

Guidelines for Hosting the SENIA Conference

February 2017

Purpose

SENIA is a network of educators, professionals and parents across Asia dedicated to supporting children with special learning needs. Working together, we will provide a network to combine our strengths to help raise awareness and advocate for the children in our lives. The SENIA conference is the main way that we realize our goals as an organization.

Our goals through the conference are to:

- foster networking in Asia;
- identify, utilize and celebrate local resources, expertise, and programs;
- continually advocate for children with special needs.

We also hope to generate revenue from each conference to help fund additional programs to further promote awareness and advocacy for students with special education needs.

Hosting

Hosting the SENIA conference is an honor. The conference provides several benefits to the host including increased recognition as host of the conference, improved awareness of special education needs in the host's country, and local training for the host's staff and families.

It must also be noted that hosting SENIA's annual conference requires a tremendous amount of resources and time. As such, the host organization must agree to follow these guidelines.

1. Planning

Ideally, the SENIA conference will be planned and organized by a committee made up of participants from around Asia. The host organization should provide the conference chairperson and leadership but we encourage the participation of others throughout the region. Committees should be set up in the following areas:

- Venue;
- Program;
- Publicity;
- Registration.

2. Finances

The host organization is responsible for finances associated with the conference. In addition, for each delegate registered for the conference, the host organization is to collect US\$10 to be paid to the SENIA board, to help raise funds for future SENIA events. Also, any excess revenue over costs is to be returned to the SENIA Board to support future awareness and advocacy programs. The host organization is to pay full registration fees for staff members that attend the conference. Staff members that support and plan the conference should not be paid for their time from the SENIA conference registration fees. The following activities should not be reimbursed except for actual out-of-pocket expenses: planning, marketing, registration management, working on the day of the conference, etc. Staff members that actually work at the conference (not including presenters) do not have to pay conference registration fees. Included in the costs for the conference should be the SENIA Student Award and SENIA Advocacy Award:

SENIA Student Award

- Economy airfare for the award recipient and one chaperone
- Two nights hotel accommodation
- Cost for the plaque

SENIA Advocacy Award

- Economy airfare for the award recipient and possibly one chaperone (for individuals who require a chaperone, i.e. under the age of 18)
- Two nights hotel accommodation
- Conference registration fees (for education professionals and/or parents)
- Cost for the plaque

3. Venue

Ideally the venue for the conference should be a school campus and should be provided free. A hotel or conference center can be expensive and increases the risk that the conference will lose money. In addition, using a school campus better reflects our mission and that we are a grass roots type of organization

4. Keynote speakers and sessions

Since the purpose of the conference is to recognize local resources and programs, outside speakers and keynote addresses should be kept to a minimum.

- One or two keynote speakers can be invited to the conference but honorarium and speakers should be kept to a minimum.
- Most sessions should be presented by attendees to the SENIA conference and they should not be paid for presenting. In fact, workshop presenters are expected to register for the SENIA conference and pay full registration fees. Presenting at the conference should be considered an honor and privilege.

- The board suggests that cohort groups meet at least once during the SENIA conference to allow for work sharing ideas.
- The presentation of both the SENIA Student Award and the SENIA Advocacy Award at the conference is an important and integral part of SENIA's mission statement. As such, the award presentation should be held at a prominent and appropriate time to maximize the honor for the recipients.

5. Pre / Post-Conference Workshops

The local planners may wish to sponsor or hold special trainings before and/or after the main SENIA conference. The fees from these trainings can pay the expenses and fees for the trainers. This can allow for more in-depth training for those who want it while also allowing the overall conference fees to be kept lower.

6. SENIA Board

The SENIA Board liaises with one another regularly during the conference, including at least one official board meeting. SENIA Board members are expected to receive free entrance to the conference. SENIA Board members should be recognized at the conference and be given time to explain the history of SENIA and discuss the future of SENIA to all participants. The conference organizers shall allot at least 1 board meeting schedule with meals for the SENIA Board members.

7. Use of Technology for Conference Management

We suggest the planning committee use automated conference registration and fee processing wherever possible. Some members of SENIA will be willing to make resources and support available as long as these guidelines are followed.

8. Board Approval

The SENIA Board is to approve the conference program and venue before the conference is finalized. The main concern of the board will be to make sure that the goals of SENIA are followed and that cost is minimized. Once the program and venue have been approved, SENIA will allocate funds to support the conference if such funds are available.

9. Final Report

Following the SENIA conference, the host organization should provide a detailed summary of costs associated with the conference and excess funds are to be forwarded to the SENIA Board for future use.

Please note that the SENIA Board is an entirely volunteer organization and does not have paid staff. Members participate on the board with the support of their organizations.

Applicants to host the next SENIA conference should sign below that they have reviewed these guidelines and agree to them:

Conference Organizer

Name

Title

Organization

Date

Representative of Host Organization

Name

Title

Organization

Date