

ALGWA

STATE CONFERENCE



**AUSTRALIAN LOCAL
GOVERNMENT WOMEN'S
ASSOCIATION**
QUEENSLAND BRANCH

GUIDELINES

***Your Guide to Hosting a Successful
Conference***

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Introduction

The Australian Local Government Women's Association (Queensland Branch (ALGWA) holds its State Conference towards the end of July every second year (commencing in 2018). The conference is the premier event in the ALGWA Calendar and the major fundraising enterprise for the organisation. Rotating among the five ALGWA zones, the conference is hosted by whichever council has been successful in bidding for the event.

Hosting an ALGWA Conference can be a rewarding experience for the team involved in organising the event as well as an excellent opportunity for a Council to profile its region. ALGWA understands that a successful conference is not something that can be done at the last minute, but requires a professional and systematic approach. Of foremost importance to ensuring a successful conference is the appointment of a Conference Coordinator and Planning Committee to oversee all the elements of this project. It is important that these be in place as soon as possible so long term planning (such as venue and accommodation bookings) can commence.

Ideally a Conference Coordinator would have attended a previous ALGWA conference and be familiar with the format of the event, however it is recognized that it is not always possible to plan so far in advance.

These Guidelines have been produced to assist the host Council's conference Coordinator and organising committee in planning and managing the many aspects and details involved in producing a successful conference. It clarifies the responsibilities that a host Council takes on when it agrees to stage this event and explains how the Council should liaise with the ALGWA Management Committee throughout the months of planning.

These Guidelines are produced as a guide to assist you and not a strict set of rules as such. As you go through the Guidelines you will see there are many opportunities to personalize your conference and give it a distinctive local flavor.

It is recommended that the Conference Coordinator read these Guidelines in entirety as soon as it is available. This will enable the Coordinator to conduct any necessary forward planning and allocation of support staff.

Background

It is a requirement under the Constitution that ALGWA conduct a conference every second year and the Conference is fundamental in assisting the organisation to meet its objectives.

Councils are invited to take part in Conference bidding two years in advance by way of written submission, followed by presentation at Conference. The Conference floor elects the successful bidder. Generally the presentations include the details of the written submissions and voting takes place during the Annual General Meeting held as part of the conference. In the event of a tied ballot the President has the deciding vote.

It is further stated in the ALGWA Constitution that:

"6. Seminar Organising Committee

At each Annual General Meeting a Council or Councils will be elected to organise the following Biennial Conference."

The primary manner that ALGWA meets its objectives is the conduct of the Biennial Conference. It does this by encouraging attendance, ensuring the appropriateness of the content and conducting its Annual General Meeting.

It is a requirement under the Constitution that ALGWA conducts a Conference every second year.

Because local government has the facilities and manpower to organise and promote the Conference they are invited, by way of written invitation, to take part in a ballot of the members at the Biennial Conference, to elect the host local government area 2 years in advance.

The Biennial Conference shall be conducted on a rotation basis commencing in 2004 with Zone 3, if no nominations from Zone 3 are received; the Secretary will call for nominations from the next Zone. Nominations for Council to be elected for the following year's conference organising committee must be on the prescribed form. Nominations will be considered at a Management Committee Meeting prior to the Biennial Conference.

Successful nominating Council's will present a formal presentation to delegates at the Annual General Meeting that will include all details submitted in the written application. Voting will take place during the business of the day. In the event of a tied ballot the President shall have the deciding vote.

The successful Council will be required to provide a written quarterly report on the planning details of the Conference to be tabled at the Management Committee Meeting. These need not be formal in presentation – usually a fax or email will suffice.

It is important that you maintain communication with the ALGWA Management Committee throughout your planning process as the ALGWA Management Committee will be required to approve various initiatives including:

1. Sponsorship packages and agreements
2. Function run sheets
3. Programming of speakers
4. Conference staging arrangements etc.

Conference Content

The host Council agrees to provide for the following:

1. Annual General Meeting – An appropriate venue to accommodate delegates/visitors for the running of an efficient Annual General meeting.
2. Returning officer, election materials and equipment.
3. One (1) hall to accommodate between 80 to 120 delegates together with two (2) smaller areas for workshops being the minimum space required. Different meeting space arrangements may be negotiated with the ALGWA Management Committee.
4. Appropriate venue, not necessarily the same as the Conference venue, for Conference/Seminar dinner.

5. Quality accommodation to be arranged within a reasonable distance from the Conference venue.
6. Shuttle transport to be provided (within close proximity) to and from Conference venue (if required).
7. An office or other appropriate space shall be provided for the ALGWA Management Committee at the Conference venue.
8. A total smoke free environment will be provided at the Conference venue and social venues, with separate venues to be made available where smoking can take place.
9. ALGWA Conference venues shall be fully accessible to all people with disabilities.
10. Every attempt will be made to provide childcare facilities in conjunction with the conduct of the Biennial Conference (if required).
11. Any special segment requested by ALGWA.

Suggested Roles and Responsibilities

Host Council

The host Council is responsible for all other tasks in organising the Conference including:

- Formulation of conference program, and engagement of key note speakers *
- Design and printing of conference brochure, business papers and registration form *
- Distribution of brochure and registration form via electronic and hard copy postings as well as via Host Council's web site *(This information should also be provided to ALGWA Queensland for Association's web site www.algwaqld.asn.au)*
- Venues for conference and functions –suggested requirements *
 - 1 Venue for Conference - suitable for approximately 80-120 delegates
 - 2 smaller venues for workshops
- Staging of conference and functions * (fully accessible to all people with a disability)
- Quality accommodation to be arranged within reasonable distance from Conference venue
- Registration and database management
- Report Quarterly in writing (or in person with progress report) to the ALGWA Management Committee on progress and for formal agreement *
- Catering (including special dietary needs)
- Sponsorship (and possible trade displays opportunities) *

- Partners' program
- Delegates' welcome gift/satchel *
- Signage
- Provide running sheets for all functions
- Budget *
- Set the price of the conference and registration fees *
- Transport
- Ongoing liaison with ALGWA Queensland Management Committee throughout this time (including speakers, registration and program, dates and venues etc.)
- Accounts audited and Balance Sheet submitted within 3 months (as per Clause 35 of the Constitution).

*Denotes role undertaken and requirement for ALGWA Management Committee's final agreement.

ALGWA Management Committee

- Distribution of Annual General Meeting conference motions via the website www.algwaqld.asn.au and email notification.
- Evaluation Forms
- The theme, keynote speakers, workshop subjects, presentations and other inclusions are the final prerogative of the ALGWA Management Committee in conjunction with the host council.
- Proposed dates for the Conference, registration fees and social program must be submitted to the ALGWA Management Committee for approval no later than seven months prior to the holding of the Conference. The ALGWA Queensland State Conference is always hosted towards the end of July.
- Within six months prior to the actual Conference, a meeting will be held between the forthcoming Conference host council including an officer of the host council and the ALGWA Queensland Branch Management Committee. This will provide the opportunity to meet with the local organisers and to clarify any outstanding matters.

Timeframe

This is a guide to assist you to schedule the workload of co-ordinating the Conference. It has been designed to spread out the various activities in a manageable way and in doing so, avoid the last minute panics and troubles.

If you Council decide to appoint a consultant to perform any or all of these tasks, certain parts of these guidelines could contract into a shorter timeframe. Either way, you will find the month leading up to the conference is a full time commitment!

An example schedule:

August	-	Conclusion of previous ALGWA Conference
October – November	-	Evaluation report from Conference tabled by Management Committee
	-	All books and accounts audited
	-	Balance sheet submitted to Treasurer ALGWA
	-	Establish conference budget
	-	Tentative block bookings for conference and accommodation
	-	Investigate conference and function venues
	-	Book conference and function venues
	-	Tentative booking key note speakers
	-	Liaise/report to ALGWA Queensland Management Committee
January – February	-	Meeting with ALGWA Queensland Management Committee
	-	Approval of next Conference dates
	-	Registration fees set
	-	Formulate social program
	-	Formulate sponsorship options/print up packages
March	-	Provide ALGWA with written reports with details of
	-	Conference venue (layout etc)
	-	Accommodation
	-	Social/Partners' program
	-	Function venues
	-	Start sponsorship drive
April	-	Continue sponsorship drive
	-	Investigate entertainment
	-	Decisions on menus
	-	Decision on theme for conference
	-	Decision on theme for conference dinner
	-	Budget review
	-	Investigate transport options
	-	Source satchels and delegates gifts
	-	Liaise/report to ALGWA Queensland Management Committee
May	-	Continue sponsorship drive
	-	Tentative bookings trade display (if appropriate)
	-	Budget review
	-	Liaise/report to ALGWA Queensland Management Committee
June	-	Start receiving delegates registration
	-	Finalise sponsors
	-	Book MC for conference dinner
	-	Budget review
	-	Liaise/report to ALGWA Queensland Management Committee

July	-	Confirm bookings
	-	Follow up registrations
	-	Confirm entertainment set up details
	-	Supply sponsor logos to host Council
	-	Budget review
	-	Confirm guest speakers and requirements
	-	Report to ALGWA Queensland Management Committee
	-	Name tags
	-	Compile satchels
	-	Confirm all numbers – catering / transportation
August	-	Running sheets for all functions
	-	Liaison with sponsors
	-	Copies of speakers' presentation to be made available
September	-	Budget reconciliation

Accountability

The host Council has total responsibility for arranging, coordinating and documenting these matters, subject to the following:

1. The one office within the host council is responsible for processing registration fees.
2. As per Clause 35 of the Constitution:

'Within 3 months of the Conference, all books and accounts must be audited and a balance sheet submitted to the Treasurer of the Australian Local Government Women's Association, Queensland Branch. The profit from the Conference is to be directed to the Australian Local Government Women's Association, Queensland Branch'.

A list of registrations received should be faxed to the Secretary/Treasurer weekly for verification that the member is financial and/or is eligible to vote at the Annual General Meeting at Conference in accordance with the Australian Local Government Women's Association, Queensland Branch Constitution.

3. When budgeting for a Conference no fee is to be allowed for the local committee and no levy is allowed for the Conference organisers.
4. Accommodation houses are to be informed of Conference as dates are confirmed.
5. Provision is made for single day registration.
6. Members of the host Council are welcome to attend any Conference session free of charge with the exception of catering costs.
7. ALGWA Queensland Branch Life Members are exempt from Conference Registration Fee.

Financial Matters

General

The registration fee is to be calculated by the host council. It should cover all expenses associated with the actual conduct of the Conference as well as providing a surplus which then becomes income for the Australian Local Government Women's Association, Queensland Branch.

It is preferred that the host Council will provide Council owned facilities and staff free-of-charge or arrange the best possible venues at reasonable rates. Meals and other services should be included in the fee as should guest speaker expenses.

Commercial sponsorship provides a means of either reducing the registration fee or providing additional income to ALGWA. This is determined when ALGWA approves the registration fee in conjunction with the host council. It is preferred the host council utilize their efforts to secure sponsors for lunches, dinners, morning and afternoon teas, special presentations and outdoor functions.

Operating expenses of this Association is derived from two sources, Membership Fees and profit from the Annual State Conference. Accordingly the host Council is requested to conduct the Conference in such a manner that a profit is returned to ALGWA.

Conference Refunds

ALGWA Queensland Branch Management Committee adopted on 15 October 2011 the following Policy with respect to refund of Conference Registration Fees:

Cancellation received up to 20 clear working days prior	50% refund
Cancellation received less than 20 clear working days prior	No refund
Participants who fail to attend	No refund

A replacement delegate will be accepted on any cancellation

In extenuating circumstances the final decision rests with ALGWA Management Committee.

ALGWA will recognize the efforts of the Host Conference Chair and Host Council.

Promotion

This is the single most important aspect of any Conference. The host Council is responsible for resources, literature and promotion.

A Conference date claimer to all Councillors and Members of the Association is to be distributed at least 5 months prior to the Conference.

A Conference leaflet, brochure or expression of interest paper needs to be prepared and distributed to all local government authorities, National and other State Executives and relevant community groups at least 3 months prior to the Conference

Follow up actions should include, a second mail-out, presentations at State Local Government Association Conferences, telephone calls, emails etc.

It is important to ensure that information gets to interested elected representatives and community groups.

Contact should also be made with the local media (press, radio and television) and interviews arranged prior and during the Conference.

Conference Dates

To be selected by the host council having regard for local conditions but to avoid Council election periods and other local government commitments. The ALGWA Queensland State Conference is always held towards the end of July.

Such Conference dates to commence with activities over a three (3) day period e.g.

1. Welcome event.
2. Conference, official welcome and opening and Conference Dinner.
3. Conference continues with guest speakers and final function.

Report Following Conference

It is the responsibility of the host council to prepare and distribute a Conference report to all delegates within 2 calendar months of the Conference. This should include keynote speeches, list of delegates, program, summary of workshops and/or recommendations and any other details that might be of interest.

ALGWA will prepare and forward a copy of the Annual General Meeting Minutes for duplication and inclusion in the report (if available).

Articles from the local media could be included with the report if desired.

It would also be helpful if Conference details could be provided to relevant Federal and State Ministers and Department, both prior to and following the Conference.

Conclusion

The success of any Conference ultimately depends on the number of delegates who attend. This in turn is directly related to the quantity and quality of pre-conference publicity and promotion.

As mentioned previously, ALGWA appreciates that the organisation of its Biennial Conference is a complex task that requires a lot of hard work and dedication.

We are sincerely grateful to host councils that take on this task and hope that it will be a rewarding experience for all involved.

We hope these Guidelines are of use to you and welcome any feedback you might have.

Thank you again.

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