

## Conference Planning Guide



### Updated December 2022

This document is a guide for planning the Annual Meeting and Conference of the Association for Living History, Farm & Agricultural Museums. ALHFAM appreciates the contributions of many individuals who provided valuable assistance in preparing, editing and updating this Guide.

This Guide and appendices are available on the ALHFAM website, [www.alhfam.org](http://www.alhfam.org)

## So You Want to Host an ALHFAM Conference

**There are many benefits to hosting an ALHFAM conference. ALHFAM is world-renowned, and this reputation imparts a high degree of prestige within the museum community to a host institution, allowing them to show their best to ALHFAM members. The host site usually becomes the site for a field trip during the Conference and provides, plans, and coordinates workshop sessions during the visit. This is your chance to shine! Staff members of the host institution can learn and benefit professionally by having the ALHFAM conference and its workshops at or near their site, and attend sessions and workshops. While these benefits cannot be measured in a quantitative sense, former host sites have been well pleased with the results of their involvement.**

**Host institutions provide much more than a venue for an Annual Conference and should anticipate being deeply involved in every aspect of the planning process. There is a significant commitment of staff time, however, the ALHFAM Board, Treasurer and Committees will help to ensure that your conference is successful.**

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## Conference planning timeline



**1****Site & Date Selection**

**The selection of sites for the Annual Meeting & Conference (“Annual Conference”, “Conference”) is made by the Board of Directors, based on recommendations from the Future Sites Committee. The committee solicits and evaluates proposals from interested host institutions and makes its recommendation to the Board. Proposals normally include a recommendation for the Conference Chair. The Board also appoints a Board Liaison to each Conference Planning Committee.**

**Selections of host sites are usually made three years in advance; approved by the Board at its fall meeting; then approved by membership in attendance at the following Annual Conference. It is strongly advised that a proposal (in the form of a written letter of commitment from the host institution’s governing body) be obtained at least three years prior to the start of the conference. Many factors are considered in making a recommendation to the board. Some of these include regional location, concentration of members, and economic considerations. The Future Sites Committee is charged with balancing a desire for regional diversity with economic and attendance considerations.**

**It has been a tradition for the annual conference to “return home” every 10 years to Old Sturbridge Village, where ALHFAM’s founding meeting was held in 1970. The Future Sites Committee is advised to confirm this intent with site administration at OSV well in advance.**

## Conference Committee

**Every successful conference needs an active organizing committee so form a working group early, and agree who does what. Below are the main responsibilities of a typical organizing committee. Assignments may vary based upon the skills and expertise of members.**

**Conference Chair** manages the overall running of the conference, including overseeing planning, financial accounting, implementation and reporting. They are the main liaison to the ALHFAM board but they are supported in the organizing and decision making process by subcommittee chairs. Familiarity with ALHFAM and attendance at previous conferences is essential.

**Program Chair** manages the call for presentations and determines the mix of workshops, presentations, panels and field trips for the conference. The Program Committee works with the Local Arrangements Committee to decide which session will take place in which locations. The Program Committee also works with the Finance Chair and the entire conference committee to arrange for presenter gifts for each presenter. Familiarity with ALHFAM and attendance at previous conferences is essential.

**Local Arrangements Chair** arranges for conference facilities including venues for the workshops and sessions, field trips, auction, accommodations, transportation, meals, refreshment breaks, and all other support options required for speakers, registrants or other participants.

**Promotion & Communication Chair** coordinates all conference publicity, advertising, promotions, and sponsorships. This includes all electronic and print media.

**Finance Chair** consults with the ALHFAM Treasurer to determine bookkeeping processes for the conference. The Finance Chair works with the other Chairs to develop the conference budget and negotiates financial contracts needed for the operation of the conference.



Sub-committees can help distribute the workload!

## Conference Committee

- ❖ Selects Conference date and approves conference theme.
- ❖ Makes assignments, sets meetings of the committee and enforces deadlines for all conference-related tasks.
- ❖ Establishes partnerships with other cultural/educational institutions critical to both the implementation and financial success of the conference.
- ❖ Provides written and/or oral reports to the ALHFAM Board meetings at six-month intervals, beginning two years before the conference date and ending six months after conclusion of the conference.
- ❖ Establishes conference budgets in conjunction with the other committees and oversees the process of handling funds by the Finance Chair and/or host institution and ALHFAM Treasurer.
- ❖ With the Program Chair, organizes and implements conference registration. Works with the ALHFAM Webmaster to set up electronic registration through the ALHFAM website.
- ❖ Provides referrals for a *Proceedings* Editor to the ALHFAM Communications Committee.
- ❖ Coordinates evaluation of the conference, both through evaluation forms completed by conference attendees and through post-conference analysis by the conference committee.
- ❖ Maintains a file in the ALHFAM Google workspace with all official reports to the board and conference documents.

## Program Committee

- ❖ Recommends conference theme to the Conference Chair.
- ❖ Determines the mix of workshops, presentations, panels and field trips for the conference, and coordinates with the Local Arrangements Chair for inclusion in the conference schedule.
- ❖ Creates and distributes “Call for Proposals.” Acknowledges receipt of proposals, organizes sessions, determines schedule, and confirms participation by all presenters.
- ❖ With the Conference Chair, organizes and implements conference registration including pre-registration, final program, financial responsibilities, e-mails and web postings, etc. Works with the ALHFAM Webmaster to set up electronic registration through the ALHFAM website.
- ❖ In conjunction with Local Arrangements Chair and venue, assigns meeting rooms for specific presentations.
- ❖ Oversees the creation of the Conference Program and ensures accuracy of session information.
- ❖ Coordinates audio-visual needs of sessions with the venue and Local Arrangements Chair. Establishes budget for audio-visual rentals if required.
- ❖ Orients presenters and session moderators with respect to conference expectations: beginning and ending times of sessions; formats; and other expectations.
- ❖ Coordinates with the ALHFAM *Proceedings* editor to solicit papers by program participants for inclusion in the *Proceedings*, **including author release forms**.
- ❖ Works with the Board’s Membership Chair to coordinate the mentorship program that matches first-time attendees with experienced conference goers. The registration page should have an opportunity for people to sign up to mentor and be mentored. A short survey of interest can be sent to both groups to match compatibility.
- ❖ Arranges for speaker’s gifts and coordinates their distribution.



## Local Arrangements Committee

- ❖ Usually appoints a sub-committee to assist with the design, organization and implementation of conference details related to local arrangements and works closely with the Conference Chair and Program Chair to assist in the development of theme, structure and schedule of the Conference.
- ❖ Arranges for facilities to accommodate various aspects of the Conference, including lodging, venues for workshops, sessions, meetings, social and networking events, meals and refreshment breaks.
- ❖ In conjunction with the Program Chair, plans field trips, off-site activities and arranges transportation for these activities.
- ❖ Works with the other Chairs to prepare the conference budget.
- ❖ Provides travel recommendations and directions (airline, train/bus routes, airport shuttles, driving directions, etc.) to be included in the Conference Guide. Determines if it is feasible or economical to coordinate ground transportation or ride-sharing options.
- ❖ Along with the Promotions & Communications Chair, contacts local businesses or distributors to secure sponsorships or donations for various events wherever it seems appropriate.
- ❖ Recruits and assigns volunteers to assist with the Registration desk and other areas.
- ❖ Coordinates logistics for the Hospitality Room.

## Promotion & Communication Committee

- ❖ Coordinates all conference publicity, advertising, promotions, and sponsorships.
- ❖ Ensures that all printed and electronic materials reflect ALHFAM's standard branding guidelines, available on the ALHFAM website.
- ❖ Works with the Local Arrangements Chair and Program Chair on the design and implementation of conference theme and artwork, and the Registration Guide.
- ❖ Ensures that details related to theme, local arrangements, cost, structure and schedule of the Conference are accurately promoted and publicized to the general membership of ALHFAM and other likely interested parties through available and appropriate media, including the ALHFAM Website, *Bulletin*, eUpdate, social media and other electronic means.

- ❖ Establishes a marketing plan and ensures Conference promotions are integrated into the ALHFAM *Bulletin*, website, blog and social media. (NOTE: All conference information should link to the conference page on [www.alhfam.org](http://www.alhfam.org))
- ❖ Ensures that the conference is properly announced and advertised with other related museum and professional affiliates (AASLH, AAM, CMA, MOMCC, etc.) and educational institutions including local universities, high schools, and the general public.
- ❖ Works closely with local Convention & Visitors Bureaus (CVBs), the local/state/provincial Office of Tourism and the local museums and cultural attractions community to help promote the conference.
- ❖ Solicits and secures vendors for the Vendor's Marketplace.
- ❖ Works closely with the rest of the Conference Committee to promote conference fundraising and development efforts.
- ❖ Serves as the public relations representative for the Conference Committee
- ❖ Develops, distributes and summarizes Conference and Session evaluation forms.

### Finance Chair

- ❖ Works with the other Chairs to develop the conference budget.
- ❖ Works with the Local Arrangements Chair and Program Chair to negotiate all financial contracts needed for the operation of the conference. Maintains all the contracts and ensures that the agreements are abided by.
- ❖ Assists the Local Arrangements Chair and Promotion and Communication Chair to provide administrative support for all conference sponsorships and donations
- ❖ Works with the ALHFAM Board Treasurer to determine accounting processes for the conference, including payment of deposits and invoices as well as receipt of donations, sponsorships and advertising revenue. Often the host institution provides this function by setting up a dedicated account within their accounting system, with an advance from ALHFAM. If this is not possible, the Treasurer can pay invoices directly (advance notice required) Although the Conference Chair is ultimately responsible for the financial health of the conference, the Finance Chair is responsible for submitting a final report of conference finances.
- ❖ Ensures that the conference (and ALHFAM) is protected by sufficient liability insurance.

## Board and Committee Responsibilities

**Future Sites Committee** provides general assistance and guidance to the Conference Committee from the time of site selection to the delivery of the conference. Includes members with past conference planning experience.

**Marketing & Membership Committee** oversees the Mentorship program and pairs first-time attendees with an experienced mentor.

**Auction Committee** coordinates the annual auction, set-up and logistics in conjunction with the Local Arrangements chair.

**President** presides over the Annual Business Meeting and serves as host for the Presidential Banquet.

**Treasurer**, in conjunction with the Finance Chair, determines bookkeeping procedures for the Conference. Manages receipt of payments from the auction.

Current committee contact information can be found on the ALHFAM website:  
<https://alhfam.org/admin-cmtes>

## Conference Overview

The dates for the Annual Conference are to be selected by the Conference Chair, through discussions with the Local Arrangements Chair, the host institution and the conference office of the university, hotel, or other facility chosen as the conference venue. ALHFAM annual conferences run four full days, usually alternating two days of presentations and meetings with two days of site visits. Usually a day of optional professional development workshops is offered prior to the start of the conference, and sometimes a day of optional post-conference tours/visits is also offered.

SAMPLE 5 DAY SCHEDULE					
	DAY 1 *	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5
MORNING	Workshops & Study Tours (Optional)	Welcome Keynote Address Concurrent Sessions Vendor's Hall	Site Visits (Partner Sites)	Concurrent Sessions Vendor's Hall	Host Site Visit Plowing Match Town Ball
LUNCH		Regional Meetings		Annual Business Meeting	
AFTERNOON		Concurrent Sessions		Concurrent Sessions Professional Interest Group Meetings	
EVENING	First Timer's Reception Salted, Smoked & Pickled	ALHFAM Auction	Dinner	Presidential Banquet Awards Fashion Show	Closing Reception

\* ALHFAM Board Meeting takes place 1-2 days prior to Conference start

ALHFAM values hands-on skills development and participatory learning. Program sessions should offer a blend of knowledge sharing, best practices and hands-on workshops.

## Annual Business Meeting

The bylaws of ALHFAM state: “An Annual Meeting of the members to conduct ALHFAM business shall be held no later than June 30 of each year.” This meeting takes place during the Annual Conference and must be incorporated into the overall schedule. Allow 90 minutes so that the full range of business and committee reports can be completed.

The bylaws require notice to all members “at least 30 days in advance” regarding the time and place of the Annual Business Meeting. The Conference program should incorporate this notice in some form to ensure that this bylaw is followed.

## Planning Tips



The ALHFAM bylaws stipulate only that “the Annual Meeting be conducted no later than June 30 of each year”. Conferences have traditionally been held during the months of April to June, with mid-to late June the norm. Considerations such as climate (e.g. heat in southern areas) and availability of conference/housing facilities may occasionally result in conferences held earlier than June,



Select a date that avoids overlap with the conferences of other major organizations, such as the American Alliance of Museums, the Canadian Museums Association, the American Association for State and Local History, etc.



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## Local Arrangements



**2 years before.** Lock in dates and sign contracts for key bookings including hotel and venue rentals, catering, transportation arrangements etc.

**18 months before.** Determine schedule of off-site tours and excursions, negotiate fees and consider these expenses in the overall budget.

**1 year before.** Solicit and start booking vendors. Confirm sponsorship opportunities and advertising with Marketing & Promotions Chair.

**8 months before.** Finalize descriptions of tours and site visits, social and networking events for the conference guide. Confirm menus with caterers.

**1-2 months before.** Recruit volunteers with local knowledge to assist at the Registration table, serve as “bus captains” etc.

**2 weeks before.** Registration closes. Finalize numbers for meals, site visits etc.

**1 day before.** Load in all materials required for registration table

## Selecting a Venue

The Conference Chair, with input from the Local Arrangements Chair and the host institution, is responsible for selecting the site(s) where the conference will actually occur. Universities are often chosen for the affordable facilities and accommodations they have available. However, a number of successful conferences have also been headquartered at commercial hotels and/or conference centers. It is important, however, to remember the ALHFAM tradition of frugality, both in regard to venue selection and in the general course of conference budgetary planning. Since most ALHFAM member institutions are small, low-budget organizations, and since many individual members attend our conferences at their own expense rather than with institutional support, conference planners are encouraged to avoid high-cost options in order to keep our conferences as accessible as possible to as many members as possible.

It is advisable to compare bids from multiple venues in your area based on their ability to provide the following:

- ❖ Group room block at a discounted room rate and a variety of rooming options (e.g. single to quad)
- ❖ Banquet room for meals, keynote address, auction, annual business meeting
- ❖ In-house catering or restaurant
- ❖ 3-6 breakout rooms for concurrent sessions, regional meetings and professional interest group meetings
- ❖ Registration/information desk
- ❖ Secure storage for auction items
- ❖ Hospitality suite
- ❖ Secure space for vendors and their products. Ideally should be large enough so that vendors can set up and then leave their products that way with the room secured when not open for conference attendees.

## Meals

Traditionally, meals are included in the cost of registration throughout the ALHFAM conference, from the opening reception through the closing night banquet, and sometimes breakfast on the day of departure. Occasionally, if the attendees are in an area with multiple restaurants, lunch or dinner on one day may be clearly designated as “on your own” either to save some money in the budget; provide choice, variety, and local flavor; or for logistical reasons; or all of the above.

- ❖ When calculating the number of people at each meal, keep in mind that many attendees leave before the final dinner, and probably less than half will remain by the next morning.
- ❖ Include meal options where selections are required on the registration form.
- ❖ Some attendees may have allergies or special dietary restrictions, which should be reasonably accommodated. Discuss options with caterers and

provide room on the registration form where attendees can specify their dietary restrictions/preferences.

## Travel Information

Participants will be eager to book travel arrangements as early as possible so be sure to include details about airport(s), train or bus stations most convenient to the conference and recommendations for public transportation options (shuttles, cabs, etc.) to the venue.

- ❖ Contact shuttle companies to see if you can secure preferred rates.
- ❖ Provide accurate GPS location of the conference venue for those driving to the conference, as well as parking information. Outline any parking fees or permits required.

## Transportation

Bus transportation provided during the conference for site visits can be quite costly. To save money, consider grouping site visits with motor coaches used for longer trips but using school buses for local shuttling between sites, for example. Minimum and maximum numbers for professional development tours is also wise.

## Site Visits

Site visits provide an opportunity to introduce attendees to other museums, attractions and cultural sites in your region and are a good way to bring in partner organizations. Factoring in travel, meals, on-site activities etc., takes a fair degree of planning so start early.

## Social & Networking Events

The Local Arrangements Chair is responsible for arranging the venue, food and program/entertainment for the following social and networking events.

**Reception for First-Time Conference Attendees** provides an opportunity for first-time attendees to be greeted by the President, the Board, and the Membership Chair and is held immediately prior to the "Salted, Smoked and Pickled" opening reception. It can occur in a space close to the "Salted, Smoked and Pickled" reception in order to take advantage of the same setups, but a separate room for the reception is preferable.

**Salted, Smoked and Pickled** is a reception the first night of the conference featuring local and regional foods, many of which are brought by members. It is often sponsored by the region in which the conference is held and features foods of that region. Conference attendees are encouraged to bring foods from their own regions,



subject to applicable customs and importation regulations. That said, donated foods are often lacking, so arrangements for a catered meal (or at least heavy appetizers) should be made as well.

**Hospitality Suite** ALHFAM annual conferences typically include a “hospitality suite” where attendees can gather in the evenings for conversations over libations. Sometimes the conference committee or donors provide snacks and soft drinks. Attendees typically bring more potent drinks to share.

With local regulations on public drinking and college campus restrictions regarding the consumption of alcohol, making arrangements for such a venue is increasingly challenging. Sometimes a large private room has been designated or a near-by off-site house rented for this purpose. If a hospitality area cannot be arranged, however, at least provide attendees with suggestions of near-by bars where those who wish to socialize can gather.

**Presidential Banquet** is traditionally the most formal event during the Conference, and is an occasion at which many attendees opt to wear period clothing. An address by the Past President occurs every other year (the year after the new president has been elected). During alternate years, when the Past President’s address is not scheduled, some sort of program or entertainment may be provided. The President of ALHFAM traditionally takes the role of emcee during this event.

The Presidential Banquet is also typically the venue of the presentation of the John T. Schlebecker Award and the Pete Watson Skills Award. The President of ALHFAM will inform the Conference Chair if awards will be presented that year.

Most attendees wear either business attire or period clothing to the banquet. An announcement to that effect should be included in the registration materials and program schedule. Time should be allowed between the day’s programming and the Banquet to allow attendees to change for dinner on this night. An optional period fashion show is often planned (working with the Historic Apparel and Textiles, or HAT, Committee) during the evening for members who wear their period clothing or who just want to participate.

**ALHFAM Forum** An optional one-hour “town hall”-style meeting is often incorporated into the schedule of the conference. This provides conference participants an organized, but informal, opportunity to discuss topics of interest and/or concern directly with members of the ALHFAM Board. This can take place at the main venue or during a site visit if sufficient space can be found. Coordinate with the ALHFAM President to see if this will take place.

**Annual ALHFAM Auction** is a lively social event and a significant fundraiser for ALHFAM. The program consists of both a live and a silent auction. Background information on the auction and details on how to register and bid should be clearly outlined to all attendees.

The Auction Committee will work with the Local Arrangements Chair to coordinate logistics and setup required for the event. Plan on the Auction lasting from 90 minutes to 2 hours. Complete details can be found in the Auction Planning Guide.

Typically, the Conference Committee is responsible for:

- ❖ Accepting and registering donations items at the registration desk.
- ❖ Identifying a secure room, near the Auction venue, in which to store auction items prior to the auction.
- ❖ Arranging for a PA system, chairs for attendees, tables for auction items, and a bar at the auction site.
- ❖ Receiving delivery of items that may be shipped in advance of the conference.
- ❖ Confirming that there is Wi-Fi at the auction venue for processing electronic payments.
- ❖ Coordinating with the Auction Committee to ensure the proper and secure handling of cash after the auction.
- ❖ Soliciting donations of auction items from vVendors.

**Vendors' Room (Optional)** provides a space for vendors to exhibit products and services of interest to ALHFAM members at the conference. This activity is popular but optional and could be scheduled for only a portion of the time during the conference. If a vendors' area is to be provided, plan carefully so there is ample opportunity for conference attendees to visit the vendors during the time they are present.

Things to consider:

- ❖ Solicit vendors or artisans from your local area, ALHFAM Business members or those who provide services to museums.
- ❖ Provide a registration form and submission deadline.
- ❖ Determine the number of spaces available and set registration fees per table or booth. (NOTE: Vendor privileges are a benefit for ALHFAM Business Members, and fees should be waived for them)
- ❖ Select a location that is close to regular activities so attendees will have easy access to the exhibitors. Easy access for loading in and out is recommended, as well as parking.

**Committee Meetings** The ALHFAM Regions, Professional Interest Groups and certain Administrative Committees require time to meet during the conference. This can be coordinated with the ALHFAM President and Vice President and scheduled to encourage participation by as many interested registrants as possible, since active committee life and networking are important aspects of ALHFAM's mandate.

## Local Arrangements Tips



This is your chance to highlight your local area from theming, to food, to museums and cultural attractions. The ALHFAM membership has a wide-range of interests - be creative in developing your program.



During the planning process, consider doing a “dry run” of field trips and other excursions in order to assess drive times, parking, rest stops etc.



Local arrangements include a lot of moving parts! Consider bringing others in to assist with planning and logistics.



Assume that all participants are included in all meals. Do not try to separate specific groups. That said, very often some people leave early, so numbers for final dinner and breakfast on the day of departure are often reduced. Consult with previous conference hosts for advice.

## 3

## Program

**When determining the program theme and content, consider recent past programs in order to provide program variety and to provide for the development of appropriate ideas and topics from year to year.**

- ◆ **12 months before.** Release the Call for Proposals at the prior year's conference and post a link to it on the ALHFAM website. Solicit workshops, panels and presentations from Regions and Professional Interest Groups, as well as staff, students and subject matter experts from your local area.
- ◆ **7 to 8 months before.** Deadline for session proposals. Be certain to send plenty of reminders ahead of time. Locking in these details is crucial to launching registration on time. The Program Committee reviews submissions and makes selections.
- ◆ **6 months before.** Create the program schedule ensuring a balance of subjects and interests (e.g. administration, interpretation, collections management, traditional skills etc.) and delivery formats. Send written confirmation to the selected presenters.
- ◆ **5 to 6 months before.** Prepare session descriptions for inclusion in the conference guide including session title, presenter name(s) and a brief description.
- ◆ **2 to 3 months before.** Confirm AV requirements and create room assignments. Arrange presenter gifts.
- ◆ **1 month before.** Recruit and assign volunteers to serve as session monitors. Program Committee works with Marketing & Promotions Chair to create session feedback forms.
- ◆ **After the conference.** Thank presenters for their participation and remind them to submit a copy of their presentation to be included in the *Proceedings*.

## Selecting a Theme

While a theme is normally chosen for the Annual Conferences, it need not be considered an essential feature. If a theme is selected, however, consider how it can be presented from several viewpoints. Appropriate keynote speakers, other speakers or panelists, or even field trips, site visits or social events can help to flesh out a theme. Conference planners are encouraged to develop themes that have universal appeal and connections to a large cross-section of the ALHFAM membership.

Once a theme has been determined, work with a graphic designer to create a conference logo. This will be used on the ALHFAM website, conference programs, registration and promotional materials, signage, T-shirts, and possibly tote bags and other conference related items. **The conference logo supplements and does not replace the regular ALHFAM logo and branding guidelines.**

## Professional Development Workshops

Professional Development Workshops have proven to be valuable and desirable additions to the Conference program. The inclusion of such programs allows the program to be extended one additional day, facilitating cheaper airfares for Conference registrants, while providing greater opportunity for more in-depth workshops on specific topics. Typically, these workshops are coordinated and sponsored by standing committees of ALHFAM and by the host site or sites. Providing a list of resources, facilities and amenities available at the conference or host site is helpful for those submitting session proposals (e.g. hearths, stoves, trades shops, access to livestock, classroom spaces etc.).

Professional Development Workshops and thematic tours of local sites of interest are often held the day before the formal conference program begins. Others may be integrated into the "regular" program. Consult past programs for examples and ideas.

## Helping Hands Project

The Helping Hands project that is done on the Professional Development Workshops day. This is planned by the Collections, Preservation and Registration professional interest group chair in coordination with the Conference Chair and Program Committee Chair. The collections-focused project is hosted by a local historical organization (it can be the host site, if they need this kind of help), who is asked to provide lunch, beverages, and snacks for the CPR volunteers. The Helping Hands project is usually limited to 10 people, and the description asks for those who have hands-on collections management experience. A stipend to cover supplies and transportation can be requested from the ALHFAM Board.

## Keynote Address/Plenary Session(s)

A keynote address is typically scheduled for the first day of the conference and serves as an official welcome. It is also an opportunity to introduce attendees to some local history or context. Past participants have included historians, academics, Indigenous knowledge keepers and storytellers.

A letter of agreement will provide the terms of their participation (e.g. date, time location, fees or honorarium), a request to include their paper in the Proceedings for publication, and permission to record their presentation, if appropriate.

## ALHFAM Proceedings

Papers, presentations, and workshops presented at each Annual Conference are gathered for publication in the ALHFAM *Proceedings*. The ALHFAM Communications Committee will work with the Conference Committee to appoint an editor (or editors) and layout designer very early in the development of the Conference.

The Editor will work with the Program Chair to coordinate the acquisition of submissions of presentations, written permissions to publish, and for collecting these papers during or after the Conference. While the *Proceedings* is copyrighted, the author retains the copyright to his/her own work and is free to reprint his/her paper in other publications.

The Editor is responsible for establishing a conceptual framework and organization for the publication, either drawn directly from the organization of the Conference, or from common themes in the available papers. In consultation with the Program Chair, the Editor will also write an introduction to the publication, explaining the overall theme and organization of the ALHFAM *Proceedings*.

The Editor reviews all articles, establishes a format for design of the publication, and proofreads all material at various stages throughout the production of the *Proceedings*. The Editor will work with the chair of the Communications Committee and/or previous editors for advice on standard formatting, as well as production sources. The final responsibility of the Editor is to coordinate the production of the publication and ensure a professional and high quality product. When ready, usually within a year of the conference, the Editor works with the ALHFAM Webmaster to post the *Proceedings* on the ALHFAM website and coordinate on-demand printing options.

Submission guidelines for the *Proceedings* are available on the ALHFAM website.

## Audio-Visual Needs

Audio-Visual requirements can be requested on the “Call for Proposals” form. However, equipment rentals and technical support will add significant costs to your budget, especially if being provided by the conference venue. Careful scheduling, encouraging presenters to bring their own laptops, and recruiting volunteers to help with tech support may help to reduce costs.



Remind presenters to bring back up copies of their presentations (e.g. cloud, USB, google drive etc.) in case they encounter any compatibility or other technical issues.

## Virtual Programs

Conference planners may wish to include virtual sessions as part of the regular conference schedule or at another time of year. ALHFAM maintains a Zoom account for this purpose. Although a virtual program involves fewer local arrangements, be sure to allow plenty of planning time to solicit presentations, determine technological requirements and set-up registration. The expectation remains to document or archive presentations in the ALHFAM A.S.K. database with either a summary or link to the presentation being included in the *Proceedings*.

## Program Planning Tips



When creating the conference program schedule, ensure a balance of interests and avoid scheduling sessions that might compete with one another in the same time slot.



The deadline for session proposals is a key date in your planning timeline, and delays in finalizing the program will have an impact on your readiness to open registration. Reminders about the deadline should be publicized on a regular basis. It is helpful to work with Regional representatives and Professional Interest Group chairs to send updates through their social media channels.



Go green! Instead of printing the Program Guide or schedule, create a QR code so that attendees can scan the program directly to their smartphone.



Encourage presenters to consider accessibility of digital content by adding captioning to videos content.



## 4

## Budget

**Creating a detailed budget is a vital part of the planning process, but there can be a fair bit of guesswork involved. So begin with a conservative budget, and scale as you go.**

- ◆ **18 months before.** Establish a preliminary budget taking into consideration all fixed and variable costs. Negotiate contracts with vendors and suppliers.
- ◆ **12 months before.** Solicit donations (monetary and in-kind), sponsorships and advertising.
- ◆ **8 months before.** Finalize registration and workshop fees. Final budget submitted to the ALHFAM Board for approval at their fall meeting.
- ◆ **6 to 8 months before.** Discuss management of conference expenditures with ALHFAM Treasurer. A \$3000 start-up loan is available for deposits or other related expenses.
- ◆ **6 months before.** Provide pricing information to the ALHFAM Webmaster (usually submitted with the Conference Program Guide).
- ◆ **1 month before.** Confirm payment process for the Auction with Treasurer and Auction Committee..
- ◆ **After the Conference.** Reconcile all payments and provide a final financial report to the Board no later than the fall Board Meeting.

<b>Sample Budget</b>				
	per person	125	150	200
<b>Revenue</b>				
Advertising		\$500	\$500	\$500
Sponsorships		\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
Registration	\$450	\$56,250	\$67,500	\$90,000
Workshop revenue <sup>1</sup>	\$75	\$3,125	\$3,750	\$5,000
Start-up loan		\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
<b>Total Revenue</b>		<b>\$64,875</b>	<b>\$76,750</b>	<b>\$100,500</b>
<b>Fixed Costs</b>				
Facility rentals		\$6,500	\$6,500	\$6,500
Transportation <sup>2</sup>		\$8,000	\$8,000	\$10,000
Workshop costs		\$2,188	\$2,625	\$3,500
Administrative costs		\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
Start-up loan		\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
<b>Variable Costs</b>				
Food & beverage (hotel)	\$140	\$17,500	\$21,000	\$28,000
Opening Reception	\$35	\$4,375	\$5,250	\$7,000
Presidential Banquet	\$50	\$6,250	\$7,500	\$10,000
Site Visit - Day 1	\$40	\$5,000	\$6,000	\$8,000
Site Visit - Day 2	\$60	\$7,500	\$9,000	\$12,000
<b>Total Costs</b>		<b>\$62,313</b>	<b>\$70,875</b>	<b>\$90,000</b>
<b>NET TO ALHFAM</b>		<b>\$2,563</b>	<b>\$5,875</b>	<b>\$10,500</b>

<sup>1</sup> Workshop attendance estimated at one-third of total conference attendance

<sup>2</sup> Additional buses required at higher registration numbers

## Registration Fees

Reduced conference registration is a perk for ALHFAM Members. The non-Member rate should be set to include the cost of a 1-year membership. Membership revenue is included in the ALHFAM operating budget and should not be included as conference revenue.

## Program Budget Considerations

The Program Chair, with the authorization of the Conference Chair and Financial Chair, will determine whether or not to offer honoraria, waive registration and/or accommodation fees or offer traveling expenses to speakers as part of the conference budget. As a general rule, however, ALHFAM does not waive costs or provide financial remuneration to ALHFAM members who contribute to the program. However, at the discretion of the Conference Chair, such consideration may be offered, particularly to non-member speakers or participants who are contributing to the conference in some significant way, such as keynote speakers. Contracts should be written for any paid presenters and should include permission for publication of their papers in the Conference *Proceedings* and in the ALHFAM A.S.K. database. Presenters at workshops should not be expected to pay the registration fee for the workshop in which they are involved.

## Auction Proceeds

Note that the funds resulting from the Auction are donations to the ALHFAM treasury and are not to be used to balance the books for the conference. They are separate funds. A standing Auction Committee handles the financial and many practical arrangements of the Auction, coordinating with the Local Arrangements Chair as necessary. Auction income and payments of those funds to the ALHFAM treasury shall be noted in the Conference's final financial report on a separate line.

## Sponsorships

Donations and sponsorships can result in significant savings to the conference and, ultimately, to ALHFAM members. Here are some suggestions on who to approach for donations and sponsorships:

- ❖ Host Institution(s) to sponsor special program activities, meals, and entertainment while at the host site.
- ❖ Friends or auxiliary organizations of the host institutions for similar support
- ❖ Grants from municipal governments and/or visitor bureaus to support conference expenses.
- ❖ Foundations or museum granting agencies that could underwrite costs of specific sessions or keynotes.
- ❖ Food service companies for discounts/donations on catered meals during site visits.
- ❖ Beverage companies, including soft drink, water, beer and wine vendors (subject to local regulations), to supply hospitality rooms and for site visits.
- ❖ Local and national businesses relevant to ALHFAM: farm equipment suppliers, fabric vendors, etc.
- ❖ Reach out to previous conference advertisers as well as those in regional ALHFAM publications.
- ❖ Museums and sites visited for waiver of admission and facility use fees.
- ❖ Transportation companies, including discounts or donations for airport shuttles, buses for site visits or van rentals.
- ❖ Airline companies for conference discounts, complimentary tickets for keynotes, and other assistance.

If working with a college or university conference office, be sure to check with them to see that donations of food or drink used on their site do not violate their regulations.

Donations can mean a significant savings to the conference and, ultimately, to ALHFAM members. Businesses that contribute should be recognized in publicity, at the event, and with a thank-you letter.

## Budgeting Tips



The Annual Meeting & Conference is an important part of ALHFAM's annual income. Any surplus revenue is welcome, but a surplus of at least \$5,000 is the goal.



Review budgets from the last few years' conferences to gain a sense of costs. Attendance estimates can be based on attendance at past conferences in the region.



Reduced conference registration is a perk for ALHFAM Members. The non-Member rate should be set to include the cost of a 1-year membership. Membership revenue is included in the ALHFAM operating budget and should not be included as conference revenue.



Assume that all participants are included in all meals. Do not try to separate specific groups. That said, very often some people leave early, so numbers for final dinner and breakfast on the day of departure are often reduced. Consult with previous conference hosts for advice.



The value of in-kind contributions should be indicated in the final report to give other planning committees an accurate reflection of conference costs.

## 5

## Registration & Promotion

**Traditional pre-conference mailings have generally given way to emails and other forms of digital promotion. All electronic postings should always be clear and professional, incorporating ALHFAM and conference logos as appropriate.**

- ◆ **6-7 months before.** Finalize all program details required for the registration guide.
- ◆ **6 months before.** Design and layout of the registration guide. The final draft should be sent to the ALHFAM Communications Manager for proofreading. Allow 1-2 weeks for review. Next, send the registration and pricing details to the ALHFAM Webmaster to prepare registration page.
- ◆ **4 months before.** Post the final PDF of the registration guide on the ALHFAM website. Early bird registration opens. Fellowship applications solicited and reviewed by the Fellowship Committee.
- ◆ **4 to 6 weeks before.** Early bird registration ends.
- ◆ **2 weeks before.** Registration closed. Final numbers confirmed with venues and caterers.
- ◆ **2 weeks before.** Prepare name tags, delegate lists and registration packages/tote bags.

## Conference Program Guide

Include as much detail as possible in the program guide to assist conference attendees in their planning, especially those who may never have attended an ALHFAM Conference. Be sure to include information details about the venue, transportation, accommodation, program offerings, social events and pricing. The guide is also the opportunity to acknowledge sponsors, vendors and organizing committee members.

The guide should be professionally designed so as to be both attractive and easily used. The final document will be uploaded as a PDF on the ALHFAM website on the Conference page. Encourage attendees to print a copy at home to bring with them to the conference. Alternatively, you can provide a QR code linking to the program guide on Conference signage and at the Registration desk for easy scanning and access.

## Registration Form

The ALHFAM Webmaster is responsible for setting up the conference registration and payment portal on the website from the information provided by the Conference Committee. Content copy can be provided in a Worddocument but proofread carefully to ensure the document is error-free. It is the responsibility of the Conference Committee to ensure the accuracy of all content.

## Promoting Your Conference

Social media opens up many opportunities to promote and build excitement about your conference. The Conference Committee should work closely with the ALHFAM Webmaster and Communications Committee to post regular conference “teasers” and updates through the eUpdate, ALHFAM Blog and social media channels. (Twitter, Instagram, Regional and Professional Interest Group Facebook pages). Also consider promoting to others who may be interested in attending, such as museum studies programs, regional museum associations and other kindred organizations.



All promotional and registration materials must be sent to the Communications Manager for proofreading and review before being posted on the Website. Please allow 1-2 weeks for turnaround.

## Fellowships

The ALHFAM Board approves a limited number of Conference Fellowships for those who would like to request financial assistance to attend. Fellowship applications are reviewed by the Fellowships and Awards Committee.

## 6

## Conference & Follow Up

**3 weeks before.** Prepare wayfinding and registration desk signage

**2 weeks before.** Assign volunteers to help with Registration Desk, session monitoring, hosting, bus captains, etc.

**The moment you've been waiting for!** It will be a hectic several days for the committee but take the opportunity to appreciate the rewards of a job well done. Committee members should be on hand during meals and other gatherings to provide updates on housekeeping matters including bus departure times, location updates etc.

**After conference.** Email evaluation forms to participants, thank sponsors and partners, prepare final conference report and financial reconciliation. **Take a vacation! Seriously, you deserve it.**

### Registration Desk

This is one of the key elements of a successful Annual Conference. Planning for and staffing the Registration Desk is the responsibility of the Local Arrangements Chair. The Registration Desk must be established at the Conference venue in a convenient location. It must be staffed at all appropriate times by adequate numbers of knowledgeable people trained to answer questions and address concerns. Desk staff is typically paid or volunteer staff of the host institution(s) who are familiar with the conference schedule, the local area and the lodging arrangements.

The Conference Chair and/or Local Arrangements Chair should be present but should manage rather than attempt to staff the registration desk. Arrangements for the receiving of auction items should be part of the Registration desk staffing. A map of the local area should be provided at the registration desk, noting the closest available stores, restaurants and other items of interest.

### Evaluation & Feedback

Feedback is beneficial for presenters, future conference planners and the ALHFAM Board. Session and overall conference evaluation forms can be emailed to attendees using tools such as Google Forms or Survey Monkey, with a summary of results included in the final conference report.



## Appendix A: Sample Call for Proposals



## Annual Meeting & Conference

June 23-28, 2022  
Tacoma, Washington

Remaining relevant in a fast-paced, technology-driven society can be a challenge for heritage organizations. To address this hurdle, ALHFAM members have found creative ways to draw new audiences to their sites, programs and other educational venues. During the conference, we want to prioritize discussions about diversity, equity and inclusion at cultural institutions and the role living history will play in future museum interpretation.

At this conference you will have the opportunity to take tours, join discussions, attend workshops and learn from experienced panelists about best practices for attracting audiences and building programs to serve our new, ever-changing public. We invite everyone interested in living history to Tacoma, the “City of Destiny,” and Fort Nisqually Living History Museum for ALHFAM’s annual Conference and Meeting.

What is YOUR vision for **The Future of the Past**?

We solicit your proposals for workshops and sessions that address diversity, equity, and inclusion at cultural institutions and the role living history will play in future museum interpretation. *The conference committee is planning two full days of workshops and will prioritize workshops over sessions.*

## ALHFAM 2022 PROPOSAL FORM

**Presenter/Chair:** Each workshop or session must have a person responsible for the organization and management of the program including logistics, requests for materials and equipment, communication with participants and the conference hosts, and leading the session. ALHFAM will only contact the chair.

**Time:** Workshops or sessions are 45 or 90 minutes. Workshops can also be half-day or full-day. Please include time for questions and answers.

**AV, Internet and Room Arrangements:** Chairs/Presenters must submit AV and room arrangement requests to the conference program chair AT LEAST TWO WEEKS BEFORE THE CONFERENCE (Lane Sample, [lanes@tacomaparks.com](mailto:lanes@tacomaparks.com)). Wireless internet will be available in the session rooms. LCD projectors will be available, but they may not be compatible with Macs.

**Registration Fees & Cost:** Chairs, presenters and panelists must register for the annual meeting for the day on which they speak unless they only attend their session. ALHFAM does not pay travel costs or honoraria for session chairs or panelists.

**Do you have a unique idea for a workshop format or session? Contact us, and we will try to accommodate your ideas.**

**Program Title:**

**Program Format:**

Workshop

Full day

Half day

Session/Panel

45 Minutes

90 Minutes

Pre-Recorded

**Submitted by:**

**1. Program Abstract (150 words maximum):** *This is your opportunity to "sell" your program to the Program Committee. Describe the program, how it relates to the conference theme and what makes it unique from other sessions.*

**2. Outcomes – Workshops only (100 words maximum):** *What will attendees gain, learn, or be able to do after attending your workshop?*

*Provide name of session/workshop chair or presenter and all participants along with title, institution/company, address, phone*

**PROPOSAL DEADLINE December 15, 2021**

To submit a proposal, complete the 2022 proposal form and email it to [lanes@tacomaparks.com](mailto:lanes@tacomaparks.com) with "ALHFAM Proposal" in the subject line. You may also mail the form to Lane Sample, Fort Nisqually Living History Museum, 5400 North Pearl St STE 11, Tacoma, WA 98407

## Appendix B: Sample Vendor Application



### Vendor Application

Thank you for your interest in being a vendor at the 2022 Association for Living History, Farm and Agricultural and Museums Conference & Annual Meeting. Bring your product and connect with ALHFAM members and Living Historians in our vendor rotunda!

**About the Event:** From June 23-28, Fort Nisqually will host the international ALHFAM Conference & Annual Meeting which includes workshops, tours, speakers & presentations. Participants will come from around the world to attend this unique professional conference.

The goal of the 2022 ALHFAM Conference is to explore how heritage organizations can remain relevant in our fast-paced, technology-driven society. Highlights of the Conference will include creative ways to draw new audiences to heritage sites, programs, and other educational venues; discussions about diversity, equity and inclusion at cultural institutions and the role living history will play in future museum interpretation; tours, round table discussions, workshops, and industry panels about best practices for attracting audiences and building programs to serve our new, ever-changing public.

**How to Apply:** Vendors can apply online at [alhfam.org/2022-Conference](http://alhfam.org/2022-Conference).

**When and where:** The vendor hall will be in the Rotunda at the [Murano Hotel](#) in downtown Tacoma, WA on Friday, June 24 and Sunday, June 26, 2021.

	Friday, June 24	Sunday, June 26
Open to conference attendees	8am – 5pm	8am – 4pm

**Vendor Tables, Electricity, Internet Access, and Security:** The Murano Hotel will provide 10 ft. tables, table skirts and chairs. Electrical access is limited. Vendors requiring electricity must indicate this on the application. WiFi is available throughout the hotel. The Rotunda is locked when there are no events in the building, but vendors are encouraged to remove valuables when not staffing tables.

**Due Date and Acceptance:** Applications are due by May 15, 2022. Vendors will be accepted on a first come, first served basis.

**Advertise in the Conference Program:** Reach conference attendees in our digital and print Conference programs. Ad rates start at \$125. Contact [fortnisqually@tacomaparks.com](mailto:fortnisqually@tacomaparks.com) for more information.



### Vendor Application

Apply online at [alfam.org/2022-Conference](http://alfam.org/2022-Conference).

Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City State Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact email: \_\_\_\_\_

	ALHFAM Business Member with Conference Registration	\$50
	ALHFAM Business Member w/o Conference Registration	\$100
	Non-ALHFAM Business Member with Conference Registration*	\$100
	Non-ALHFAM Business Member w/o Conference Registration*	\$150

*\*An annual ALHFAM Business Membership is included with all non-member vendor fees.*

Do you need electricity? Yes  No

Provide a description of products or services:

## Appendix C - Sample Sponsorship Request

ASSOCIATION FOR LIVING HISTORY, FARM AND AGRICULTURAL MUSEUMS  
JUNE 21-25, 2014 • HERITAGE PARK HISTORICAL VILLAGE • CALGARY, ALBERTA CANADA

### 2014 Annual Conference Sponsorship and Advertising Opportunities

From June 21-25, 2014, the Association for Living History, Farm and Agricultural Museums will come to Western Canada for the first time in 23 years. This is your opportunity to connect with this active group of museum professionals. Administrators, curators, and front line staff at history museums across Canada and the United States have relied on ALHFAM for over 40 years for leadership in historic preservation and interpretation. The special needs of outdoor history museums, museums focusing on agriculture, and museums that utilize living history techniques have brought together a knowledgeable and dedicated group eager to share skills and information. We hope that you will be interested in supporting the organization and connecting with its audience.

#### SPONSOR A CONFERENCE EVENT

Excursion to Southern Alberta .....	COMMITTED
Presidential Banquet at the Gasoline Alley Museum, Heritage Park .....	COMMITTED
Farewell Dinner at Bar U Ranch .....	\$ 1,000
Keynote Address.....	\$ 500
Coffee Breaks on Sunday or Tuesday.....	\$ 300
Hospitality Suite.....	\$ 250
Be a conference supporter!.....	\$ 50

Sponsors at/over the \$1,000 level will receive a complimentary full page advertisement in the conference program; sponsors at the \$250 to \$500 level receive a quarter page advertisement in the conference program. **All supporters will be recognized throughout the conference.**

#### ADVERTISE IN THE CONFERENCE PROGRAM

The professionally designed and printed booklet will be published in the spring of 2014 and sent to 1,000 members and 500 museum organizations and contacts. Space will be reserved for commercial services and suppliers of products useful to the membership of this specialized audience.

- Quarter Page Ad ..... \$60
- Half Page Ad ..... \$100
- Full Page Ad ..... \$175

Book your advertising space now. Prices in effect until November 1, 2013. There will be a \$25 late fee after November 1, 2013. All ads due no later than December 15, 2013 for publication.

**For information about this opportunity, contact Susan Reckseidler, Conference Chair at 403.268.8559 or via email at [sreckseidler@heritagepark.ca](mailto:sreckseidler@heritagepark.ca)**



HERITAGE PARK  
EST. 1950



**ALHFAM**  
The Association for Living History, Farm and Agricultural Museums

## Appendix D - Registration Worksheet

### Fields to include on the Registration Form

- Name
- Pronouns
- Name as you wish to appear on name badge
- Institution
- Address
- Phone
- Emergency Contact Name
- Emergency Contact Number
- Are you a first time attendee?
  - If so, would you like to be paired with a mentor
- I am interested in mentoring a first-time attendee
- I would like to volunteer during the conference (auction, session moderator etc.)

### Additional Fields As Required (e.g.)

- Presidential Banquet meal selection
  - Option 1: Chicken
  - Option 2: Beef
- Field Trip
  - Option 1
  - Option 2

### Photo consent

ALHFAM Photography Release

Check the box to indicate you have read and agree to the terms of the Photography Release.

<http://www.alhfam.org/Conference-Photography-Release>

### Pricing Details

ALHFAM Member - Early Bird Registration      \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Non-Member - Early Bird Registration      \$ \_\_\_\_\_

ALHFAM Conference Planning Guide

ALHFAM Member - Regular	\$ _____
Non-Member - Regular	\$ _____
Single Day - Member	\$ _____
Single Day - Non-member	\$ _____
Add ons:	
Workshop Option 1	\$ _____
Workshop Option 2	\$ _____
T-Shirt	\$ _____
Size SM M L XL	

## Appendix E - Auction Planning Guide

The ALHFAM Auction is not only one of the key social events at the Annual Conference but also a significant fundraiser for the organization. Typically held on the second evening of the conference, following dinner, the event consists of both a silent and a live auction. The Auction sub-committee of the Board is responsible for organizing and executing the auction in cooperation with the Conference Planning team.

- ◆ **8-12 months before.** Auction Committee reaches out to the Conference Chair and Local Arrangements Chair to confirm venue and set-up requirements, as well as date and timing of the event.
- ◆ **4 months before.** Remind attendees about the auction and encourage them to bring items for the auction or ship them to the host site in advance. Confirm and track receipt of items that are shipped.
- ◆ **1 month before.** Recruit / assign volunteers to assist with the auction, including the auctioneer.
- ◆ **2 weeks before.** Auction committee sends supplies to host site.
- ◆ **During registration.** Items for auction received at the Registration Desk and securely stored until set up begins.
- ◆ **Day of auction.** Volunteers assist committee with moving auction items to the venue, selection of items for live and silent auction. Allow 2-4 hours for set up.
- ◆ **Let the bidding begin!**



## Choosing the Venue

The best auction locations have a secure storage room nearby, are well-lit, are large enough for the participants and lots of silent auction tables, have an integral or adjacent bar, have a sound system and are located at the host university or hotel, not off-site. Ideally, the Auction Committee should have access to the space with plenty of time to set up and without having to miss too much of the conference.

## Room Layout

- Table & chairs (3) for payment table located near the entrance
- Table and chairs (2) for recording table located at the front of the room
- Live Auction tables (2-4)
- Silent Auction tables (4-8)
- Microphone & podium for Auctioneer
- Cash bar
- Banquet style seating for attendees
- Wi-fi access

## Supplies

- Bid Numbers (printed on cardstock, estimate numbers based on registration)
- Auction Slips (2-part NCR forms)
- Printed Receipts (for those who request "official" donation/purchase receipt)
- Silent Auction bid slips
- Golf pencils & small pencil sharpener
- Tape and/or sStapler (used to attach Silent Auction Bid Slips onto Auction Slips)
- Straight pins (for attaching forms to textile items)
- Pads of ruled paper (2)
- Calculators (2)
- Square Reader for phone or tablet (for credit card payments - Treasurer to bring)
- Box Cutter (for opening boxes that have been shipped)
- Cash box or pouch (1-2) Small cash float with \$1's and \$5's

## Timing & Duration

It works well to schedule the Auction in conjunction with dinner and a cash bar. You may wish to have the silent auction items open for bidding and live auction items available for previewing during meal service, with the live auction to follow. Allow an hour to 90 minutes for the live auction, with time allowed for bidders to make their payments before leaving. Timing may need to be adjusted depending on when the venue needs to be vacated.

## Receiving & Processing Auction Items

When gathering objects at the registration desk, it is advised to group like things in boxes, i.e. books, shirts, reproductions, etc. Don't over-pack the boxes because they are then hard to move.

Make sure the volunteers at the registration desk know how to tell people to fill out the auction forms. Make copies of the handout included at the end of this guide and provide examples of the auction forms for reference. A volunteer will need to open the items shipped in advance and complete the auction forms. Store items in a secure storage room until you are ready to set-up the items. Anticipate that some donors will bring their auction stuff the night of the auction. Be prepared with forms at the payment table.

## Volunteers

A request for auction volunteers can be included on the registration form. The Auction Committee will also recruit volunteers. As the set-up takes place during the afternoon, these volunteers need to be willing to give up going to sessions or a site visit. Find an auctioneer or two. It's essential that they can keep the pace lively and moving along. Let the Auction Committee know who has volunteered: the committee will assign tasks.

How many people do you need?

- Setting up silent and live auctions (4-5)
- Cashiers (2-3)
- Recording Table (2)
- Auctioneers (2)
- "Vannas" to show-case live auction items (2-3)
- "Yeppers" to watch for bidders during the live auction (3-4)
- Silent auction closers (1-2 per table)
- Clean up: as many as possible

## Setting up Live and Silent Auctions

The Auction Committee will work together to decide which items will go in the live auction, and those for the silent auction. There are no hard and fast rules, but given 60 minutes in an hour and perhaps a minute to two minutes per object, 40 to 45 objects per hour for the live auction is a good estimate. Depending on how much time you have, pick out 60 to 70 items. Sometimes it's good to let the auctioneer(s) take a look at all the items, because they might find something that they would like to auction for one reason or another. Tell the auctioneers and Vannas about how many objects they will have to get to, and remind them of the 1 - 2 minute per object pace.

Keep track of valuable objects. In the past, some things have “disappeared” before the auction.

The Silent Auction changes a bit depending on the venue, so remain flexible. Organize the tables by type of object if possible. Place a 2-part bid sheet and a pencil with each item. All silent auction items need to be arranged so that people can see and write on the bid slips.

## **Bid Numbers**

Bid numbers are sold for \$1 from the payment table located near the entrance. Cashiers record the name and a cell number or room number for each bid number.

## **Beginning the Auction**

It is a good idea to have someone explain the objective and rules of the auction and possibly even auction lore. Station committee members or helpers near the silent auction tables to help bidders and to make sure they put their number in the right place and their bid in the right place.

## **Recording Table (Live Auction)**

Staff the Recording Table with two people. As an item is about to go up for sale, a Vanna will bring the auction form to the table. On sheets of lined paper, one person records the object description and the winning bid, followed by the winning number. The other person records the winning bid number and then the amount on the auction form. The auction form copy is taken to the winning bidder with the object. The top auction form copy is retained, and as they accrue, they are taken to the payment table. Then they are sorted in bid number order and integrated with the forms from the silent auction items.

## **Closing Silent Auction Tables**

You will have to decide when and how the silent auction tables will close: all at once or sequentially. Once the tables are closed, the committee will close out the bid slips by circling the last bid and bid number. The bottom copy of the auction form remains with the item. The top copy of the auction form is transferred to the payment table. The payment table volunteers will sort them according to bid number and integrate them with live auction item forms.

The Auctioneer announces that bidders need to check the silent auction tables to pick up items they won. Bidders should bring the bid sheets and auction forms with them to the check out table.

## Payment

Set up the check-out table with three people. The person in the middle will have the credit card reader. The person on one end will handle bid numbers 1 – 100, and the person on the other will handle 101 – 200 (or however it breaks down). Both of the end people should have a cash box or pouch (with the cash from sales of the numbers), a calculator, pens, and the stacks of auction forms arranged by bid number.

As each buyer checks out, the cashier totals the auction forms for that number. Payment can be made by cash, credit card or check (payable to ALHFAM) Mark the auction forms PAID.

Occasionally, winning bidders will leave before the end of the auction, or they will overlook an item that they won. Outstanding payments can be tracked down using the bidder's phone number or room number, or an announcement can be made the following day.

## Closing the Auction

The Treasurer is responsible for counting the cash, credit card sales and checks. They will need to deposit the checks and cash into the ALHFAM account. Credit card sales go directly into the ALHFAM PayPal account. Unsold or unclaimed items can be sold the next day or transferred to a regional meeting for their auction.

### Auction Tips



How many items can you expect? This depends greatly on whether people are flying or driving or there is a large registration from the local sites. You can estimate each person will bring 2 to 6 items. An estimate of the number of items determines the number of tables needed.



Provide shipping instructions and a contact name for those sending auction items by mail or courier. Keep a list of people from whom you've received shipped items so you can answer the inevitable question, "Do you have the stuff I shipped?"



Request secure storage for auction items near the registration area, preferably close to the auction location. Assign someone to have the key or arrange access with the venue.



Avoid outdoor venues, tents or public spaces for the auction. Allow plenty of room for viewing items.



Check for local regulations regarding volunteer or unlicensed auctioneers

### **Conference Registration Desk Instructions for Receiving Auction Items**

When someone comes to the registration desk with auction items:

- Provide the donor with an auction form for each item
- Ask them fill out the form (refer to examples)
- Attach the form to the item: place the form inside books, pin forms to textile objects, and use tape for everything else
- Sort items into boxes:
  - Books
  - Clothing
  - Reproductions
  - Antiques
  - Food
- Auction items that were shipped in advance will be in the storage area.
- The committee will have a list of all the packages of auction items received, so you can answer the question “Do you have the stuff I shipped”.