



Host Community RFP

(Request For Proposals)

Currently accepting proposals for 2009 through 2011

EVERYONE WINS!

What makes an **Association of Midwest Museums' (AMM) Annual Conference** special? It's the **People**. It's the **Places**. It's the **Ideas**. The AMM Annual Conference offers a chance for your community and its museums to shine. The AMM Annual Conference and your community are introduced and promoted to more than 5,000 individuals in 1,500 museums across the Midwest. Approximately 400 individuals regularly attend the Annual Conference.

Benefits to Local Museums, their staff, trustees, volunteers and stakeholders, include:

- Creates or strengthens relationships among local museums, opening the way for future partnerships and collaborations;
- Introduces museums to diverse local, state, and regional funding sources, including corporations, foundations, and governmental granting agencies;
- Provides valuable training opportunities for staff, trustees and volunteers at affordable rates;
- Showcases recent projects, including capital projects and special exhibits;
- Provides regional recognition of leadership skills of staff, trustees and volunteers who take prominent volunteer roles on various committees; and,
- Introduces staff, trustees and volunteers to new ideas while building a valuable network of regional friends and colleagues.

Benefits to the Local Community include:

- Directs regional attention on the successes of your cultural community and its supporting businesses, governmental agencies, private foundations, and educational partners;
- Attracts more than 400 visitors to your community, which translates into more than \$100,000 in revenue generated from hotels, restaurants, shopping, and transportation services; and,
- Demonstrates your community's ability to host regional conferences for this market, which can be used as a model of success to attract other museum conferences, including the American Association of Museums, Association of Science and Technology Centers, Museum Trustee Association, American Association for State and Local History, etc.

Benefits to the Association of Midwest Museums and the Regional Museum Community:

- Strengthens the museum profession by "providing a forum for the exchange of information and new ideas to shape the future of museums";
- Generates a net profit of approximately \$35,000-40,000 in earned income for AMM, which supports about 40% of its general operations; and,
- Provides opportunity to cultivate individuals for future leadership roles with AMM.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Since 1927, museum professionals in the Midwest have convened for networking and professional development at an annual fall conference. Traditionally, AMM meets for a 3-4 day period from mid-September to late October. The conference usually commences with an opening reception on Tuesday night at one of the anchor institutions in the host community. The conference then officially opens with a keynote presentation on Wednesday morning and ends on Friday with a midday session or closing keynote speaker. The Wednesday through Friday model is preferred; however, air fares and hotel rates can affect this, and some recent conferences have adapted to a Thursday through Saturday model. Attendance has varied over the years from 250 to more than 600, with current conferences averaging around 400 attendees. AMM strives to provide a conference that is **affordable, accessible, and relevant**.

Co-Hosts:

When possible, AMM has partnered with state museum associations to the mutual benefit of all. AMM may also partner with national and regional museum-service organizations.

Conference Site and Structure:

The bulk of daily activities for the conference typically take place in the conference hotel with evening events at area museums. In addition to at least 200 sleeping rooms, a hotel must also have at least six breakout rooms available, and ballroom space for general sessions, luncheons, breakfasts, and an exhibit hall that can accommodate between a minimum of 40 booths, either 8x10 or 10x10. Further requirements for the hotel are listed below.

Funding Structure:

Two of the first questions communities and museum hosts typically ask are “how much is this going to cost,” and “who is responsible for raising the money?”

The AMM Executive Director works with the AMM Treasurer and the Conference Chair(s) to establish a budget that is submitted and approved by the AMM Board. The typical conference budget anticipates a projected income of \$100,000-120,000 and expenses of \$60,000-80,000. The revenue streams can be separated into three categories: 1.) **registration and fees**, which accounts for approximately 40% of income; 2.) **earned income** through the sale of preliminary and final program advertising and exhibitor fees accounts for 20%; and 3.) **sponsorships** of keynote presentations, receptions, and other activities account for the remaining 40%.

While AMM’s Executive Director is primarily responsible for the earned income portion of the conference through booth and ad sales, the Conference Committee and Development Chair are chiefly responsible for raising the sponsorship portion. This portion may be in the form of direct contributions from corporations, foundations and government agencies, or it can be in the form of in-kind contributions for services such as printing, bus transportation or catering. The AMM Executive Director and Board of Directors will assist with the process of identifying and soliciting conference sponsorships. Occasionally, the local CVB has taken a lead in finding local sponsors. At other times, the museums have underwritten the cost of evening events in their operating budgets or found sponsors. While museums are encouraged to help underwrite the expenses of hosting evening receptions, it is not a requirement for hosting an evening event. Host museums are expected to waive all entrance fees for conference attendees during the duration of the conference and to provide a minimum 10% discount in their gift shops.

SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

The AMM Annual Conference is an important undertaking that requires an earnest commitment of leadership, volunteer time, and fundraising on the part of museums and the local host community. Logistically, there are also requirements for meeting space and community accessibility as explained below.

Community Requirements:

- There should be a critical mass of museums in the local area with staff sufficient to help organize the conference (see below), as well as attend the conference (between 20-25% of attendees are from the local community with as much as 35% coming from the host state).
- Museums in the local community should represent a variety of sizes, types, and disciplines (small, medium and large museums, historic houses, zoos, botanical gardens, art museums, historic parks, history museums, science centers, children’s museums, specialty museums).
- Travel to and from the community, whether flying or driving, should be easy and affordable.
- AMM attempts to regularly rotate the conference site among the eight states in its region (Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, and Wisconsin), although this is not a strict requirement.
- Mid-sized communities are encouraged to apply.

Requirements of Local Museums:

- The **Conference Committee** is made up of 12-20 individuals, usually staff from the local museums, with the following leadership roles: general chair (or co-chairs), development chair, local arrangements chair, and volunteer chair. Successful committees have included volunteers from the community who can contribute professional expertise and help with fund-raising;
- A **Program Committee** is made up of 6-10 individuals, with about half coming from the local community; this committee is responsible for the content of sessions, keynotes, workshops and other educational opportunities. The rest of the Program Committee is made up of representatives from the Standing Professional Committees and, for continuity, the Program Co-Chair(s) from the previous year’s conference.
- Serve as hosts for evening receptions and some workshops;
- Secures approximately \$40,000 in cash and in-kind support for the conference from the state and local community; and,
- Make a commitment to fully support and promote the conference within the local community; and send staff to attend the conference.

Hotel or Conference Site Requirements:

Following AMM’s preferred schedule of a Wednesday through Friday conference with a hotel acting as the main conference site, a hotel must have at least 200 sleeping rooms available for the peak nights. AMM typically commits to the following block (approximately 400 total):

Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
100	150	150	20	10

The following is a typical schedule for the **Meeting Room Space** at the hotel:

Tuesday, 12pm – 5:00pm

- Ballroom for decorator and exhibitor setup

Wednesday, 8am-6pm

- Ballroom for Exhibit Hall (minimum of 40 booths, 8x8 or 8x10) and meals (buffet for minimum of 300)
- Ballroom for general session for minimum of 300+ theater-style (Please note that when possible, the general session and exhibit hall can be combined)
- Late morning and afternoon (10am-5pm), 6 breakout rooms for concurrent sessions (minimum 40+ classroom)
- Dedicated registration area near the Exhibit Hall and general session rooms

Thursday, 8am-6pm

- Ballroom for up for minimum 40 exhibit booths and meals (buffet for minimum 300)
- 6 breakout rooms for concurrent sessions set for 40+ classroom in morning and afternoon
- Dedicated registration area near the Exhibit Hall and general session rooms

Friday, 8am-6pm

- Ballroom set 300 theater-style for keynote speaker
- 6 breakout rooms for concurrent sessions set for 40+ classroom in morning and afternoon

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING PROPOSALS

The area **Convention and Visitors' Bureau** (CVB) or a local museum may take the lead in organizing the appropriate materials for submission to AMM in consideration of hosting the AMM Annual Conference. AMM encourages the local museum community and the local CVB to work in concert to submit a joint proposal.

We are currently accepting proposals for **2009 through 2011**. Bids may be for a single year or multiple years.

With a cover letter, submit **two copies** of the following:

1. At least three **letters of support** signed by the directors of local museums acknowledging their commitment to host events, to provide volunteers to serve on the various committees, and to help raise the necessary funds to support the conference (can also be a single letter signed by at least three local museum directors).
2. Appropriate **bids from local hotels**.
3. A packet or portfolio containing **general information on all area services and attractions**, including: transportation, restaurants, hotels, shopping and other amenities.
4. A **contact list of similar conferences** held in your community within the last two years.

Submit proposals to: Brian K. Bray, Executive Director
Association of Midwest Museums (or via Fed Ex or UPS)
PO Box 11940 225 S. Skinker
St. Louis, MO 63112-0040 St. Louis, MO 63105

Questions, contact: Phone (314) 746-4557 E-mail bbray@midwestmuseums.org
Fax (314) 746-4569 Visit <www.midwestmuseums.org>