

Organizing and Managing SGA BIENNIAL MEETINGS

This document is intended to assist in organizing, financing, and managing the SGA Biennial Meetings, and will serve the local organizing committee, SGA Council, and any others contributing to SGA Biennial Meetings. This guide provides a template for planning meeting activities, subject to modifications and additions as needed for a particular venue, and it is intended to help ensure that SGA meetings achieve the highest professional level, from both the technical and scientific viewpoints.

1) Organizing Committee

The Organizing Committee includes representatives of the SGA Council and the Local Organizing Committee. Past organizers of SGA meetings can be appointed by the SGA Council to serve on the Organizing Committee.

a) SGA Council: The SGA President, Executive Secretary, Treasurer and Regional Vice-President are *ex officio* members (as per the SGA Constitution) of the Organizing Committee. *Ex officio* members assume a proactive responsibility in maintaining the quality of the meetings.

b) Local Organizing Committee (LOC): As per the SGA constitution, the LOC must be approved by the SGA Council. Appointment of the members of the LOC is the most important first step toward a successful meeting. The SGA Council will assume a proactive role in the selection of the LOC.

c) Student Committee: A student committee shall be established by SGA to promote student participation in the meeting. The duties of the student committee include the coordination of student grants for travel, registration, local accommodation, field trips, and workshops. The student committee will work closely with the LOC to ensure that student's presentations are adequately represented in the program. The student committee will assist in the selection of the best poster and oral presentation by students for the conference.

d) Sponsorship Committee: The SGA Vice-President (Chair of the SGA Educational Fund Committee) should coordinate with the LOC seeking sponsorship with the aim to avoid any duplications.

2) Co-organization versus Sponsorship

An important distinction is made between "sponsors" for SGA meetings and "co-organizers."

Sponsors simply share logos and help with advertising, for example, and assume no formal responsibility for organization. A co-organizer accepts a well-defined block of responsibility for parts (e.g., specific technical modules and/or field trips) of the meeting. Any recognized professional organization that has goals consistent with the goals of the SGA may approach SGA as a co-organizer or sponsor; co-organizers and/or sponsors must be approved by the SGA Council and the LOC. Sponsors will have a billing or position on the meeting advertisements but will not necessarily have an active role in the planning and conduction of the meeting.

3) Technical sessions

a) The titles/topics for some of the technical sessions should be consistent with the theme of the meeting. However, it is essential to have sessions that are not bound to the title of the meeting. Sessions must also reflect the diverse cross-section of SGA membership. Topics of sessions should be timely and captivating.

b) The number of concurrent oral sessions must not exceed four; departures from this number must be approved by the SGA Council and the SGA *ex-officio* members.

c) Great care is needed in selecting scientists that will be responsible for organizing technical sessions. Selection of session organizers is the responsibility of the LOC and the SGA *ex officio* members. SGA Council and LOC must ensure that session organizers enjoy high international reputation and represent a broad cross-section of the SGA membership.

d) Posters are considered to be a critically important part of the meeting and should not be in competition with oral presentations. To attract attendance of the poster sessions, incentives such as free beer, coffee and cookies, etc. should be considered. Also, poster sessions should be scheduled following oral sessions. Awards for the best poster student presentations will be made by the SGA Student Committee in consultation with some senior scientists.

In the case of restricted international travelling, LOC can suggest to the SGA Council organization of a fully virtual and/or hybrid meeting.

4) Abstracts

Following the tradition of past SGA Biennial Meetings, extended abstracts (up to 4 printed pages) have to be submitted by potential delegates who want to contribute with either an oral or a poster presentation. It is of the highest priority to fulfill all necessary criteria to keep the Proceedings of SGA Biennial Meetings among refereed Conference Proceedings listed in Clarivate Analytics database and LOC is responsible for following instructions described at

<https://clarivate.com/academia-government/scientific-and-academic-research/research-discovery-and-referencing/web-of-science/web-of-science-core-collection/editorial-selection-process/conference-proceedings-citation-index-evaluation-process-selection-criteria/>

After the meeting, when SGA Proceedings volumes are completed and available at the SGA website, SGA Executive Secretary will contact Clarivate Analytics at editorial.relations@clarivate.com to ask for their evaluation and inclusion on WOS.

(a) Preparation and reviewing of abstracts: Clear and detailed guidelines for the preparation of the abstracts, together with an easy to use, standardized template will be distributed to the LOC at least nine months before the meeting. All abstracts MUST conform to the instructions for abstract preparation provided by SGA. The abstracts must be of high scientific and technical quality, including correct English. Acceptance or rejection of submitted abstracts is the responsibility of the session organizers. Final acceptance of the abstracts is the responsibility of the editors of the Proceedings. SGA expects a certain percentage of abstracts to be rejected, based on scientific and technical quality. Session leaders may select additional reviewers for abstracts. The session leaders and reviewers are not expected to rewrite abstracts in order to make them acceptable. However, it is incumbent upon the author(s) to find help (if needed) to put the abstracts in reasonable English. Technical editors may be provided by the LOC. Rejection of abstracts or requesting the author(s) to rewrite a poor or non-conforming abstract should be the normal consequence of a poorly written abstract, rather than expecting the session leader/reviewer to rewrite it. No distinction is to be made between abstracts for oral and poster presentations. Deadlines established by the LOC and TL for reviewing and acceptance MUST be strictly enforced.

(b) Number of abstracts per delegate: No more than one oral presentations (except when invited) per delegate will be permitted.

(c) Proceedings volumes: The accepted abstracts of paid-up delegates will be published digitally or in printed form. The Proceedings volumes published digitally will be accessible free of charge to all SGA members. The publisher will produce volumes of extended abstracts, making use of the standardized templates and ensuring a continuously high level of a product that is recognizably that of SGA. No additional proceedings or other technical publications concerning the conference can be authorized without written permission of SGA Council.

(d) Editors of the proceedings volume(s): The editor(s) must be approved by Council and will normally consist of not more than 4 co-editors. The editors will have prime responsibility for adhering to established protocol for acceptance of the abstracts and delivering the abstracts in standardized formats in a *timely* manner to the publisher. The session leaders will canvass and pre-select submissions, organize reviewing process and make recommendation to editor(s). They will be acknowledged on the first page of the section for which they are responsible. Reviewers will be gratefully acknowledged in a highly visible section of the proceedings. It is important that the editors follow the instructions by Clarivate Analytics (see above).

(e) Final Acceptance of Abstract: The final acceptance of an abstract is contingent on the payment of registration fees. Consequently, no abstract will be included in the conference proceedings without the author's payment of registration fees.

(f) Deadlines for all aspects of abstract submittal, editing and revisions must be established as early as possible during the conference planning and subsequently adhered to.

5) Exhibits

A concerted effort is needed to promote exhibits at the SGA meetings (companies, SGA corporate members, government surveys, mineral crafts, scientific houses, universities etc.). SGA corporate members will be given discounted exhibit space and co-organizers will receive free exhibit space. Exhibits are an important and effective way to generate interest and revenue for the meeting. A person responsible for exhibits must be designated by the LOC. This person will produce a list of potential exhibitors that can be reviewed by the Organizing Committee.

6) Workshops and Short Courses

Pre- and/or post-conference workshops and/or short courses are important parts of SGA Biennial Meetings. Separate committees, working with SGA and the Local Organizing committee, need to be established to ensure that these important parts of the meeting are adequately developed. Short course and workshop notes could be published by SGA, pending financial resources and approval by the SGA Council. Workshops and short courses *must* be financially self-supporting, including one free student participant in each workshop/short course.

7) Field trip Committee

Pre- and post-conference field trips are an important component of the meeting. The SGA Council must approve a list of field trips to be offered. The chairperson of the field trip committee and the SGA Council are responsible for approving the final selection of field trips. For each field trip, a field trip guidebook is to be prepared by the field trip leader(s). Fieldtrips *must* be financially self-supporting, including one free student participant in each field trip. Authors of field trip guidebooks should be encouraged to prepare the guidebooks in such a way that they can be published and sold through the SGA website after the meeting.

8) Financial Aspects

(a) Revenue Generation: The SGA meetings are expected to generate some financial surplus. Such a surplus and income from new memberships received from the SGA meetings are essential for the financial and scientific health of SGA. SGA will charge each conference an “SGA Management Assessment Fee” to be decided by the SGA Council (typically 30 Euro per registration). This amount is to be included by the LOC in the registration fee, and it is to be treated as a normal expense for conducting the conference. Net surplus from the conference (including workshops, short courses and field trips) is to be split between SGA and the LOC at a rate to be decided in advance for each meeting by the SGA Council (typically at least 50 % of the surplus will go to SGA). An eventual deficit will be shared by the LOC and SGA 50:50.

(b) Budgets and Review of Budgets: The SGA Treasurer will establish financial barometers and oversee the finances of the meeting and expenses. A budget will be established based on the venue, site costs, abstract publication costs, registration income, and the SGA assessment fee. These must be established early, before any start-up funds (seed money) are provided (if required). SGA requires a preliminary budget to be submitted at the time of application for hosting a meeting and again 60 days after the applicant receives acceptance of the proposal. Updated budgets are required to be submitted to the SGA Treasurer regularly in the year of the conference, ideally at the beginning of the year and a two months prior to the conference. A summary of the conference data (budget, number and break-down of delegates, exhibitors, etc.) is to be submitted during the conference. Final accounting must be received not later than four months after the meeting. The budget must include detailed financial data regarding all elements of the program (i.e. field trips, workshops, short courses, exhibits etc.). Failure to submit the required financial data could result in the cancellation of the conference or moving to a different venue. The Treasurer will submit all budgets and accounting to the SGA Council for approval.

(c) Registration Payments: A consistent policy must be established for the payment of registration fees. Discounts for members and members of co-organizing groups and affiliated societies (having MoU with SGA) need to be established. Significant “late registration fees” should be implemented. Abstracts will only be accepted for inclusion into the proceedings volume and as part of the official program *after payment of conference fees and attendance at the conference* (the growing “no show” problem). The SGA EC must approve of the registration fees before any announcement is published.

(d) Seed Money: The amount of funds for organizational start up expenses needs to be determined early and agreed upon by co-organizing parties, such that the planned meeting does not run the risk of generating a financial loss. This seed money will be paid back to SGA at the conclusion of the Biennial Meeting.

9) Students and Professionals from Economically Disadvantaged Backgrounds

The SGA and the LOC will coordinate efforts to solicit funds to provide financial grants to students and economically disadvantaged professionals from developing countries making presentations at the conference. In the past, such grants have made it possible for many students to participate in SGA Biennial Meetings. A Student Grant Committee will be organized by SGA and the LOC to coordinate the distribution of student grants. This committee will be chaired by the SGA Vice-President for Student Affairs. Funding of these grants shall be obtained primarily through the SGA Educational Fund.

10) Information and president from past meetings

The LOC is encouraged to utilise the vast resource of information on SGA Biennial Meeting organisation available in final reports from previous meetings. These reports document various aspects of meeting organisation including budgets and development of the speaking and poster programs, short courses and field trips, catering and social events, as well as in seeking sponsorship funding, avenues for advertising the meeting and the development of the proceedings volumes. The information in these reports can save the LOC time and help avoid problems and pitfalls encountered in previous meetings. The 2022 New Zealand report also provides a list of duties required from the professional conference organiser (PCO), useful when approaching potential PCOs, and in developing a contract with the selected PCO. The Biennial Meeting reports are available from the SGA Executive Secretary. Also, the LOC chairs of recent meetings can supply president for various items such as abstract templates and examples of formatted abstracts, and letters for seeking sponsorship (noting benefits for the sponsors), and letters for engaging session convenors, short course presenters and field trip organisers, noting their roles, duties, and benefits.

11) Miscellaneous Items

(a) Advance Planning: SGA will invite applications for hosting SGA Biennial Meetings at least 4 years prior to the scheduled meeting and complete site selection at least 3 years prior. The selection of a particular venue for future SGA Biennial Meetings will be based on opportunities for field trips, scientific and organizational strength of the LOC, and the potential for growing SGA membership. Any SGA member can submit a request to the SGA Council to host a biennial meeting at a particular venue; however, council members are encouraged to solicit internationally recognized leaders or centers in mineral deposit geology research as potential hosts for future SGA meetings.

(b) Timelines: Organizational milestones detailing abstract deadlines, advertising, fund raising, etc., need to be approved and periodically reviewed by SGA Council and the Technical Coordinating Committee. Measures must be already in place when milestones are not on schedule.

(c) Advertisement: A timeline is needed for the promotion and advertisement (posters, notices in journals, event programme including SGA Award Ceremony, SGA General Assembly, etc.). All promotional materials must be pre-approved by the promotion manager before public distribution. All other materials should go primarily to the SGA Executive Secretary. The LOC should prepare the First and Second Circulars and conference website for approval by the SGA promotions manager and the TL.

(d) Post-meeting evaluation: A post-meeting evaluation for each biennial meeting will be prepared by the LOC within four months after the meeting. This report will provide a final budget, including revenue and expenses, plus attendance, and description of problems encountered, and solutions used. Copies of all advertisements will be included in this report. Three hard copies of the report will be delivered to the SGA Executive Secretary.

(e) Data protection: Although the LOC is encouraged to make available a list of delegates and their affiliations, the LOC must not sell or give away personal data (incl. e-mail addresses) of delegates to any outside party.

(Revised by Jan Pašava, Hartwig Frimmel, Karen Kelley, David Banks, John Slack, Iain Pitcairn, Tony Christie – August 2025)