



Leadership Event Planning Guide

The Event Planning Guide is a resource designed to assist IRWA Region and International Committee leadership with the planning and execution of successful Region Forums, Committee Symposiums and other educational or social events efficiently and effectively.

1 YEAR BEFORE POTENTIAL EVENT DATE

Determine The Event Date(s)

1. Find out the dates from IRWA HQ for the International Governing Council (IGC) Meetings, typically held in February in the spring and September in the fall, along with any other previously scheduled events to avoid overlap. *Note: Region Forums should be held after the IGC meetings.*
 - Spring Region Forums are typically scheduled in March (post-IGC Spring Meeting) through early May (before the annual conference).
 - Note that Region Officer Nominations Elections are typically held during the Spring Forum, and elected nominees must be submitted to the International Secretary no later than 40 days prior to the annual Board of Directors Meeting, which is held during the annual conference. Spring Forums should be scheduled accordingly to meet that deadline.
 - Fall Region Forums are typically scheduled for late August to October (post-IGC Fall Meeting).
2. International Committees should take Spring and Fall Forums, IEC and IGC meetings, as well as other committee symposium dates and IRWA events, into account when choosing a date to maximize attendance.
3. Determine whether a Right of Way International Education Foundation (RWIEF) or Canadian Right of Way Education Foundation Fundraiser should be included. See examples below for fundraiser ideas:
 - 50/50 raffle
 - Basket raffle
 - Silent auction
 - Pass the Hat

Event Logistics

1. After confirming dates that do not overlap with the IGC Meetings, communicate with Region and Chapter leadership and Committee members on preferred dates to maximize attendance and participation.
2. Consider connecting with the previous Region Forum host Chapter and/or Committee Chair to inquire about the average number of attendees from previous events and how many hotel rooms were booked, etc.



3. Begin your venue search for places that can accommodate the number of expected attendees for the event.
 - Meetings/events are often held at the hotel or within a block or two from the hotel. *Note: many attendees are traveling from out of town and may not have a vehicle.*
 - Obtain multiple venue catering and room rate sheets to compare costs.
 - Determine clear deadlines with venue of when to confirm menu/catering, headcounts and room block reservations. Be aware of any food & beverage minimums.
 - Utilize attorneys or others to review event-related contracts before signing and committing. HQ can conduct a courtesy review of contracts upon request. Note that the review and comments are not a legal opinion but rather an overall review and recommendation of potential concerns to consider within the contract.

4. Negotiate and discuss discounted room rates with chosen hotel, if applicable.
 - Ask about attrition policies (e.g., will the Chapter/Region/Committee be monetarily responsible for excess rooms not filled for the block?).
 - Set a registration deadline based on the date to get the negotiated room rate.

Registration

1. Discuss whether there will be a virtual component to the event and the cost of registration for a virtual participant.

2. Discuss where attendees will register (e.g., Region or Chapter website, HQ website).

3. Discuss registration fee amount.
 - Consider cost of food and room for social event, Forum venue rental fee, A/V equipment (if not provided with room cost), breakfast options, lunch for Forum attendees, and snacks, if provided.
 - Determine whether some of the costs can be covered by sponsorship offerings (see below).

4. Discuss how registration payments should be received.
 - Online via credit card (this should be included somewhere on the registration page)
 - If you are accepting in-person payments, discuss how you will take credit card payments. (If you are not accepting credit card payments, be sure to include verbiage on the flyer and registration page that only cash and checks are accepted for on-site registration).



Sponsorships

1. Determine whether the event requires sponsorships.
 - Decide how many sponsorship tiers should be offered and the pricing for each tier. See below for examples of sponsorships:
 - Title Sponsor (typically priced the highest)
 - Welcome Reception Sponsor
 - Swag Sponsor
 - General Event/Forum Sponsors (can be multiple levels or simply tiered by price)
 - Evening Event/Social Activity Sponsor
 - Consider what benefits can be offered to the sponsor. See below for examples of benefits:
 - Provide swag
 - 5-minute speech to promote company
 - Logo(s) on agenda, social media, website, other marketing materials for event
 - Signage at meals or breaks
 - Perform outreach to solicit sponsorships. See below for examples on sponsorship outreach:
 - Member emails
 - Social media posts
 - Personal calls (these can be well-received, particularly if sponsorships are not sold organically as the event draws near)

9 MONTHS BEFORE EVENT

1. The following should be confirmed and/or secured by this time:
 - Event date
 - Main event venue
 - Venue for optional events including a networking/social event, Education Foundation fundraiser or an education offering (which typically takes place the day before or after the Forum)
 - Registration fee amount
 - Sponsorship tiers/packages and rates
2. Begin discussion about continuing education (CE) credits.
 - Contact licensing agencies for CE documentation requirements to obtain CE credits.
 - Prepare and send all documentation to obtain CE credits to the appropriate contact, depending on the location of event.
 - Determine if out-of-state attendees can apply for CE credits in their home state.



- Note that, effective July 1, 2017, Chapters, Regions and/or Committee Chairs (“event organizers”) shall approve their own CE events and are now considered IRWA-sponsored/approved events. Each event organizer is responsible for reviewing and approving the CE credits for their local events.
 - The CE credits at the event, and the event itself, do not need to be formally submitted to IRWA Headquarters for the International Professional Education Committee’s Credentialing Subcommittee approval.
 - However, event organizers must provide a completion certificate to attendees who would like recertification credit.
 - This completion certificate will need to be distributed to attendees by the event organizer post-event. The certificate must include:
 - Name of attendee
 - Name of course, event, etc.
 - Date(s) of course, event, etc.
 - Number of IRWA-approved recertification credit hours
 - Name, title and signature of one of the following:
 - IRWA Chapter or Region Officer
 - Chapter Professional Development Committee Chair
 - Chapter Education Committee Chair
 - IRWA logo
3. Prepare marketing materials/flyer(s) to include the following details:
- Location, date and times for each event
 - Registration fee for attendees in person and virtual, if offered
 - Hotel information, such as address, room rate, website and QR code/discount code for booking, if applicable (include deadline to book at the discounted rate)
 - A contact for registration notifications (to track attendee names and maintain accurate numbers for food and beverage)
 - Registration fee and payment information
 - Details on related events (e.g., Education Foundation fundraiser, education offerings, social/evening event)
 - Sponsor logo(s) and thank you note to sponsors, if specified as a benefit
4. If you require assistance with flyer creation, fill out the International Marketing & Membership Committee’s [Marketing Support Request Form](#).
5. Email completed flyer to Region leaders for approval to Chapter presidents and communication/social media chairs.



6 MONTHS BEFORE EVENT

1. Announce the event at any Chapter, Region or International meetings before event and distribute flyers. Be prepared to discuss the event and encourage members to attend.
2. Share a Save the Date on social media accounts, including IRWA's Member Network, to increase awareness about the event, especially if the registration link isn't ready to go live.
3. Fill out the ["Submit Event" form](#) on IRWA's website to have the event published on HQ's calendar, which is visible to all members.
4. Remind International and Region leaders about the event to enlist their help in bringing awareness by emailing their members.
5. Post flyer on Chapter/Region social media platforms.

3 MONTHS BEFORE EVENT

1. Finalize agenda(s) and confirm speakers, if applicable.
2. Email flyer to members and potential attendees. For Forums, Region leaders should forward the information to Chapter leaders who will then forward it to their members, encouraging them to attend. Include the deadline you will need in order to lock in numbers for food and beverage.
3. Maintain promotion of event on social media platforms. Be sure to include sponsorship mentions, if applicable.



1 MONTH BEFORE EVENT

1. Confirm A/V with venue. Below is a list of common needs:
 - Screen
 - Projector
 - Microphone(s)
 - Extension cords/power bars
 - Room set-up
 - Podium
 - Registration table
2. Perform one last promotional outreach via email and social media platforms.
3. Close registration on the deadline given in marketing material. Confirm headcount, schedule and food and beverage with venue on the deadline date.
 - If deadline is extended, send communications via email and social media to announce the extension.
4. Confirm food menus with venue.

2 WEEKS BEFORE EVENT

1. Send an email to attendees with the following information:
 - Event flyer
 - Agenda/schedule of events
 - Hotel and parking information, and other transportation details
 - Optional: list of things to do and places to dine
2. Send final confirmation/communication with hotel about number of attendees, schedule, and food and beverage choices.



HELPFUL CONTACTS

General Inquiries

- Jaime Rose Tieu, CAE, Member Services Manager — tieu@irwaonline.org
- Aiyana Lopez, CMP, Member Services Manager — lopez@irwaonline.org

Digital and Print Communications

- Vivian Nguyen, Editor & Communications Manager — nguyen@irwaonline.org

Education Course/Offering Inquiries

- Amir Vafamanesh, Organizational Learning & Development Manager — vafamanesh@irwaonline.org

Financial Inquiries

- Rakhshan Mazarei, Chief Financial Officer — rmazarei@irwaonline.org

Venue booking and inquiries

- Dyemond Cooper, CMP, Event Coordinator — cooper@irwaonline.org

Contract Review Support

- Jade Meador, CAE, Deputy Executive Director — meador@irwaonline.org

HELPFUL LINKS

Education

- [IRWA Attendance Certificate Template](#)

Marketing

- [International Marketing & Membership Committee Marketing Support Request Form](#)

Region Forum Meeting Documents

- [Meeting Agenda Template](#)
- [Roberts Rules of Order Cheat Sheet](#)
- [IRWA PowerPoint Template](#)