



ASSOCIATION FOR
PUBLIC POLICY ANALYSIS
& MANAGEMENT

Request for Proposals – APPAM Regional Student Conference

Background Information

The APPAM Regional Student Conference was developed in part to increase APPAM student member benefits, increase institutional member benefits, and to increase visibility for the association.

The impetus for the conference was made during an APPAM student happy hour in March 2015. A number of George Mason University SPGIA student attendees mentioned their school's Advances in Policy and Politics Conference (APPC) and the hope to expand the conference in future years. APPAM staff and the GMU PhD students suggested partnering with local policy schools to hold a Regional Student Conference to expand the reach and breadth of the conference as there were limited outlets for students to present their research and network with policy professionals.

The idea was proposed to the following DC regional policy schools, who confirmed their participation in the event. Further, they agreed to cover all direct costs for the event and allow APPAM to handle administration, promotion, and logistical tasks for the conference. Each of the 9 sponsoring schools identified a representative to serve on a steering committee to help plan the conference.

- American University
- George Mason University
- Georgetown University
- George Washington University
- University of Maryland College Park
- University of Virginia
- William & Mary
- Virginia Commonwealth University
- Virginia Tech

An RFP was sent to all sponsoring schools to allow bids to host the conference. Two bids were received, George Mason University was chosen as the host, largely because of Metro accessibility.

The goal of the conference was to give PhD and Master's students an opportunity to present in front of professors, practitioners, and other students to gain research presentation experience. The conference featured student research from across the country and provided several networking opportunities designed to connect fellow policy experts in the area.

The event attracted 179 attendees; 79 student papers/projects were presented at 25 panel presentations over two days of programming. The event also featured a career pathways lunch panel, a networking lunch, and a networking reception.

Because of the success of this event, APPAM would like to hold two regional student conferences in 2017; one in Washington D.C. and one in another part of the country. We are seeking proposals for the non-DC conference today.

RFP Requirements

- List of sponsor schools. We are requiring a 5 school/program minimum for a regional conference in order to support submissions and attendance at the conference.
- Contact information from each sponsor school (at least one main contact, either student, administrator, or professor)
- A designation of one school to be the host. For the host institution, description of the following:
 - Onsite host contact information.
 - Meeting room map, capacity, and availability information + setup costs. (See below for “Proposed Room Capacity Needs”).
 - A/V room capabilities + rental costs.
 - Catering services + costs.
 - Parking availability description + costs and/or public transportation availability.
 - Estimate of staffing & labor costs.
 - Proposed dates for conference and reasons for the proposed dates (Spring Break, etc.). (See below for “Event Logistical Details”).
 - Description of the proposed location. (See below for “Additional Location Requirements”).

Proposed Room Capacity Needs (across two full days, 8:00am – 8:00pm)

- Multipurpose Room (1 – 2 rooms) – Minimum 250 capacity for breakfast(s) and lunches, in rounds, with space for a panel discussion. Also needed for networking reception(s) and possible career fair/presentation skills workshop/mentoring event.
- Concurrent Session Rooms (5-7 rooms) – Minimum 50-75 capacity, theatre seating, room for head table, with computer, projector, and screen.
- Registration Area – Three to five 6’ tables for registration and sponsor materials.

Additional Location Requirements

- Location – Proximity to public transportation and/or ample parking to attract the greatest number of students and professionals.
- A/V Needs – The multipurpose room and the session rooms will each need a computer, projector, and screen for presentations. The multipurpose room will also need table mics and room mics for audience participation.

- A/V Support – Onsite A/V support during both days of conference is required.
- Additional Onsite Support – Onsite host contact to accept conference materials, facilitate room setup, and coordinate F&B ordering.
- F&B – Event space convenient for catering set-up
- Networking Reception – Conducive for reception(s) with alcohol served.

Event Logistical Details

- The 2016 conference was held on April 1st – 2nd. Feedback on the timing was mostly positive with some suggestions to hold it earlier in the year. The two regional conferences will be held in conjunction with each other and APPAM reserves the right to work with the submitter to change the date to one that works well for all parties.
- We anticipate the format to be as follows: 20 – 30 panel presentations over 2 days, 1 lunch plenary, and 1 -2 networking events. Feedback from students also suggested holding an additional sub-event either directly before or after the conference. Ideas included a job fair, mentoring program, or a presentation skills workshop. APPAM would like to incorporate at least one of these for 2017.

Tentative Schedule

Day 1

- 8:00 – 9:00: Registration and Breakfast
- 9:00 – 9:10: Welcome
- 9:15 – 10:45: Concurrent Sessions (5-7)
- 11:00 – 12:30: Concurrent Sessions (5-7)
- 12:30 – 2:00: Networking Lunch and Panel Discussion
- 2:15 – 3:45: Concurrent Session (5-7)
- 4:00 – 5:30: Concurrent Session (5-7)
- 5:45 – 7:30 : Networking Reception

Day 2

- 8:00 – 9:00: Registration and Breakfast
- 9:00 – 9:10: Overview of Day Two
- 9:15 – 10:45: Concurrent Sessions (5-7)
- 11:00 – 12:30: Concurrent Sessions (5-7)
- 12:30 – 1:30: Networking Lunch
- 1:45 – 3:15: Concurrent Session (5-7)
- 3:30 – 5:00: Concurrent Session (5-7)
- 5:15 – 5:45: Job Fair/Presentation Skills Workshop/Mentoring Events

Financial Details

The direct costs of the conference will be split evenly among the sponsoring schools. APPAM will cover all indirect costs. The 2016 conference expenses totaled about \$16,000 with sponsoring

school contributing about \$1,500, after registration revenue was taken into account. Below are example potential costs:

- Food & Beverage
- Room Setup
- Facility Rental
- Housekeeping
- AV Equipment Rental
- Event Staffing
- Printing
- Parking
- Abstract Management
- Graphic Design
- Supplies
- Misc. Expenses

Registration

Registration for the 2016 Regional Student Conference was \$25 for all attendees (presenters, chairs, discussants, regular attendees). APPAM provided 10 complimentary registrations for the sponsoring schools (most went to chair & discussant registrations). Registration revenue totaled just over \$3,500 in 2016 and helped defray expenses for the sponsoring schools.

To offset costs, APPAM may also solicit conference sponsorship opportunities to organizations outside of the sponsoring schools. Sponsorship opportunities may include:

- Program ad sales
- Table literature
- Networking lunch/reception sponsorship
- Pre- or post-conference job fair/presentation skills workshop/mentoring events

Expected Steering Committee Responsibilities

Each sponsoring school would appoint a member to the steering committee to help plan the conference. Below is a list of expected steering committee tasks.

- Promotion of conference to student population, both for submitting proposals and registration
- Securing of chairs and discussants for equal share of panels (i.e. 25 panels and 5 sponsoring schools = each school responsible for securing chair **AND** discussant for 5 panels; PhD students may serve as panel chair)
- Securing **at least one** policy professional to serve on Program Committee to review student abstract submissions

- Bi-monthly conference planning calls (or as needed)

Expected Host School Responsibilities

When submitting an RFP, please indicate where the conference would physical be held. As stated above, the conference was held at George Mason University School of Policy, Government, and International Affairs in April. The school site worked well due to its proximity to public transportation and variety of classroom sizes available for use.

- Conference material storage
- Facilitate room setup
- Manage AV equipment ordering
- Coordinate F&B ordering and invoicing
- Onsite contact during entirety of conference

Expected APPAM Responsibilities

- Location selection
- Abstract solicitation
- Marketing of conference
- Review of abstracts (committee comprised of members and Policy Council)
- Registration
- Pre-Conference logistics (conference program, conference website, speaker/chair/discussant correspondence)
- Onsite logistics
- Agenda building
- Management of schedule
- Keeping the Steering Committee abreast of progress
- Plenary speaker selection (plenary topic TBD)
- Overall management of the student conference
- Collecting and distributing funds for payment

The deadline to submit a proposal to host the non-DC regional student conference is August 5th. All proposals should be submitted by email to tsheehan@appam.org. For questions, please contact APPAM Executive Director Tara Sheehan, tsheehan@appam.org.

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