



### Cost-Effective Event Planning for a Win-Win Situation

There are many ways to organize your events with little or no cost to the local section by using local community resources, national ACS volunteer programs and collaboration with outside scientific, business and community organizations. Here are some examples and advice for managing the cost of events.

Most sections provide career mentoring for their members and students just entering the chemical workforce. Most of us are familiar with the Career Fair at National ACS meeting twice a year. Career Fairs provide career workshops; resume review; and mock interviews with the use of volunteers trained by the Department of Career Services and Development. It isn't easy to provide a career event locally, especially at a modest cost. However, there is a little utilized national program which provides career workshops, resume review and mock interview at the local section level using the same career consultants and career workshop presenters that are at national meetings, sometimes for a just the cost of their travel expenses. These volunteers live throughout the U.S., sometimes just a few miles from a local section. Most career consultants and career workshop presenters are more than happy to provide career programming at the local level. This service can significantly reduce the cost of this type of programming and be scheduled by emailing [careers@acs.org](mailto:careers@acs.org).

A major cost item for an event is the room charges for a venue. It is easy to book your event at a local hotel, restaurant or large university. Sometimes these expenses are slight but in most cases they are large which requires finding funding, charging for the event or impacting the yearly source of revenue for a local section. Some sections and organizers have learned ways around this. Local companies, community colleges or smaller institutions are a great resource in providing low cost or free space for an event. Other venues for community events such as Chemistry Week or Earth Day may be local museums or shopping malls. Think of the benefits for the location where you are holding a program. Benefits for local community colleges and universities may be exposure to the community based on their programs and facility, publicity in the news, or just sponsorship. Always look for a contact in the chemistry department as a source to collaborate with instead of the general event planning departments. Not everyone is an ACS member but most chemists are willing to help other chemists and sometimes relationships are formed in which these individuals later become members and/or active in the local section.

Food has a major effect on programming. Some sites allow outside food to be brought in which can lower the cost. This might include providing a coffee pot with coffee and hot water, or shopping for snacks at a local discount store along with the cups, plates and utensils. Many times local food chains or pizza restaurants will provide food at a discount if they are included in your publicity. This also holds true if you are planning an event at a local restaurant. Negotiate your cost based what you can give them in return such as publicity in advertising their name in your program to your audience or on your website. Perhaps you can schedule during a day or time when they have little business and therefore providing them with income when they usually may not have some.

Collaboration with other organizations is a terrific way to increase the value of a program and share the cost. The benefit is increased publicity for your event and exposure for them. Sponsorship is an excellent tool to use when planning your event. First determine who the major players in this opportunity are and sell your idea to them. Sponsorship may be solely financial or a great way to get extra volunteers on a project along with extra exposure and connections that other organizations have. Successful programming may lead to future opportunities from that organization. In either case, it is always a win-win situation.

These are just a few ways to leverage opportunities in your community. There are more ways that most of us have learned as we provide this type of service to our members. Share your success in low cost events by sending a description to [lsac@acs.org](mailto:lsac@acs.org).

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