

ALABAMA MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION (AMGA)

GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCTING A STATE CONFERENCE



This notebook has been prepared to guide the local associations as they host the State Conference.

Updated: September 30, 2019

Thank you and your local association for agreeing to host the AMGA State Conference

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ALABAMA MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE GUIDELINES

PURPOSE

The purpose of the recommendations is to help a local association prepare for and execute an annual conference. Guidelines in this manual have proven successful in the past and should be considered in the conference planning. While local associations may vary the script and execution of the conference based on locale, facilities etc., certain items in this manual must be adhered to per direction of the AMGA Board of Directors (AMGA BOD). ***These items will be clearly delineated by bold, italicized annotation.***

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR CONFERENCE

The annual conference is a shared responsibility between the AMGA and the local host association (LMGA). ***The AMGA BOD is responsible for the annual business meeting and the awards program held at the conference banquet. The other BOD responsibility is the business meeting where the membership shall elect officers, board members, and nominating committee members and transact such other business as may properly come before this annual meeting.*** Since the annual meeting also provides an opportunity for advanced training, networking among local associations and promotion of the Master Gardener Program, **the local host association is responsible for workshops, tours, social gatherings, and lectures that fulfill this responsibility.**

Certain minimum requirements are necessary to host a conference. These include:

- **A facility large enough to accommodate the conference, with one meeting room that can house up to 400 persons and additional meeting rooms for workshops/lectures.**
- Social/banquet facilities for up to 400 people.
- Hotels attached to the conference site or nearby that have reasonable rates.
- A commitment from the local host association to spend 2+ years planning the conference and providing 40 or more volunteers per day during the conference.
- Conferences are normally a day and a half. If pre-conference workshops, tours, social events, etc. are planned, they are to be scheduled for the day preceding conference.
- Therefore, facilities and manpower must be available for three days.

PLANNING AND SCHEDULING

Planning should begin at least two plus years prior to the anticipated conference date. The AMGA Vice President is chairperson of the AMGA Conference Committee. The AMGA VP will

actively research future conference locations and ask local associations if they would be willing to host a conference. ***If a local association is willing, the AMGA VP will approach the BOD with the willingness of the LMGA to host the Conference.*** The AMGA BOD will then vote to award the conference and notify the local host association.

These tasks need to be accomplished very early after conference award. The first order of business is picking a conference facility. Second, a date chosen preferably one not interfering with holidays. A theme is chosen and the title to be incorporated on correspondence, leaflets, flyers, etc. should read **“AMGA ANNUAL MEETING CONFERENCE”**

1. Conference committee - ***The LMGA shall establish a conference organization as soon as possible after the conference is awarded.*** The Conference Committee should include a conference chair and co-chair, and the chairs for finance, fundraising / vendors, food/hospitality, program/ speakers, and facilities committees, at a minimum. Other sections of the guidelines note additional conference committee/subcommittee positions that have been used in the past and were successful.
2. ***Conference Budget - It is mandatory that a preliminary conference budget be submitted to the AMGA Conference Committee for review, within 6 months of being awarded the Conference. The LMGA Conference Committee will submit the reviewed detailed conference budget to the AMGA BOD for final review and approval. No contracts may be signed or money expended before the budget is approved by the AMGA BOD.***

The AMGA Treasurer shall submit the detailed blank budget Excel forms to the LMGA Finance Chair for preparation of the preliminary budget.

The LGMA Conference committee shall review conference budgets for the past two conferences, and use these to help prepare a preliminary budget. Include a preliminary umbrella insurance policy to cover 3 days of Conference activities. In other words – Cover Your Assets!

Each Committee Chairperson will develop a detailed budget for their areas of responsibilities and submit to the LMGA Finance Chair who will compile the budget.

For budgeting purposes, income may be based on the average of the last two conferences or as recommended by the AMGA VP.

3. Facility Reservations - Following approval of the budget by AMGA, the local conference committee shall secure the meeting facility immediately. The Committee should plan for up to 400 attendees.
 - If the Conference is to be held at a hotel conference facility, a block of rooms should be reserved for the Conference attendees. Attempts should be made to negotiate a reduced rate. At the meeting facility, at least one

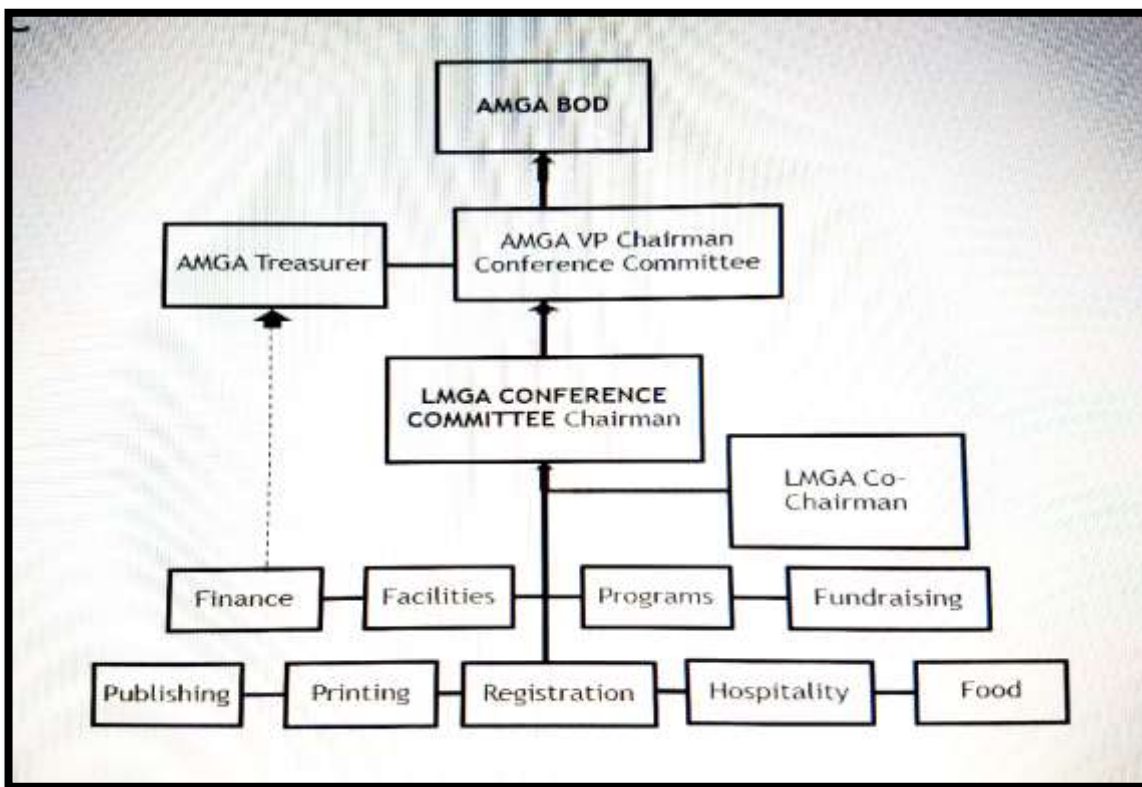
meeting room should be able to accommodate all registrants at one time. This is necessary for the opening session, banquet meal, and for the business meeting.

- If the Conference facility is not adjacent to the hotel, the committee should find host hotels using local Chamber and Convention and Visitors Bureau for help, and should negotiate the lowest costs and bonus rooms for out of town speakers.
4. Publicity - Start advertising the conference on the AMGA website as soon as the conference dates and location is chosen. Submit articles for the state newsletter at least nine months prior to the conference outlining the events and this information should be included on the AMGA website.

Conference Program and Registration materials will be included in the winter issue of the State Newsletter prior to the conference. The host association shall work with the AMGA Newsletter Editor to determine format and content requirements and deadline.

LMGA CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ORGANIZATION AND REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES

While the local host association is free to choose any organizational structure to plan and execute the conference, the following organizational structure has proven to be successful in the past. This chart does not list all possible committees or subcommittee that a LMGA may choose as part of their organizational structure.



The LMGA Conference Committee Finance Chair and the Fundraising Chair must work closely with the AMGA Treasurer and the AMGA VP. They are shown reporting to the LMGA Committee Chairman and the respective AMGA counterpart.

The following section describes the duties and responsibilities of members of the LMGA Conference Committees. Additional committees/subcommittees are included in the section below. If a LMGA chooses to not include those committees/subcommittees, then their responsibilities need to be handled by other committees.

CONFERENCE CHAIRPERSON(S)

All Conference chairs shall read post-conference reports from the past two years as well as this manual. The Conference Chair(s) and committee chairs as desired shall meet with the VP, AMGA Conference Committee to review these documents.

Conference chair duties include:

- 1) Fill all key committee chair positions as described under planning and scheduling to immediately prepare the preliminary budget. Any other positions should be filled as necessary. It is recommended that the Conference Chair appoint a Co-Chairperson to share the responsibilities.
- 2) It is important that you put an organization in place that distributes the responsibilities of the conference to several individuals /groups and **not** place the majority of the responsibilities on the Conference Chairperson and the Co-Chairperson.
- 3) Schedule and preside at all meetings of committee chairpersons as needed during the time preceding the conference. It is important for the LMGA Conference Steering Committee to record minutes of the planning meetings, including reports from all subcommittees to maintain a track of what has and is occurring and action items.
- 4) ***Attend AMGA BOD meetings and submit written reports on the progress of the Conference.***
- 5) ***Subcommittee chairs should submit reports to Conference Chairs within 30 days post conference***
- 6) ***Submit a written post-conference report no later than then September Board of Directors meeting following Conference.***

LMGA CONFERENCE COMMITTEES/SUB-COMMITTEES

Each host organization will structure its own LMGA Conference Committee. This manual identifies several committees and sub-committees that may be part of the LMGA Conference Committee. Past conferences have found that most of these will be necessary to effectively host a conference. Some committees like finance and fundraising must be established because they will have direct contact with AMGA counterparts. Some committees like hospitality and food may be combined at the discretion of the Conference leadership. Early in the planning process the LMGA Conference Committee needs to be

defined and communicated to the VP-AMGA Conference Committee. No matter the LMGA Conference Committee structure, the following guidelines apply to all committees:

- 1) ***Each committee chairperson will determine a budget for their committee and submit it to the LMGA Finance Chairperson and the Conference Chair, who will compile the complete budget to be submitted to the AMGA Conference Committee and the BOD.***
- 2) Each Committee Chairperson should keep an account of all expenses incurred for submission to the LMGA Finance Chairperson. Submit any bills using form FIN3 shown in the forms section of this document.

Finance Committee

This committee must be a part of the LMGA Conference Committee.

- 1) ***The Finance Committee Chairman working with the LMGA Conference Chair shall develop a conference budget based on input from each of the other committee chairpersons using the budget forms FIN1 and FIN2 shown in the forms section of this document or budget templates provided by the AMGA Treasurer.***
- 2) The registration fee, plus any estimated sponsorships, donations, and vendor and advertising income, should cover all expenses of the conference. ***The conference fee shall not exceed the amount determined by the AMGA BOD based on the approved budget.***
- 3) The AMGA Treasurer will provide up to \$2000 seed money to the LMGA's account to cover any up-front expenses incurred by the host association in preparing for the conference. The seed money is considered an advance and will be calculated into the financial report for the conference. ***Host associations will document the use of this money by providing receipts to the AMGA Treasurer through the Finance Chair.***
- 4) ***All monies collected, from registration, advertising, donations, etc. will deposited in the AMGA bank account. The AMGA Treasurer will provide the bank account number and guidelines on the method to be used by the LMGA Finance Chair for bank deposits.*** This is very important in order for the hosting association and the AMGA Treasurer to be able to reconcile the transactions.
- 5) Make sure each committee chairperson understands how to submit bills. The Finance Chairperson will coordinate bill payment with the State Treasurer.
- 6) ***A record of all income and expenses should be maintained. The templates for recording the income and expenses shall be provided by the AMGA Treasurer to the LMGA Finance Chair.*** The AMGA Treasurer and the Finance Chair shall communicate to review all templates and debiting and crediting entries.

- 7) The Conference Expense Record (Form FIN3) will be used to document reimbursable conference expenses. The Conference Travel Expense Voucher (Form FIN4) documents the expenses of speakers. One copy of these two forms must be submitted to the AMGA Treasurer to receive payment for expenditures. These forms are included in the forms section of this document.
- 8) The AMGA Treasurer will have the checkbook at the conference, and will be available at the conference to pay any expenses that must be covered at that time, such as caterers, speakers, refund to registrants who had to cancel, etc. 9) A final report of all deposits and expenses should be submitted to the Conference Chairperson as soon as possible following the conclusion of the conference. The Finance Chairperson should work with the AMGA Treasurer to reconcile the financial report and resolve any differences. This report should be submitted to the AMGA Treasurer and Board of Directors.
- 10) It is the intent of the AMGA Board of Directors not to make a large profit. Any conference net profits shall be shared with the host organization as follows:
 @ 50% Total net profit
Should the conference result in a loss of funds, the loss will be borne by AMGA, and not the hosting association.
- 11) If the hosting organization requests conference help from neighboring Master Gardener Associations, any profit sharing among associations is the decision of the hosting association and should be decided and communicated when the neighboring associations are approached for help.

Fundraising Committee

This committee must be a part of the LMGA Conference Committee. The AMGA Treasurer and the AMGA VP shall meet with the Local Fundraising Chair as an important part of the financial support to the conference. The Local Fundraising Committee should include individuals who are familiar with the local business community, to solicit sponsorships for the conference.

- 1) A fundraising budget to cover expenses will be developed and submitted to the conference finance chairman.
- 2) After approval of the conference budget by the AMGA Board, the LMGA Fundraising Chairman may suggest to the AMGA Treasurer and VP ways to tailor conference packages. These packages will be used to solicit Sponsors, Donors, and Vendors. ***The packages distributed will be identical for both local, state and national/corporate sponsor solicitations.*** The cover letter and the contact will be the only differential.
- 3) ***The conference packages shall be approved by the AMGA VP and Treasurer and they may not be sent to potential donors until after the prior year's conference.***

- 4) Fundraising for the conference will occur at the local, state, and national level. ***Any area covered by a co-hosting organization comes under state/national fund raising. The Local Fundraising Chair will keep the AMGA Treasurer and AMGA VP informed as to their results.***
- 5) ***The local Chair is responsible for local, regional and state fundraising, and sharing that list so there is no duplication***
 - a. A local database of contact information should be kept on what has been accomplished throughout the entire process.
 - b. ***A periodic report should be sent to the AMGA VP giving updates on the status of local fundraising/sponsorships.*** The AMGA VP will not participate in the local contacts unless requested by the local conference Fundraising chairperson.
- 6) Proceeds from the rental of vendor space should be used to offset the costs of the conference.
- 7) Coordinate the layout of the tables for vendors with the Facilities Chairperson and Conference Chairman.
- 8) Communicate in writing with the vendors at least two weeks prior to conference to establish a specific time for setup, times when the booths will be open and a time when the booths can be taken down. The Fundraising Chairperson and Committee members should be available to assist with setup and work through any problems that arise.
- 9) **Several Complimentary spaces need to be included for “Search for Excellence” award winners (#3) and Future Conferences (#2). Sponsors normally do not require vendor space but it is recommended one booth space I, if desired, be accounted for.**
- 10) All vendors, sponsors, etc., who earn the right to publish logos in Conference Program must submit them by deadline established on contract. Include a name tag in packet. Request Vendors supply drop cloths for their booth, esp. for plants.
- 11) ***Vendors, Sponsors, etc. must submit payment/donations one month prior to the program booklet printing deadline.*** Vendors, sponsors, etc., may receive a refund 6 weeks prior to the conference.
- 12) ***All contracts/waivers must be signed by the vendor, sponsor, etc., then submitted to the AMGA Vice President for approval and signature.***
- 13) Form FR6 can be used for providing an invoice for a gift, donation, etc. for charitable tax deduction purposes.

Silent Auction Sub-committee

The Silent Auction is a responsibility of Fundraising. It may be administered by a subcommittee of Fundraising. Approximately twelve months prior to the conference, the Silent Auction Chairperson should begin solicitation for items. A form should be included for description of item, \$ Value, etc.

- 1) Contact each LMGA for a donation through the state Advisory Council, and local garden clubs through your local contacts. Suggested dollar value is \$100.00 or more.
- 2) Solicit donations from other sources i.e. grocery, pharmacy, florists, local trades, spa, boutiques.
- 3) A room for the silent auction should be arranged with the facilities chairperson, along with tables for display. Use Excel to track items. Allow 2+ linear feet per item
- 4) A bid sheet should be placed by each item and state a minimum starting bid plus a bid increase of \$5 or more. The sheet will provide a place for the bidder's registration number. (Form FR5)
- 5) When the bidding is closed, the Silent Auction Committee will gather the bid sheets. A \$ tally for multiple wins by one bidder should be prepared and the total \$ tally for the Silent Auction should be given to the AMGA Treasurer.
- 6) The Silent Auction Committee will then post or announce the winners of the various items and set a deadline for payment.
- 7) Members of the committee, and the State Treasurer should be available to process payments and verify all payments are collected.
- 8) **Proceeds should be deposited by the AMGA Treasurer to the AMGA account and the amount reported to the LMGA Finance chairperson.**

Registration Committee

This committee must be a part of the LMGA Conference Committee. The Registration Committee is responsible for preparing a registration form for the conference. They also process all registrations and welcome attendees to the conference. They must work closely with the program committee to make sure that the registration form includes a schedule of conference events, information on the keynote speakers, maps, and directions to the conference location, etc. They also must work with the Printing Committee to make sure the registration form is included in the AMGA newsletter and in the AMGA website.

- 1) Determine a budget for registration and submit to the Finance Chairman (Form REG1). The newsletter insert will be considered a conference expense and must be included in the Registration budget.
- 2) Keep a record of all expenses and submit all bills to be paid to the Finance Chairperson on the Conference Expense Record. (FIN3)
- 3) Establish a firm date for registrations. In some cases, two registration dates have been set with a savings for early registration and a higher charge for late registration. Make it clear that if a registrant must cancel, meal cost will not be refunded after the caterer's deadline.
- 4) The conference program and registration information will be included as a special insert in the winter issue of the AMGA Newsletter prior to the conference. This Committee will need to work with the AMGA Newsletter Editor. Prepare the registration insert, which will include all registration forms (Examples shown in Forms REG2.1, REG2.2). Make it clear what costs are per person. Everyone must register separately if planning

to attend sessions. Based on the capacity of the conference facility, limitations may be placed on attendees. Hotel information should also be included in the package.

- 5) Work with the ACES State Master Gardener Program Coordinator to send a letter inviting the Extension agents responsible for the Master Gardener Program in their area to the conference. ***MG County Agents must pay the registration fee and all other associated costs. MG County Agents must also pre-register*** and will not be allowed as walk-ins. In the event an Extension agent is a speaker/presenter at the conference, the registration fee is waived.
- 6) ***The hosting association's workers and volunteers also must pay the registration fees.*** It must be understood that as local host, it is your turn to "work" the conference and you may not be able to attend all sessions. For hours worked during a session you are awarded the CEU credits.
- 7) Collect and record the number of people for each event. A computer spreadsheet (Excel) is very helpful and provides flexibility of gathering the information in many formats. Information should include; the number of attendees from each county, number of spouses/guests, number of attendees at banquets, tours, workshops, etc. This information is useful to future planners and to the AMGA Board. Keep all registration forms in a three-ring binder and have it available at the registration desk in case of questions.
- 8) Confirmation should be sent upon receipt of each individual registration. E-mails recommended.
- 9) Collect and deposit all monies as directed by the LMGA Finance Chairperson and the AMGA Treasurer.
- 10) Prepare nametags showing the person's name (in large print), county represented, and the events/activities/meals the person has paid to attend.
- 11) Continuing Education Credit (CEU's) information is to be included in the conference program for each session.
- 12) The Chairperson should be free to handle late registrations and money.
- 13) It is suggested that 2-4 additional volunteers be available to assist during the Conference for "at the moment" needs.

Registration Bags Sub-Committee

Attendees have in the past been presented with conference registration bags. This activity may be handled by a sub-committee or the Registration Committee.

- 1) Solicit as many souvenirs as possible from various businesses, individuals and the local Chamber of Commerce, *as well as national gardening companies.* Assemble packets to be distributed to registrants upon arrival. The packet should include the program, directions for off-site events, nametags, information on local attractions and local

nurseries, and the CONFERENCE EVALUATION SHEET (REG3.1, REG3.2). Have registration packets assembled prior to the conference and day of registration.

- 2) Assist the Registration Committee at the desk during registration.
- 3) Provide a list to the Conference Chairperson of those who would require a thank you note for their donations included in the conference bags.

T-Shirt Sales Subcommittee

This activity may be handled by a sub-committee or the Registration Committee since T-shirts are handed out at the registration area.

- 1) A budget to cover cost of expenses will be developed and submitted to the conference finance chairman. (Form REG1).
- 2) The hosting association should provide a conference T- shirt that would include the conference theme, logo, and lettering as a memento of the conference.
- 3) These shirts should be pre-ordered on the registration form and be available for pickup at registration. This will eliminate any leftover t-shirts from a conference.

Evaluation Subcommittee

This activity may be handled by a sub-committee or the Registration Committee

- 1) Printing cost for the Conference Evaluation sheet should be included in the Printing Budget (Form REG4). The form should be included in the registration package or handed out near the end of the Conference. It is suggested that the evaluation sheet be put in Conference Booklet.
- 2) The Evaluation Committee should develop this form. All attendees should be encouraged to fill out the form. The information should be compiled into a format that would show an overall rating of the conference. This information is important to the AMGA in planning future conferences. (Form REG3.1, REG3.2) In addition a survey should be given to vendors to evaluate how well their products sold, space, interest in product, etc.
- 3) An evaluation from conference workers listing: The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly. Include suggestions for improvement
- 4) Evaluation forms should be reviewed by the Conference Chairperson and then passed to the AMGA Vice President for review prior to passing the evaluations to the next hosting organization.

Program Committee

This committee must be a part of the LMGA Conference Committee.

- 1) Begin work immediately on a "theme" for the conference and a tentative list of topics and workshops.
- 2) Consult with AMGA President regarding time requirements for the Annual Business Meeting, and the AMGA Vice President for the Banquet program (AMGA Awards to be presented).

- 3) AMGA Requirements for pre-conference discussions (round tables, panels, etc.) will be needed from the AMGA President and Vice President.
- 4) Work with the registration chairperson to determine the number of programs needed and the cost. This figure is to be reflected in the conference budget submitted to the finance chairperson. (Form REG4)
- 5) Design Programs for handout at the conference. Biographical sketches of the speakers should be included in a special section of the program. Using advertisers for the program is optional and will help underwrite the costs of printing. Work with Fundraising Chair on this.

Speaker Sub-Committee

This activity may be handled by a sub-committee or the Program Committee.

- 1) Develop a budget and submit to the finance chairperson (Form SP1 and PR1).
- 2) Secure speakers for each topic and assign a time on the program. Your Regional Extension Agent is a valuable contact person for knowledge of speakers, as well as the State MG Program Coordinator.
- 3) Speakers may be paid honorariums plus expenses. A detailed budget of each speaker's costs is to be developed and submitted to the finance chairperson (Form SP1). Expenses include mileage and/or actual travel cost, hotel and food. Mileage will be reimbursed at the current rate set by IRS. Expenses should be submitted to the Finance Chairperson on the Conference Travel Expense Voucher. If air travel arrangements are involved, it is suggested the speaker make all travel arrangements and pay the costs. Provide the Speaker with a Travel Expense Voucher for reimbursement. The deadline for submission for expense reimbursement is 30 days following the conference. (The speaker expenses are included in Form FIN4).
- 4) Once a commitment from a speaker has been received, verbally or written, prepare a contract (Form SP2) which outlines the schedule and all expectations, including the amount of time they have been allocated on the program. ***All contracts must be sent to the AMGA Vice President for their signature. The AMGA Vice President will submit the contracts to the AMGA Treasurer for their signature and final processing.***
- 5) The Speaker Subcommittee will provide speaker information to the Program Chairman for coordination with Facilities and Registration.

Book Sales/Signing Sub-committee

This activity may be performed by the Program committee or a sub-committee.

- 1) Speakers having books to sell may do so at the conference. Some will bring their books while others will expect our organization to handle the ordering. Negotiate an equitable arrangement for the selling of books, whereby the conference would receive some financial benefit. If a speaker wishes to sell books during the

conference, obtain information for the Book Sales/Signing Subcommittee. **AMGA will not pre-purchase books to be sold at conference.**

- 2) Determine the number of speakers who wish to sell books at the conference and the times they will be available to sign/sell their books.
- 3) Work with Facilities committee and the Program Committee to have tables available for book sales.
- 4) Have volunteers manning the tables that will help the speaker with signing and collection of money.

Tours Sub-committee

This activity may be performed by the Program committee or a sub-committee. Tours of interest to Master Gardeners are desirable and should be made available. Tours may include local gardens or attractions in the area that are of gardening interest.

- 1) Cost of these should be clearly noted on the registration form. Depending on the tour, mass transportation may be needed.
- 2) Determine a budget for the transportation needs and submit to the finance chairperson.
Transportation costs can increase the costs of a conference by a substantial margin.
- 3) Make arrangements to reserve transportation as far in advance as possible. Arrange guides/hosts for each bus. Make sure each guide/host has adequate directions to the designated destination.
- 4) If transportation is not to be provided give the attendees "clear" directions to the designated locations and allow them to travel on their own.
- 5) It is desirable to have Master Gardeners at all tour sites to guide attendees.

Printing Committee

This committee is responsible for all printing requirements. These include conference program, registration forms, and advertising material. These duties may be a subcommittee of the Program or Registration Committee.

- 1) Work with the program chairperson and registration chairperson. Determine a budget for all printing costs and submit to the finance chairperson. (Form REG4). Submit all bills to be paid to the Finance Chairperson on Conference Expense Record (Form FIN3)
- 2) Work with the Program and registration chairs on the layout of the written program and any other materials that need to be printed.
- 3) Have all printing done as per direction of the other committees. Other committees include but are not limited to; Registration, Programs, and Fundraising. Ensure advertisers have paid for their advertising prior to printing of the program.
- 4) Deliver the printed conference Programs to the Registration Bag Sub-Committee by their required due date.

Publicity Committee

This committee may be a separate committee or a sub-committee.

- 1) Prepare *Pathways* winter issue insert and submit to the Editor by December 15 preceding Conference.
- 2) Information promoting the Conference should be given to the State MG Program Coordinator, *Pathways* Editor and the AMGA webmaster starting as soon as the conference dates and theme have been determined. Work with the Registration Committee to coordinate the release of the information.
- 3) Arrange for photographic coverage of the entire conference.
- 4) Contact the surrounding State MG Coordinators, local media, and state magazines.

Facility Committee

This committee must be a part of the LMGA Conference Committee. The Facility Chairman should arrange for the location of conference and negotiate for the cost of facility and all added item that are necessary to use the facility. This is very important as conference facilities often have hidden costs (tables, chairs, A/V equipment, etc. Ensure a clear understanding of ALL the costs involved, before the contract is finalized.

- 1) Develop a budget and submit to the finance chairperson (Form FAC1).
- 2) Secure location as suggested under #2, Planning and Scheduling.
- 3) Arrange for space needed for large meeting room, rooms for concurrent sessions, and areas for refreshment breaks, displays, vendors, registration, exhibits, and book sales/signing.
- 4) Negotiate hotel and/or conference center costs. ***The final contract will be sent to the AMGA Treasurer for formal signature*** (the Treasurer will send the deposit check for secure the facility). If the conference is at a hotel/conference center try to negotiate free rooms. These free rooms should be used for the speakers to help with the cost of conference. Try to negotiate for a hospitality room, which can be used by your volunteers, as well as the speakers and the AMGA Board of Directors.
- 5) ***The AMGA Treasurer will sign the contract with the meeting facility only after the detailed budget is approved by the AMGA BOD and will provide the check to secure the facility.***

Meeting Room Subcommittee

This activity may be handled by the Facility Committee. This committee works with both the programs and facilities.

- 1) Check each meeting room prior to the session, ensuring it is set up properly. The Speakers Chairperson should provide a list of each speakers' needs (i.e. microphones, projectors, and screens, etc.).
- 2) Do a walk-through of the conference site to learn how to control lighting, sound systems, air conditioning, heating, etc. Make sure rooms with windows can be darkened. Arrange this with the facilities chairperson.
- 3) Try to have the rooms set up so that the entrance/exit is at the rear, opposite the speaker. Make sure the podium is set in a location allowing maximum sight of the audience for the speaker.

- 4) Assign monitor to each room for each session. The monitor should introduce the speaker, help with lighting and equipment, and keep the program on schedule. It is helpful to let a speaker know they have five minutes remaining. 5) Post a copy of the schedule at the meeting room door.

Audio/Visual Subcommittee

This activity may be handled by the Facility Committee. The Audio-Visual Subcommittee works with the facilities and speaker chairpersons.

- 1) Develop a budget and submit to the finance chairperson (Form FAC1).
- 2) Check with the conference location on audiovisual options available. Verify they have personnel available who can help in emergencies.
- 3) The State MG Program Coordinator's office and County Agent's office have equipment available (laser pointers, video projectors, slide projectors, extension cords, etc.) for use at no charge. Check with them first before renting the equipment from the conference site.
- 4) Have additional equipment available in case of mechanical failure.

Food Committee

The Food Committee is responsible for food at the social event pre-conference, lunch and snacks and the banquet meal during the conference.

- 1) Develop a budget and submit to the finance chairperson. Form H1 can be used to guide budget preparation.
- 2) ***Be sure to include the costs of taxes and gratuity, when pricing the costs of the meals.***
- 3) The budget for food requirements will be the greatest expense to the conference. Work closely with the caterer(s) to provide quality food at the best possible price. Include tickets for meals.
- 4) Often snacks/beverages can be donated or provided by assisting LMGA and this is a cost-effective method of providing these services.
- 5) The time, location and the program for the banquet should be discussed with the AMGA Vice President.
- 6) The banquet should have a keynote speaker (try for a limit of 30 minutes). Work with the program chair for keynote speaker.
- 7) AMGA Awards and installation of Officers/Directors will also take place at the banquet, as well as recognition of outgoing Officers/Board Members.
- 8) If a buffet style dinner is used, make sure the setup includes at least two serving lines, to speed up service.
- 9) Ensure the registration form includes all options associated with the meals so that attendees may indicate the meals/lunch preferences. This is critical in determining a headcount for each of the food events, hopefully, avoiding over-ordering of food. Coordinate this requirement with the Registrations Committee Chairperson.

- 10) Work with the Program Committee to determine the requirements for refreshment breaks and box lunches during the conference. Provide adequate break items such as coffee, tea, soft drinks and snacks. Vendors are offered only snacks and drinks.
- 11) Provide caterer with headcount for all events at the latest they can accommodate.

Decorations Subcommittee

This committee may be part of the Food Committee, Hospitality committee or a separate subcommittee. This committee is responsible for decorations of refreshment tables and banquet table decorations.

- 1) Determine a budget (Form H1) for decorations and submit to the finance chairperson. Submit any bills to the Finance Chairperson for payment on Conference Expense Record. (Form FIN3)
- 2) Table decorations at the refreshment breaks and at the banquet are usually given as door prizes. Work with the door prize chairperson.

Hospitality Committee

- 1) Determine a budget for hospitality requirements (Form H1) and submit to the Finance Chairman. Submit all bills to the Finance Chairperson for payment on Conference Expense Record. (Form FIN3)
- 2) Provide welcome baskets and a note in each speaker's hotel room.
- 3) Work with Facilities Committee Chairperson to ensure a hospitality room is available. This room may be used by the local hosting volunteers, the speakers, and possibly as the meeting room for the AMGA Board of Directors. Refreshments (soft drinks, coffee, and snacks) should be provided in this room.
- 4) Work with the facilities chairperson to assign the "complimentary rooms" from the hotel contract to the speakers.
- 5) Assist the Program Committee with greeting the speakers at the hotel or airport. Be sure they have a copy of the conference materials, including the conference schedule.
- 6) Provide overall decorations of the facility, entryways, restrooms, stage area, etc. that will welcome attendees.

Door Prizes Subcommittee

This activity may be part of Hospitality committee.

- 1) Work with the local Fundraising Chairmen to organize the collection of door prizes.
- 2) Solicit donations from local merchants. Coordinate contacts to avoid multiple solicitations.
- 3) Provide a list for thank you notes to the Conference Chairperson. This can be done easily by collecting business cards of those who donate and writing on the back of the card the item donated. It also provides the name and address of the person who should receive the thank you note. Be sure address on card is mailing address.
- 4) Methods of giving away door prizes vary greatly depending on the number of prizes. One method is to use the registration number on each nametag and it

would correspond to a number pre-drawn for a prize. The attendees, at their leisure, can check the numbers on the door prizes to see if they have won. Be cautious of the amount of time taken up for door prizes. Use a ticket at door on last day for door prizes.

- 5) Be prepared for Vendors to donate items esp. at end of conference

Forms

Conference Budget (prepared by LMGA Finance Committee)

Income Form

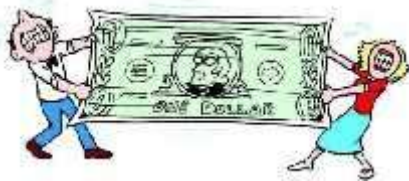
FIN1

<u>Income</u>	<u>Committee Responsible</u>	<u>#Attendees</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Current Estimate</u>
<u>Registration</u>				
<u>Registration Fee</u>	<u>Finance, Registration, Conf. Chair</u>		<u>Attendees</u>	
<u>Late Fee</u>	<u>Registration</u>		<u>Attendees</u>	
<u>Fundraising</u>	<u>Fundraising Committee, AMGA Treasurer /AMGA VP</u>			
<u>Sponsorships</u>			<u>Business</u>	
<u>Vendor Booths</u>			<u>Business</u>	
<u>Non-Commercial Booths</u>			<u>Display and LMGA</u>	
<u>Ads/Donations</u>				
<u>Workshops</u>	<u>Programs</u>			
<u>Meals</u>	<u>Food</u>		<u>If all-inclusive this will only be guest meals</u>	
<u>T-Shirts</u>	<u>Registration T-Shirt</u>		<u>Attendees</u>	
<u>Miscellaneous Income</u>	<u>Finance</u>			
<u>Total Income</u>				

_____ **Conference Budget** (prepared by LMGA Finance Committee)

EXPENSES

Form FIN2

<u>Sub Category</u>	<u>Committee Responsible</u>	<u>#Attendees</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Current Estimate</u>
Facilities (See Facilities Budget)	Facilities			
Speakers: (see Speaker Budget)	Program			
Registration Expense (See Registration Budget)	Registration			
Hospitality Expenses (See Hospitality)	Hospitality			
Meals (See Food Budget)	Food			
Printing	Programs, Registration, Printing			
Materials for Workshops	Programs			
Publicity	Publicity			
T-Shirts	T-Shirt			
Miscellaneous Expenses	Finance			
				
TOTAL EXPENSES:				
<u>Net Profit/Loss</u>				

Conference Expense Record

Form FIN3

**ALABAMA MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION, INC.
CONFERENCE EXPENSE RECORD**

All reimbursements for expenses incurred will be made by the Alabama Master Gardener State Treasurer. This form must accompany any request for reimbursement. Please attach all pertinent receipts to this completed form.

Return forms to the Finance Committee Chairperson.

Name/Payee: _____ Date: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Conference Committee: _____

EXPENSES:	AMOUNT
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
TOTAL AMOUNT CLAIMED	\$ _____

Please use back of form if additional space is needed.

Approved by Finance Committee Chairperson _____

Amount Reimbursed: _____

Approved by AMGA State Treasurer _____

Check Number: _____ Date _____

Conference Travel Voucher

Form FIN4

<u>Alabama Master Gardener Association, Inc.</u>	
All reimbursement for expenses incurred will be made by the AMGA State Treasurer. This form must accompany any request for reimbursement. Please attach all pertinent receipts to the completed form and return to the Finance Committee Chairperson.	Conference Committee:
Name/Payee:	Date:
Mailing Address:	City State Zip
Expenses:	Total Amount
Transportation	
Airlines	\$
Mileage @ \$ _ _ =	\$
Parking	\$
Lodging	\$
Speaker Fee/Honorarium	\$
Meals	
Breakfast	\$
Lunch	\$
Dinner	\$
Total Amount Claimed	\$
Approved by Finance Committee Chairperson	
Approved by AMGA State Treasurer	
Amount Reimbursed	\$
Check Number	Date:

AMGA Invoice

Form FR6

Alabama Master Gardener Association Inc



INVOICE NUMBER

Conf Year + CompanyName

INVOICE DATE

Sponsor / Vendor Information	
Company:	
Contact Name:	
Address:	
City/State/Zip	
Phone:	

Package Description	Amount Due
Total Due:	

Notes:

AMGA is a 501c3 Charitable Organization. Your donation may be tax deductible.
 IRS Employer Identification Number: 58-2067024

Chairman of Committee or Conference must sign _____
 Signature

Registration and T-Shirt Budget

Form REG1

<u>Registration Expense</u>			Cost Each	Total
Memento for attendees	Registration			
Nametags & Pouch	Registration			
Tote Bags	Registration			
Pathways Insert	Registration			
Misc.	Registration			
<u>Total Registration Expense</u>	Registration			
<u>Registration Income</u>	Registration			
<u>T-Shirts</u>	T-Shirt			
T-Shirt Cost	T-Shirt			
T-Shirt Selling Price	T-Shirt			
<u>T-Shirt Income</u>	T-Shirt			

Example Registration Template

Form REG2.1

The Magic of Gardening

22nd Annual Alabama Master Gardener Association Conference

Birmingham Marriott Hotel

March 22-24, 2012

Registration Form - Part A

Last Name _____ First Name _____ MI _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

MG County _____ Email Address: _____

Please click one of the options: Master Gardener Intern ACES Guest Other

Is the name same as the Registration Name for the Badge? Yes No

If no please submit name for badge: _____

REGISTRATION	COST	ENCLOSED
Regular registration, postmarked by March 1, 2012	\$100	
Late registration, postmarked after March 1, 2012, no meals included	\$145	
Friday Box Lunch <input type="checkbox"/> Check if vegetarian meal desired		No charge before March 1, 2012
Additional costs, as desired		
Thursday Reception (Includes BBQ dinner at Birmingham Botanical Gardens with Chicken, Pork & Sides)	\$25 Registration must be postmarked before March 1, 2012.	
Friday Banquet at Birmingham Marriott (Please check one) <input type="checkbox"/> Chicken <input type="checkbox"/> Salmon <input type="checkbox"/> Vegetarian	\$40 Registration must be postmarked before March 1, 2012.	
Number of T-Shirts in each size: ____ Small ____ Medium ____ Large ____ XL ____ XXL	\$15 each All T-Shirt orders must be received by March 1, 2012. No T-Shirts will be available for purchase at the conference.	
Guest(s) Meals: , available until March 1, 2012		
Guest name (s): _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Thurs. Barbeque Dinner \$25 <input type="checkbox"/> Fri. Banquet \$40; Check meal choice: <input type="checkbox"/> Chicken <input type="checkbox"/> Salmon <input type="checkbox"/> Vegetarian	
Guest name (s): _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Thurs. Barbeque Dinner \$25 <input type="checkbox"/> Fri. Banquet \$40; Check meal choice: <input type="checkbox"/> Chicken <input type="checkbox"/> Salmon <input type="checkbox"/> Vegetarian	
Total Amount Enclosed		

Date Received

Payment Received

Confirmation Sent

Initials

Example Registration Template

Form REG2.2

Registration Form Part B—Thursday Sessions and Breakout Sessions

Thursday, March 22

Roundtable/Networking Sessions

12:30 – 2:00 No additional charge. Each session will last approximately 45 minutes. Please check which session(s) you plan to attend.

The Three Rs—This round-table discussion will address the problem of retention of graduate Master Gardeners and how to keep them actively involved in programs, focusing on the three Rs: Recruiting, Recognition, and Retention. Facilitator: Ellen Hall

Data Base 101— This round-table discussion will introduce participants to the new Master Gardener data base. Topics to be covered include the procedures for entering data, what data is needed, methods of retrieving data from the system, reports that can be printed and used at a local level, and the interface of the new system with the current Service Hours database. Facilitators: Fred Evans and Jean Lee

Garden Tours

3:00 – 4:30 **Transportation will not be provided.** See the Conference insert for driving directions to Birmingham Botanical Gardens and Aldridge Gardens.

I will tour Birmingham Botanical Gardens. Docent-led tours available on the half hour.

I will tour Aldridge Gardens. Docent-led tours available at 3:00 and 3:30 p.m.

Friday, March 23

Breakout Sessions

1:45 – 2:35 No additional charge. Indicate your first and second choices by putting a 1 (first choice) or a 2 (second choice) beside your selections.

<input type="checkbox"/> A. Vasha Rosenblum	The Perfect Garden Pet — Red Wigglers!
<input type="checkbox"/> B. Sallie Lee, Nelson Wynn, Jim Jacobi	Terrific Tomatoes
<input type="checkbox"/> C. John Manion	Spring Magic—Early-Blooming Native Plants
<input type="checkbox"/> D. Lois Trigg Chaplin	Your Yard? A Salad!
<input type="checkbox"/> E. Betsy Fleenor	Cottage Style by Design

3:05 – 3:55 No additional charge. Indicate your first and second choices by putting a 1 (first choice) or a 2 (second choice) beside your selections.

<input type="checkbox"/> A. Vasha Rosenblum	The Perfect Garden Pet — Red Wigglers!
<input type="checkbox"/> B. Sallie Lee, Nelson Wynn, Jim Jacobi	Terrific Tomatoes
<input type="checkbox"/> C. John Manion	Spring Magic—Early-Blooming Native Plants
<input type="checkbox"/> D. Lois Trigg Chaplin	Your Yard? A Salad!
<input type="checkbox"/> E. Betsy Fleenor	Cottage Style by Design

Evaluation Form Template

Form REG3.1

**ALABAMA MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION
Conference March 22-24, 2012 Birmingham, Alabama
CONFERENCE EVALUATION**

On a scale of one to five, with one being the lowest and five being the highest, please indicate the extent to which area meets its objective with the appropriate number

Registration <u>Comments:</u>	1	2	3	4	5
Facilities and Location <u>Comments:</u>	1	2	3	4	5
Thursday Pre-Conference Seminar <u>Comments:</u>	1	2	3	4	5
Thursday Pre-Conference Tours <u>Comments:</u>	1	2	3	4	5
Session Topics <u>Comments:</u>	1	2	3	4	5
Speakers <u>Comments:</u>	1	2	3	4	5
Conference Organization <u>Comments:</u>	1	2	3	4	5
Time Allotted for Each Segment <u>Comments:</u>	1	2	3	4	5
Saturday Morning Plenary Sessions <u>Comments:</u>	1	2	3	4	5
Overall Usefulness of Information Presented at This Conference <u>Comments:</u>	1	2	3	4	5

OVER, PLEASE

Evaluation Form Template

Form REG3.2

Pg. 2

WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE PART OF THE CONFERENCE?

WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO ATTEND THIS CONFERENCE? CHECK APPLICABLE REASONS:

___ *Speakers/Presenters*

___ *Fellowship with other Master Gardeners*

___ *Location*

___ *Other (Please Specify)* _____

PLEASE LIST TOPICS YOU WOULD LIKE TO HAVE INCLUDED IN FUTURE CONFERENCES OR MAKE ADDITIONAL COMMENTS IN THE SPACE BELOW.

WERE YOU ABLE TO SCHEDULE MOST OF THE SESSIONS YOU REQUESTED OR WANTED TO ATTEND? _____ IF NOT, HOW COULD THIS BE IMPROVED?

GENERAL COMMENTS THAT WOULD BE CONSTRUCTIVE TO FUTURE CONFERENCES:

THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING AND TAKING THE TIME FOR THIS EVALUATION!

HAVE A SAFE TRIP HOME

Printing & Publicity Budget

Form Reg4

Printing and Publicity Committees must work with Program and Registration Committees to get an accurate budget estimation. While the Program committee and the Registration Committee prepare the Programs and Registration forms, and what would go into pre-conference publicity, cost to the conference is in the printing of these items, so their expense should be shown under the printing and publicity budgets.

<u>Printing and Publicity Budget</u>				
<u>Printing</u>	<u>Category</u>	<u>Cost ea.</u>	<u>Qty</u>	<u>Total Cost each</u>
Program	Program			
Registration Form (s)	Registration			
Evaluation Form	Registration			
Banquet Program	AMGA			
Other				
<u>Total Costs Printing</u>				
<u>Publicity</u>				
Pre-Conference Handouts	Publicity			
Postage	Publicity			
TV/Radio Promotions	Publicity			
Other				
<u>Total Costs Publicity</u>				

Example Conference Agenda Template

Form PR1

Day 1

11:00AM	Registration Opens
12:30PM-2:00PM	Round Table Discussions
3:00PM	Tours
5:30PM	Welcome Reception
6:00PM	Dinner

Day 2

7:30AM-9:00AM	Continental Breakfast
8:00AM-Noon	Registration
9:00AM-10:15AM	Plenary Session
	Welcome/Keynote Speaker
10:15AM-10:30AM	Break, Vendors, Sponsors
10:30-Noon	Annual Business Meeting

Noon-1:15PM Box Lunch

1:15PM-1:30PM	Break, Vendors, Sponsors
1:45PM-2:35PM	Breakout Sessions
	1. Name/Subject
	2. Name/Subject
	3. Name/Subject
	4. Name/Subject
2:35PM-3:05PM	Break, Vendor, Sponsors
3:05PM-4:00PM	Breakout Sessions
	1. Name/Subject
	2. Name/Subject
	3. Name/Subject
	4. Name/Subject
5:00PM-6:00PM	Social Hour w/cash bar
6:00PM-7:00PM	Banquet
7:00PM-8:00PM	Keynote Speaker
8:00PM-8:30PM	Awards & Installation of Officers

Day 3

7:30AM-8:30AM	Continental Breakfast
8:45AM-9:45AM	Plenary Session
	Preview of Next Conference
	Keynote Speaker
9:45AM-10:00AM	Break, Vendors, Sponsors
10:00AM-11:00AM	Plenary Session
	Keynote Speaker
11:00AM-Noon	Closing Remarks
Noon-2:00PM	AMGA Board Meeting & Lunch

Speakers Budget Calculations

Form SP1

<u>Speaker Budget</u>			
Speakers Fee		Speakers Fee	
Speakers Name		Speakers Name	
Keynote or Break Out		Keynote or Break Out	
Lodging		Lodging	
Registration		Registration	
Parking		Parking	
Meal #1		Meal #1	
Meal #2		Meal #2	
Meal #3		Meal #3	
Mileage		Mileage	
Airfare		Airfare	
Honorarium		Honorarium	
Total Speaker Cost		Total Speaker Cost	
Speakers Fee		Speakers Fee	
Speakers Name		Speakers Name	
Keynote or Breakout		Keynote or Breakout	
Lodging		Lodging	
Room		Room	
Parking		Parking	
Meal #1		Meal #1	
Meal #2		Meal #2	
Meal #3		Meal #3	
Mileage		Mileage	
Airfare		Airfare	
Honorarium		Honorarium	
Total Speaker Cost		Total Speaker Cost	

Print multiple pages if needed

Total cost of all Speakers \$_____



SPEAKER CONTRACT

Year Alabama Master Gardener Conference

Name

Program Chairman

Address

City, State Zip Date:

This Agreement made this _____ day of _____, 20__ by Alabama Master Gardener Association (AMGA), (First Party) and Name of Presenter _____, (Second party)

That in consideration of the mutual covenants and agreements to be kept and performed on the part of said parties' hereto, respectively as herein stated:

I. Said party of the first part (AMGA) covenants and agrees that it shall:

Honorarium of or Speaker Fee of: put dollar amount here

Honorarium will be made out to: Insert name of organization here

Transportation: If applicable (include round trip fees)

Audio Visual Equipment: fill in equipment needed here

Banquet Ticketyes/no Complimentary Hotel Room if Applicableyes / no

II. Said party of the second part (Speaker) covenants and agrees that it shall:

Speak/Present to the AMGA Conference on day month year for length of presentation

The topic will be Name of topic

Will provide the AMGA Conference Program Chairman with a personal biography by:

date.

III. Other terms to be observed by and between the parties:

IV. If, for whatever reason, speakers full name cannot fulfill Part II above, all advances received by Speaker name must be returned and AMGA has no other responsibilities financially to Speaker name.

This agreement shall be binding upon the parties, their successors, assigns and personal representatives.

AMGA Treasurer

Date

AMGA Vice President

Date

Speaker or Second Party

Date

Facilities Budget

Form FAC1

Facilities Budget Template			
Expense Name	Cost	Each	Total
Hotel Name Total Room Nights Contracted			
Hotel Rooms Booked			
Room per night charge			
Budgeted Hotel Cost			
Conference Center 1			
Conference Center 2			
Sub Total Hotel/Conf Center Contracts			
Microphones			
Projectors			
Screens			
Computers			
A/V Technician			
Sub Total A/V Costs			
Table Clothes			
Chairs			
Risers			
Tables / Meeting Rooms			
Registration Tables			
Easels			
Lecterns/Podiums			
Sub Total Tables, Chairs, Etc.			
Vendor Booths			
pallet jacks and hand trucks			
Tour Transportation			
Vendor Parking			
Security			
Insurance/Liability			
Total Costs Facilities			

Food/Hospitality Budget

Form H1

		<u>Cost per person</u>	<u>quantity</u>	<u>total Cost</u>
Expenses				
Food				
Pre-conference, Day 1				
Snacks/Breaks				
Social/Dinner				
Day 2				
Breakfast				
Lunch				
Dinner/Banquet				
Breaks				
Day 3				
Breakfast				
Snacks/Break				
Hospitality				
Flowers/Seeds				
Baskets				
Door Prizes				
Decorations				
Total Expenses				
Income (if all-inclusive conference fee, this will be only guest meals)				
Social/Dinner				
Banquet				
Lunch				
Total Income				
Net Income				

What a Post-Conference Report should include.

Form CH1

This report should include an 8-10-page executive summary that will go to the BOD. In that summary will be:

- Summary Report from Conference Co-Chair - a brief one-page summary of most important lessons-learned, what worked well and made the most impact for a successful conference and a one paragraph evaluation of the conference.
- Conference Statistics - attendance broken down by event, by day, and by category of attendees. Number registered, categorized by MG, spouse/guest, speakers, Number attending workshops, tours, etc., Number attending banquet and social events.
- Financial Summary - one-page summary of all income and expenses.
- Summary of evaluations from the conference - 2-page summary of the attendees' evaluations of the conference.
- Lesson Learned - most important overall lessons learned and lessons learned by each committee. These should include what worked and what did not.

Following the executive summary will be more detailed Committee Reports written by each committee. These reports should include:

- explanation of the process followed in accomplishing their task, along with lessons learned and suggestions for upcoming conferences.
- Number of volunteers needed during the conference to complete all task.

Also attached to this detailed section will be a hard copy of the registration forms, the banquet program and the program booklet.

Complete financial records including income and expense ledgers will also be in this section and may be filed on electronic media.

This complete overall Conference report will be provided to the following year's conference committees, and this complete report will be filed in the AMGA records retention system, both as a hard copy and electronically. **Therefore (2) hard copy notebooks and (2) thumb drives USB should be given to the AMGA VP for distribution and Records Retention.**