



Symposium Host Packet and Timeline

INTRODUCTION

This packet is intended to assist potential or confirmed hosts for a UPAA Symposium; The planning timeline, necessary equipment, and facilities, as well as budget information and answers to frequently asked questions.

GOALS OF SYMPOSIUM

The UPAA Symposium provides professional development through educational seminars, guest lectures, hands-on workshops and networking opportunities. The ultimate goal of the symposium is for the members to return to their campus with new knowledge and with renewed enthusiasm/inspiration.

PLANNING

The host institution will work with the symposium planning committee and the board of directors to make symposium decisions. Host institutions are listed as a sponsor, not individually sponsoring an event or speaker.

FUNDING

The symposium is funded by attendee registration fees, investment from the host school, and sponsorship from corporate partners. The funds contributed by the hosting institution are treated as part of a “pot” of funding used to plan the symposium and set the budget. Unused funds are returned to the hosting institution.

SPEAKERS / SYMPOSIUM CONTENT

The most recent UPAA membership survey may be useful in indicating what topics the members are interested in. The UPAA Corporate Partner Chair will work with the host to identify and connect with speakers who can be sponsored by Corporate Partners, but there is some funding for speakers who do not fall under this option. Some funds (honorarium) may be available through UPAA for bigger name speakers and breakout speakers who require payment, but these scenarios should always be discussed and made part of the budget. The presenter is responsible for travel, lodging and other transportation. If the host hotel compensates a few suites as part of the contract, those rooms can be used for speakers. All speakers receiving honorarium from the UPAA will sign a contract outlining relevant details above.

Hosts are responsible for collecting and scheduling breakout presenters, and choosing keynote speakers, though they can always lean on symposium planning chairs and committee members

for help. The Video Chair should be heavily relied on to assess and choose video speakers and presenters.

BUDGET

- While planning the Symposium, the committee (which includes the host) should try to budget costs so that the Symposium attendance fee remains within \$50 of the previous years' fee.
- Plan to make a budget with 200 attendees including all membership levels in mind. This is most important when calculating fixed costs like room rental.

FACILITIES

Attendee Numbers: Although it is up to the host to determine the maximum number of attendees since this number is often determined by space limitations at the symposium venue, the aim is to accommodate our growing organization and keep numbers consistent with the turnout of roughly 250 from recent years.

Lodging and Dining: Need adequate facilities to house and feed Symposium participants. Can be a mix of on and off campus facilities. Preferably there would be a range of prices and room occupancy options for lodging. If off campus, transportation needs to be addressed. Dietary consideration for catered meals must be considered.

Breakout Rooms: Breakout rooms should each be able to hold seating that adds up to 250 people (or whatever the final head count is). There should be at least six breakout rooms or spaces. Breakout rooms and spaces should be in close proximity to each other for ease of movement from one session to the next.

Corporate Partner (CP) space: During the midyear meeting, the symposium planning team will help find the best location for our corporate partners to set up their tables. Security in this space as well as proximity to members during the week is paramount. The host is responsible for coordinating the receiving of gear from CPs prior to the symposium. Any storage fees incurred for the gear being shipped to the hotel or other holding location is the responsibility of the CP.

Meeting Room Technology: Podiums, projection screens, laptop hookups, microphones should be in every room, or the host needs to make arrangements to obtain this equipment. Having host institution's IT personnel available is ideal.

Board Meeting: Meeting room for UPA Board Meeting on Symposium registration day (Monday). This can be on campus or at the hotel, though having this space at the same location as the main event can be very helpful for when the board needs to meet throughout the week, as well as providing a place to store awards, CP giveaways, and presenter gifts for easy access.

Registration Table: Needs to be staffed on registration day (Monday). The members will check in and receive their packets and local information.

NIKON SHOOT OUT (photo) and B&H SHOOT OUT (video): Find an interesting location. Consider fees involved with travel to the location, admissions fees, and whether booking a location is necessary.

Awards Banquet: Symposium typically ends with the Awards Banquet Thursday evening. This event and facility can be modified if necessary according to the Symposium agenda. The schedule should allow for a few hours of “free time” prior to the banquet which allows time for the host and board of directors to set-up for the banquet.

HOST TIPS

- Bring an event planner on board. They make a world of difference.
- Look for volunteers and student workers for various last-minute tasks.
- Members are great at carpooling and generally there are enough cars for carpooling. Parking passes may be needed.
- Plan to orchestrate and take the group photo.
- The business meeting should ideally take place on Thursday during lunch for efficient use of time.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. *Can you specify the space requirements? How large a room is needed for general sessions, and how many or what size rooms are typically available for breakout sessions?*

Our symposium size is determined by how many the hosting location can fit. That said, we no longer consider places that cannot accommodate our growing group. We average 240 attendees, so auditoriums for keynote speakers should fit that many. Breakout rooms generally hold 30-60, and we usually host six breakouts at a time.

2. *Can the University hosting add more sponsors to the event? If so, are there any sponsor conflicts we should know about? (For example, if BH Photo is present, can Adorama also be there?)*

Yes, but you would be advised to work closely with Kristen Grace, our Corporate Relations Chair, to coordinate new sponsors. There are no sponsor limitations.

3. *What is the average amount typically invested from the host school? What have other schools contributed in the past?*

Contributions from host schools vary depending on school. In the past five years, the contributions were between \$15K and \$20K. It's important to note that our goal is always to

break even, and any leftover money contributed to the UPAA from host schools is returned. In the last five years, contributions were returned in full, with exception to Notre Dame, who received \$13k from their \$20K contribution.

4. How are symposiums budgeted?

We start by getting general costs of needs (space rental, catering, AV needs, etc) from the host to get a sense of what the overall bill will be. Registration fee is created to cover those costs. The host should try to budget costs so that the Symposium attendance fee remains within \$25 of the previous years' fee.

Previous registration fee numbers;

1. Tennessee, 2025
 - a. Cost per person- \$412.95
 - b. Revenue per person- \$527.01
 - c. Symposium Cost- \$629
2. Utah, 2024
 - a. Cost per person- \$485 (est)
 - b. Revenue per person \$522.37
 - c. Symposium registration fee - \$529

UPAA Board members and chair names and contact info can be found [HERE](#)

PAST HOSTS: (For any questions you may have about hosting)

- Steven Bridges, University of Tennessee, sbridge7@utk.edu
- Jaren Wilkey, BYU, jaren@byu.edu
- Amanda Pitts, Grand Valley State U, pitts.amanda@gmail.com

PLANNING TIME LINE

3 Years Ahead:

UPAA Board works to recruit symposium sites and add interested hosts to their board records

2 Years Ahead:

Tentative host submits proposal and departmental authorized Host Contract to UPAA Board. UPAA Board approves choice of host.

1 Year Ahead:

An announcement is made sharing the location of the next symposium. Dates for the Symposium are determined in the months following. The host begins to research hotels, speakers, event accommodations, rooms for meetings, and meals. An event planner from the host's institution should be brought onboard.

9 Months Ahead (Oct/Nov):

- Host provides lodging and conference center costs for UPAA president, symposium planning chairs, and committee for review. Hotel contracts may be signed at this time.
- The board attends campus for their annual in-person midyear meeting in October or November. This two day visit is for the board to connect in person for a day-long meeting, and for the board to join the host to tour the facility options to decide on specific locations. Chairs often join as well.
- The board stays in the hotel likely set to be used for the actual symposium to experience their accommodations.
- The President signs a hotel contract and possibly makes partial payment to the hotel.

7 Months Ahead (December):

- Have registration cost and outline of Symposium content set so Symposium information can be shared with members. This is imperative so that members can pitch to their employers to get professional development funding and be able to attend. For many this is a long process.
- Ideally, registration opens December 1 to allow universities with a fiscal year ending December 31 to pay from the year ending soon.
- Symposium information is added to the UPAA Website. This site contains all relevant information for registration and schedule. This page also contains the link to payment information for the symposium.