

AHRA Northwest Regional or Local Meeting

The Northwest Region (Washington and Oregon) has been putting together regional and local meetings since the fall of 2009. In that time period, the NWR has hosted more than 15 meetings with an attendance of 52-98 participants. We have learned a lot in the process. Our goal is to make this a truly enjoyable process that supports the goals and mission of the AHRA and provides learning, CE credit, and networking opportunities for our local imaging administrators. The following process may serve as a guide for coordinating the NWR meetings.

Step 1—Leadership Sponsor (Timeline: 4-9 months in advance of the meeting)

The first step to establishing a meeting is recruitment of a leadership sponsor. The leadership sponsor provides the venue and assigns the people that will be responsible for working with the AHRA core team to coordinate the meeting.

Step 2—Venue (Timeline: 4-9 months in advance of the meeting)

The venue should be free to use (we have had exceptions but the cost is generally prohibitive) and should not have restrictions that will interfere with the intended use. The most popular venue to date are hospital auditoriums or meeting spaces. The venue should accommodate 80-100 people, food tables, and vendor booths (tables or displays). **Important note* the attendance is capped at the number of people the venue will accommodate.**

Step 3—Select a Date (Timeline: 4-9 months in advance of the meeting)

The NWR holds free meetings once per quarter. This has proven to be an effective strategy primarily because of our vendor sponsorships and the willingness of the core team to maintain involvement in the process. The meetings have been most successful when held on a Thursday. Fridays are “iffy” and dependent upon the area (i.e. if there is travel involved for the majority of the participants). Mondays are the least preferred by those surveyed in our meetings. Avoiding holidays and the dates for other AHRA and modality centric conferences is essential.

Step 4—Hold the Date (Timeline: 3-4 months in advance of the meeting)

Generally, we do not complete the conference form (which lists the meeting on the main AHRA site) until we have established our speakers. At this point, in the process we want to send a hold the date email notification to our list serve participants. If we are to this point in the process and we are hosting a prior meeting, we will announce the next meeting date and place during that meeting.

Step 5—Speakers (Timeline: 3-4 months in advance of the meeting)

Speakers must be established before the conference form can be completed. The agenda for the day will be based on the number of speakers. We have learned that making the conference too long (more than 5 speakers) effects attendance in the morning and late afternoon. The ideal number of speakers is 4 for an all-day session. Speakers are easiest to find in the facility where the event is being held. Vendors readily supply speakers for our events. Bellevue College and University of Washington are good sources for speakers as well. The core team can provide additional ideas or contact information.

- Speakers should speak for 60 minutes or 90 minutes. We have had some difficulty with the 90 minute sessions running short, so we have favored the 60 minute sessions. The ARRT, who issues our CE credits for the sessions, requires that the speakers speak for 50 minutes minimum for a 60 minute session and 80 minutes minimum for a 90 minute session. **Note* This is important information to share with the speakers when asking them to speak.**
- We have reimbursed speakers for their time in the past but would prefer to seek speakers at no cost. Vendor sponsored speaker's expenses are covered by the vendor. Previously, honorariums for speakers have been provided not to exceed \$500 (this is not a hard and fast rule, but has not been exceeded to this point). Most local speakers will speak without charging anything.
- Speakers MUST provide a timed-outline of their presentation and a CV or Resume to Jillian Nanof at AHRA corporate as soon as possible once they have been identified as a speaker.
- Important note* If a vendor is supplying a speaker, the presentation **MUST be VENDOR neutral.** It cannot promote their product or services. They may present information regarding their product as long as they provide information on other products in a neutral fashion (i.e. dose monitoring for CT is currently provided by vendors A, B, C, & D).
- Ask speakers for introductions. This should be short and represent how the speaker wishes to be introduced.

Step 6—Vendor Sponsorship (Timeline: 3-4 months in advance of the meeting)

Vendor sponsorship is crucial to our process and how many of them we need is dependent upon the structure of each meeting. In general we have asked each vendor for \$1,500 OR a speaker sponsorship OR to cover something specific like all or part of the food. In general, the sponsorship has cost a single vendor between \$1,200-\$6,000. For this reason, we would like to remain consistent in what we are asking. We typically ask the vendor for sponsorship in this manner:

“We are seeking sponsorship of our regional or local AHRA meeting in the fall. We have the following opportunities available: \$1,500 general sponsorship, sponsorship of a speaker that you would provide, Sponsorship of Lunch (typically \$1,200-\$1,800), or Sponsorship of the breakfast and break food (Typically \$1,200-\$1,500). Sponsorship allows you to set-up a booth (table or display) at the event.”

- Vendors receive recognition for their sponsorship on the AHRA website. **Note* If we do not already have it, please ask the vendor for their logo to add to the AHRA site.**
- If we raise more than we need for a specific meeting, we keep the funds on file with Jillian Nanof at AHRA corporate. Together with her, we track the funds so we can use them if and when we run short of sponsorship funding for a meeting.
- If a vendor prefers to pay for items directly, they may do so. If they prefer to send sponsorship funds to AHRA corporate, they may do so by contacting Jillian Nanof at AHRA corporate and paying by credit card over the phone or by sending her a check. Jillian will note the funds to our account. **PLEASE have the vendor note what the funds are for when sending the check. This is critical.**

Step 7—AHRA Meeting Form (2-3 months in advance of the meeting)

In order to get the meeting officially on the docket for AHRA, the AHRA meeting form must be completed. Please include an agenda for the day (see next item). The speakers should be identified by name and title, and the title of the presentation should be included. The vendor sponsors should be identified and their logos should be forwarded along with the form. Please provide a campus map if needed. For any questions about the form, please contact the core team or Jillian Nanof.

Step 8—Agenda (2-3 months in advance of the meeting)

Please allow for 15 minute breaks between sessions. Lunch should be 45-60 minutes depending upon ease of access to the food. Registration is generally 30 minutes. **Please encourage all participants to visit with the vendors.** Please provide 15-20 minutes for AHRA business/presentations.

Agenda Template

9:30-10:00a	Registration (Coffee and Continental Breakfast generously sponsored by X)
10:00-11:00	Speaker 1 (generously sponsored by X)
11:00-11:15	Break (refreshments generously sponsored by X)
11:15-12:15	Speaker 2 (generously sponsored by X)
12:15-1:15	Lunch (generously sponsored by X)
1:15-1:30	AHRA business
1:30-2:30	Speaker 3 (generously sponsored by X)
2:30-2:45	Break (dessert generously sponsored by X)
2:45-3:45	Speaker 4 (generously sponsored by X)
3:45-4:00	Break (generously sponsored by X)
4:00-5:00	Speaker 5 (generously sponsored by X)

Note* 5 speakers are not recommended as people generally leave earlier and miss this speaker entirely. If you choose 5 speakers, make this one the biggest topic such as a regulatory issue in hopes that the group may stay.

Step 8—Catering (1-2 months in advance of the meeting)

Planning for the food can be challenging. If you must obtain your catering through a specific place (i.e. the hospital's catering) then it is much easier to do. If you choose to use an outside vendor, then please look a few quotes to get the best price. Plan for 50-60 people with the caterers. This is always perfect regardless of the number of attendees. Why? Because we avoid single items like boxed lunches.

- Order items for breakfast (bottled water, pastries, juices, coffee, hot teas, and fruit) for 50 people.

- If the first break is in the morning, leave these items out and order a refresh. If the first break is in the afternoon order dessert for this break and leave it out for the following break. For dessert, bars, cookies, and brownies are best received. Order desserts for 50 people.
- For lunch do not order items that are single items like sandwiches. Instead order bowls of salads, fruits, vegetables trays, pastas, etc. **We do not do boxed lunches because we cannot pin-point exact attendance.** Order food for 60 people.
- For the last break order light hot and cold appetizers for 25 people. People generally eat less at this point.
- The invoices should be obtained as soon as possible. Once obtained the invoice will be sent to Jillian Nanof at AHRA corporate. **Exception* Some vendors prefer to pay this directly.** If this is the case, provide the invoice to the vendor. Please allow 30 days for payment.

Step 9—Raffle Items and Other Misc. Expenses

- Gift baskets or other prizes have routinely been ordered for door prizes and raffles. When purchasing these items, please keep and forward your receipts to Jillian Nanof for reimbursements.

Step 10—Core Team Meetings

- The core team is in place to assist in every way possible with the event. Regular meetings should occur to provide this support. The meetings should be coordinated between the leader host and the core team leader (designated early in the process by the core team). We attempt to select one leader from the core team as a point-of-contact for each meeting. Jillian Nanof is our AHRA corporate meeting leader; she can be reached at Jnanof@ahraonline.org

Step 11—Day of Items

- Speaker Introductions (select various people to perform each one and hand them out ahead of time so the speaker and the person introducing them can review them)
- Signage for parking lot, entrance, and meeting space (cost reimbursed if needed)
- Tables and table cloths or covers for vendors (1 table per vendor)
- Desired literature for facility, etc.
- 2 tables for signing in
- Pens for signing in
- Name tags
- Sharpie markers for extra name tags
- AHRA provided bags
- Slips of paper to write name for raffle or raffle tickets
- Something to hold the slips of paper for the raffle (ie. jar, vase, box, bucket).
- Clip board for session sign-ins

Note *Session sign-in sheets MUST be signed during the session and NOT before or after the session. These sheets are collected by the core team representative and sent to Jillian Nanof. CE credit cannot be awarded for the sessions where this does not occur. The sheets are very important to the participants.