

# ***Organizing and Managing SGA BIENNIAL MEETINGS***

This document is intended to assist in organizing, financing, and managing the SGA Biennial Meetings, and will serve the Local Organizing Committee (LOC), SGA Council, and any others contributing to SGA Biennial Meetings. This guide provides a template for planning meeting activities, subject to modifications and additions as needed for a particular event, and it is intended to help ensure that SGA meetings achieve the highest professional level, from both the technical and scientific viewpoints. At the same time it represents an agreement of understanding between the LOC and SGA.

## ***1) Organizing Committee***

The Organizing Committee includes *ex officio* members of the SGA Council, the LOC, program coordinator who will be a member of the Organizing Committee and approved by SGA, and the Technical Liaison. Past organizers of SGA meetings can be appointed by the SGA Council to serve on the Organizing Committee.

**a) SGA Council:** The SGA President, Executive Secretary, Treasurer and Regional Vice-President are *ex officio* members (as per the SGA Constitution) of the Organizing Committee. *Ex officio* members assume a pro-active responsibility in maintaining the quality of the meetings.

**b) Local Organizing Committee (LOC):** As per the SGA constitution, the LOC must be approved by the SGA Council. Appointment of the members of the LOC is the most important first step toward a successful meeting. The SGA Council will assume a pro-active role in the selection of the LOC.

**c) Technical Liaison (TL):** For each biennial meeting a Technical Liaison will be appointed by the SGA Council. The TL may be any SGA member in good standing. However, the person selected for the TL must reside outside the local area that is hosting the meeting. The TL serves on the Organizing Committee and provides a link between the SGA Council and the Local Organizing Committee. The TL helps ensure excellent communication between the LOC, the SGA Council and the *ex officio* members. The TL provides an independent perspective on the scientific quality for the meeting.

**d) Student Committee:** A student committee shall be established by SGA to promote student participation in the meeting. The duties of the student committee include the coordination of student grants for travel, registration, local accommodation, field trips, and workshops. The student committee will work closely with the LOC to ensure that student's presentations are adequately represented in the program. The student committee will assist in the selection of the best poster and oral presentation by students for the conference.

**e) Sponsorship Committee:** SGA will select a person to coordinate, in conjunction with the SGA Promotion Manager and the SGA Educational Fund, the participation of corporate geologists in the conference and to develop corporate sponsors to financially assist student participation in the conference (SGA corporate coordinator). It is essential that the interactions with corporate geologists by the LOC and SGA coordinator are coordinated and unified.

## ***2) Co-organization versus Sponsorship***

An important distinction is made between "sponsors" for SGA meetings and "co-organizers." Sponsors simply share logos and help with advertisement, for example, and assume no formal responsibility for organization. A co-organizer accepts a well-defined block of responsibility for parts (e.g., specific technical modules and/or field trips) of the meeting. Any recognized professional organization that has goals consistent with the goals of the SGA may approach SGA as a co-organizer or sponsor; co-organizers and/or sponsors must be approved by the SGA Council. Sponsors will have a billing or position on the meeting advertisements but will not necessarily have an active role in the planning and conduction of the meeting.

## ***3) Technical sessions***

- a) The titles/topics for some of the technical sessions should be consistent with the theme of the meeting. However, it is essential to have sessions that are not bound to the title of the meeting. Sessions must also reflect the diverse cross-section of SGA membership. Topics of sessions should be timely and captivating.
- b) The number of concurrent oral sessions must not exceed four; departures from this number must be approved by the SGA Council and the SGA *ex-officio* members.
- c) Great care is needed in selecting scientists that will be responsible for organizing technical sessions. Selection of session organizers is the responsibility of the LOC and the SGA *ex officio* members. SGA Council and LOC must ensure that session organizers are of high international reputation and represent a broad cross-section of the SGA membership.
- d) Posters are considered to be a critically important part of the meeting and should not be in competition with oral presentations. To attract attendance for the poster sessions, incentives such as free beer, coffee and cookies, etc. should be considered. Also, poster sessions should be scheduled following oral sessions. Two minutes summaries by authors of the posters, at the close of oral sessions, should be considered as an option by the LOC.
- e) Awards for the best oral and poster student presentations will be made by the SGA student committee in consultation with some senior scientists.

#### 4) Abstracts

Following the tradition of past SGA Biennial Meetings, extended abstracts (up to 4 printed pages) have to be submitted by potential delegates who want to contribute with either an oral or a poster presentation. It is of the highest priority to fulfill all necessary criteria to keep the Proceedings of SGA Biennial Meetings among refereed Conference Proceedings listed in ISI Thomson database.

**(a) Preparation and reviewing of abstracts:** Clear and detailed guidelines for the preparation of the abstracts, together with an easy to use, standardized template will be distributed by the LOC (after consultation with the SGA Council) nine months before the meeting. All abstracts MUST conform to the instructions for abstract preparation provided by SGA. The abstracts must be of high scientific and technical quality, including correct English. Acceptance or rejection of submitted abstracts is the responsibility of the session organizers. Final acceptance of the abstracts is the responsibility of the editors of the Proceedings. SGA expects a certain percentage of abstracts to be rejected, based on scientific and technical quality. Session leaders may select additional reviewers for abstracts. The session leaders and reviewers are not expected to rewrite abstracts in order to make them acceptable. However, it is incumbent upon the author(s) to find help (if needed) to put the abstracts in reasonable English. Technical editors may be provided by the LOC. Rejection of abstracts or requesting the author(s) to rewrite a poor or non-conforming abstract should be the normal consequence of a poorly written abstract, rather than expecting the session leader/reviewer to rewrite it. No distinction is to be made between abstracts for oral and poster presentations. Deadlines established by the LOC, and approved by the SGA, for reviewing and acceptance MUST be strictly enforced.

**(b) Number of abstracts per delegate:** No more than one oral presentation per delegate will be permitted.

**(c) Proceedings volumes:** A publisher to be approved by SGA will publish the accepted abstracts of paid-up delegates. The Proceedings Abstracts will be published in digital format with by-order printed copies. Ten (10) printed copies will be delivered to the SGA. In addition to the number of proceedings volumes that are requested by paid registrants, a set number of extra volumes should be obtained from the publisher for SGA. Additional proceedings volumes can be authorized to provide for a small set of high profile guests and to provide extra volumes for possible increases in registrations. The number of proceedings to be printed MUST be approved by the LOC and the SGA Council. The publisher will produce volumes of extended abstracts, making use of the standardized templates and ensuring a continuously high level of a product that is recognizably that of SGA. ***The final Proceedings volumes have to contain basic publishing information as e.g., publisher, publisher address, ISBN or ISSN, copyright etc.*** Abstracts and proceedings will be sold by the SGA through its website. No additional documents/publications can be printed by the LOC without permission of SGA Council. One set of

abstracts has to be submitted to ISI Thomson (Publication Processing, Thomson Reuters, 3501 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104, USA). If the conference proceedings are published online in PDF format, information on free electronic access should be sent to [ts.proceedings@thomson.com](mailto:ts.proceedings@thomson.com).

**(d) Editors of the proceedings volume(s):** The editor(s) must be approved by Council and will normally consist of less than 5 co-editors. The editors will have prime responsibility for adhering to established protocol for acceptance of the abstracts, and delivering the abstracts in standardized formats in a *timely* manner to the publisher. The session leaders will canvas and pre-select submissions, organize the reviewing process and make recommendation to editor(s). The session chairs will be acknowledged on the first page of the section for which they are responsible. Reviewers will be gratefully acknowledged in a highly visible section of the proceedings.

**(e) Final Acceptance of Abstract:** The final acceptance of an abstract is contingent on the payment of registration fee. Consequently, no abstract will be included in the conference proceedings without the author's prior payment of registration fees.

**(f) Deadlines** for all aspects of abstract submittal, editing and revisions must be established as early as possible during the conference planning and subsequently adhered to.

### **5) Exhibits**

A concerted effort is needed to promote exhibits at the SGA meetings (companies, SGA corporate members, government surveys, mineral crafts, scientific houses, universities etc.). SGA corporate members will be given discounted exhibit space and co-organizers will receive free exhibit space. Exhibits are an important and effective way to generate interest and revenue for the meeting. A person responsible for exhibits must be designated by the LOC. This person will produce a list of potential exhibitors that can be reviewed by the Organizing Committee.

### **6) Workshops and Short Courses**

Pre- and/or post-conference workshops and/or short courses are important parts of the SGA Biennial Meetings. Separate committees, working with SGA and the Local Organizing committee need to be established to ensure that these important parts of the meeting are adequately developed. Short course and workshop notes could be published by SGA, pending financial resources and approval by the SGA Council. Workshops and short courses *must* be financially self-supporting. It will be possible for students to apply for free workshops and short courses. Each of the short courses and each of the workshops *must* include one free registration for a student applicant.

### **7) Field trip Committee**

Pre- and post-conference field trips are an important component of the meeting. The SGA must approve a list of field trips to be offered. The chairperson of the field trip committee and the SGA TL are responsible for approving the final selection of field trips. For each field trip, a field trip guidebook is to be prepared by the field trip leader(s). Copies of the field trip guides can also be sold at the meeting. Fieldtrips *must* be financially self-supporting. Authors of field trip guidebooks should be encouraged to prepare the guidebooks in such a way that they can be published and sold through the SGA website after the meeting. It will be possible for students to apply for free field trips. Each field trip *must* include one free registration for a student applicant.

### **8) Financial Aspects**

SGA is a non-profit organization, registered in Switzerland, and thus exempt from tax by the Swiss authorities. When setting up the initial budget for the meeting, the LOC must establish whether value-added tax (VAT) or similar taxes are applicable according to the local tax regulations of the country in

which the meeting is to be held. It is the responsibility of the LOC to adhere to local tax laws.

**(a) SGA Revenue:** The SGA meetings are expected to generate revenue. Revenue and new memberships received from the SGA meetings are essential for the financial and scientific health of SGA. SGA will charge each conference an “SGA Management Fee” to be decided by the SGA Council (currently 30 Euro per registration). This amount is to be included by the LOC in the registration fee and it is to be treated as a normal expense for conducting the conference. Net revenue from the conference (including workshops, short courses and field trips) is to be split between SGA and the LOC at a rate to be decided in advance for each meeting by the SGA Council (typically at least 50 % of excess revenue will go to SGA).

**(b) Budgets and Review of Budgets:** The SGA Treasurer will oversee the financial planning of the meeting. A budget will be established by the LOC based on the venue, site costs, abstract publication costs, registration income, and the SGA assessment fee. This must be established early, before any start-up funding (seed money) is provided, and approved by the SGA Treasurer. An example budget will be provided by the SGA Treasurer. SGA requires a preliminary budget to be submitted at the time of application for hosting a meeting and again 60 days after the applicant receives acceptance of the proposal. Updated budgets are required to be submitted to the SGA Treasurer January 1, April 1, and June 1 of the year of the conference, and a conference summary be submitted during the conference. A final accounting must be received not later than four months after the meeting. The budget must include detailed financial data regarding all elements of the program (i.e. field trips, workshops, short courses, exhibits etc.). Failure to submit the required financial data could result in cancellation of the conference or moving to a different venue. The Treasurer will submit all budgets and accounting to the SGA Council for approval.

**(c) Registration Payments:** A consistent policy must be established for the payment of registration fees. Discounts for members and members of co-organizing groups need to be established. Significant “late registration fees” should be implemented. Abstracts will only be accepted for inclusion into the proceedings volume and as part of the official program *after payment of conference fees* (the growing “no show” problem). The SGA Treasurer must approve of the registration fees before any announcement is published.

**(d) Seed Money:** The amount of funds for organizational start up expenses needs to be determined early and agreed upon by co-organizing parties, such that meetings operate at a profit. This seed money will be paid back to SGA at the conclusion of the Biennial Meeting.

## ***9) Students and Economically Disadvantaged Professionals from Developing Countries***

Students will be invited and encouraged to submit abstracts and present their results at the SGA Biennial Meetings, which are expected to represent a great opportunity for students to interact with leading scientists, mining companies, and other students and young scientists. The student registration fee will be at a reduced level, SGA student members paying the lowest registration fee. A number of possibilities for low cost accommodation for students should be assured. The SGA, through the SGA Educational Fund Committee, and the LOC will coordinate efforts to solicit funds to provide financial grants to students and economically disadvantaged professionals from developing countries making presentations at the conference. A limited number of grants will be open for SGA students who are senior authors of accepted abstracts. Students from economically disadvantaged countries should be prioritized. Grants will be coordinated by a SGA student grant committee that will include the SGA Student Representative on the SGA Council.

## ***10) Miscellaneous Items***

**(a) Advance Planning:** SGA will invite applications for hosting SGA Biennial Meetings at least 4 years prior to the scheduled meeting and complete site selection at least 3 years prior. The selection of a particular venue for future SGA Biennial Meetings will be based on opportunities for field trips, scientific and organizational strength of the LOC, and the potential for growing SGA membership. Any SGA member can submit a request to the SGA council to host a biennial meeting at a particular

venue; however, council members are encouraged to solicit internationally recognized leaders or centers in mineral deposit geology research as potential hosts for SGA meetings.

**(b) Time Lines:** Organizational milestones detailing abstract deadlines, advertising, fund raising, etc., need to be approved and periodically reviewed by SGA Council and the Technical Coordinating Committee. Measures must be already in place when milestones are not on schedule.

**(c) Advertisement:** A time line is needed for the promotion and advertisement (posters, notices in journals etc.). All promotional materials must be pre-approved by the promotion manager before public distribution. All other materials should go primarily to the SGA Executive Secretary. The LOC should prepare the First and Second Circulars and conference website for approval by the SGA promotions manager and the TL.

**(d) Post-meeting evaluation:** A post-meeting evaluation for each biennial meeting will be prepared by the LOC within three months of the meeting. This report will provide a final budget, including revenue and expenses, plus attendance, and description of problems encountered and solutions used. Copies of all advertisements will be included in this report. Three hard copies of the report will be delivered to the SGA Executive Secretary. It is expected that parts of this report can be used for promotional activities, such as publication in the SGA News.

**(e) Data protection:** The LOC must not sell or give away personal data (incl. e-mail addresses) of delegates to any outside party.

(Revised by D. Leach, H. Frimmel and J. Pašava, May 2009/J. Pašava and G. Beaudoin, October 2015/J. Pašava, H. Frimmel, J. Relvas, K. Kelley, April 2017)