

Conference Organising

Revised Date: Nov 2020

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CONFERENCES OF THREE OR MORE DAYS

All conferences of three or more days sponsored by the RACI Branches, Divisions, or Groups, must obtain Board approval and endorsement. The Conference Approval Form is available on the RACI website member resources section www.raci.org.au under downloads and must be completed and sent to the National Office. Endorsement by the RACI Board will automatically cover the conference with Public Liability insurance under the RACI insurance policy.

Conference approval timing

The conference approval documentation is required to be completed and sent to the CEO at least 12 months prior to a conference.

Professional conference organiser

For events with expected numbers below 400 organising the event in house, without the services of a PCO, should be strongly considered, National office can provide this service.

If a Professional conference organiser is to be engaged the RACI preferred supplier should be used. However, if the conference organising committee wish to use a third party a full quote from both the preferred supplier and the alternative must be obtained covering all aspects of services expected to be provided, or procured, by the PCO.

A justification for not using the preferred supplier must accompany the approval form.

An alternative PCO may not be engaged until approved by the Board.

All contractual documentation must be signed by the CEO.

Where a PCO is to be used it is expected the PCO runs a trust account and uses their ABN to deal with all conference GST related issues distributing the surplus to the RACI on accounts finalisation. The accounts must be audited post the event.

Inclusion and diversity

The RACI is committed to improving the diversity balance within the chemical sciences and to be approved all RACI sponsored events must conform to the Institutes Inclusion and Diversity policy and the relevant targets in place at the time of application.

The current requirements are:-

- The inclusion and diversity policy to be available on the conference website
- 30% of organising committee must be female
- A minimum of 30% of all plenary, keynote and invited speakers must be female
- 40% of session chairs must be female
- Anonymous participant diversity tracking must be integrated into the registration process (gender, non-English speaking background, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, Disability)

- Targets must be set and the finale report must include a section on performance to target
- Harassment policy must be stated and a harassment officer appointed

Finances

The approval forms must be accompanied with a reasonable budget estimation using the template conference budget format. The budget must be calculated on the expected number of delegates with a range of numbers 20% less than expected to 10% greater. With larger conferences the preferred provider PCO can be of great help here as they will have experience with similar sized conferences. The financial goal of the conference is to make a 15% surplus on delegate income.

It is important that commercial partner support is not the driving force behind the surplus calculation and the conference should aim to break even after State and City grants but before commercial exhibitions and sponsorship.

Fee structure

Conferences are for the benefit of RACI members, to assist in the development of young chemists and encourage people to become members of the RACI. The fee structure should be set to achieve these aims and to entice delegates to register early. Guide lines are:-

- A 20% surcharge applies on the early bird rate for late registrations
- A 30% surcharge applies to conference registration fees for non members.
- Any Kindred society members may attend the conference at member rates. There must be a kindred society agreement in place offering the same privileges (reciprocal rights) to RACI members. Australian based members of an overseas located institution are excluded unless approved by the Board.
- Student fees should be no more than 60% of normal fees but preferably set at 50%. They must cover the variable cost of the event.
- A conference dinner can be included in the delegate fee or it can be charged as an extra. The decision on the method to use will be at the discretion of the organising committee however the underlying objective must be to have as many people attend as possible for networking opportunities.

Sponsorship and exhibitors

To achieve the overall goal of a 15% surplus on delegate fees and to ensure the conference has suitable benefits for the delegates the active participation of sponsors and a trade exhibition are essential, however estimates of commercial income must be conservative with the available pool of commercial partners decreasing as industries are moving off shore.

Conference Partners

Conferences may be organised in conjunction with other events. To make use of the RACI Public Liability insurance cover the approval process still must be followed.

A Memorandum of Understanding [MOU] must be provided that details various parties, outlines the aim of the conference, lists the activities and the responsibilities of the various partners, itemises the conference seed funding from each party and the distribution of any surplus and allocation of any deficits.

Conference advertising

The RACI name and logo cannot be used in any advertising or promotional materials until Board endorsement of the conference.

All advertising material must carry the current RACI branding.

The event will be placed on the events page of the RACI web site.

Advertising may be placed in the Chemistry in Australia free of charge

Advertising may be placed in regional and national newsletters free of charge

Direct e-mail blasts to the membership or particular sections of the membership may be made through National Office.

Conference reporting

Regular updates of performance to budget must be made and if these indicate a deficit situation may result the CEO must be informed immediately.

Once the conference has been held, a notice will be sent to the Chair of the Organising Committee reminding him/her an interim report is due within two (2) months. A final financial report must be sent within six (6) months of completion of the conference.

The Chair of the Conference Organising Committee should forward a conference report to the Board within two (2) months of the completion of the Conference. This report should include a summary of attendees and the success in meeting the demographic targets, RACI members and students and non members, the attendees' Division group (applicable if the conference is a joint Division event), an overview of the conference and a preliminary financial report if there are still outstanding accounts. All exhibitors and sponsors attending the conference should be listed together with their contact details. A final financial report should be sent within six (6) months of the completion of the conference including a budget variance report listing actual numbers against the final budget numbers.

It is vital details on conference delegates, sponsors and exhibitors be maintained together with a final report outlining areas that need more attention to assist with future conferences organisation, promotion and support.

Approval process in NO

Required documentation:

- Conference approval form
- Budget
- PCO quotes [if preferred supplier not used]
- Justification to use third party PCO
- MOU if a joint venture

Upon receipt of the Conference Approval Form, the form will be filed in the conference file and initial review made

- If the documentation incomplete or does not meet the standards it is returned to Conference Chair.
- If in order the documentation forwarded to the treasurer for financial approval of the budget.

If the treasure approves the budget the Conference Approval Form and budget to be forwarded to the Board for approval at the next Board meeting.

Once the Board has approved the conference, the Chair of the Organising Committee and Branch President or Division Chair will be notified.

If a the event is divisional based the Branch President in the state or territory where the event is to be held will be notified.

The original signed form will be filed and the conference will be added to the list of conferences on the RACI website.

Once the final report has been received it will be filed with the signed approval form.