

**Society for Community Research and Action  
Biennial Planning Handbook**

*Version September 3, 2014*

## **Acknowledgement:**

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## **Users Guide**

This Handbook was developed based on a compilation of best practices and lessons learned from a series of biennial events. The Handbook describes the roles and responsibilities of the local and national biennial conference planning committees. It discusses core components of conference planning (e.g., finances, program, logistics). It also includes a timeline of biennial tasks as well as other useful reference materials (e.g., call for presentation proposals, mentoring program information, guidelines for presenters). This Handbook is intended to serve as a guide for members who are involved in planning, implementation, and/or evaluation of an SCRA biennial conference. As members design and develop their own conference, it is expected and encouraged that decisions will be tailored to local needs.

### *Request for Feedback*

The developers of this Handbook view the document as a "work-in-progress" that is to be updated and refined based on learnings across planners from each biennial event. In the spirit of on-going improvement, please track and send any suggestions for improvement to the SCRA Administrative Director. You may submit your suggestions as they arise, or collectively, at the end of the biennial event.

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## Society for Community Research and Action Biennial Planning Handbook

SCRA Biennial conferences occur in odd-numbered years near the end of June. Planning for the conference begins at least three years in advance, with the submission of a conference proposal (see Appendix A for an example of a call for proposals and an outline of what the proposal requires).

For the purposes of clarity, the following convention regarding the planning timeline will be used throughout this document. All “years” begin in August, when new terms begin on the SCRA Executive Committee.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Beginning August</b>	<b>Place in Biennial Sequence</b>
<b>Year One</b>	August of even-numbered years	Year of the previous Biennial
<b>Year Two</b>	August of odd-numbered years	Non-biennial year
<b>Year Three</b>	August of even-numbered year	Biennial year

The following table demonstrates how this timeline works for the next three Biennials.

<b>Biennial</b>	<b>Year One</b>	<b>Year Two</b>	<b>Year Three</b>
<b>June 2015 Biennial</b>	8-12 to 7-13	8-13 to 7-14	8-14 to 7-15
<b>June 2017 Biennial</b>	8-14 to 7-15	8-15 to 7-16	8-16 to 7-17
<b>June 2019 Biennial</b>	8-16 to 7-17	8-17 to 7-18	8-18 to 7-19

### Biennial Conference Planning Committees

The conference is coordinated both by a Local Planning Committee and the National Planning Committee. The SCRA president-elect<sup>1</sup> and the Local Planning Committee chair serve as co-chairs of the National Planning Committee.

The mission of these committees is to oversee the development of a Biennial conference for the Society that fosters lively and engaged discussion of recent developments in community research and action and facilitates the creation and maintenance of a sense of community for SCRA members.

Although the biennial location and committees are established in Year One, prior to the previous biennial conference, the serious work of planning the conference begins at least 24 months before the conference date (see Appendix B for a list of tasks and suggested timeline). It is at this point that the Local Planning Committee should begin regular

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<sup>1</sup> This refers to the individual elected in August of Year One.

meetings and provide routine updates to the National Planning Committee and the SCRA Executive Committee.

### **The National Planning Committee**

Commonly, the majority of the members of the Local Planning Committee have never attended a Biennial and have minimal knowledge of the expectations, traditions, and challenges associated with planning and implementing a biennial conference. The National Planning Committee provides consultation and support to the Local Planning Committee. The Local Planning Committee should consult with the National Planning Committee about all major decisions, such as the conference theme, dates, budget, keynote speakers and any anticipated deviations from previous Biennial formats. The National Planning Committee should also be consulted about issues related to their specific areas of expertise. For example, the chair of the Disabilities Interest Group serves on the National Planning Committee and should be consulted regarding accessibility arrangements for the Biennial. It is the responsibility of the Local Planning Committee to actively reach out to the National Planning Committee as support is needed.

#### ***National Planning Committee Membership***

The National Planning Committee is comprised of eleven (11) members, as listed in the table below. The President-Elect in Year One and the Chair of the Local Planning Committee serve as co-chairs of the National Planning Committee.

<b>SCRA Member</b>	<b>Responsibilities<sup>2</sup></b>
1. President Elect  This is the SCRA member who was president-elect in Year One.	The individual in this role leads planning and coordination efforts of the National Planning Committee, including convening meetings, allocating tasks, monitoring the biennial budget, communicating with the Executive Committee, and managing other biennial planning activities
2. Local Planning Committee Chair	The individual in this role leads planning and coordination efforts of the Local Planning Committee, including recruiting committee members, convening meetings, allocating tasks, ensuring biennial costs stay within approved amounts, and managing other biennial planning activities
3. Early Career Interest Group Chair or Delegated Member	The individual in this role ensures that biennial sessions and activities adequately and appropriately promote early career and professional development.
4. International Committee Chair or Delegated Member	The individual in this role ensures that biennial sessions and activities incorporate the needs and interests of SCRA’s international members, and adequately and appropriately encompasses international perspectives.

<sup>2</sup> See section (below) titled *Biennial Planning Team Tasks and Responsibilities* for additional detail.

5. Policy Committee Chair or Delegated Member	The individual in this role ensures that biennial sessions and activities adequately and appropriately address policy issues relevant to SCRA's members.
6. Women's Committee Chair or Delegated Member	The individual in this role ensures that biennial sessions and activities adequately and appropriately address women's issues.
7. Cultural, Ethnic & Racial Affairs Committee Chair or Delegated Member	The individual in this role ensures that biennial sessions and activities promote diversity and adequately and appropriately address cultural and racial issues.
8. Practice Council Chair or Delegated Member	The individual in this role ensures that biennial sessions adequately and appropriately encompasses topics pertaining to the practice of community psychology
9. Disabilities Interest Group Chair or Delegated Member	The individual in this role ensures that the planning team appropriately identifies and addresses the needs of disabled persons and groups participating in the biennial.
10. Second Year National Student Representative	This individual in this role ensures that biennial sessions and activities adequately and appropriate address the needs and interests of participating students. The student member will review student conference submissions, oversee student travel awards, coordinate conference activities for students, and represent student concerns.
11. Previous Biennial Site Chair	The individual in this role provides guidance and shares "lessons learned" based on his or her biennial planning experience.

### **The Local Planning Committee**

The Local Planning Committee is responsible for planning and coordinating the full range of activities associated with hosting a biennial conference, including but not limited to circulating the "Call for Papers", identifying presenters, establishing pre-conference activities and the conference program, communicating with membership and addressing member questions/needs, administering evaluations, and tracking biennial costs and revenues. The Local Planning Committee shall work closely with SCRA's Executive Committee, Administrative Director, and association management group, in addition to the National Planning Committee, to plan, implement, and evaluate the biennial conference<sup>3</sup> Within sixty (60) days after the biennial conference, the Local Planning Committee shall submit a Biennial Conference Report to the SCRA Executive Committee that reflects the

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<sup>3</sup> In areas deemed necessary, the Local Planning Committee may request for the SCRA Executive Committee to outsource (via contract ) specific conference activities to SCRA's association management group or other entity. This request must be made far enough in advance to establish such an arrangement.



process and outcomes of the biennial. A copy of the Biennial Conference Report template is included in Appendix C.

***Local Planning Committee Membership***

<b>Local Member</b>	<b>Biennial Role</b>	<b>Responsibilities<sup>4</sup></b>
Institution Faculty	Chair	The individual in this role leads planning and coordination efforts of the Local Planning Committee, including recruiting committee members, convening meetings, allocating tasks, ensuring biennial costs stay within approved amounts, and managing other biennial planning activities. This individual is one of the 11 members of the National Planning Committee
Institution Faculty and/or Student	Finances	The individual(s) in this role works in close partnership with SCRA's Treasurer and association management team.
Institution Faculty and/or Student	Marketing & Member Communication	The individual(s) in this role has the responsibility of advertising and providing members with information about the biennial conference. Information about the biennial shall be circulated via SCRA's member list, listservs, website, and the TCP.
Institution Faculty and/or Student	Conference Programming	The individual(s) in this role has the responsibility of developing the conference program, including pre-conference activities. Example activities that fall under conference programming include poster sessions, presentations, committee and interest group meetings and activities, keynote speeches, town hall meetings, and biennial banquet.
Institution Faculty or Other SCRA Member	Mentoring Program	The individual(s) in this role has the responsibility for coordination of the mentoring program, which has multiple facets of preparation (e.g., identifying mentors, soliciting mentees, schedule development, room reservations). See pages 20 & 40 for more information about the Mentoring Program.
Institution Faculty and/or Student	On-site Accommodations and Visitor Information	The individual(s) in this role has the responsibility of working with local vendors to arrange participant accommodations and prepare visitor information (e.g., hotel reservations, travel logistics, local dining options, recommend list of places to see/visit, obtaining local city and campus maps). This individual shall work closely with the individual in the Marketing and Member Communication role to

<sup>4</sup> See section (below) titled *Biennial Planning Team Tasks and Responsibilities* for additional detail.

		make information readily available to participants.
Institution Faculty and/or Student	Conference Operations	The individual(s) in this role has the responsibility of coordinating and overseeing the operations of the conference, e.g., room reservations, meal orders, conference transportation, and registration
Institution Faculty and/or Student	Volunteer Management	The individual(s) in this role has the responsibility of recruiting, training, and managing biennial student volunteers.
Institution Faculty and/or Student	Disability Issues	The individual(s) in this role has the responsibility of planning for and addressing participant disability needs and issues.
N/A	Evaluator	<p>The individual in this role has the responsibility of working closely with the National Planning Committee and individual in charge of Conference Programming to develop and administer an evaluation of the biennial. This individual is responsible for preparing an evaluation report within sixty (60) days of the end of the biennial. The evaluation report should be included as part of the larger Biennial Conference Report.</p> <p>The National Planning Committee, with the advice of the Executive Committee, appoints a Conference evaluator to conduct an evaluation of the Conference.</p>

## Biennial Planning Tasks and Responsibilities

### Year One

During the first year, the major tasks include provision of input to the Executive Committee about site selection, formation of the Local Planning Committee, and clarification of conference themes and goals. The specifics of the tasks are as follows:

#### 1. Site Selection

Sites will be selected three (3) years in advance to allow sufficient preparation time.

- The ***President-Elect*** announces the search for a site in the fall TCP and posts a message on the listserv by August 31, requesting that proposals be received by December 1<sup>st</sup> (see Appendix A). Proposals are also requested by talking to people who have previously submitted, or to others who have informally expressed interest. Proposals to host the Biennial should include attention to diversity issues.
- The ***President-Elect*** receives all proposals and mails them with an evaluation form to ***National Planning Committee***.

- Criteria for selection of sites include:
  - Significant likelihood of income accruing to SCRA: Will the conference serve as a revenue generator?
  - Potential cost to participants: What will a package that includes housing and meals cost? How much more will registration be? Is this affordable to students?
  - Support from sponsoring institution: Does the proposal indicate available or potential financial or in-kind support?
  - Meeting facilities: Do these allow for the creation of a sense of community? Do they seem amenable to diverse kinds of formats? Do they seem comfortable? Attractive? Safe?
  - Transportation accessibility: Are there international airports nearby? If not, does the proposal indicate other types of transportation that can be provided?
  - Handicapped/disabled access: Does the facility allow easy access for handicapped/ disabled individuals? Sites should make every attempt possible to adhere to the guidelines for accessibility adopted for the SCRA Biennial Conference. These criteria are listed in Section
  - Diversity: Does the proposed site adequately address how diversity issues will be included in the conference, in terms of themes, local site context, planning committee, presentation review criteria, and/or planned conference content?
  - Surrounding sites: Is the site near an exciting city, beach, etc.? Is this favorable or would it be distracting?
  - Working group: Is there an available working group?
  - Experience: Do the folks have experience organizing conferences? Is it positive?
  - Regional balance considering locations of other recent Biennials
  
- The ***President-Elect*** notifies the chosen site of the Executive Committee’s selection and appoints the site chair. The ***President-Elect*** simultaneously contacts all other applicants to let them know of the decision and thank them for their proposals.

2. Formation of the ***Local Planning Committee*** (see the table above for suggested roles)

The key members of the Local Planning Committee are identified in the Biennial proposal. The Local Planning Committee shall represent local constituencies with diverse resources and interests (e.g., mental health centers, advocacy organizations, research institutes, university departments)

3. Development of Conference Goals and Themes

The development of the biennial conference should be undertaken as a creative process. The ***Local Planning Committee*** presents their ideas regarding goals, themes, and creative education and interactive formats in the Biennial proposal. These ideas are then furthered clarified through discussion with the ***National***

**Planning Committee.** The conference theme and specific goals of the conference should be shared with the EC by the end of planning Year One.

4. Undertake other tasks during this first year including:
  - **National Planning Committee** works with the **Local Planning Committee** to finalize conference dates. This process should take into account factors such as academic schedules (finals and graduation) of institutions on quarter systems.
  - **Local Planning Committee** seeks alternate sources of funding and in-kind support from foundations, educational institutions, human services, community agencies and other services.
  - **Both committees** work together to solicit proposals from evaluators and select conference Evaluators.

## Year Two

All of the following tasks are completed by the **Local Planning Committee** in consultation with the **National Planning Committee** as noted.

1. Select Speakers and Trainers
  - Each Biennial Conference has two invited keynote speakers. Invited keynote speakers should represent a balance between research and applied perspectives. There should also be a balance of the characteristics that make for diversity — gender, race, ethnic background, sexual orientation, place in their career, geographic location, etc.
  - Trainers for Workshops (including Continuing Education Workshops if offered) should be both skilled presenters and have compelling ideas. It is preferred that the training be strongly participative. The goal is to have a strong cluster of education activities that will address diverse needs of SCRA Members and local people with community interests. Again, the trainers should reflect the diversity valued by the Society.
  - The process for the selection of trainers is as follows:
    - Check to see what training workshops were offered at the previous Biennial and the attendance. For popular workshops, ask the trainers if they are interested in offering the workshop again.
    - Ask the EC and the **National Planning Committee** if there is a particular training workshop they would like to see offered.
    - Check with SCRA Committees, Councils and Interest Groups (particularly the Practice Council, Public Policy Committee, and Early Career Interest Group) to determine if they are planning to offer any training workshops.
    - Determine how many training workshops can be reasonably scheduled and make the selections. Consult with the **National Planning Committee** if conflicts arise.

- The process for selection of keynote speakers is as follows:
  - The **Local Planning Committee** requests suggested names, email addresses, phone numbers, and available information from the **National Planning Committee** and Executive Committee;
  - The Chair of the **National Planning Committee** compiles a list and sends it along with criteria to members of both planning committees who prioritize their first three choices;
  - The **Local Planning Committee** chooses the top 3 to 5 choices and an alternate;
  - The **Local Planning Committee** Chair writes invitation letters to all. Follow-up is carried out by the **Local Planning Committee** Chair. Speakers should be selected by September 1st of Year Two so that their names can be published in the Call for Papers in the TCP. An announcement should also be circulated during this time on the SCRA listserv and on the biennial page of the website.
  
- 2. Development of contract with online submission service
  - SCRA uses an online service for the submission and review of proposals and the development of conference program. The contract for this service should be developed by the **Local Planning Committee** in consultation with the **National Planning Committee** and then submitted to the Treasurer for review. The use of the online submission service is discussed in greater detail later in this document.
  
- 3. Development of contract with conference manager.
  - The **Local Planning Committee**, in consultation with the **National Planning Committee**, has the option of contracting with a conference manager. This decision, and the details of the contract, should be finalized in Year Two of the planning process. The use of a conference manager is discussed in greater detail later in this document.
  
- 4. Development of a preliminary schedule
  - Firm decisions about beginning and ending times for the Biennial should be made at this time, as well as times for plenary sessions, meals, poster sessions, and presentations. Additional information regarding the development of the schedule is included later in this document.
  
- 5. Set biennial registration fees,
- 6. Make preliminary decisions regarding housing needs
- 7. Make preliminary decisions regarding transportation needs
- 8. Make preliminary decisions regarding meals
- 9. Make preliminary decisions regarding meeting rooms
- 10. Provide an updated budget

## **Year Three**

During the final year the ***Local Planning Committee*** should:

1. Make reservations for conference halls and rooms;
2. In consultation with the ***National Planning Committee*** Chair, prepare and publish the Call for Papers in TCP and online (i.e. SCRA listserv and website) (due date: August 15);
3. Submit Call for Papers in the various APA publications and Divisional newsletters (due date: November 15);
4. Arrange and oversee the review of proposal submissions.
  - Solicit reviewers through a call on the SCRA listserv and SCRA student listserv. Try to recruit enough reviewers so that every submission is reviewed by three (3) people.
  - Through the online submission program assign reviewers to submissions. Try to limit student reviewers to poster proposals.
  - Send a timeline and instructions for using the online review process to the reviewers. This should be done by early December with a deadline for all reviews to be completed by early January.
  - Notify colleagues of submission decisions.
5. Coordinate pre-conference activities with the Council of Education Programs, the Practice Council and any other groups who are planning a pre-conference meeting.
6. Plan and formalize arrangements for continuing education credits if these are being offered (CEUs are discussed later in this Handbook).
7. Meet regularly to work on logistics beginning in February.
8. Develop a preliminary program for publication on the Biennial webpage of the SCRA website.
9. Finalize program and all logistics.
10. Provide an SCRA booth/table at the conference for participants to get information about and to express interest in the Society and SCRA-sponsored committees and interest groups.
11. Run conference.
12. Follow up on evaluation report.
13. Provide a final report to Executive Committee for APA meetings following the conference.
14. Maintain computer file documents that include a job description, copies of important correspondence, detailed procedures for critical tasks, and other critical papers.
  - a) Turn over the computer file documents to the SCRA Administrative Director at the end of her/his term,
  - b) Send the Secretary a copy of the computer file documents.

## **Specific Responsibilities of the Student Member**

The ***Second Year National Student Representative*** is the designated student member of the National Planning Committee. The student member of the National Planning Committee serves as a representative of student interests and as a liaison between student members and NSRs, and the National Planning Committee. The role of the student member on the National Planning Committee is to ensure that student issues and concerns are reflected in the conference program. More specifically, the student member:

1. Forms a student review committee to select the student travel award winners;
2. Represents student concerns and interests at conference planning sessions (e.g., students are particularly concerned with issues such as keeping conference-related expenses low);
3. Collaborates with NSRs to schedule the Student Business Meeting/s and coordinate student activities at the Biennial; and
4. Submits a written report to the NSRs and Chair of the Local Planning Committee detailing accomplishments and activities. This report is to be included in the second year NSR's report to the Executive Committee.

## **Communication Recommendations**

Clear lines of communication are key to a successful Biennial. The following are meant to be suggestions for the Local Planning Committee for ensuring that clear communication occurs.

- Determine in advance (by end of Year One) who reports to whom and establish an infrastructure and schedule for communication.
- Clarify who is doing what within the local and national planning committees, in advance (by end of Year One), so that expectations are clear.
- Maintain regular communication with the National Planning Committee, SCRA's association management group, SCRA Executive Committee, and Administrative Director.
- Hold routine weekly planning calls starting at least three months prior to conference, and build an accountability structure in place for ensuring committee member adherence to agreed upon timelines and benchmarks.
- Designate a person from the planning team join EC calls to report on planning updates
- Starting in Year One, develop and maintain a key contact list for all committee members, SCRA president, SCRA Administrative Director, SCRA association management group, and service providers (e.g., catering, transportation).

- Develop and disseminate planning committee contact info (email and phone numbers), roles and responsibilities early in the planning process (by the end of Year One)
- Respond to attendee inquiries within seven days of receipt, even if it means letting the attendee know you need more time to address their inquiry.

### **Communication with Attendees**

Information regarding the Biennial may be posted on the website, sent over the SCRA listserv, emailed through the online submission service to attendees, or emailed to all registered attendees (either through the online submission service or through the SCRA management service). Frequent communication to attendees and presenters on such topics such as housing, transportation, program changes, and the weather is appreciated by attendees and encouraged. Do not assume that conference attendees will receive this information just through postings to the Biennial website or the SCRA listserv.

### **Conference Finances**

The Biennial is budgeted to serve as a source of revenue for SCRA and is expected to yield a profit. At the same time, the Biennial is expected to keep registration fees as low as possible for students and international attendees while at the same time providing most meals, one or two social events, and transportation.

Responsibility for approving and tracking conference finances is as follows:

- The Local Planning Committee, in consultation with the National Planning Committee and members of the EC as needed, develops all proposed contracts, such as contracts for conference management service, the online submission service, transportation, facilities, housing, food, etc.
- Contracts are then submitted to both the President serving as co-chair of the National Planning Committee and the Treasurer for approval and signatures. No contracts should be signed by members of the Local Planning Committee.
- SCRA's association management group (e.g. AMC Source) will provide a report of all registration fees, workshop fees, and other sources of Biennial revenue on a monthly basis in Year Three of the conference planning. An additional report will be generated a week before the Biennial. A final revenue report, including registration fees broken down by category, will be generated by SCRA's association management group two weeks after the Biennial. All reports shall be sent to the Chair of the Local Planning Committee and the SCRA Treasurer.
- The Local Planning Committee holds primary responsibility for tracking the budget, including all revenues collected and anticipated, and all expenditures and anticipated expenditures.



An initial conference budget is generated in the biennial proposal (see Appendix D). The section below lists key activities pertaining to the management of the conference finances:

### **Year One**

- The ***Local Planning Committee***, in consultation with the SCRA Treasurer, determine how conference expenses and revenue will be tracked before, during, and after the conference, and who will be in charge of tracking what components of the budget. The use of a budget tracking tool, such as Quickbooks, is strongly recommended.
- The ***Local Planning Committee***, in consultation with the SCRA Treasurer, determine a system for authorization and processing of payments for conference expenses.
- The ***Local Planning Committee*** submits an estimated conference budget to the EC for approval. An example budget is located in Appendix D, and a sample of the 2013 registration fee structure is included in Appendix E. It is recommended that the estimated conference budget adhere to the following parameters:
  - Total facility site fees: <\$9,000
  - Total AV and AV Support fees: <\$3000
  - Per person estimates for food/beverage expenses:
    - Breakfast: <\$10/meal
    - Lunch: <\$15/meal
    - Dinner (e.g., banquet, reception): <\$35/meal
    - Snack: <\$8/snack session
  - Transportation expenses: <\$3000
  - Entertainment expenses: <\$1000
  - Speaker Honorariums may be offered upon request and based on need. Speaker Honorariums should not exceed \$500 per speaker, and a total of \$1,000. Travel expenses for speakers should not exceed \$750 per domestic speaker and \$1,500 per international speaker with no more than one international speaker per conference.

Note: No expenses will be approved without a budget, and out of budget expense are not guaranteed to be approved.

### **Years One and Two**

- Secure vendors and make payments on pre-service fees as needed. Note: at least two bids are required for food/beverage and transportation services.
- Secure sponsors. Consider creating targeted benefits packages including a dedicated space for sponsor and other table tops whether at registration area or in some other area. Some possible sources of sponsorships include, but are not limited to the following:
  - Local institutional support-e.g., in-kind contributions (e.g., space/facilities, AV equipment, transportation services, sponsoring an event such as a reception)

- Local business support-e.g., donation of food or materials, with recognition at plenary event and in the program
- Professional sponsorships-e.g. publisher and other exhibitors who would pay for some combination of exhibit space, printed advertisements, program advertisements, with recognition at plenary events
- Specify fees for workshops and how they are handled.
- Update budget monthly until three months out; at that point, begin to update the budget bi-weekly.
- Keep all invoices and transaction receipts in one file folder that is shared with the Treasurer. Note: This may require planning members to scan paper invoices/receipts.

### **During the Biennial**

- Bring a locked cash box onsite, with change, for cash registration payments.
- All expenses must be submitted or planned two weeks before the Biennial.
- Final budgeting is the responsibility of ***Local Planning Committee***.

## **The Conference Program**

Decisions about the conference program should be based on best practices from previous biennials, including the length of the program, types of programs and activities, presentation formats, Call for Proposals, and time-blocks.

The end of June is the traditional time for the Biennial. Two issues that should be kept in mind when establishing the exact dates are the fact that Father's Day in the United States falls in June and some community psychology programs (such as DePaul) are on quarter systems, which means they probably will have final exams in early June. Preliminary dates for the conference should be shared with the National Planning Committee before publication. Firm dates should be publicized at least two years before the Biennial, preferably during the preceding Biennial.

### **Special Biennial Events**

There are a number of special events that are traditionally held during SCRA Biennials that put specific constraints on the overall conference program.

#### ***Pre-conference Workshops***

Pre-conference workshops are an opportunity to provide innovative educational experiences and can range from topics directly identified by SCRA members to efforts to provide low-cost resources to community members. Pre-conference workshops are held on the day prior to the official start of the Biennial and require participants to pay an additional registration fee to off-set the costs.

Pre-conference workshop topics may be generated in two ways; SCRA members may submit proposals for potential workshops, or the conference organizers or Executive Committee may determine a need for a specific workshop. Pre-conference workshops that are generated by the conference organizers or EC are meant to meet an identified professional development need of our membership and may involve a payment to the presenter. Pre-conference workshops that are proposed by the membership do not include a payment to the presenters. This point should be made clear in communications with members who submit proposals for pre-conference workshops.

In planning for the biennial pre-conference workshops, the conference committees shall:

- select workshop topics
- solicit proposals for workshops
- include workshop fees and information in the estimated final conference budget submitted to the SCRA Executive Committee for review (see section titled Conference Finance).

### ***Plenary Sessions, Keynote Speakers, and Award Presentations***

Each biennial program should include between two and four plenary sessions to accommodate keynote speakers, award addresses, and award presentations. The exact number of plenary sessions will depend upon a number of issues discussed below.

#### *Keynote Speakers*

Keynote speakers can increase the appeal of attending a biennial as well as the educational experience of participants. Selection of keynote speakers should consider intellectual connection to our field. Speakers with national or international recognition and from outside of SCRA are encouraged. Speakers at previous Biennials have ranged from community activists to politicians to academics. No more than two keynote speakers should be scheduled per biennial conference.

#### *Award Presentations*

The Member-at-Large in charge of awards should be contacted early in the process of planning the program in order to ensure proper coordination of award presentations.

Speeches are given by the recipients of the following two awards:

- Award for Distinguished Contributions to Theory and Research
- Award for Distinguished Contributions to Practice in Community Psychology

These are the only two awards with a speech attached. They should be considered plenary addresses in the program, on par with the keynote speakers. During Biennial years the individuals receiving these awards have the option of presenting their speeches at the

Biennial or at APA. Since the recipients of these awards are not identified until the early spring of Year Three, the Local Planning Committee will not know until sometime in the spring if these award addresses are to be presented at the Biennial. This means that space must be held open in the program for these addresses, even though the decision that the address will take place has not yet been finalized.

The following other award category recipients are announced and receive a plaque during the biennial, but do not give an awards speech:

- Award for Special Contribution to Community Psychology (Note: this award is given at the discretion of the EC and is not normally given at every Biennial).
- Award for Special Contribution to Public Policy
- Award for Excellence in Education Programs (Note: this award recipient gives a brief opening address at a CEP roundtable session)
- Outstanding Educator Award (Note: this award recipient gives a brief opening address at a CEP roundtable session)
- John Kalafat Awards in Applied Community Psychology--Program Level Award
- John Kalafat Awards in Applied Community Psychology--Individual Level Award
- Early Career Award
- The Don Klein Practice Book Award

Presentation of all awards should include a 2-3 minute description of the award recipient, her/his work, and why s/he was selected for the award. The awards are to be presented by the person chairing the specific award committee, or an individual identified by the committee chair. This means that 30-45 minutes should be reserved during a plenary session to allow for the presentation of these awards.

### ***Committee, Council, and Interest Group Meetings***

The individual with the role of Conference Programming shall work with the chairs of SCRA Committees, Councils, and Interest Groups (C/C/IG) to schedule group meetings for members of the respective groups. A list of chairs can be obtained from SCRA's Secretary. The meeting time is designed for C/C/IG Chairs to discuss old and new business with group members.

The tradition has been to hold these meetings over a provided breakfast or lunch, allowing interested members to grab a meal and join the meeting. The selection of locations for breakfast and lunch should keep these requirements in mind. Breakfast and lunch breaks should last for at least an hour in order to accommodate these meetings, and should not be concurrent with any other sessions. It may be necessary to schedule C/C/IG meetings concurrently with mentoring events, although this should be avoided if possible.

The easiest way to schedule these meetings is through the online submission process. C/C/IG chairs should be told to submit a proposal for their group meeting through the online submission process, and then these proposals should be assigned a breakfast or

lunch timeslot. This submission by C/C/IG chairs should not be included in the four submission per person count.

These guidelines for the scheduling of C/C/IG meetings may be modified depending upon the needs of specific Biennials, but any modifications should be done in consultation with the National Planning Committee.

### ***Poster Sessions***

Poster sessions have traditionally been held across at least two days of the conference, for approximately 1.0 to 1.5 hours per session. During these sessions, at least one authoring member of the poster is expected to be present to discuss the contents of the poster. Poster sessions are not to be scheduled concurrently with other conference programs, including the Mentoring program and banquet. Poster sessions can be held concurrently with a reception but the food should be in the same general area as the poster session and any musical entertainment should be outside the poster session room.

In the past, arranging for enough easels for all posters has proven problematic and/or expensive for some conference organizers. Consult the reports of previous biennials (available on the SCRA website) for potential solutions for this problem.

### ***Mentoring Program***

The Biennial Mentoring Program is designed to enhance the conference experience for students, early career professionals, and those new to the field of Community Psychology. The Mentoring Program includes the following set of activities, which is to be coordinated by a designated member of the Local Planning Committee (i.e., either the local Conference Program member or another individual that works closely with the local Conference Program member):

- **Orientation Breakfast:** During this session, Mentoring Program participants receive information about the Mentoring Program, including how the program works, what they expect, existing opportunities, and other logistic information. The host of the Mentoring Program should be designated by the Local Planning Committee. The Orientation Breakfast should last no more than 1 hour, and should be scheduled for the morning of the first full biennial conference day. The Orientation Breakfast session should not be scheduled in conflict with any other major student or early career sessions.
- **Small Group Mentoring Sessions:** These sessions provide mentees with the opportunity to meet with a participating mentor of choice. During these sessions, mentees are invited to ask mentors a wide range of questions pertaining to the mentor's experiences as a community psychologists. The recommended mentee-to-mentor ratio is between 3:1 to 9:1. Small Group Mentoring Sessions are ideally to be scheduled for lunchtimes of the two full conference days, and free of conflict with any other major student and early career sessions.

- **Individual Mentoring Opportunities:** This activity provides mentees with the opportunity to meet informally with participating mentors during the biennial conference. Mentors are to be provided with ribbons, which they adhere to their name tag, so that mentees can readily identify mentors. Mentors should be advised to wear ribbons only when they are available for mentoring.

### *Planning for the Mentoring Program*

Planning for the Mentoring Program should begin at least nine (9) months prior to the biennial conference, with a call for mentors released at least six (6) months prior to the conference, and an announcement about the Mentoring Program made at least three (3) months prior to the conference. Calls and announcements should be posted on the listserv and website .

Below is a list of planning issues to address:

- **Time and location of orientation breakfast session.** This session should be located near the breakfast area, and be able to accommodate the number of expected mentees (generally 40-50 mentees)
- **Time and location of group mentoring sessions during lunch period.** Lunches should be provided near the mentoring session rooms, or delivered directly to the rooms.
- **Number of lunch meals needed per day.** Remember to include the mentor into the head count and to inquire about food allergies
- **Sign-up sheets should be made available to prospective mentees.** These sheets are ideally posted on bulletin boards near the registration table. Descriptions of the participating mentors should be made available, or a designated mentoring program agent should be near the sign up sheets to address Mentoring Program questions. Consider reserving a table and chair specific for the Mentoring Program agent and Program documents.
- **Mentee Information Handout.** These should be developed in advance of the conference and should provide important details about the Mentoring Program (e.g., available activities, scheduling, list of mentors with mentor description, etc. See Appendix F.)
- **Ribbons.** Ribbons should be developed that are labeled "Mentor" in large size font. These ribbons should be adhesive at the top so that mentors can adhere them to their name tags. Be sure to provide participating mentors with specific instructions on when to display their ribbons.
- **Quiet seating area for informal mentor-mentee conversations.** Identify these spaces prior to the conference and include location details in the Mentee Information Handout.

- **Selection of Mentors.** Historically, selection of mentors has been via personal recommendation with the list of mentors remaining fairly identical over biennials. The local Mentoring Program member may decide to use the same set of mentors from the past, or post a Call for Mentors. If a Call is posted, it should be done at least six (6) months prior to the biennial. The final set of mentors should be diverse in background, experience, and demographic characteristics.
- **Pre-conference advertising.** Information about the mentoring program shall be circulated online at least three (3) months prior to the conference. This include general information about the Mentoring Program, the list of mentors, scheduling information, and details on how to sign-up as a mentee.
- **Evaluation.** The Local Planning Committee member in charge of the Mentoring Program should work with the biennial conference evaluator to develop specific questions for the Mentoring Program evaluation. These questions can be included with the general conference evaluation, or administered separately to only participating mentees.

## **Presentation Proposals**

Proposals for presentations are submitted through an online submission service (currently All Academic, Inc. (<http://www.allacademic.com/>)). This system allows for the submission and review of proposals, allocation to time slots, survey of AV/technology needs, and basic formatting of the printed program to all occur online. This contract should be negotiated in Year Two of the planning process in order to allow the Local Planning Committee member in charge of programming sufficient time to become familiar with how the system works. The basic parameters from the previous biennial should still be present in the system, including accounts for members who have previously presented.

### ***Call for Proposals***

A sample call for presentation submissions is included as Appendix G. While the call will be modified to meet the specifics of each Biennial, the basic information about presentation formats should remain substantially the same. Changes to the formats of acceptable presentations should only be done in consultation with the National Planning Committee. Note that the workshops listed in the formats below are workshops to be held during the basic conference programming, not the pre-conference workshops discussed above. The formats are:

### ***Program Formats***

Priority will be given to proposals that explicitly address one or more of the following expectations: (a) audience participation, (b) congruence with conference theme or thematic tracks, (c) clear articulation of lessons learned from session, and/or (d) exemplars

of community-academic engagement. Submissions should fall under one of the following five categories:

1. *Poster Presentations* facilitate individual and small group conversations through the use of visual aids. Presentations that highlight innovative methods for conference participant interaction will be preferred. Poster presentations can emphasize research, practice, action or other initiatives as reflective of the conference themes or tracks. Posters will be organized in thematic groups.
2. *Symposia* provide a forum for discussion, debate, and explication of diverse perspectives as they pertain to the conference themes and/or tracks. Symposia may be used to present practice and/or research themes; however, submissions that explicitly describe the process or method that will be used to facilitate audience interaction and dialogue will be preferred.
3. *Roundtable Discussions* should provide a forum for the sharing of ideas related to innovative methods in community psychology, or debate of the issues reflective of the conference theme. This format is especially appropriate for sessions in which the presenters' role is to facilitate the audience's exploration of the issue. One or more facilitators may lead a roundtable discussion.
4. *Town Meetings* feature discussion of critical issues pertaining to community psychology. This format is most appropriate for exploring the broad issues that cut across the conference theme, subthemes and related topics. One or more facilitators may lead a town meeting.
5. *Workshops* provide a means to teach new skills of relevance to the field. One or more instructors may teach a workshop.

The Call for Proposals should be disseminated in numerous ways. A call should be:

- Submitted for the Fall issue of *The Community Psychologist*. (Due to TCP editors by August 15)
- Posted on the SCRA website and conference website.
- Distributed electronically to a variety of different list-serves and distribution lists.
- A one-page flyer, giving a description of the conference and indicating that the Call should be posted on the conference website. This flyer should be distributed to local agencies and made available to SCRA members and other interested individuals for posting and distribution in their departments.

### ***Abstract and Presentation Guidelines***

Each author is asked to limit his or her participation to four (4) presentations. This limit does not include poster presentations, or chairing meetings or special events. This rule



cannot be enforced through the online submission system, basically because one author's name can be associated with several abstracts in the same symposium (for the sake of the rule, one symposium is considered one presentation, even if the author is listed on several abstracts). Overall, individuals seem fine with adhering to the rule, and are very supportive of its intent. Program chairs should conduct a review in mid-spring of authors who are listed more than four times in the program. This can occur because people lose track of how many symposia they agree to serve on as discussants. Such authors should be asked to voluntarily withdraw from one or more of their presentations.

It is important to require full contact information and email addresses for all authors during the submission process. Submission instructions should stress that whoever is submitting the proposal should be sure to have accurate contact information, including email addresses, for all authors ready at the time they do the submissions.

It is also important to stress that the Biennial uses a blind review process, and authors should be careful to remove any identifying information from their abstracts.

Negotiating the online submission process can be difficult. It is helpful to develop instructions for authors describing the submission process in detail. An example of such instructions is included in Appendix H. These instructions will vary from year to year and will need to be revised by the Program Chair before distribution.

Presentation guidelines have been developed at the recommendation of several SCRA members, who felt that guidelines like these had been helpful in increasing the quality of presentations at other conferences they had attended. A copy of some suggested guidelines is included as Appendix J and should be modified as appropriate and emailed to presenters once the program is complete.

### ***Proposal Reviews***

The local conference committee should select reviewers for submitted abstracts. Soliciting volunteer reviewers through SCRA's listserv is helpful. Graduate students are generally assigned to review poster sessions. Reviewers can be divided into content areas (e.g., Diversity; Community Collaboration; Interventions: Youth; Interventions: Health; Interventions: Other; Methods; Public Policy/Social Action; and SCRA/Professional Issues/Teaching) and submission types (symposia, townhalls, round tables, posters, and special events). Reviews take place through the online submission system.

### **Continuing Education Units**

The experience of past Biennial Committees has been that arranging for Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for the conference is very time consuming and only utilized by a few members. This process can often be made easier by collaborating with a local organization that regularly offers CEUs. Because of these complications it is not expected that CEUs will definitely be offered at Biennial conferences. It is at the discretion of the Local Planning Committee.

## **The Printed Program**

One of the benefits of using an online submission system is that it allows you to download a file with all abstracts and an author index for inclusion in the printed program. Conference attendees seem to really appreciate having the full abstracts.

There could still be difficulties with inconsistent entering of abstracts (some people use all caps for titles, some use none), and there can be a few cases of authors entering notes to the program chair in their abstracts, so it should be expected that some editing of this file will be necessary before it can be included in the program. This task could be made even easier by making it as clear as possible to authors that what they enter into the system is what will be in the program, giving clear rules for the use of capitals, and asking people not to include their degrees after their last names.

The 2013 Biennial, hosted by the University of Miami, arranged for an application that allowed online viewing and searching of the program, along with the ability to construct a personal schedule of sessions to attend. This was very well received and is recommended for future Biennials.

## **Conference Evaluation**

An external evaluator (an SCRA member) should work collaboratively with the planning team in the development and implementation of the evaluation questions.

## **Conference Logistics**

### **Working With University Systems**

The current expectation for SCRA Biennials is that there will be a specific university (or consortium of universities) who is serving as the official host of the conference. At a minimum the university will be involved in providing facilities and AV/technology equipment. Universities are also generally involved in providing some low-cost dormitory housing, and often food. Occasionally universities may have complete conference programming services, with whom Local Planning Committees may wish to contract.

This intersection of university systems with volunteer committees and the SCRA association management system can become confusing for all involved. A few guidelines are:

- Members of the Local Planning Committee are responsible for clarifying the roles of various university entities and negotiating any required contracts.
- Any contracts with university systems should be negotiated as far in advance as possible, at least by the end of Year Two.

- Use of AV/technology equipment should be negotiated with the university, along with the availability of knowledgeable staff to trouble-shoot problems during the conference.
- Insurance for the conference is provided by the American Psychological Association. The SCRA Administrative Director can obtain proof of this insurance for the university.
- The Local Planning Committee should obtain and keep in a central location phone numbers of all primary points of contact on campus including AC, facilities, disability, emergency, and catering.
- The Local Planning Committee should clarify building/classroom opening and closing times with university staff and ensure that everyone involved in the conference is aware of those times.

There are additional issues to be thought of when contracting with university systems for food, transportation, and housing that will be addressed under those categories below.

## **Registration**

Biennial registration has been handled by the SCRA association management company (currently AMC Source) through the negotiation of a separate contract. This contract should be negotiated in Year One of the planning process and should include both pre-registration and onsite registration.

Preliminary registration fees and categories should be included in the conference proposal and are approved by the EC (see Appendix E for the 2013 Biennial registration fees). Fees for non-members include a six-month membership in SCRA (June to December). The Local Planning Committee may decide to offer reduced registration fees for particular participants (e.g., community partners, leadership from the Policy, Action, and Research Collaborative, an inter-organizational collaborative group). Reduced registration fees need to be specified prior to development of the registration form.

Pre-registration for the Biennial should be available on the conference website at least four to five months prior to the Biennial. A minimum of four weeks is needed in advance to create and test the registration form.

Clarify and communicate to members and planning committee SCRA policy for registration refunds

### ***On-Site Registration***

The following recommendations apply to arranging logistics for on-site registration:

- Have at least two laptops and two printers for onsite registration so that attendees can register themselves online and name badges can be produced on the spot.

- Have name tags made in advance.
- An indoor registration area is best for many, many reasons including availability of electricity, keeping registration materials secure, protection from the elements, etc.
- Designate a “quiet” room for volunteers and staff who need to take a break, make a phone call, and for storage purposes.
- Determine a method of securing materials in a safe location overnight.
- Have a specific location for attendees to sign-up for mentoring activities.
- Maintain a SCRA information table with membership brochures and information about SCRA groups and activities.
- At registration desk, keep emergency contact information and information for the nearest medical facility(ies). Keep information on local taxi services. Have information on hand regarding nearby restaurants that provide delivery services to campus. Also keep a "First Aid" Kit, including extra band-aids, anti-itch and anti-bacteria ointments, and possibly pain relief medications (e.g., Tylenol, Aspirin, Ibuprofen)
- Make campus maps available at registration. Know where the nearest ATM and bathrooms are located.

### ***Attendance***

Attendance at SCRA biennials varies depending upon the location of the conference. The following table is provided for planning and budgeting purposes.

#### **Conference Participation For All Biennial Conferences**

<b>Site and Year of Conference</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>% Presenters</b>	<b>% Full-pay Professionals</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> Columbia, SC (1987)	275	na	
2 <sup>nd</sup> E. Lansing, MI (1989)	324	na	
3 <sup>rd</sup> Tempe, AZ (1991)	233	na	
4 <sup>th</sup> Williamsburg, VA (1993)	515	na	
5 <sup>th</sup> Chicago, IL (1995)	620	65%	
6 <sup>th</sup> Columbia, SC (1997)	521	76%	
7 <sup>th</sup> New Haven, CT (1999)	590	79.5%	
8 <sup>th</sup> Atlanta, GA (2001)	590	na	
9 <sup>th</sup> Las Vegas, NM (2003)	472	84.7%	43%?
10 <sup>th</sup> Champaign, IL (2005)	596		
11 <sup>th</sup> La Verne, CA (2007)			
12 <sup>th</sup> Montclair, NJ (2009)	514		
13 <sup>th</sup> Chicago, IL (2011)	700?		
14 <sup>th</sup> Miami, FL (2013)	597		

Source: Evaluation reports of the 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Biennials.

## ***International Attendees***

The majority of our international attendees come from Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, Japan and South Africa. It is important to note that international attendees who come from countries other than the five listed above generally are given travel awards. In other words, the travel awards are key to encouraging attendance from under-represented countries. These awards are given by the International Committee and the Local Planning Committee should work with the chair of International Committee to ensure that prospective attendees are aware of these awards.

Creative approaches to encourage international attendees are encouraged. For example, previous biennials have translated the call for proposals into Spanish and offered connections to bilingual “buddies” to assist international attendees in negotiating the conference.

## **Housing and Transportation**

It is important to provide a range of housing options in easy proximity to the main conference venues, preferably within walking distance. Traditionally on-campus dormitory housing has been offered as a low-cost option. If providing on campus housing, develop the contract with the university housing office as early as possible, definitely by the end of Year Two. The contract should include information on how attendees will reserve and pay for on-campus housing, and who will be responsible for overseeing this process.

Other housing options should include a range of hotels with varying costs. Consider setting up a couch-surfing website if possible.

Information on the nearest airport, shuttles/trains to the conference, travel from hotel accommodations to the conference, travel between conference revenues, and housing options should all be available on the conference website at the same time that conference registration is made available.

## **Accessibility of Conference Events**

In order to ensure the accessibility of the conference it is required that a member of the Disabilities Interest Group be included on the National Planning Committee and that issues related to accessibility be addressed in the conference program. In addition, it is strongly recommended that an individual who routinely works on issues of disability compliance review all venues and plans at least six (6) months prior to the conference. In addition, the following recommendations are made:

- Add a disabilities accommodations request to registration form, asking for as much information as possible.
- Check that recommended lodging facilities and other venues can accommodate disability needs.

- If the conference is being held on a university campus contact the disabilities department in advance for information on disability friendly routes, services, taxi services, ramp keys, etc.
- A golf cart at the onsite registration table works well, especially if the campus is spread out, for transporting those with limited mobility or delivering materials to an event.

## **Photos & Videos**

Photos and videos of the biennial conference are useful for posting on SCRA’s website, Facebook account, and other SCRA publications. These are recommendations for Local Planning Committees that choose to organize the collection of photos and videos during the biennial. During the year of the biennial (specifically, January-March), the local Volunteer Management member shall recruit volunteers to take photos and videos during the conference. It is recommended that there are at least two (2) media arts volunteers per day designated to capture photos and videos. All volunteers should received instructional materials at least two (2) weeks prior to the conference. An example instructional document is included in Appendix J.

The following disclaimer should be included along with registration materials and on the biennial website:

“Attendance at <insert conference name> programs, events or public spaces constitutes consent to be photographed for use in print and/or electronic publicity for SCRA. Photos, images, and videos submitted by conference attendees may also be used by SCRA for promotional purposes. To ensure the privacy of individuals, images will not be identified using full names or personal identifying information without written approval from the photographed subject. Images of groups of people will be used by SCRA for social media promotional purposes. If you do not want us to use a photo or video of you, please tell the <insert conference name> staff member coordinating the event PRIOR to the program.”

## **Sustainability of the Conference**

Guidelines for conducting a “green” biennial conference are included as Appendix K. The best way to ensure that the biennial will reflect these guidelines is by including a written declaration to follow them in the original biennial proposal, ensure that everyone involved in planning the conference has copies of the guidelines, and refer back to the guidelines repeatedly during the conference planning. In addition, it can be helpful to have a member of the Environment and Justice Interest Group be a member of the planning committee.

## **Food**

Generally Biennials provide two or three breakfasts, two lunches, and light snacks during the day. Many Biennials have also provided a reception, with food and music. Most Biennials have provided some variety of evening social event. This could take the form of a reception or a complete dinner. Seated/plated dinners have not normally been offered, and are discouraged due to the cost. Local Planning Committees are encouraged to be creative in planning evening social events and should consider finger foods, buffets, and sponsored events.

Breakfasts and lunches are of the “grab and go” variety, and are offered in a central location to accommodate committee and interest group meetings and mentoring activities. When ordering food, take into account that past Biennials have found that breakfast attendance is low, particularly on the first and last mornings, often 1/3 less than the number of conference participants.

- Steer away from university/institutional arrangements that restrict the vendors that may be used for food/beverage and transportation services.
- Identify/schedule all events requiring food service in advance. Determine in advance how food orders are to be handled and develop a system for doing so.
- Incorporate the “green” recommendations in Appendix K if possible.
- Given the variety of diets and food allergies indicated by past participants, menus should also include at least one vegan or vegetarian option to accommodate vegans, vegetarians, and those who are lactose-intolerant.
- Avoid ordering items with nuts. All breads and pastas should be multi-grain and gluten free if possible. All sauces, dressings, condiments, etc, should be available on-the-side if possible.
- Label all food on buffets and boxes, and/or on menus if meals are plated.
- Vary the meals over the days.
- Provide water stations, and ensure to communicate that attendees should bring their own water bottles.

## **Technology**

- Work with the SCRA Website and Social Media Committee to develop the conference website. This should begin in Year Two.
- The 2013 Biennial in Miami arranged for a mobile app for the conference, program which was very much appreciated by conference attendees.
- Secure AV contact and Wifi contact info. Create a system for maintaining contact with AV folks throughout conference so that they can assist on demand, if needed.
- Authors are asked to indicate their audio-visual needs when they submit their abstracts. The online submission service allows you to download reports concerning audio-visual equipment.
- Conference text updates, twitter handles, and back channels also work well.

## **After the Conference**

- With SCRA's association management group, compile a list of attendees.
- Complete the final budget. SCRA's association management group will provide a revenue report, organized by registration fee categories, within two weeks after the biennial.
- Review the evaluation survey results/report when it becomes available.
- Write a report discussing your experiences with the Biennial with suggestions for updating this Handbook (see Appendix C for a template). Send to EC for posting on the website and to the next Biennial committee.
- Suggest edits to this Handbook based upon your experiences and send those suggested edits to the Administrative Director.



## Appendix A: Example Call for Biennial Proposals



Call for Proposals:  
2013 and 2015  
Biennial Conferences

The Society for Community Research and Action is soliciting proposals from individual academic institutions and/or consortia of academics and practitioners to host the 2013 and the 2015 Biennial Conferences. The conference is typically 3 to 4 days in mid-June and draws 500 to 700 participants. Hosting this exciting event draws attention to the host institution and enables the very diverse conference participants to appreciate the sponsoring institution(s) and its location.

For the 2013 and 2015 Biennials SCRA will be engaging the services of an event planner to handle the logistics (hotels, meals, transportation, etc.) of each conference. The focus of this proposal is on the Local Planning Committee, i.e., those who would solicit submissions for presentations and posters, organize pre-conference workshops, identify and invite plenary speakers, organize locally based demonstration visits or trips, etc. Proposals to host either conference should include the descriptions of the following elements:

- The expected Local Planning Committee, including the diversity of membership (faculty, practitioners, students, etc.)
- Proposed dates for the conference
- Availability of meeting facilities, including accessibility for handicapped members, availability of space for plenary sessions, receptions, etc.
- Diversity within the Local Planning Committee, conference chairs, etc.
- Availability of accommodations
- Accessibility of transportation to site, cost of air-travel and of local transportation costs (shuttles, taxis, etc.)
- Estimated registration fees (final would be negotiated with conference planner, taking site costs into account)
- Financial resources such as institutional contributions and other donations
- Human resources (collaborating/affiliated agencies, student groups, etc.)
- Proposed or special conference themes or regional emphases: reasons that this site will be a great location for the Biennial
- Estimated budget for Local Planning Committee expenses
- Expectations of profit from conference

Please contact Pat O'Connor ([oconnnp@sage.edu](mailto:oconnnp@sage.edu)), SCRA Past President, with any expressions of interest and questions or concerns. Applications are due December 1, 2011.

## **Appendix B: Timeline of Biennial Tasks**

**Note:** Please contact the SCRA Administrative Director for an accompanying Excel-based project tracking sheet.

### **Year One**

- Form the National Planning Committee and select a site.
- Form the Local Planning Committee
- Clarify conference goals and themes.
- Confirm the dates of the Biennial with the National Planning Committee
- Develop material to advertise the dates and location at the preceding Biennial that June.
- Seek alternative sources of funding and in-kind support.
- Identify co-sponsors.
- Select the conference Evaluator.

### **Year Two: August – April**

- Select keynote speakers and, as desired, trainers for CE workshops
- Develop contract with online submission service
- Develop contract with SCRA management service for conference registration and other conference management tasks.
- Develop contracts with any other entities that will be responsible for conference management
- Explore CEU options
- Work with hotels (negotiate conference rate)
- Arrange for University housing
- Locate space and resources for conference site

### **Year Two: May – July**

- Plan preliminary program schedule, including entertainment, banquet, etc.
- Set registration fees
- Start to look at need for housing, transportation, meeting rooms, and food
- Update biennial budget and share with National Planning Committee
- Decide on logo, colors, etc.
- Begin conference website development
- Develop Call for Proposals

### **Year Three: August - September**

- Distribute Call for Proposals (August 15 TCP submission deadline)
- Confirm that online submission process is ready to go
- Identify program reviewers
- Confirm hotel and dorm room arrangements, including dorm room reservation process
- Finalize plans for meals/snacks and seek bids for food
- Finalize transportation needs and seek bids
- Develop registration page on conference website
- Conference website goes live

### **Year Three: October**

- Order supplies (name tags, folders, etc.)
- Organize labor resources
- Ensure instructions for online submissions are on conference website
- Online submission process goes live
- Conference registration goes live, including process for dorm room registrations

### **Year Three: December - January**

- Review proposal submissions
- Make decisions regarding acceptance

### **Year Three: February**

- Acknowledge acceptance (non-acceptance) of proposals
- Finalize program schedule
- Finalize meeting room reservations
- Develop a list of technical needs of presenters and finalize arrangements for technology
- Plan social events
- Plan for poster sessions

### **Year Three: March-May**

- Confirm registrations
- Do local publicity
- Prepare and print program

### **Year Three: May**

- Confirm workshops/notify registrants of cancellations

- Prepare master scheduling of room assignments and special equipment needs
- Secure poster judges and ribbons, certificates
- Confirm catering
- Prepare materials for packets
- Prepare conference posters and special signs for campus, message center, registration and information tables
- Organize staff and graduate students to work the conference
- Prepare supply box for information table

### **Year Three: June**

- Prepare nametags
- Review and confirm all requests
- Prepare staff/graduate student assignments for registration and information table
- Put up posters
- Set up registration table

### **Year Three: July**

- SCRA's association management group submits a revenue report (with registration fees broken down by category) to the SCRA Executive Committee

### **Year Three: August**

- Submit biennial report to SCRA Executive Committee (within 60 days after the biennial conference)

## Appendix C: Biennial Report Template

Examples of past Biennial Reports are available on the SCRA website

- ✓ Title Page "[Insert biennial #] Biennial Conference on Community Research & Action: Final Report & Recommendations"
- ✓ Table of Contents
- ✓ Executive Summary
- ✓ Conference Planning and Infrastructure
  - Committees and Workgroups
  - The National Planning Committee
  - Conference Theme
  - Development of a Preliminary Conference Schedule and Program
  - Call for Proposals
  - Abstract and Presentation Guidelines
  - On-Line Abstract Submission and Management
  - Proposal Reviews
  - Keynote Speakers and Invited Addresses
  - Continuing Education (CE) Units
  - The Printed Program
  - Advertising
- ✓ Conference Logistics
  - Registration
  - Pre-Registration
  - On-site Registration
  - Attendance
  - International Attendees
  - Housing
  - Communication
  - Travel and Transportation
  - Accessibility of Conference Events
  - Food and Entertainment
    - Alcohol
    - Breakfasts
    - Breaks/Refreshments
    - Lunches
    - Friday Dinner
    - Entertainment Activities
  - Mentoring Events
  - Ambassador Program
  - Audio-Visual Needs
  - Poster Boards

- Staffing
- ✓ Conference Evaluation Results
- ✓ Conference Finances
  - Financial Management
  - Conference Sponsors
  - Fundraising
  - Silent Auction
  - T-Shirts
- ✓ Summary
- ✓ Appendices
  - Symposium Submission Instructions
  - Guidelines for Presenters
  - Mentoring Materials
  - Ambassador Program Materials

**Appendix D: Budget**  
(Based on 600 Attendees)

**EXPENSES**

➤ Food	Per Person	TOTAL
Breakfast:	\$8.00 per person x 3 = \$24	\$14,400
Lunch:	\$17.00 per person x 2 = \$34	\$20,400
Reception:	\$17.00 per person x 1 = \$17	\$10,200
***Banquet:	\$30.00 per person x 1 = \$30	\$18,000
Snack:	\$8.00 per person x 3 = \$24	\$14,400
	Food Subtotal	<b>\$74,400</b>
➤ Conference Space Rental Fee (4 days)		\$6,800
➤ Technical/AV Support:		\$2,000
Entertainment		\$500
➤ Printing/Postage		\$6,000
➤ Honorarium/Speakers (2 @\$500)		\$1000
➤ Promotional Items		\$4,000
➤ Conference Evaluation		\$2,500
➤ Supplies		\$4,000
➤ All Academic Services		\$4,000
➤ Registration Management Fee (AMC Source: \$1400/mo. x 13 mo)		\$18,200
➤ Transportation		\$2,000
➤ Miscellaneous Expenses		\$5,000

**TOTAL COSTS: \$130,400**

**REVENUE**

➤ Conference Registration Fees (based on 603 participants):	
180 Student SCRA Members @ \$135.00	\$24,300
60 Student Volunteers (at least 8hrs of service) @ \$25.00	\$1,500
48 Student Non-members @ \$155.00	\$7,440
42 International (not Canada) Student @ \$80.00	\$3,360
198 Professional SCRA Member @ \$370.00	\$73,260
30 Professional Non-Member @ \$410.00	\$12,300
15 International (not Canada) Professional @ \$185.00	\$2,775
15 One Day onsite registration (all other) @ \$175.00	\$2,625
15 Student One Day Onsite registration @ \$100.00	\$1,500
➤ Co-sponsorship Donations:	\$15,000

**TOTAL REVENUE: \$144,060**

**TOTAL NET REVENUE: \$13,660**

**\*\*\*Pease see the document text regarding Food.**

## **Appendix E: 2013 Biennial Conference Registration Fees**

Student SCRA Members - \$135.00  
Student Volunteers (at least 8hrs of service) - \$25.00  
Student Non-members - \$155.00  
International (not Canada) Student - \$80.00  
Professional SCRA Member - \$370.00  
Professional Non-Member - \$410.00  
International (not Canada) Professional - \$185.00  
One Day onsite registration (all other) \$175.00  
Student One Day Onsite registration \$100.00



## Appendix F: Mentoring Materials

### OVERVIEW OF 6th BIENNIAL MENTORING PROGRAM

#### 2013 SCRA BIENNIAL CONFERENCE

The Biennial Mentoring Program is designed to enhance the conference experience for students, early career professionals, and those new to the field of Community Psychology. You are encouraged to join any or all of the following mentoring activities.

Orientation Breakfast (Friday, 7:45-8:30 am),

Small Group Mentoring Discussions (Thurs, Fri, Sat, lunchtimes)

Individual Mentoring (informal encounters with Mentors throughout the conference)

Available are 19 Mentors, each wearing a raspberry-colored "Mentor" ribbon during the conference. They range from graduate students to senior community psychologists, so there are Mentors at every level of seniority. Collectively, they represent a broad range of interests and backgrounds. Carry around this booklet, with the Roster of Mentors, for reasons to be revealed below.

The Mentoring Area is on the first floor of Memorial Classroom Building (**MM**). There you will find an information table, staffed intermittently; the posted sign-up sheets for lunchtime small groups; and a seating area for free-form Speed Mentoring from the Mentors. Any last-minute instructions or changes will be posted on the in the Mentoring Area.

**Orientation Breakfast** -- Friday, 7:45-8:30 a.m, Room 312, MM. Here you will meet some of the Mentors and other Mentees and will be oriented to the biennial conference and the mentoring program. Former Mentees will share tips on taking full advantage of the considerable resources available to you for mentoring at the conference. This session is intended to both excite and empower you.

**Small Group Discussions** – Thurs, 12:45-1:45 pm; Fri, Sat, noon-1 pm. Nineteen lunchtime small groups will be hosted by a Mentor. (Room numbers, all in MM, will be on the sign-up sheets.) The groups represent a broad range of interesting and practical topics. The schedule, hosts and topics for the small groups follow the Mentor Roster. To maintain interactivity and intimacy, group size will be limited to 8 people (with 3 stand-by spots) and will require prior sign-up, "first come, first served." If your preferred group is filled, choose another. If your plans change later, please return to cross your name off the sign-up sheet, releasing your spot for another Mentee. Free boxed lunches will be provided. (Delivery instructions will be posted by the Mentoring sign up sheets.)

**Individual Mentoring** -- The Mentors will provide one-on-one, informal mentoring upon (your) request. When they are available, they will wear their raspberry-colored Mentor ribbons. (When not wearing the ribbon, they are "off duty.") The following Mentor Roster indicates the days when each Mentor expects to be onsite at the conference, indicated by "R," signifying "Ribbioned Mentor." One reliable "hang out" area for finding mentors is the Breezeway, first floor, MM.

To encourage greater use of individualized mentoring, we have added Mentee stickers; (Slower than) Speed Mentoring and the Find the Mentor contest.

**Mentee Stickers:** Self-designated Mentees should request (from the Mentoring area or at the Orientation Breakfast) a colored sticker to wear on your name badge. This unobtrusive sticker will allow Mentors to spot you, out of the crowd, as a participant in the Mentoring Program.

**(Slower than)Speed Mentoring:** Mentors will hang out in one predictable place (Breezeway, first floor, MM), signaling their availability by wearing their raspberry Mentor ribbon. They are available to chat with any Mentee. Don't be intimidated that you have to pose a brilliant question: "Seen a good movie recently?" is a perfectly fine approach line.

### **Small Group Schedule**

***Prior sign up for groups is required***

Room locations (all in MM) will be posted on sign up sheets, first floor, MM Bldg

#### **Thurs, June 27 (12:45-1:45 pm)**

Michelle Bloodworth How to combine your career and family  
David Chavis Careers in community strengthening and change  
Jim Emshoff How to set up a consulting business  
David Lounsbury How to do community psychology in medical settings  
John Moritsugu How to find and keep a mentor  
Susan Wolfe Exploring practice career options

#### **Friday, June 28 (noon - 1 pm)**

Meg Bond How to become active in SCRA  
Victoria Chien Community-based internships for community/clinical students  
Jesica Fernandez A chat with undergrads and incoming grad students  
Pamela P. Martin How to use the community psychology competencies  
Emily Ozer Partnering with community schools  
Evelyn Yang How to search for jobs in practice settings

#### **Saturday, June 29 (noon - 1 pm)**

Chris Beasley A chat with undergrads and incoming grad students  
Alexis Hamill How to incorporate community psych in clinical settings  
Gloria Levin International development opportunities  
Chris Nettles Community-based internships for clinical students  
Irma Serrano-Garcia Being Latino/a in an Anglo world  
S. Darius Tandon How to obtain external research funding  
Tom Wolff Being an activist community psychology practitioner

**Engage the Mentor Contest:** The 3 winners of this contest will have collected autographs from as many of the 19 Mentors as possible, inscribed below. In order to obtain an autograph, you must engage the Mentor in real conversation. (Of course, only ask for an autograph when the Mentor is wearing the Mentor ribbon, signaling availability.) While the prospect of conversing with Mentors is payoff in itself, there is another prize: An extended telephone conversation at a later date with any (willing) Community Psychologist, on your choice of topic. After the conference, email [glorialevin@verizon.net](mailto:glorialevin@verizon.net) by **JULY 3**, stating the number of autographs obtained. Even if you only obtained 3 or 4 autographs, report it. Winners will be contacted to arrange for an introduction with an agreeable selectee for mentoring. Gloria will help you identify the perfect mentor.

## Appendix G: Example Call for Presentation Proposals

*Call for Proposals*  
*14<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference of the*  
*Society for Community Research and Action*  
*June 26<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup>, 2013*

The Society for Community Research and Action (Division 27 of the American Psychological Association) invites you to our 14<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference!

**Sponsor:** The University of Miami (Coral Gables, FL), School of Education and Human Development

**Theme:** *Communal Thriving: Pursuing Meaning, Justice, and Well-being*

We aim to have a conference that will explicitly address the topic of communal thriving through highly participatory sessions. Many communities face enormous challenges with great dignity, resourcefulness, and courage. This conference seeks to explore the multiple ways in which communities thrive. People make meaning, pursue wellness, and struggle for justice throughout their lives. We seek to have discussions that honor people's search for meaning, justice, and well-being. We believe that in this tripartite pursuit, individuals and communities thrive. To facilitate these discussions, we solicit proposals that:

- a. Specifically reflect the theme of communal thriving or one of the six tracks identified below
- b. Identify specific ways of engaging the audience
- c. Prioritize participatory processes

The conference will have the following six parallel tracks, which are described in greater detail below.

- I. Communal thriving through community partnerships and social change
- II. Communal thriving through prevention and wellness promotion
- III. Communal thriving through narrative, arts, and new media
- IV. Communal thriving through equity, diversity, and social justice
- V. Communal thriving through research
- VI. Communal thriving through organizational and school transformation

### **INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING PROGRAM SUBMISSIONS**

To submit a proposal, please visit <http://www.scra27.org> and select the biennial conference link. The system will be ready to accept proposals on or about October 15, 2012. **The deadline for receipt of program proposals is: 11:55 PM (EST), Monday November 26<sup>th</sup>, 2012.** Proposal submission guidelines will be available online.

To facilitate dialogue that is inclusive of global linguistic diversity, and with appreciation for the multicultural communities in Miami, proposals may be submitted in Spanish with the plan for sessions to be conducted in Spanish.

## **PROGRAM TRACKS**

- I. Communal thriving through community partnerships and social change

System level change requires (a) partnerships across players and sectors in society, and (b) value-based social change efforts aimed communal thriving. This track of the conference affords an opportunity to present and discuss research, ideas, and experiences related to collaborations and deliberate social change efforts.

- II. Communal thriving through prevention and wellness promotion

Reactive and medical approaches to health and well-being are costly and not as effective as preventive approaches. While prevention seeks to reduce risk factors, wellness promotion seeks to enhance resilience, protective factors, and enabling environments. This track is aimed at presenting work on prevention and promotion that enhances communal thriving and well-being.

- III. Communal thriving through narrative, arts, and new media

An important component of individual and communal thriving is meaning making. Storytelling, artistic expression, and engagement in new media afford people opportunities to be creative and expressive. Arts and new media are not only methods of expression, but also of communication; innovative and challenging ideas get expressed and communicated through new media. We wish to highlight efforts by community psychologists, community members, and other professionals that utilize expressive methods for thriving.

- IV. Communal thriving through equity, diversity, and social justice

The values of diversity and fairness are central to community psychology. Many communities suffer from oppression and exclusion due to discriminatory policies and practices. We wish to highlight efforts that promote communal thriving through interventions aimed at valuing diversity and social justice.

- V. Communal thriving through research

Information and research are essential components of communal thriving. We wish to highlight how diverse approaches to research (including quantitative, qualitative, community based participatory research, and other innovative approaches to rigorous inquiry) contribute to community well-being. Data and data-based information can be a powerful tool to raise consciousness about oppressive conditions and potential for change.

In addition to empirical research, we welcome integrative conceptual and theoretical papers addressing communal thriving.

- VI. Communal thriving through organizational and school transformation

System level changes happening in organizations can foster or inhibit the well-being of stakeholders. We are interested in learning about enabling structures and interventions that bring people together in healthy processes leading to positive outcomes, with an emphasis on organizational and school transformation.

### **PROGRAM FORMATS**

Priority will be given to proposals that explicitly address one or more of the following expectations: (a) audience participation, (b) congruence with conference theme or thematic tracks, (c) clear articulation of lessons learned from session, and/or (d) exemplars of community-academic engagement. Submissions should fall under one of the following five categories:

1. *Poster Presentations* facilitate individual and small group conversations through the use of visual aid. Presentations that highlight innovative methods for conference participant interaction will be preferred. Poster presentations can emphasize research, practice, action or other initiatives as reflective of the conference themes or tracks. Posters will be organized in thematic groups.
2. *Symposia* provide a forum for discussion, debate, and explication of diverse perspectives as they pertain to the conference themes and/or tracks. Symposia may be used to present practice and/or research themes; however, submissions that explicitly describe the process or method that will be used to facilitate audience interaction and dialogue will be preferred.
3. *Roundtable Discussions* should provide a forum for the sharing of ideas related to innovative methods for addressing communal thriving, or debate of the issues reflective of the conference theme. This format is especially appropriate for sessions in which the presenters' role is to facilitate the audience's exploration of the issue. One or more facilitators may lead a roundtable discussion.
4. *Town Meetings* feature discussion of critical issues pertaining to communal thriving. This format is most appropriate for exploring the broad issues that cut across the conference theme, subthemes and related topics. One or more facilitators may lead a town meeting.
5. *Workshops* provide a means to teach new skills of relevance to the field. One or more instructors may teach a workshop.

To make sure that the five formats above are as participatory and innovative as possible, submitters are encouraged to consider the following possibilities:

- World Café
- “Meet the Speakers”
- Site visits to community projects
- Group art
- Audience response polling
- Q&A session systems
- Visual learning (e.g., *ImageThink*)
- Invite groups from the community to perform (e.g., music, theatrical performances, dance, drumming)
- Activities (e.g., storytelling, drumming)
- Reflective process
- Structural participatory strategies (e.g., fishbowl seating arrangements)

### **CONFERENCE SITE INFORMATION**

The conference will take place at the University of Miami’s Coral Gables campus in Miami, Florida.

The conference will begin on Wednesday June 26<sup>th</sup> with a welcome reception in the afternoon, and conclude on Saturday evening, June 29<sup>th</sup>. Pre-conference sessions will take place during the day on Wednesday, June 26<sup>th</sup>.

Details about conference registration, including travel, lodging and transportation arrangements, and conference accessibility, will be provided on the SCRA website and in the Preliminary Conference Program which will be available in March 2013. **All presenters must register for the conference and pay registration fees.**

*Lodging:* Many lodging options will be available for the conference attendees, including hotels and student housing options. Detailed information on accommodations will be available on the conference website.

*Conference Fees:* Information about registration fees will be posted on the conference website.

Questions related to the program can be sent to [SCRABiennial@gmail.com](mailto:SCRABiennial@gmail.com)

## Appendix H: Instructions for Submitting Symposia to the Online System

**NOTE: These are instructions for an old system and will need to be updated.**

The main thing authors should keep in mind is that the first person to enter an abstract for a symposium has to be the Chair, for that specific symposium. It is the Chair's responsibility to create the symposium title--also called the group title--and communicate the password to the other authors of the symposium group. When submitting an abstract, authors will need to pick the Group Title from the pick list and then enter the appropriate password.

1. In order to use the system, you need to create an account. This will then give you a username and password. You will use these whenever you log on to the system. Any of your co-authors who wish to edit your abstracts will also need to create an account.
2. On the Home Page under "Author Tools" click on "Create/Edit Abstracts"
3. The next page will show you all the submissions that include your name. You can chose to edit or delete existing submissions here, or if you don't have a submission or want to create a new one you click on "Create New Abstract"
4. The next page requires you to select a program format. Click on "Symposia" and then click on "Save and Continue"
5. The next page gives you a list of tasks you need to complete on the left hand side, and instructions for the selected task on the right hand side. Read the General Instructions first. You must press on the "Acknowledge" button on the bottom of this page in order to continue. This page also gives you the tracking id number for your symposia.
6. If you go to the Symposia task you will see that you need to create a new group title and group password. If you do not do this, you won't be able to add abstracts to the symposium. When you go to add abstracts, all you will see is every other symposium that has been submitted, and not yours.
7. After you create the group title and password, you can decide if you want to add the introduction abstract or a presentation abstract. If you are the Chair of the symposium, you should create the introduction abstract. Each presenter can add their own abstract or you can do it for them. If you want them to do it, you need to let them know the group title and password.
8. After you add a presentation title and abstract, you will see a box asking about time requested. Just put that this is part of a symposium.

9. You then indicate the equipment needed.
10. At this point you will be sent to the proof-reading page. I think it might be at this point that people are having problems because they see that they are listed as the author of the presentation, when actually they were just entering it for someone else. If that is the problem just go back to the "Author" selection on the right hand side.
11. Your name should show up. Make sure that you are checked as the entering author but NOT the primary author or the presenting author for this abstract if you are entering it for someone else. Then enter their information under new author. Indicate that they are the primary/presenting author. You can also enter co-authors here and specify the order of the authors. You can also enter discussants here. Add discussants as authors to the introductory abstract.
12. If you haven't already done so, you will have to go back and indicate the topics you want associated with the abstract.
13. Remember that you MUST submit each abstract separately. In other words, you have to go through all the steps for each abstract, up until you hit the "submit" button. You cannot add multiple abstracts at the same time. You will need to submit one, then go back and submit the others.
14. Also, remember that all of your abstracts will be marked "pending completion" until the introductory abstract for the symposium has been submitted.
15. To create a new abstract associated with your symposium you must go completely back to the Status of Current Documents page that shows all the abstracts associated with your name. Click on the "Create New Abstract" button. When you get to the symposium step, indicate that you are submitting a presentation abstract. Select your group name, and enter your password. This will associate the new abstract with the existing ones in the symposium.



## Appendix I: Guidelines for Presenters

The SCRA Biennial is an opportunity to showcase the current best research and practice in community psychology, and we look forward to having every session be thought provoking and informative. The following are some guidelines for you to follow when preparing your presentation. It is our hope that attending to these details will help to ensure your presentation is the best it can be.

**Structure Your Time** – This seems like an obvious point, but it is important enough to bear repeating. SCRA is a very relaxed conference, but some structure is essential if you wish to accomplish your goals and ensure that your session is meaningful to the participants. Explicitly write-up your goals for the session, and share them with your co-presenters. Specify how you plan to meet each goal. Be sure each presenter is clear on what he or she will be doing, and how much time they will have to do it. Practice your presentations in advance to assure that you are not planning on presenting more information than you can in the allotted time.

**Structure Time for Discussion** – The Biennial is meant to be a participatory conference. We try to meet this goal through the format of our sessions, but of course it is up to each set of presenters to ensure that their session involves the audience to the greatest degree possible. Set time-limits for each of your presenters with time for discussion at the end. Then consider assigning a time-keeper to ensure that your discussion time does not disappear.

**Consider Other Forms of Audience Participation** – Of course, discussion is not the only way to involve your audience in your session. Creative activities that give your audience an opportunity for engaging in the topic fully support the goals of the Biennial and are strongly encouraged when possible.

**Avoid Being a “Talking Head”** – Attendees don’t like to hear papers read to them; if you prepared a paper, use it as a source to prepare an outline for your presentation. If you are presenting the results of a research study, emphasize the interpretation, implications, and possible applications of the results rather than the specifics of the technique or detailed data.

**Use Handouts** - Handouts are extremely useful, and very welcomed by participants. Often the only record they will have of your session and your ideas are the handouts you give them. Even just a handout of references relevant to your session can be greeted with enthusiasm by the participants.

**Plan for Some Tangible Result** - The proceedings from the conference are not published. However, you can certainly make plans during your session to ensure some tangible result occurs from your session. There are several outlets for distribution, including *The Community Psychologist*, the SCRA website, and distribution through the SCRA listserv. Obviously this will not be a useful goal for many, perhaps most, of the sessions, but plan to

be open to the idea if it should arise. This goal is best accomplished when you and the participants explicitly plan the form, goals, and distribution of your result and assign specific responsibilities to individuals before the end of the session.

**Be Prepared to Take Names and Addresses** - There will be some participants who will want to have reprints of your papers, or who will want to contact you after the conference. Have copies of your business card to hand out, with your email address. Also, have a sign-up sheet for people to leave their names and addresses if they want reprints. A very easy way to handle reprint requests is to have mailing labels available at your presentation that attendees can just fill out.

**Poster Presentations** – Just like the other presenters, you should have a sign-up sheet for people to leave their names and addresses. It is also a nice idea to have copies of your paper available at the session for people to take. Try to have a co-author at your poster if you want to leave your poster to view others. The poster session is a forum for you to meet other people who are interested in your work. That goal can't be met if you leave your poster unattended. Posters should be up and ready for viewing at the start of the scheduled poster session. For this conference, each presenter will have a square of core board (the stuff used to back pictures) on which to pin his or her materials. We will supply the pins. The boards are 3 feet, 4 inches in width by 2 feet, 8 inches in height. The arrangements will work best if you plan your materials so that they will fit in these dimensions, although you will have some leeway to allow materials to extend over the edges of the board if necessary.

And don't forget to have fun!

## Appendix J: Instructions for Volunteer Photographers

### EXAMPLE EMAIL MESSAGE

Hi SCRA Volunteer,

Warm greetings! We are delighted to have your assistance with capturing the biennial conference through photos and videos. These photos and videos will be posted on the SCRA website and used in SCRA print materials. Below you will find information to guide you in your role. Please don't hesitate to contact me prior or during the conference for clarifying questions and/or to suggest ideas. My cell number is 517-927-9494.

Thank you for your service to SCRA. I hope you have a wonderful time at the biennial conference.

All the best,

Victoria H. Chien

Administrative Director Society of Community Action and Research (Div. 27 of APA)

### SCRA Media Arts Volunteer FAQ:

#### WHAT DO I NEED TO DO BEFORE MY VOLUNTEER SHIFT?

- ✓ Prior to the biennial conference, you will receive a Dropbox invitation. Please accept this invitation. Dropbox is a file sharing tool. We will use Dropbox to store the photos/videos that you capture. Note: You may be asked to register for a Dropbox account if you don't have one already. This takes only a few minutes to do.
- ✓ Back up your images on your media card so that you can bring an empty media card. We don't want you to run out of storage space.

#### WHAT WILL I NEED FOR MY VOLUNTEER SHIFT?

For this volunteer shift you will need to bring a **camera** and/or **video-recorder**. Please also be sure you have an **empty media card** and a **fully charged battery**. We also recommend that you bring a set of back-up batteries if you have some, or the battery charger for your device.

#### WHAT SHOULD I TAKE PHOTOS/VIDEOS OF?

We are looking for photos/videos that:

- capture the essence of community psychology--e.g., collaboration, democratic participation, respect for diverse individuals and cultures, empowerment, promotion of social justice.
- highlight the four focuses of SCRA: practice, research, education, and policy
- reflect a sense of community and the vibrant energy of SCRA members

We encourage you to have fun with your role, and enjoy engaging other SCRA members. Active and passive photos/videos are welcomed!

#### WHAT SHOULD I KEEP IN MIND AS I AM TAKING PHOTOS & VIDEOS?

- **Please be sensitive to the comfort level of members.** Some members may not want pictures/videos taken of them. **\*\*If a request is made to have a particular photo/video deleted of the individual, please respectfully do so.**
- **Please also be thoughtful not to interfere or disrupt conference activities/sessions.** E.g., it is okay to capture pictures of presentations as long as the act of doing so is not perceived by others as disruptive. We understand that personal judgment will have to be exercised in your role.

- ***Please refrain from taking videos of private conversation, and photos of any activity that would be judged as private.*** All photos/videos captured should be in public settings
- In general these images will be presented together on the website, so it will be effective to capture simplified images and avoid busy details.
- To decrease photo editing after the biennial please use the correct color balance for the lighting situation (daylight, tungsten, fluorescent, mixed, and flash). If you are unsure how to properly use these settings on your camera, Lindsey Zimmerman will help you (call/text: 404-242-4434).
- Videos can consume the media card quickly! Unless you have a sizable media card (>30GB) or a way to backup data quickly, we advise sticking with primarily photos and/or short videos (<2 min each).
- When possible, we encourage you to collect basic information about your subjects (e.g., Name and Affiliation) so they can be identified later on the website. For example, use your voice memo function on your phone (if available), state the number of the image and then ask the participants to state their name and where they are from. You can also keep a scratch pad where you have folks write down their information.

#### WHAT DO I NEED TO DO **AFTER** MY VOLUNTEER SHIFT?

- Upon finishing your volunteer shift, please upload the photos/videos to our shared Dropbox file. **All photos should be JPEG or GIF files.**
- When uploading the pictures and videos, you may find that the data exceeds the capacity of the Dropbox account. Should that happen, images/videos can be sent in batches and coordinated via email. Please contact me to arrange for this: **vchien@scra27.org**.
- We understand that you may not have access to your computer to transfer the photos/videos during the biennial. If that is the case, please upload your photos/videos no later than **Wednesday, July 3, 2013**.

## Appendix K: Suggestions for a Green Biennial

The following suggestions are from a paper published in *The Community Psychologist* by Manuel Reimer and Corte Vorhees. A slightly different version of this paper was first published in *The Community Psychologist*. The suggestions are based on information gathered by the authors from [www.bluegreenmeetings.org](http://www.bluegreenmeetings.org), [www.epa.gov/opptintr/greenmeetings](http://www.epa.gov/opptintr/greenmeetings), a document with community tips for SCRA conferences initiated by the SCRA International Committee at the Biennial in Pasadena and drafted by Niki Harre, Serdar M. Değirmencioğlu and Manuel Riemer, and contributions by members of the SCRA Environment & Justice Interest Group.

1. *Use paperless technology.* Paper has multiple negative environmental impacts, beginning with the harvesting of trees for fiber, continuing with the processing of wood fiber into pulp for making paper, and finishing with the disposal of paper products at the end of their useful life. With modern technology, there are many ways one can reduce the use of paper. Promotional material can be emailed. Conference programs can be made available for download on hand-held devices and also be accessible at computer work stations at the conference site. Handouts can be distributed via the conference website. If the use of paper is necessary, 100% recycled paper that is certified by the Forest Stewardship Council should be used.
2. *Serve only vegetarian meals with seasonal locally grown organic ingredients.* By using locally grown food that is seasonal one can significantly reduce the carbon footprint of a conference. In addition, the shortage of meatless meals at conferences is a common annoyance for the vegetarian participants.
3. *Practice the 3Rs.* While supplying recycling bins is important, finding a recycling bin at conference can often be difficult. The real key is to avoid producing waste in the first place. For example, avoid box lunches with individually wrapped food items and conference bags stuffed with things one will likely throw away. Also, do not use plates and silverware that cannot be reused. Using products made out of biodegradable corn does not solve the problem, it simply changes its nature.
4. *Don't serve bottled water.* Using bottled water is easily avoidable by asking participants to bring their own reusable bottles and provide refill stations with tap water throughout the conference site. In addition, some reusable bottles with a conference logo could be made available for purchase on site.
5. *Save energy.* Coordinate with the meeting venue to ensure that energy lights and air conditioning will be turned to lower settings during sessions and completely off when rooms are not in use.

6. *Have virtual sessions.* By introducing virtual sessions and broadcasting certain sessions on the internet people from countries far away such as Australia and New Zealand can still participate in the conference without having to add significantly to their carbon footprint by flying great distances.
7. *Select environmentally conscious hotels.* Preferably select hotels that reuse their linens, recycle, and use bulk dispensers for shampoos and soaps in guest rooms.
8. *Be conscious about transportation.* Make sure the conference site is relatively close to an airport, accommodations, and areas where people can go out at night. Use fuel efficient vehicles to transport people around.
9. *Offset carbon.* Clearly, it is not possible to completely avoid a carbon footprint for this conference. Thus, conference participants should be offered the opportunity to offset their carbon footprint caused by their conference attendance right when they register. The money raised by carbon offsets are typically used to reduce carbon production elsewhere (e.g., investing in solar panels for remote villages in several African countries) and support reforestation.

Following these recommendations could significantly reduce the environmental footprint of a conference. Of course, the environmental impact is not the only aspect that one should consider in planning a conference. Issues of community, diversity, worker rights, equity, affordability, and discrimination are equally important factors that need to be considered. Let's make it happen!