

Written by : Geoff Harrison 6/6/07
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ASSOCIATION OF OUTDOOR RECREATION AND EDUCATION
Conference Policies and Guidelines

1. Selection of Conference Hosts

The Board of Directors of the Association of Outdoor Recreation and Education (AORE) shall select the organization that will host the annual association conference.

The Board shall approve the Conference Operating Budget. Budget is to include all expenses necessary to run the annual association conference. Conference budget will need to be developed in a manner consistent with the format provided in **Appendix A**.

Budget items will include, by way of example, the following items:

- AORE repayment
- pre and post conference workshops,
- marketing expenses to plan, promote, and run the conference
- entertainment fees (speakers, slideshows, music, etc.)
- meals and catering
- venue rentals
- audio/ visual equipment
- printing conference promotional materials, name tags, and conference packets
- postage, phone and fax service
- related administrative expenses
- commemorative items
- transportation
- tent city

2. Conference Site Selection Criteria

In selecting an organization to host the annual conference, the BOD will take the following criteria into consideration to ensure that the host organization has:

- a dedicated group of at least 3 or 4 AORE professionals who are strongly committed to putting on a successful conference
- a good understanding of expected conference outcomes (participation, logistics, fiscal responsibility, etc.)
- potential to generate a high volume of volunteers to assist in putting on the conference

In selecting a host site for the annual conference the BOD will review site to measure quality of the conference location and facilities to identify if the site will foster a sense of community by providing central and comfortable lodging, meeting and dining areas which adequately accommodate conference attendees. Considerations will include spatial design and traffic flow that encourage networking, informal interaction and conversation.

To access these needs, the BOD will ensure that the following criteria is met to ensure that the selected site offers:

- proximal access to major centers for commercial public transportation (air, rail,

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bus)

- proximal access to major interstates for private transportation
- easy access from the nearest major or regional airport, preferably no more than one hour away and a low or no cost to attendees
- offers adequate lodging options at or near the conference site that meet the historic room rates and that accommodate the volume of conference attendees
- offers a minimum of 7 meeting rooms (preferably under one roof) which will comfortably accommodate 40 to 80 people per room
- a site that offers a large room capable of holding all conference attendees (450 to 600) to be used for banquets, keynote speakers, and other activities involving all conference participants
- a large open and visible area for vendor exhibits that can be secured during off-hours which is located near the main flow of conference traffic
- a large central area for registration, career center, presenter relations and general conference information
- catering service capable of handling all meals served during the conference with the capability of providing traditional, vegetarian and possibly vegan meals
- an on-site conference facility coordinator to handle communication and troubleshooting between the Host Committee and conference site staff

3. Purpose of the Conference and Targeted Audience

The primarily purpose of the conference is the exchange of ideas and information between individuals involved in not-for-profit outdoor recreational and educational programs. The target audience as described in the AORE Mission Statement includes the following: college, university, community, military and not-for-profit outdoor recreation and education programs. Promotional materials about the conference should be oriented to these groups.

4. Diversity Statement

The conference is open to all interested individuals. No conference attendee will be discriminated against on the basis of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability or professional affiliation.

5. Fiscal Management

The preferred method is that all conference income and expenses shall be run through the AORE National Office. With BOD approval, the conference host may run all conference income and expenses through an account established by and appropriately monitored by their university or organization. In such cases, the Host must have the capability to accept credit cards and on-line registration. Settlement of Repayment to AORE must be completed by Host within 180 days after the completion of the conference.

6. Conference Fee Structure

The annual conference is the primary fundraiser for the association. The net revenue generated at the conference provides the financial means by which the association

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annually serves the membership. It is critical that the conference is successful in generating the required minimum approved repayment to AORE. The conference registration fee structure shall be approved annually by the Board of Directors, and shall include the minimum approved repayment to AORE. It is recommended that the Board not increase fees by more than ten percent (10%) above the previous year's rates, except with extenuating circumstances. Current approved rates are the following.

Professional Member Pre-registration	\$175
Professional Member Regular Registration	
Professional Member Late Registration	\$225
Professional Non-member Pre-registration	\$265
Professional Non-member Regular Registration	
Professional Non-member Late Registration	\$310
Student Member Pre-registration	\$ 95
Student Member Regular Registration	
Student Member Late Registration	\$125
Student Non-member Pre-registration	\$145
Student Non-member Regular Registration	
Student Non-member Late Registration	\$160
Exhibit Booth Pre-registration	\$450
Exhibit Booth Regular registration	
Exhibit Booth Late Registration	\$600
Additional Representative Fee	
Advertiser Conference Packet Stuffers	\$250

Day Rates, individual meal rates for spouses or friends of conference participants, and other conference rates shall be established by the Conference Host and approved by the Board.

7. Conference Registration and Refund Policies

The following policies should be reproduced plainly on the conference and vendor registration forms. It is recognized that the National Office may grant exceptions to this policy in cases where it may cause undo hardship on the registrant.

- Administrative Changes: AORE reserves the right to change the conference schedule and program offerings prior to and/or during the conference period.
- Conference Membership Policy: The annual AORE conference is only available to individuals who are current with their annual association membership dues. Conference attendees who register at the member rate but are not members and/or current in their annual dues will be charged the non-member rate and will be

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charged for an annual membership. Non-members of the association must join AORE in order to attend the conference. By registering at the non-member rate the registrant will receive an annual membership.

- Conference Cancellation Policy: All refund requests must be made in writing to the AORE National Office. A refund minus 25% will be provided if the request is received by AORE on or before October 1st. A refund minus 50% will be provided if the request is received between October 1st & October 15th. No refunds will be provided after October 16th.
- Institutional/Organizational Membership: Allows an Institutional or Organizational Member to register three (3) non-AORE members to attend the annual AORE Conference at the member's rate. These same individuals may also enroll as a member of AORE for a 20% discount off of the normal professional and/or student membership rates.
- Affiliate Relationships: AORE will (based on current Memo of Understanding between the Association of Outdoor Recreation and Education and the National Intramural Recreation and Sports Association) honor Professional and Student registrants at the member rate who are a documented current member of NIRSA. Registrants who ARE NOT on the list of current members provided by NIRSA will automatically be charged for an AORE membership when they register for the conference.
- AORE, as a service to its members, prints the contact information for all attendees in the conference schedule as a means of promoting networking amongst our membership. A box must exist on the registration form that offers attendees the opportunity to NOT have their contact information be printed in the conference schedule.

8. Conference Fee Waivers

Fee waivers and/or other benefits may be approved by the Board of Directors or the Board's designee (i.e. Conference Host) for organizations or individuals who: 1) provide an important educational service to the conference; and/or 2) provide other services of value to the conference or Association including but not limited to publicity, good-will, or donated labor, equipment or supplies. The value of services donated must, at a minimum, exceed the value of the registration.

Policies governing conference fee waivers are the following:

- The Conference Host or the AORE Board of Directors may waive conference registration fees for guests, vendors, and/or sponsors that contribute substantially to the conference. Such waivers should be limited and provided only after careful considerations by the Host & BOD.

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- Conference registration fees at the Associate level should also be waived for keynote speakers or providers of special programs, association office manager, and a reasonable number of members of the host committee and their volunteers. Waived fees for service providers such as keynote speakers should be documented in their contract for services.
- All fee waivers shall be documented, including detailed explanation and clarification.
- Conference fees are NOT to be waived for presenters of pre/post conference workshops and/or regular educational sessions offered at the conference.

9. Event Sponsorship Information

AORE vendor members have the opportunity to become recognized conference sponsors. Unless otherwise noted, the rates for conference sponsorships include the standard vendor booth space and attendance for one representative plus the additional benefits mentioned within the specifications of the sponsorship level. Any benefits or exchanges for services that lie outside of these designations must be approved by the BOD prior to the host committing to the sponsorship.

Sponsorship Level: Everest Sponsorship Fee: \$4,500

- Premier 15' x 20' booth adjacent to the central stage
- Registration for one additional representative
- Free one year AORE Vendor Membership
- Company logo and link on registration website
- Public recognition at opening and closing ceremonies
- One page ad in the bimonthly newsletter
- Five minutes of projected continuous loop imagery, supplied by vendor, to be shown in vendor hall before awards ceremony and at dinner social
- Option for vendor representative to assist in the live student auction
- Two company banners at dinner social
- Vendor catalogs placed in conference packet
- Sponsorship fee provides for one student membership

Sponsorship Level: Aconcagua Sponsorship Fee \$2,750

- 10'x 10' vendor booth
- Registration for one additional representative
- Free one year AORE Vendor Membership
- Company logo and link on registration website
- Public recognition at opening and closing ceremonies
- One page ad in conference schedule
- Half page ad in bimonthly newsletter
- Option for vendor representative to assist in the live student auction

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- Vendor catalogs placed in conference packet

Sponsorship Level: Denali Sponsorship Fee: \$2,250

- 10'x 10' vendor booth
- Registration for one representative
- Company logo and link on registration website
- Public recognition at opening and closing ceremonies
- Half page ad in conference schedule
- Quarter page ad in bimonthly newsletter
- Vendor catalogs placed in conference packet

Sponsorship Level: Kilimanjaro Sponsorship Fee: \$1,750

- 10'x 10' vendor booth
- Registration for one representative
- Company logo and link on registration website
- Public recognition at student auction
- Quarter page ad in conference schedule
- Quarter page ad in bimonthly newsletter
- Vendor catalogs placed in conference packet

10. Scholarships

Policies governing scholarships provided to conference attendees are the following:

- Scholarships for conference attendance shall be established and managed by the BOD or the Board's designee.
- The availability of such scholarships shall be provided to the Conference Host in sufficient time to be included with the conference registration materials.
- All scholarship recipients must be members of AORE.
- The conference host will be reimbursed by AORE at the pre-registration cost for each scholarship attendee unless the conference fees are handled through the AORE National Office.

11. Board Expenses

The Conference Host is responsible for the logistics/ costs associated with providing a meeting room for the BOD meetings that proceed the conference. The Host is not responsible for any expenses related directly to the Board of Directors' personal expenses; such as travel to the conference, hotel and/or board members' registration fees.

12. Conference Dates

Policies governing the dates of the conference are the following:

- Whenever possible, the main portion of the conference shall take place during the time period between November 1 and November 15. The exact dates shall be a part of the Conference Host's proposal and approved by the Board.

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- Every effort should be made on the part of the Board and the Conference Host to assure that the date of the conference does not conflict with other major outdoor related conferences (i.e. Association of Experiential Education, Wilderness Risk Manager's Conference, etc.)
- The Conference Host is responsible to make sure the conference dates do not conflict with major local events (other large conferences, fairs, sporting events, etc.) which might utilize needed motel/hotel space or facilities in which the conference will be held.
- Pre/ Post conference workshops may be held earlier/later in the week of the conference as determined by the Conference Host. Unless otherwise agreed upon, the main portion of the conference should start no later than Thursday morning and end on Saturday Evening.

13. Conference Theme. The conference theme for each conference is established by the Host and approved by the BOD.

14. Liability and Risk Management

The Board of Directors and Conference Host will work together to appropriately address liability, risk management, land use permits, and insurance concerns related to conference activities.

15. Smoke-free Environment

Activities of the conference should take place in a smoke-free environment.

16. Environmental Awareness

If at all possible, food and drinks should be served in reusable or recyclable materials. All waste materials from the conference should be recycled when such facilities are available.

17. Meals

At least three meals, including one evening meal, should be a part of the conference registration fee. Vegetarian and, if possible, vegan food options should be available to those attendees who request such meals in advance.

18. Accessibility

All major conference facilities and bathrooms must be fully accessible to individuals with physical disabilities. Reasonable accommodations should be made to ensure an inclusive conference environment.

19. Promotional Materials

Conference Hosts should insure that the AORE name and logo are clearly depicted on all conference materials. Promotional materials should clearly indicate that the conference is oriented to those involved in not-for-profit outdoor recreational and educational programs as identified by the Association's Mission (college, university, community, military and not-for-profit outdoor recreation and education programs). All promotional material

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should be reviewed by the Board's conference liaison. Information on AORE and membership benefits, services and opportunities shall be included whenever appropriate.

20. Duties of the Board of Directors and AORE's National Office

The Board of Directors shall provide support and assistance to the Conference Host by providing the following direction and actions.

- AORE's National Office Manager will provide the Conference Host with mailing labels for vendor and conference mailings. The office manager will send out information to AORE members via email, post updates and conference materials on the Association's website, provide membership forms and other helpful materials.
- The AORE Board of Directors shall be responsible for organizing, staffing, and providing proper written requests (preferably using standard conference forms) for all of the Association's presentations and exhibits at the conference, including but not limited to:
 - AORE Town Hall Meetings (At least two, one-hour sessions)
 - Committee Work Sessions
 - AORE Annual Business Meeting (At least two hours, non-competitively scheduled)
 - Student Business Meeting (At least one hour scheduled in advance of AORE Annual Business Meeting)
 - Conference Site Selection Meeting
 - Orientation to AORE session (First scheduled educational program)
 - AORE Awards Program (Short--15 minute presentation of AORE awards)
 - Student Career Center
 - AORE General Information Booth
 - AORE Presenters' Relations Table
 - Information Sharing Table (For AORE members to display program brochures, etc.)
 - Student Scholarship Auction
 - Take a Student to Lunch
 - Facilitate National Book Awards Auction per requirements of MOU

21. It is recognized that the Association has contracts--written and implied--with other groups and organizations to provide services at the conference. The Board will provide advance written documentation to the conference host of any individuals for which the registration fees are being waived--or of any exhibitors that are being provided free booths. The Board will make a concerted effort to have such groups and organizations provide proper written documentation, on the required standard conference forms, of their displays and presentations to the conference host.

Such groups may include, but are not limited to:

- National Outdoor Book Awards

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- Leave No Trace
- Western Regional Outdoor Leadership
- National Intramural Recreation and Sports Association
- Wilderness Education Association

22. Conference Host: Communication with the Board & Membership Updates

The Conference Host will provide updates on the progress of conference during the board's regularly scheduled conference calls. The Conference Host will provide articles for the Association's newsletter, web articles and listserv postings to keep members abreast of conference planning.

22. Pre and Post Conference Workshops

Pre and post conference workshops have proven to be a strong revenue generator for the association because the conference provides the membership with a central location to obtain high levels of technical training during a condensed time period. The Conference Host is required to solicit and obtain vendors who will provide workshops and seminars that will benefit the membership. Pre and post conference providers benefit by presenting at the conference because they gain an enormous amount of exposure and a significant fiscal reward for their investment.

Pre and Post conference providers are required to be members of AORE prior to providing services. Each workshop will be priced so that they are self-supporting and to generate a surplus for AORE. Providers net 70% of the advertised workshop price. AORE retains the remaining 30%.

- The Conference Host will obtain signed contracts for service from all pre and post conference providers.
- The Conference Host is required to provide the logistical support for pre and post conference providers. This may include : room arrangements, audiovisual, or the transportation necessary to provide such workshops. Any associated costs must be included in the advertised price so that the 70:30 ratio is maintained
- Minimum enrollment levels should be established in the contract by the workshop provider so the workshop is financially viable.
- Workshops which do not reach the minimum number of participants required to break even may be cancelled and a full refund offered to any registrant who has paid in advance.
- Conference host must notify provider of workshop enrollment 21 days prior to conference so that provider can choose to offer/ cancel low enrollment courses.
- All pre-conference workshops must end prior to the beginning of the main conference's open session. All post conference activities must start after the close of the conference.

23. Board & Committee Meeting Space

The Conference Host shall provide a meeting room (large enough for approximately 15-20 people) two days prior to the conference, during the conference, and the day after

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the conference to be used for AORE Board of Directors meetings. The Conference Host will also provide adequate space for AORE committees. If costs are involved in providing the space, such costs should be considered a conference expense.

24. Contracts

Contracts are required with keynote speakers, special presenters, caterers, and pre and post conference workshops providers. These contracts will include a clause that allows the Conference Host to cancel the service should registrations not reach a break-even or near break-even point, three weeks before the start of pre-conference workshops. Contracts shall be signed by the conference host (the board's designee), with a copy provided to the AORE National Office.

25. Conference Surplus

Conference surplus is considered to be total conference income minus expenses. Overages above the expected AORE repayment will be transferred to AORE.

Without prior approval from the BOD, all surplus generated by the conference will be retained by the Association. If the Conference Host handles income and expenses, the surplus should be transferred within 90 days of the close of the conference. Surplus does not include the AORE minimum share, workshop surplus and seed money provided by AORE.

27. Conference Evaluation

The Conference Host will work with the BOD Presenter Relations Committee to ensure evaluation forms available for educational sessions—and pre- and post-conference workshops. Results of the evaluations shall be available to the session providers.

In addition, an overall assessment should be conducted on the conference by having participants fill out an evaluation form during one of the last events of the conference. The results of the final conference evaluation should be shared with the Board within 120 days following the conference.

28. Final Report and Disbursement of Conference Surplus

A final report including a conference financial statement following the approved budget format (see attached) shall be submitted by the Conference Host to the President and Treasurer of the Association within 90 days of the end of the conference. If income and expenses are handled by the Conference Host, a check for all AORE monies collected shall be issued to the AORE National Office Manager along with the financial statement. AORE monies include: AORE membership dues, AORE minimum repayment, AORE seed money, and the surplus from workshops. In the event that the Conference Host receives bills for conference expenses after issuing the check for the surplus, the host may submit copies of such bill(s) to the Association for reimbursement.

29. Changes and Amendments

The Board of Directors may make substantive amendments and changes to the AORE

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Conference Policies and Guidelines as long as the membership is provided with an opportunity to make comments concerning such changes prior to their adoption as follows:

Notice shall be given 24 hours in advance during the AORE conference; otherwise notice shall be given 30 days in advance. Amendments may be made without notice.