So you’re thinking about hosting a HAPS Regional Conference...

A HAPS Regional Conference is a one- or two-day event that brings together educators from one of the four HAPS regions (usually the host state and neighboring states). These conferences typically have one or two sessions of workshops and one or two keynote speakers. They may also include poster sessions and vendor exhibits during lunch and breaks. Generally, attendees come for just that day, so you would not need to coordinate their hotel stays.

If you are thinking of hosting, here are some considerations:

- **Attendance**: is typically 40 to 80. Most are from your state, with a few from neighboring states. However, we will be advertising across all of HAPS, so you might find people traveling several states over if they are interested.

- **Space needs**: You should have about 4 to 6 breakout rooms for workshops (we’ve rarely need wet labs unless your theme revolves around some hands-on activity like dissection). You’ll need an area that can provide lunch for everyone. You’ll need a room that can provide a keynote speaker stage and audience seating of up to 100. You’ll need space (and electricity) for vendor exhibits. If you plan for posters, you’ll need space and poster frames (typically, there are only a few of these per conference).

- **Institutional support**: You’ll need to determine if attendees can access the campus WiFi. You’ll want to secure the ability for attendees to park while attending the conference. Whereas ASG (our business manager) will contract for catering (breakfast, breaks, lunch), you’ll need to determine if your campus has requirements for catering contracts.

- **Keynote speakers**: Keynote speakers need to be local (HAPS plans to pay only their conference registration and food). If you wish to provide transportation for a speaker, you’ll need to secure funding for that.

Here are some of the resources that HAPS offers to assist you:

- Your **meeting committee** is made of your colleagues. Remember to delegate tasks and keep track of who is responsible for what.

- The **HAPS Conference committee** will provide advice and support when you have questions about organizing your conference proposal.

- The **Executive Director** will create online resources for you (including a HAPS email account and a timeline with links to resources). He will also be available while you plan and prepare your conference.

- The **business managers** (ASG) will negotiate contracts with caterers and exhibiting vendors. You are welcome to offer input into these processes, but you will not need to be responsible for these contracts (ASG has a lot of experience with this). They will also work with you during the planning/implantation periods to have everything ready for the conference.

- The **Membership Committee** and your **HAPS Regional Director** will assist you in advertising to institutions in your state and neighboring states. The Regional Director (or designee) will plan to attend the conference, to serve as an official representative of HAPS in meeting your...
administration and answering any questions from the exhibitors or attendees about HAPS-specific details.

- The **HAPS website** contains a number of resources to help you organize and advertise your conference.

**Here’s a brief idea of a time frame to consider:**

- About a year out, you’d want to discuss with your institution to get their support (with a good crew, many have put together a great conference in under 6 months). You’d submit a proposal and your institution administration would submit a letter of support.
- Once the proposal was accepted, we would create an online timeline for you with links to various resources.
- You’d have regular contact with ASG and the Executive Director, so that everyone was aware of the progress and could assist with the preparation.

**Submitting a proposal:**

- Determine an approximate date that you’d like to shoot for. Since the annual conference is typically at the end of May each year, we typically schedule the regional conferences for fall or early spring. Check with your colleagues and administration to confirm that this is a good time for you.
- Organize a meeting committee. Invite colleagues and local HAPS members to assist you. Delegating tasks within the planning state has been a life-saving move for many conference hosts in the past.
- Obtain a letter of support from your institution (ideally from your institution president, but other high-ranking officials who can confirm that your institution will work with you).
- Complete the online proposal form. You can find this on the HAPS website. Once submitted, it will be reviewed – along with the letter of support – by the HAPS Conference Committee for completeness. It will then be reviewed by the HAPS Board of Directors, who will decide if it’s ready to be approved.

Regional conferences require significant teamwork and planning, but the experiences gained will be worth your efforts. You will take leadership, but you will have plenty of support from HAPS, and you’ll be able to present the HAPS experience to several educators who may not be able to attend an annual conference while also showcasing your institution to others. Let us know if you have any questions.