



Association of  
Canadian Archivists  
Association canadienne  
des archivistes

## Conference Planning Policy

<b>Date approved:</b>	January 30, 2024
<b>Policy Number:</b>	2024-01
<b>Date of Last Review/Revision:</b>	January 30, 2024
<b>Next Mandated Review Date:</b>	January 2027
<b>Policy Authority:</b>	Executive Officer(s) designated as Board Liaison(s) for conference planning
<b>Associated Documents:</b>	Conference Operations Guide

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## 1.0 PRINCIPLES

- 1.1 The Association is committed to organizing and presenting an annual conference to meet the needs of its membership as well as the financial, legal, and operational requirements of the Association.
- 1.2 The organization and delivery of the conference is a significant undertaking. The persons named in section 5.2.3 are responsible for meeting various outcomes by specific deadlines.
- 1.3 The Association considers the following factors when planning its conference:
  - 1.3.1 **Flexibility** – the format enables responding to unexpected, extraordinary circumstances and, if necessary, pivoting to an alternative format in a timely, efficient and cost-effective way.
  - 1.3.2 **Accessibility and Equity** – in keeping with the ACA's *Equity Commitments*, the format provides equitable inclusion and access for attendees including individual members, institutional members, students, members experiencing financial hardship and diverse



communities. This is achieved by ensuring the factors described in section 4 of the *Equity Commitments* are considered, including but not limited to:

- a. Alternating between in-person and online conferences,
- b. The criteria used at sections 5.3, 5.4 and 5.5 to decide the location of the conference,
- c. Variable registration fees,
- d. The Association's Fee Subsidy Policy, and
- e. Providing meeting spaces and networking opportunities for professionals to connect and meet in-person or virtually at the conference.

1.3.3 **Programming** – the format achieves the purposes of the Association's annual conference including:

- a. Professional learning;
- b. An opportunity to discuss and resolve issues facing the Association and the profession;
- c. A forum to consult presidents of provincial/territorial archival councils and associations;
- d. The ability to satisfy the requirements under the *Canada Not-for-Profit Corporations Act* to hold an annual general meeting when one is not scheduled to be held at a different time and place;
- e. A place to transact the business of the Association, its Committees, Special Interest Sections and other related entities;
- f. An occasion to further the development of the Canadian archival community; and
- g. An event to generate revenue to support the continuing operations of the Association.

1.3.4 **Revenue** – the format offers multiple revenue streams including but not limited to:

- a. Conference and workshop registration fees,
- b. Sponsorships,
- c. Donations,
- d. Trade show exhibitor fees,
- e. Advertising space, and
- f. Event tickets.



1.3.5 **Expenses** – the format is economically viable in terms of the expenses paid for:

- a. Facility rentals,
- b. Travel and accommodation,
- c. Catering,
- d. Information technology services,
- e. Transportation to conference events,
- f. Publicity and marketing,
- g. Delegate conference materials,
- h. Speakers, and
- i. Association executive and staff.

1.3.6 **Dates, Timing, Schedule and Duration of Conference** – the format accommodates, when possible, the usual spring timetable (i.e., May/June) for this event.

1.3.7 **Location** – the format considers the geographic region and time zone in which the conference is held, the size of the urban centre hosting the event and the number of volunteers available to support it.

## 2.0 PURPOSE

2.1 The purpose of this policy is to establish:

2.1.1 The formats adopted by the Association for its annual conference,

2.1.2 The cycle of these formats, and

2.1.3 The process to organize, manage and deliver the conference.

## 3.0 SCOPE

3.1 This policy applies to the Board, Association committees, members and Secretariat who play a role in planning and delivering the annual conference.



## 4.0 DEFINITIONS

- 4.1 **ACAF** means the Association of Canadian Archivists Foundation.
- 4.2 **Association** means the Association of Canadian Archivists (ACA).
- 4.3 **BIPOC** means Black, Indigenous and People of Colour.
- 4.4 **Board** means the ACA Board of Directors.
- 4.5 **Member, Members** or **Membership** has the meaning set out in By-law No. 1 of the Association.
- 4.6 **Secretariat** means the Association's Executive Director and Membership Services Coordinator.

## 5.0 POLICY

### 5.1 Conference Format

- 5.1.1 The Association will typically use one of two formats for its annual conference:
  - a. An in-person event held at a physical facility, and
  - b. A virtual event held online using an audio/video conferencing application.
- 5.1.2 A hybrid format may be contemplated based on an assessment of financial, technical, operational and human resource considerations.
- 5.1.3 In-person and virtual conferences, with the prior consent of session participants, may include recording sessions for subsequent asynchronous viewing.
- 5.1.4 The normal cycle for conference format will be to alternate between in-person and virtual events. For greater certainty, this means each format typically will be used every second year.

### 5.2 Conference Planning

- 5.2.1 The annual conference will be organized considering all relevant factors described in section 1.3.
- 5.2.2 The location, timing and format of the conference will be decided considering equitable inclusion and access for attendees.
- 5.2.3 The conference planning and implementation process involves a collaborative partnership of:



- a. The Association's Board to:
    - i. Provide general governance and financial oversight, with advice and support from the Financial Review Committee, and
    - ii. Liaise with Indigenous peoples on whose ancestral territory the ACA is holding its annual conference;
  - b. The Secretariat to provide strategic operational support;
  - c. The Conference Planning Committee to meet:
    - i. The short-term goal of coordinating and overseeing the planning of the next immediate conference, and
    - ii. The long-term goal of developing preliminary plans for conferences 2-3 years ahead of the conference dates;
  - d. The Program Team to develop the conference program and schedule;
  - e. The Host Team to develop the conference social, networking and other hospitality events;
  - f. The ACA Foundation to plan and manage fundraising activities associated with the conference; and
  - f. The Communications Committee to support publicizing the conference.
- 5.2.4 The Board will liaise as early as possible with Indigenous community members on whose ancestral territory the conference will be held. The Board consults about reconciliation, outreach and how Indigenous community members may wish to be included in the conference program and/or attend the conference.
- 5.2.5 A comprehensive Conference Operations Guide will be used by all Association volunteers. It describes the roles, responsibilities, detailed procedures, deliverables, and timelines for each person. In doing so, it promotes, as seamlessly as possible, the communication,



understanding and effective working relationships necessary to deliver a successful conference.

### **5.3 Conference Dates**

5.3.1 Whenever possible, the conference will not be held on or around statutory holidays to prevent potentially higher travel costs.

### **5.4 Conference Location for In-Person Conferences**

5.4.1 The location of in-person conferences will be decided using the following criteria:

- a. The location enables attendance by as many members as possible,
- b. The conference moves between Canada's five regions (Atlantic, Central, Prairies, Pacific and the North) on as equitable a basis as reasonably practical to promote member access,
- c. The availability of conference facilities with suitable space capable of accommodating the programming,
- d. The cost for participants to attend the conference is reasonable when measured in terms of registration fees, accommodation rates, travel and other related expenses, and
- e. The cost for the Association is reasonable when measured in terms of facility and information technology rentals, catering, required minimum accommodation reservations and other required services.

5.4.2 Preference will be given to post-secondary institutional venues when it is more cost effective.

### **5.5 Conference Location for Virtual Conferences**

5.5.1 The location of virtual conferences will be decided using the following criteria:

- a. The virtual conference will be anchored to a geographical location to establish a time zone for the facilitation of synchronous virtual conference sessions, and
- b. The location will also establish a geographic point of connection, allowing regional colleagues to come together as a Host Team and develop opportunities for conference attendees to learn about the anchor location through local virtual events. Examples include tours of regional archives and sites of historic interest, pre-recorded





performances of a notable regional band or theatre group and online exhibits developed by regional archives/heritage organizations.

## 5.6 Conference Finances

5.6.1 Conference finances will be actively managed to:

- a. Ensure that revenue is sufficient to offset the expenses incurred and, whenever possible, supports other Association programs and activities; or
- b. Absorb a modest, expected deficit in the interest of achieving equitable regional accessibility when other revenue streams make this sustainable across fiscal years.

## 5.7 Conference Registration Fees

5.7.1 Registration fees for in-person and virtual conferences will be reviewed annually by the Conference Planning Committee, Financial Review Committee, Secretariat and Board to:

- a. Provide a reasonable balance between the costs for participants and the Association, and
- b. Achieve the revenue goals described in section 5.6.

5.7.2 Conference registration fees will be managed as follows:

- a. Requests for a conference registration fee subsidy will be handled according to the Associations' *Fee Subsidy Policy*.
- b. The conference registration fee will be reduced or waived for the conference planning volunteers named in section 5.2.3 who volunteer during the conference (not including food and social event costs).
- c. Free complimentary session access will be provided to non-member speakers and commentators attending only the session in which they make their presentation. Free complimentary session access does not include meals and social activities.
- d. The Association may offer speakers, allied professional association members and members of the provincial/territorial associations financial consideration in the form of the ACA membership rate at time of registration.
- e. Funding typically will not be provided to speakers, but the Association will consider requests for such support.



- f. Any requests to waive the registration fee in whole or in part that fall outside the scope of the *Fee Subsidy Policy* must be approved by the Board.
- g. Requests for conference registration fee refunds will be submitted to and processed by the Secretariat.

## 5.8 Conference Program

- 5.8.1 The conference program will be structured around a theme that informs but does not limit the presentation, format, or topics of sessions and workshops at that conference.
- 5.8.2 The primary content of the conference will be discussions of professional practices, issues, concerns and new developments within the archival profession that are likely to interest participants and promote attendance at the conference.
- 5.8.3 There will be no less than two and no more than three conference session days.
- 5.8.4 Promotional presentations at the conference by sponsors or commercial enterprises take place only with prior Board approval and will be decided in accordance with section 5.7 of the Association's *Gifts, Donations and Sponsorship Policy*.
- 5.8.5 Commercial enterprises will be encouraged to participate in the Trade Show and to publicize their services through advertisements in the conference program, the website and other options.

## 6.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### 6.1 General

- 6.1.1 Association members are encouraged to suggest future themes and locations for the conference, volunteer for the conference planning teams, attend the conference and offer feedback regarding the planning and presentation of the conference to improve the overall experience.
- 6.1.2 Association members and the Secretariat must comply with all Association policies and codes, including but not limited to the Volunteer Code of Conduct and the Bias and



Harassment Response Protocol when participating in Association business, declare conflicts of interest, and maintain confidentiality of information belonging to the Association.

- 6.1.3 The Association's Board of Directors, Secretariat, volunteers, and contractors must comply with the terms of their job descriptions, contracts and/or this policy.
- 6.1.4 The Association's Board of Directors, Secretariat, and Members must not benefit from their work with respect to the conference. Any benefits received must be proactively declared and used by and for the Association.
- 6.1.5 In addition to this policy, details regarding the roles, responsibilities, reporting relationships, and duties of the Association's Board of Directors, Secretariat, Conference Planning Committee, Program and Host Team members, Foundation and Communications Committee are contained within the Conference Operations Guide. All these people will familiarize themselves, use and follow the Conference Operations Guide.
- 6.1.6 The Executive Officer(s) designated as the Board Liaison(s) for conference planning is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the *Conference Planning Policy*.

## 6.2 Board of Directors

- 6.2.1 The Board of Directors, on the advice and recommendation of its committees, is responsible to:
- a. Designate the Board member(s) to liaise with the Secretariat, Conference Planning Committee, Program and Host Team chairs.
  - b. Approve the Conference Operations Guide;
  - c. Approve the normal cycle of the conference format and any changes to it;
  - d. Approve the location and dates of in-person and virtual conferences;
  - e. Appoint the chairs and members in good standing of the Conference Planning Committee and Program and Host Teams;
  - f. Approve the conference theme and call for submissions prepared by the Program Team;
  - g. Approve the overall schedule and structure of the program, ensuring the factors described in section 4 of the *Equity Commitments* are considered, that sufficient time is



- allowed for specific conference events required by the Board or Host Team and that there are no conflicts with any contracts that might incur unanticipated expenses;
- h. Approve the Host Team's plans for social activities;
  - i. Approve the conference budget plan of projected revenues and expenses including:
    - i. Conference and workshop registration fees, sponsorship fees, donations, trade show exhibitor fees, advertising fees and social event fees,
    - ii. Reducing or waiving the registration fees in accordance with section 5.7.2.b,
    - iii. Requests for funding received from speakers, and
    - iv. Requests to waive the registration fee in whole or in part that fall outside the scope of the *Fee Subsidy Policy*;
  - j. Approve promotional presentations at the conference by sponsors or commercial enterprises;
  - k. Liaise with Indigenous leaders and community members regarding the conference; and
  - l. Participate in specific events as directed in the conference program.

### 6.3 Secretariat

#### 6.3.1 The Secretariat is responsible to:

- a. Coordinate conference financial management including registration, sponsorship, trade show exhibitor, advertising and social event fees;
- b. Evaluate conference facilities;
- c. Negotiate contracts with conference suppliers including accommodation, meeting spaces, catering, technical services and transportation;
- d. Register delegates;
- e. Respond to requests from international presenters who request financial consideration in the form of the ACA membership rate at time of registration;
- f. Administer free complimentary session access to non-member speakers and commentators attending only the session in which they make their presentation;
- g. Administer conference registration refund requests as needed; and



- h. Prepare the conference schedule, delegate packages, forms, badges, tickets and on-site signage as required.

#### 6.3.2 The Executive Director is responsible to:

- a. Prepare, in consultation with the Board Liaison(s), Conference Planning Committee and Host Chairs, the conference budget plan using conservative projected revenues and cost estimates that reflect experience or proposed actual costs;
- b. Submit the conference budget plan to the Board for approval;
- c. Recruit and coordinate with the Board financial sponsorships of the conference;
- d. Respond to requests for a conference registration fee subsidy;
- e. Submit for approval by the Board requests for funding received from speakers;
- f. Submit for approval by the Board requests to waive the registration fee in whole or in part that fall outside the scope of the *Fee Subsidy Policy*;
- g. Submit for approval by the Board requests to make promotional presentations at the conference by sponsors or commercial enterprises;
- h. Coordinate with the Conference Planning Committee Chair matters related to the next immediate conference and preliminary plans for conferences 2-3 years ahead of the conference dates;
- i. Coordinate with the Program Team Chair all matters related to conference session content, including production of the conference program;
- j. Coordinate with the Host Team Chair all matters related to conference hospitality events;
- k. Draft, in consultation with the Program and Host Teams, Professional Development and Communications Committees, the post-conference assessment survey and, once



approved by the Conference Planning Committee Chair, distribute it to conference participants and tabulate the results; and

- I. Prepare an evaluation of facilities and costs for the Board to decide future conference locations.

## **6.4 Conference Planning Committee**

6.4.1 Conference Planning Committee members must be members in good standing during their term of appointment.

6.4.2 The Conference Planning Committee is responsible to:

- a. Develop preliminary plans for conferences 2-3 years ahead of the conference dates;
- b. Recommend the physical location of in-person conferences upon considering the criteria in sections 5.3 and 5.4;
- c. Recommend the anchor location for the ACA's virtual conferences upon considering the criteria in sections 5.3 and 5.5;
- d. Recommend to the Board, in consultation with the Program Team, the theme for annual conferences which best reflects the interests of membership and the communities in which the conference will take place;
- e. Announce a call for volunteers to serve on the Conference Program and Host Teams for the annual conferences, 1-2 years in advance of the conference date;
- f. Update membership on conference planning progress and solicit membership input and feedback;
- g. Provide the Board with a list of Indigenous communities on whose ancestral territories the conference may take place 2-3 years in advance of a conference;
- h. Coordinate regular meetings with the Secretariat, Conference Program and Host Team Chairs to ensure plans are proceeding on schedule and to assist in troubleshooting when required;
- i. Consider the post-conference assessment survey results and make recommendations to the Board; and
- j. Lead, in consultation with the persons named in section 5.2.3, the annual process of keeping the Conference Operations Guide up-to-date and, when revised, submit it to the Board for approval.



## 6.5 Program Team

6.5.1 Program Team members must be members in good standing during their term of appointment.

6.5.2 The Program Team is responsible to:

- a. Develop, in consultation with the Conference Planning Committee, a conference theme for annual conferences, which best reflects the interests of membership and the communities in which the conference will take place;
- b. Submit the conference theme and a call for submissions to the Board for approval;
- c. Announce the approved theme and call for submissions;
- d. Review all proposals submitted, including keynotes (plenaries) and concurrent sessions, and select the content of the conference, including the poster session;
- e. Solicit and evaluate conference workshop submissions and facilitate their delivery;
- f. Organize the content of the conference sessions to create the schedule of sessions, selecting presenters and recruiting session chairs and commentators as needed;
- g. Submit to the Board for approval the conference program and schedule and any subsequent changes to it;
- h. Coordinate publicity with the Association's Communications Committee, including the use of social media, to generate interest;
- i. Attend and oversee the delivery of program sessions during the conference, with each Team member shepherding a share of the sessions; and
- j. Provide the Secretariat with input on the draft post-conference assessment survey.

## 6.6 Host Team

6.6.1 Host Team members must be members in good standing during their term of appointment.

6.6.2 The Host Team oversees the hospitality aspects for conference delegates and is responsible to:

- a. Organize and schedule conference activities (other than program sessions) including the opening reception, delegate networking opportunities, social occasions, and visits to local facilities and events of interest. These activities include but are not limited to:



- i. Before conference sessions start, reserve one day for Association meetings including the Board of Directors, *Archivaria* Editorial Board, Committees, Special Interest Sections and other related entities; and
  - ii. Provide meeting spaces and networking opportunities for professionals to connect and meet in-person or virtually at the conference;
- b. Submit to the Board for approval the social activities plan and any subsequent changes to it, including proposed venues, any transportation required, any limits on the number of participants, costs and any fees charged to cover costs;
- c. Collaborate when needed with the Secretariat about catering selections for refreshment breaks, luncheons, receptions and dinner within the conference budget





plan, while providing delegates the opportunity to experience local food and beverage, as well as local sights and sounds;

- d. Coordinate publicity with the Association's Communications Committee, including the use of social media; and
- e. Provide the Secretariat with input on the draft post-conference assessment survey.

6.6.3 Social events will be cost recovery, supported by modest admission fees or by a sponsorship proposal submitted to the Secretariat and approved by the Board.

## **6.7 Association of Canadian Archivists Foundation**

6.7.1 The ACAF Board is responsible for planning and managing the fundraising activities throughout the duration of the conference.

## **7.0 REPORTING**

7.1 The Conference Planning Committee, in consultation with the Program and Host Teams, Professional Development and Communications Committees, and the Secretariat, will:

- 7.1.1 Consider the post-conference assessment survey results,
- 7.1.2 Financial results, and, if necessary,
- 7.1.3 Make recommendations to the Board.

## **8.0 RELATED LEGAL, POLICY AUTHORITIES AND AGREEMENTS**

8.1 The legal and other Association policy authorities and agreements that may bear on the administration of this policy and may be consulted as needed include but are not limited to:

- 8.1.1 *Financial Management Policy,*
- 8.1.2 *Fee Subsidy Policy,*
- 8.1.3 *Gift, Donation and Sponsorship Policy,*
- 8.1.4 *Travel and Accommodation Policy,*
- 8.1.5 *ACA Equity Commitments,*



8.1.6 Current Sponsorship Agreements that may exist between the ACA and external organizations, and

8.1.7 Current Memoranda of Understanding which might exist between the ACA and partner organizations.

## **9.0 ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY**

9.1 The information and records made and received to administer this policy are subject to the access to information and protection of privacy provisions of the Association's *Privacy Policy*.

## **10.0 RETENTION AND DISPOSAL OF RECORDS**

10.1 Information and records made and received to administer this policy are evidence of the Association's actions to manage its annual conference. Information and records must be retained and disposed of in accordance with a records retention schedule approved by the Association Secretary.

## **11.0 POLICY REVIEW**

11.1 The Association's Conference Planning Committee will review this policy at least once every three years.

## **12.0 AUTHORITY**

12.1 This policy is administered under the authority of the Executive Officer(s) designated as Board Liaison(s) for conference planning.

## **13.0 INTERPRETATION**

13.1 Questions of interpretation or application of this policy or its associated document(s) shall be referred to the President, Executive Officer(s) designated as the Board Liaison(s) for



conference planning and the Chair of the Conference Planning Committee, who will jointly make a decision, which shall be final.

## **14.0 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS**

14.1 The associated documents for this policy are:

14.1.1 Conference Operations Guide.