



Regional Meetings Guidelines and Funding

Objectives

To provide local development opportunities for those interested in the anatomical sciences. The regional meetings will provide AAA members and participants an opportunity to present their scientific and educational research via platform and poster sessions.

The goal is:

- To provide national meeting level programs and benefits to serve members preferring a smaller venue, a place to hone their presentations and network with local colleagues, or that may not otherwise be able to attend the annual AAA meeting.
- Provide local development opportunities for those interested in the anatomical sciences, including high school students, undergraduate students, graduate students, postdocs, faculty and other researchers.
- Increase and diversify AAA membership through outreach to underrepresented minorities via historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) and Hispanic serving institutions (HSIs).

Meeting Guidelines

- AAA regional meetings should be held in a different location from that of the annual meeting and last regional meeting. The same location can be considered for alternate years.
- AAA regional meetings have been typically held during the fall each year so as not to compete with the annual meeting (typically held in March/April), and the program should be designed as a one-day event. The meeting does not have to be in the fall.
- Whenever possible, without detriment to the program's scientific excellence, the meeting should have a balanced gender distribution and include minority and junior faculty/investigators among invited speakers.
- Meeting venues should be easy access and affordable, especially for low-budget labs and primarily teaching institutions. Dedicated poster sessions must be available in the program, with ample time for discussion and exchange of ideas. The meeting should provide plenty of opportunities to increase interaction between invited speakers/ senior investigators and students, postdocs and junior investigators.
- The organizers should include in their program an education session and a professional development component. The Educational Affairs and Professional Development Committees can be resources for these activities.
- Competition Awards should be available for student and postdoc presenters. AAA budgets an additional \$1,000 in competition awards to trainees.
- Website - AAA will host the Regional Meeting website on the AAA website. The website will contain general information about the meeting, agenda, speakers, venue/location, housing options, online registration and abstract submission.
- AAA provides online registration and abstract submission service and a nominal 5% of the collected fees will be incurred to help defray credit card provider charges.
- Marketing – AAA will assist with marketing the meeting by including it in the monthly newsletter and sending 2-3 email blasts. Additional marketing is expected by the local organizers.

Funding Information

- AAA will provide up to \$10,000 USD to assist with all the expenses for the Regional Meeting. The money is sent to the host university as a reimbursement of expenses.
- AAA will provide up to \$1,000 for trainee competition awards. Payable directly to the student winners.
- Speaker travel reimbursement should come out of the budget and no additional money from AAA will be provided. It is highly recommended that the invited speakers be informed of the level of travel/meeting assistance they will receive at the time of invitation. An honorarium for speakers is prohibited.
- AAA will not reimburse for any giveaways to the attendees without prior approval.
- The organizers must set up different registration fee rates for AAA members and non-members, as one of membership benefits, and to encourage attendees who are non-members to join the Society. Students and postdoctoral members should be charged a lower fee to help offset meeting costs.
- The organizers are encouraged to solicit sponsors and exhibitors to help offset the costs. We strongly recommend that the exhibits be located with the posters and/or the food, to promote more visibility and traffic, something the vendors expect at the meeting.
- Meeting report: After the meeting and all the bills and reimbursements are processed, the organizers must submit a financial report to the AAA office. In compliance with auditing requirements, the organizers are advised to maintain good records of the income and expenditures, including receipts, which should be sent to the AAA office.

Application Process

The application must include:

1. The names and contact information of the principal organizers (it is highly recommended co-chairs be identified) and list other potential organizing committee members. The organizing committee usually contains 4 – 6 and includes a student or postdoc. We recommend that roles be assigned to each person such as: Programming (recruitment of speakers, agenda preparation, workshop planning); Site Planning (catering, room booking, poster logistics, signage); Marketing (identifying sponsors, advertisers, vendors, and potential attendees, along with social media presence); and Academics (abstract categorization, judge selection and management, abstract evaluation procedures). The student member will assist with one or more of these roles to gain insight into conference planning. This would constitute the “on-site” organizing committee. To ensure that education and professional development components are represented in the meeting agenda, the PDC and EAC will review the proposal early in the process and provide expertise by helping to suggest and/or invite speakers, as well as provide ideas to the organizing committee in these areas. If possible, a Co-Chair from the prior Regional meeting (to be determined by the current and previous organizing committees, along with AAA staff) will serve in an “ex officio” capacity to provide guidance surrounding the meeting organization.
2. Tentative meeting agenda, including proposed speakers and “theme” (these should also reflect a balanced gender distribution and meet goals of the AAA Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan); plans for educational, professional development, outreach, and awards components; how the meeting will fulfill a purpose and address goals of AAA, including fostering interactions among participants across different educational/career levels. The program could also include workshops providing training and educational opportunities to attendees that they wouldn't normally have access to (or may not have been aware of within the region).
3. List of participating departments at host institution along with other institutions in the area (e.g., universities, colleges, high schools)
4. Anticipated number of attendees

5. Proposed meeting date(s) (must not overlap with other large national/international scientific/education meetings). The first or second Saturday of November has been popular for the past few years, but other dates can be considered.
6. Information on meeting spaces to be used
7. Options for parking, hotel(s), etc.
8. Estimated costs/budget to include items outlined in the list below. Note that AAA will provide \$10,000, so organizers should identify additional sources of funding such as corporate sponsors, journals, or funds from the host or other local institutions. AAA will also provide \$1,000 to cover competition awards. Any money to reimburse speaker travel must come from the \$10,000 budget and/or other sources identified/secured by the local organizing committee, such as vendors, to offset additional expenses.
9. Sponsorship opportunities or exhibits? Potential companies to contact?

Responsibilities:

Institution/location logistics

- Venues (for talks, workshops, posters, reception; one vs. multiple buildings)
- Catering (lunch, receptions, breaks)
- Signage the day of the meeting (within and outside of buildings)
- Parking – do attendees have to pay for parking or will the university waive parking?
- Accommodations (securing hotel(s) at a reduced rate)

Meeting logistics

- Develop a schedule for conference calls or meetings to discuss meeting logistics with the organizing committee
- Provide progress reports to AAA staff (based upon items listed in Appendix A) identifying items that have been accomplished or are still in progress. These reports will be staggered in their submission to AAA, with reports submitted more frequently as the meeting date approaches. For example, if a site is identified two years in advance, quarterly reports would be sent to AAA the first year. In the year leading up to the meeting, reports would be submitted every two months for the first half of the year, followed by more frequent submission of reports (e.g., monthly) in the six months leading up to the meeting. Additional reports may be required as the meeting date approaches and will depend on the progress made in planning the meeting.
- Registration (keeping costs down, tiered rates based upon career level)
- Abstract submission and review (if choosing abstracts for oral platform presentations)
- Talks: A/V equipment and on-site assistance
- Workshops: On-site equipment
- Posters: Identify poster board companies (if not offered by the institution); develop poster size guidelines; recruit poster judges; develop a schedule for judging. AAA has a scoring rubric and judging guidelines to follow
- Develop criteria for poster and platform award competitions and award amount
- Secure/confirm speakers and workshop leaders
- Select session chairs/moderators
- Draft scripts for session chairs, welcome/closing/thank you remarks
- Send reminder emails (for meeting itself, abstract submission and registration, booking hotel, etc.)
- Email participants regarding whether the abstract has been chosen for poster or platform session
- Inform speakers of the level of reimbursement in advance
- Print/assemble name badges for participants (this can be done by the AAA office)

- Create meeting booklet (including abstracts) and distribute to meeting attendees (can be done electronically so that no costs are incurred for printing)

Advertising

- Provide information about the meeting to be used on the AAA and regional meeting website
- Provide information for a meeting flyer to be created by AAA
- Promote meeting via email to colleagues at relevant local institutions
- Advertise internally at host institution (social media, institutional website) and externally (neighboring institutions)
- Promote meeting on Anatomy Network and to any other societies willing to advertise it on social media.

Post-meeting

- Help prepare post-meeting summary (e.g., what worked and what didn't, suggestions)
- Thank you emails (speakers, sponsors, AAA staff)

AAA Staff Responsibilities

Meeting proposal

- Review proposal(s) in conjunction with a specific Regional Meeting Proposal Review Committee or the Board

Advertising

- Write copy for regional meeting webpage and meet with staff about design ideas.
- Create an email blast based on information provided by the organizing committee
- Announce meeting registration on the website, email blast and social media.
- Promote meeting during Annual Meeting in slides and program book.
- Write promo copy and advertise meeting in the newsletter

Meeting logistics

- Have the organizing committee confirm abstract submission categories for website
- Set up online meeting registration and abstract submission pages
- Process registrations and send confirmations to attendees
- Send final reminders to submit abstracts before deadline
- Compile list of submitted abstracts and send to the organizing committee for abstract review
- Order any supplies needed for the meeting
- Create on-site welcome power point slides

Post-meeting

- Help prepare post-meeting summary (e.g., what worked and what didn't, suggestions)
- Update the website with award winners
- Send out follow-up survey to attendees

Questions:

AAA Contacts

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