

## APS Specialty Conferences | Organizer Planning Guide

### Overview

The following document outlines program design and financial requirements for the creation of APS specialty conferences, including agenda development, expense management, revenue generation, and roles and responsibilities of conference organizers and APS staff to ensure successful and financially sustainable events.

### APS Specialty Conference Objectives

APS specialty conferences provide attendees with valuable scientific education and networking opportunities, as well as a platform to showcase late breaking physiological research. Specialty conferences should be designed to provide exceptional scientific content, capture a diverse audience of scientists and/or science educators, and enhance the reputation of APS within the broader life sciences community, in a financially sustainable way. All specialty conferences should be designed to “break-even” or generate net revenue for the Society. Combining two conference proposals to form one large conference will be considered.

### Program Development Requirements

#### *Conference Theme Selection*

Conference organizers and their corresponding planning committee members will be tasked with developing and selecting conference themes and subtopics in consultation with APS staff who may provide insight by leveraging historical audience engagement and sponsorship data.

When selecting conference themes, organizers must ensure the selected topic can attract a significant audience and generate adequate non-registration revenue via grant and sponsorship funding.

#### *Minimum Audience Size*

Specialty conference themes and venue locations will be selected to ensure a range of 125-150 attendees, including speakers/presenters, with at least seventy-five percent of this audience paying the full conference rate (i.e., no comped or discounted speakers, trainees, etc.). If registration does not exceed sixty percent of the total minimum goals by the early bird registration deadline, the conference may be canceled. APS staff will advise conference organizers of the “break-even” minimum number of paid attendees to move forward.

### Financial Requirements

#### *Lodging Expense Limits*

The cost of lodging associated with APS specialty conferences must not exceed a range of \$260-300 per night. Venues will be selected, and contracts negotiated by APS meetings staff; conference organizers are not involved in the destination selection but may suggest locations (such as their own university facilities). APS staff will advise conference organizers of variables that could impact their lodging expense: other competing events in chosen city, housing type offered, and time of year.

#### *Speaker Reimbursement*

Speakers may be reimbursed for travel and lodging dependent upon registration revenue and Non-Registration Revenue Generation.



### *Attendee Registration Rates*

Registration pricing will be set by APS meetings staff to ensure subsequent revenue defrays at least 75% of conference expenses (A/V, Catering, Room Rental, etc.). Staff overhead is not factored into the conference expenses base rate.

### *Non-Registration Revenue Generation*

In partnership with the APS Development Office, organizers must raise a minimum of \$25,000 (\$15,000 of which is unrestricted) to support logistical costs and the attendance of trainees and/or scientists from underrepresented backgrounds.

### *Corporate Sponsorships*

Organizers and APS staff will solicit sponsorship from the life sciences industry to support conference activities. Organizers must reserve 90 minutes of the conference agenda for three (3) industry technology workshops/research presentations (30 minutes each).

### *Federal or Foundation Grants*

Organizers and APS staff will collaborate to develop and submit grant applications to NIH (R13 grants) and appropriate charitable foundations. Organizers will draft all grant materials related to scientific programming with support from APS staff when needed. APS staff will organize and submit grant materials to funders unless a program's principal is required to do so.

### *APS Financial Support*

APS will provide up to \$20,000 in seed funding to defray costs of speaker travel and registration, food and beverages, and social activities. Excess registration and non-restricted sponsorship or grant revenue will be allocated to reimburse APS seed funding.

## **Organizer & Organizing Committee Roles & Responsibilities**

Specialty conference organizers and their corresponding committee will lead the following planning activities:

- Determine conference title, scheduling, and session topics with consultation from APS staff
- Outline the agenda, speakers, workshops, poster sessions, and career development sessions.
- Contact, invite, and confirm all speakers and session chairs
- Leverage personal and institutional networks to market the conference
- In partnership with the APS Development Office, obtain conference sponsorship to defray cost of travel awards and event logistics
- Conference fundraising will be conducted with the approval and coordination of the APS Development Office
- Complete any post-event reports required by grant funders or sponsors

## **APS Staff Roles & Responsibilities**

APS staff will lead the following specialty conference planning activities:

- Site selection, contract and negotiations
- Venue and vendor management
- On-site conference management and logistics
  - Poster boards and A/V equipment
- Attendee registration
- Speaker coordination



- Conference marketing including webpage creation and management and comprehensive marketing campaign
  - Targeted email distributions, banner ads on APS journal webpages, and social media promotion
- Financial management and conference budgeting
- Support outreach for corporate sponsorships and grant funding
- Management of corporate sponsorship programs
- Facilitation of poster and travel award disbursement and procedures