

Conference Planning Hierarchy

TOP LEVEL

Regional Board

Selects the theme and overall agenda of the conference.

MID LEVEL

Local Planning Committee

Sets committees and decides specific agenda.

Selects conference dates and location.

Decides overall policies and approves decisions of all action committees.

ACTION LEVEL

Entertainment Committee

Decides and organizes social functions for conference.

Negotiates band, facilities and food contracts.

Facilities Committee (Conference Chair)

Negotiates all contracts with hotel.

Arranges number of rooms, meals, etc.

Program Committee

Develops conference tracks and workshops.

Selects speakers and makes all speaking arrangements.

Publicity Committee

Writes and sends press announcements, teasers, registration form, etc.

Is responsible for all advertising.

Acts as liaison with newspapers, television and radio stations.

Raffle Committee

Solicits prizes from vendors, businesses, access centers, etc.

Promotes sales of tickets and oversees the raffle.

Registration Committee

Processes incoming registration materials.

Provides registration materials, program and name tag to all participants.

Maintains on-site registration facility and handles questions and problems.

Scholarship Committee

Organizes incoming scholarship requests and handles inquiries.

Selects and informs all full and partial scholarship recipients.

Vendor Committee

Recruits sponsors and vendors.

Negotiates contracts.

Arranges vendor room location, set-up and security.

Video Awards Committee

Handles all arrangements for solicitation, organization and registration of entries.

Arranges tape judging.

Organizes ceremony, tape display and awards presentation.

Volunteer Committee

Recruits volunteers to help before and during conference.

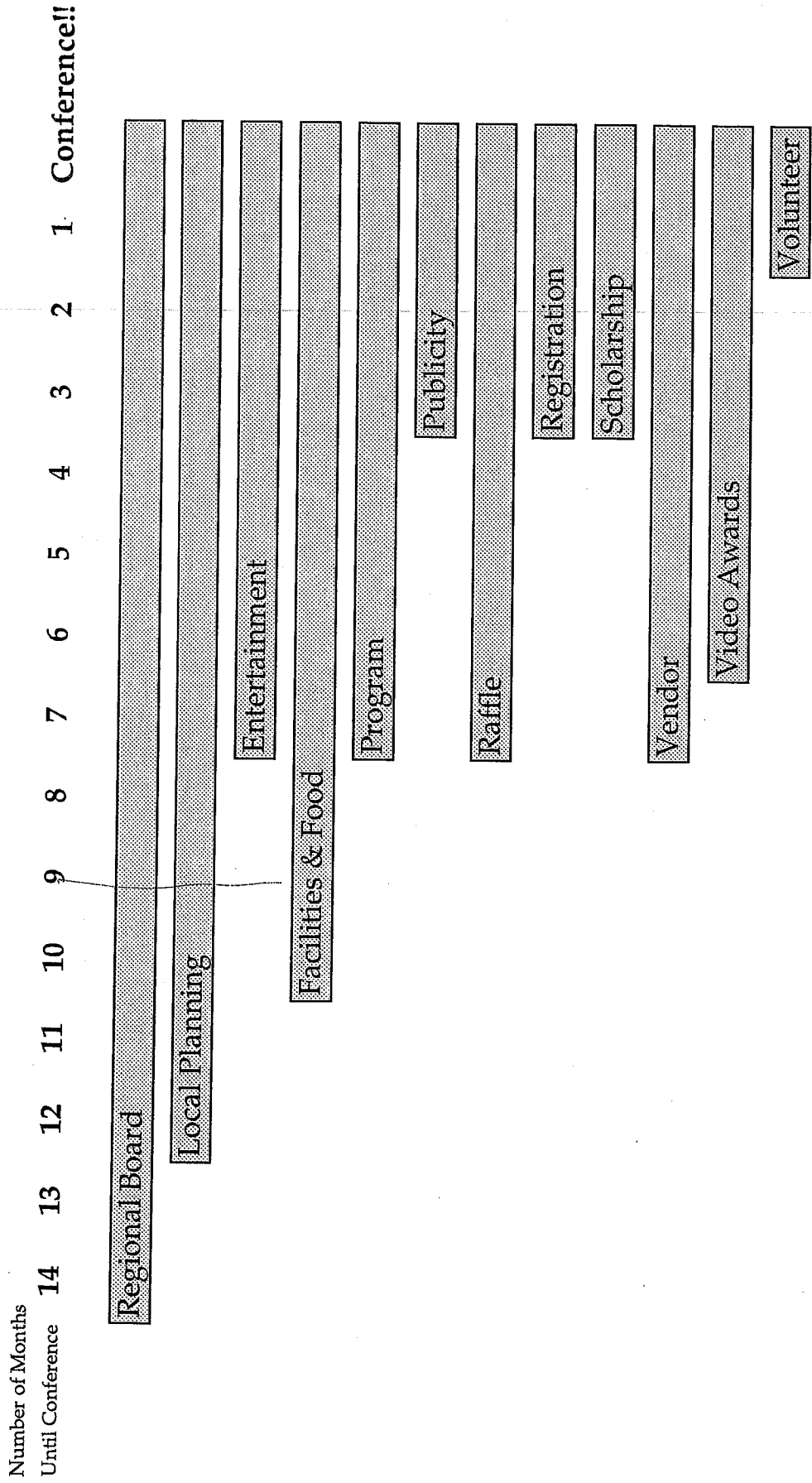
Supervises volunteer activities.

Regional Conference Notes

Helpful Hints for the Program Coordinator

Timeline:	Time to Conference
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Identify Workshop Tracks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a critical exercise. Your committee should consider carefully whether you will be able to draw enough attendees for a specific track to make it worthwhile to put together. 	6 - 7 mo.
<p>If you are trying to reach a specific target group that are not directly involved at Access Centers (educators for example), ask yourself:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> How many targeted workshops would it take to get them to sign up? <input type="checkbox"/> What kind of a concerted publicity plan will you be able to mount to make them aware of this conference? <input type="checkbox"/> Can you do such a campaign in a number of different places in the region? <input type="checkbox"/> Are there specific incentives to offer attendees (like an option to pay for individual workshops or a free video consultation)? <input type="checkbox"/> Can your target group afford the rates you are charging? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Brainstorm specific workshops and potential speakers 	5 - 6 mo.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Brainstorm potential keynote speakers and figure out best way to approach them. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Decide whether you will have a closed circuit channel at the hotel or a viewing room for tapes so that you can invite attendees to share their video work in the upcoming regional newsletter etc. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Create Schedule for workshops <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Work with Entertainment Committee Chair, Vendor Committee Chair, and Hotel Liaison to avoid conflicts and insure time for everything <input type="checkbox"/> Build in breaks for networking & vendor room browsing <input type="checkbox"/> Include time for Special Interest Group Breakout <input type="checkbox"/> Include time for Keynote Speaker 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Recruit speakers by phone 	4 - 5 mo.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Letters of confirmation to speakers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Include a map <input type="checkbox"/> Include a release for taping and distributing <input type="checkbox"/> Include a form for AV needs <input type="checkbox"/> Include a verification of name, address, etc. for correct entries in Conference Program 	2 mo.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Finalize blurbs about each workshop for conference program 	1 mo.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Second confirmation letter to any speakers involved in schedule changes 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Reminder call to speakers the week of the conference 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Prepare evaluation forms for each workshop or for the conference as a whole 	2 - 3 wks.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Thank-you letters after the conference 	

Conference Time Commitment Chart



Regional Board

Responsibilities and Timeline

Responsibilities	Time to Event
Determine conference planning hierarchy (LPC Chair, Regional Board, Treasurer) and decision making process	14 months
Develop a budget and establish finance policies: (with LPC Chair & Treasurer)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open bank account at host site • Establish credit card mechanism • Develop an overall, centralized strategy for revenue income, deposits and expenditures (to include registration, vendors, etc.) • Determine how expenditures are made (approvals, reimbursements, etc.) 	
Establish policy issues:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reimbursement of expenses associated with conference planning (printing, postage, phone calls, publicity, facility deposits, Video Awards plaque ordering, T-shirts, logo design, etc.) • Consider number of out-of-town guests and which expenses will be covered • Consider how many scholarships • Consider compensating host site (hire part-time conference planner?) 	
Select a Theme	8 - 10 months
Set overall Conference Agenda (pre-conference, general plenaries, special events, order of events, number of breakout sessions/tracks, etc.)	
Design a logo	
Determine overall conference policies and program focus	
Design overall conference agenda to include consideration of pre-conference workshops, keynote presentations, special plenaries	5 - 8 months
Design and produce T-shirts	2 months
Decide on other sundry items to sell	

Local Planning Committee

Responsibilities and Timeline

Time to Event

12 months

Responsibilities

Select committees

Appoint committee chairs

Select date and notify National (publicity, ctr, general information reasons)

Select and reserve site

Negotiate contracts

Review all plans with regional board

Credit application (coordinate with Treasurer)

Entertainment Committee

Responsibilities and Timeline

Responsibilities

Party arrangements coordinate with LPC Chair, details (venue, entertainment, liquor licenses, menu)

Video Awards reception, coordinate with video awards committee re ceremony

Create a local guide with alternative events (see samples)

Hospitality issues:

- Special meal events, entertainment
- Tours of local access centers
- Meeting of dignitaries
- Pre-conference welcome at somebody's house

Be prepared to respond to changes in entertainment needs

Time to Event

4-7
months

1-2
months

Facilities and Food Committee (Conference Chair)

Responsibilities and Timeline

Responsibilities	Time to Event
Select and negotiate hotel (see samples and advice)	10 months
Select other venues	
Arrange meals, coffee services (see section on advice)	1-2
Arrange room assignments, configs, signage, a/v (see samples)	months
Liaison with hotel on all matters (who's on master account list (comped guests), who's on the contact list)	
During conference - coffee at registration table for workers? for attendees?	
Be prepared to respond to changes in room, numbers of people attending a workshop (extra chairs), meal needs, equipment needs	

Program Committee *Responsibilities and Timeline*

Responsibilities	Time to Event
Develop tracks (see advice column for details)	4 - 5
Develop workshops	months
Solicit, select and confirm speakers:	3 - 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify a circulation list to include a broad range of access interests. • Distribute final list of tracks and workshops to circulation list for speaker suggestions. • Make final selections of speakers/moderators and contact all speakers via phone - be prepared to answer the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When is conference/workshop? Where is conference being held? Who is sponsoring and who is attending? Who am I speaking with? What is the topic? What are the expectations? What length should my presentation be? How am I to be compensated? (Air, speaker fee, hotel, meals, etc.) • Send letter and conference registration packet to each speaker confirming their appearance, subject(s) and soliciting their A/V requirements (see sample) • Develop final speaker list to submit to Registration Committee for packet • Compile all A/V needs and submit to Facilities Committee 	months
Develop conference/speaker evaluation form to be included in conference packet or in each room (see sample)	1 month
Be prepared to respond to changes in speakers	
Send thank-you note to all speakers	After

Publicity Committee

Responsibilities and Timeline

Responsibilities	Time to Event
Design and print teaser (see samples)	3 months
Design and print brochure (see samples)	
Send to Coastal Access and other relevant publications	
Produce signs (other than Facility signage)	1 - 2 months

Conference Notes

Helpful Hints for the Registration Coordinator

- ✓ Encourage early registration to avoid last-minute deadline crunch and help program and facility committees plan room locations:
 - Set a lower registration rate for those who register up to 2 weeks before the conference.
 - Establish single day rates.
 - Make note of any hotel deadlines for low conference rates.

- ✓ Make sure the following information appears on the registration form (the things that we forgot):
 - Location and hours of registration desk at conference.
 - Statement informing registrants that there will be no written notice verifying registration. Give telephone number and hours where they may call to verify.
 - Stated cancellation policy. Suggested policy of full refund less \$15.00 processing charge if cancellation is made up to 4 days prior to the conference. No refund after deadline.
 - Lay out the workshop and event interest check boxes by day.
 - Have a special check box for special dietary needs, ie. vegetarian.

Registration Committee

Responsibilities and Timeline

Responsibilities	Time to Event
Design registration form for brochure (coordinate with Publicity Committee)	2-3
Receive, process, document registrations and coordinate with Treasurer re: a system for depositing checks	months
Oversee registration table and process at conference (coordinate with Facility Chair and Volunteer Chair)	
Develop accounting strategy for on-site registration and items sold at conference (coordinate with Regional Board, LPC Chair and Treasurer)	
Prepare registration packets and produce name tags.	
Registration desk supplies:	Event
Names; name tags and holders; ribbons for speakers/board/guests/volunteers etc.; cash box; receipt books; extra registration forms; credit card thing; extra cash; check stamp; promotional materials; price lists; for sale items; registration packets; tickets for special events	
Prepare final list of attendees (names, addresses, access centers, etc.) and coordinate with LPC Chair to distribute	
Coordinate with LPC Chair items to be sold at registration table	

Vendor Committee

Responsibilities and Timeline

Responsibilities	Time to Event
Contact potential and appropriate vendors (product and service)	5-7 months
Assemble fact/information sheet (including map/layout of room) about conference/Alliance	
Assemble price sheet	
Negotiate and develop contract with vendors	
Arrange for construction/decoration of booths	
Coordinate with Facility Chair issues of security	
Coordinate with hotel about loading/transport of equipment to vendor room	
Be prepared to respond to vendor thefts, followed by vendor outbursts!	Event

Video Awards Committee

Responsibilities and Timeline

Responsibilities	Time to Event
Arrange for judging sites	
Design Call For Entries form, arrange for printing, and mail	
Arrange site for awards ceremony	
Send timeline and verification letter to judging sites	
Establish procedure for receiving, logging and organizing entries	
Design and print postcard verifying receipt of entries	
Deadline for incoming tapes:	2 months
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Log entries and make copies of entry forms and checks • Label tapes and sort (category number, pro or non) • Send postcards verifying receipt of entries 	
Send tapes and judging packets to judging sites	1.5 months
Solicit host and presenters for awards ceremony	
Send notification letter to finalists	
Design and print awards program	
Order plaques and certificates	
Edit finalists tape for ceremony	.5 months
Organize tapes for pick-up at coordination site	