruct individuals who have not registered by mail to fill in a form and then proceed to the cashier.
6. Large signs should designate the “Advance” and “On Site” registration areas, cashiers, badge typists, advance packet pick-ups by letter (A-K or L-Z), etc. Be sure to position these overhead since registrants will obscure table-high signs.

#### Staffing the Registration Area

1. The busiest time is usually the hour immediately before the first technical session, particularly the first day. Two or three hours of registration on the evening preceding the first day of sessions can ease the early morning rush and serve as an excellent training period.
2. Depending on the expected number of registrants, you will probably want three registrars for on-site duties and three or more for advance registration pick-up during the first half-day of the meeting. The second and third mornings usually require fewer staff than the first morning, but

you should review the program carefully for new programs that bring in additional conferees. Little registering is done after 2:00 PM.

3. Convention bureaus sometimes provide excellent registration assistance. Most bureaus offer a certain number of hours on a complimentary basis and charge on a per-hour basis for additional time and staff.

***Future Action Committee***

Text will be furnished later