

American Art Therapy Association
2011-2013 Annual Conference Management
Request for Proposal
January 13, 2009

INTRODUCTION

The American Art Therapy Association, Inc., a 501(c) (3) membership Association, is inviting proposals to provide the most effective method for management of its 2011 through 2013 Annual Conferences.

Conference management service options (entity) which will be considered include:

- A comprehensive full service conference management company.
- A conference management services firm that can provide a range of specific services to support in-house staff.
- A fulltime experienced conference management expert working as an employee who assembles and directs specific conference services that complement the capacity of the headquarters staff.

The Association is seeking the most effective and cost efficient option for management of our Annual Conference which will result in providing extensive conference management experience, strong financial and electronic information management capabilities and comprehensive conference marketing and communications skills. The Association seeks: a firm or entity specializing in sponsorship sales; training and event and conference planning for the non-profit sector; and association conference management with experience in healthcare and educational related conference management. The Association requires a high degree of customer service focus by the selected entity.

The Association and/or its vendors, contractors and volunteers, do not discriminate against any individual or group with respect to any service, program or activity on the basis of gender, race, creed, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, or age, or other prohibited basis. Women and minority owned businesses are strongly encouraged to submit a proposal.

The American Art Therapy Association is based in the Washington D.C. area: the 2011 conference will be held in Washington, DC. The 2012 and 2013 conference site locations will be identified by April 2010.

The proposal should include:

- The experience and history of the applying entity.
- The specific expertise that the entity would provide to accomplish the statement of work activities noted in this request for proposal. (Qualifications & Responsibilities Section)
- The list of key staff and their bio/resumes.
- The specific approaches that the entity would use to ensure cost efficiency.

- Financial management capability and reporting.
- On-line registration process capacity/approach.
- Event marketing and sponsorship experience, including recommended process/approach for the Association's events.
- Staffing complement and function at the conference itself.
- History of working with volunteer-led associations.

The proposal with all required attachments should be submitted to: Attention; Conference Proposal, American Art Therapy Association, 225 North Fairfax Street, Alexandria, VA. 22314 by 5:00 PM EST on February 26, 2010. An electronic version of the Proposal and cover letter in Microsoft Word files only should also be sent to info@arttherapy.org. All proposals will be reviewed by the Conference Management Company Selection Committee in advance of the final approval. **Selections will be announced by April 30, 2010. Work by the selected entity must begin on May 1, 2010.**

Background and Mission of American Art Therapy Association

The American Art Therapy Association (the Association) is an organization of professionals formed in 1969 dedicated to the belief that the creative process involved in art making is healing and life enhancing. Its mission is to serve its members and the general public by providing standards of professional competence, and developing, promoting knowledge in, and of, the field of art therapy. The Association is a national, non-profit association representing over 5,500 members. It is governed by an 11-member volunteer Board of Directors elected by the membership. The Association also has 36 State and Regional Chapters that conduct meetings and activities for members and promote art therapy on the state and local level.

It is expected that the 2011 Annual Conference will attract between 1,200 and 1,500 attendees; additional marketing will result in growing conference attendance each year going forward.

The Association web site is <http://www.americanarttherapyassociation.org>.

Proposal Format, Selection Process, and Background

The following materials are required for a completed application:

1. A cover letter
2. A proposal (inclusive of the elements listed above - 3 copies)
3. At least three letters of reference from associations in the healthcare and related fields (3 copies)
4. Background information (3 copies)

Items 1-4 should be mailed to: Attention: Conference Proposal AMERICAN ART THERAPY ASSOCIATION, 225 North Fairfax Street, Alexandria, VA 22314.

In addition, please submit items 1 and 2 (the cover letter and the proposal) electronically using Microsoft Word files only to info@arttherapy.org.

The key contact in the proposal will be called if your firm/entity's qualifications are in line with the overall requirements for an in-person presentation. Final candidates will be required to present their proposal for conference management to the selection committee in March 2010. Please review the American Art Therapy Association web site for more information about art therapy.

I. Qualifications and Responsibilities of Conference Management Entity:

A. Qualifications

The entity must have demonstrated extensive experience in:

- Conference management of large national association conferences throughout the US and Canada.
- Knowledge and experience in on-line conference marketing and conference management systems including registration and exhibition systems.
- Management of conference courses tied to the overall conference experience.
- Exhibit management expertise.
- Sponsorship development and coordination of sponsor benefits.
- Excellent negotiation skills and vendor relationship skills and management.
- Communications materials development and press relations.
- Preference will be given to those entities with a record of not-for-profit, government and/or professional association government conference management in the health care field, particularly mental health.
- Women and minority businesses are strongly encouraged to apply.

B. Responsibilities

SECTION I: OVERVIEW

American Art Therapy Association seeks to host an educational conference in July 2011 to promote increase knowledge of art therapy, best practices in the field, innovative use of art as therapy, and build partnerships and connect the membership with related groups such as health care related organizations, educational institutions, community based and government organizations.

Goals of the conference:

1. Attendance of 1,200+;
2. Approximately 160 on-site courses/ meeting sessions.
3. Realize a profit of a minimum of \$150,000;
4. Extend brand awareness of American Art Therapy Association to the creative arts and arts community, corporate sector and related sponsors, government entities and health and educational groups;
5. Raise awareness of best practices in art therapy.

Conference Management Responsibilities:

1. Serve as key coordinator and marketer to promote, plan and execute conference to the satisfaction of the Association;
2. Develop and disseminate all marketing information to the association's membership, potential attendees, corporate and non-profit sponsors, presenters, and exhibitors;

3. Negotiate the specifics of each hotel contract for the three year contract period and interface with the selected hotel chain which will be managing the conference over the next 5 years;
4. Work with the Association lead staff and the head of the Conference Committee and specific sub-committee chairs as required for a successful conference.
5. Serve as coordinator for the conference committee in assisting speakers for all educational workshop sessions and keynote presentations;
6. Develop conference planning timeline and manage activities to include all logistics related to securing venue and management of all on-site requirements (course requirements, catering, signage, schedule, hotel rooms, meeting rooms, A/V, etc.). The management company is also responsible for coordinating all off-site events. The conference management company will also work with the local arrangement committee (LAC) to coordinate special related functions.
7. Develop overall marketing plan with timelines, specific tactics, and key persons responsible for execution;
8. Develop the conference schedule and all marketing materials in collaboration with the Association for both on-line and hard copy as required;
9. Provide coordination of on-line proposal management system, on-line registration, payment processing that interfaces with the Association's financial system, design and manage the conference website as a subsection of the Association's web site, and provide other electronic management services required of conference management.
10. Provide a 48 hour guaranteed response to all inquiries and requests received;
11. Provide monthly sales/activity reports to the American Art Therapy Association on the status of attendees, sponsors, vendors, speakers, course participants and registration. Provide weekly report in the 6 weeks prior to the start of the conference.
12. Provide financial reporting that integrates with the Association's financial reporting system, and provide monthly financial reports as required for twelve months prior, during and 4 months post conference.
13. Work closely with the Association to manage additional tasks as needed such as coordination of the arts and craft marketplace, the open art studio, order supplies for the open art studio, order and provide tables for the marketplace, etc.

Section II: COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES

The Association's logo and the Conference logo will be integrated into print and electronic collateral for the purposes of inspiring audience to register for the conference. (The annual conference logos will be developed by the national office and the Conference Committee in concert with the Local Arrangement Committee one year in advance of the conference.)

Conference Marketing & Promotions

The entity will:

- Develop a complete marketing plan with strategies and tactics to meet the conference goals for attendance, sponsorship, and revenue.
- Create and facilitate all marketing efforts for the purposes of promoting the conference to various target audiences – prospective attendees, sponsors, vendors, and the media.

- Create, produce, and mail/email promotional pieces for the purposes of securing desired attendance, sponsor contracts, crafts fair participants, food vendors, and display vendors.
- Be responsible for gathering content from conference committee and others and updating the conference web page.
- Be responsible for content and execution of email messages to targeted audience.
- Develop and distribute press releases announcing the conference to appropriate media outlets.

Deliverables:

- Incorporate the national brand logo and color palette and font family for all marketing and conference materials;
- Create, produce and email a minimum of three (3) printed conference promotional pieces, to include two postcards/similar (one to launch and one to remind) and a registration brochure;
- Create and execute a minimum of 10 emails to target audiences, at least one per month and more per month as the conference date approaches;
- Create and maintain web page content to promote conference;
- Develop the event press release to announce conference to local and national media outlets.
- Create timeline of all marketing and promotional activities, due dates, and key person(s) responsible for execution.
- Outreach to the Association 60 national partners to secure broad attendance.

Section III: VENUE SELECTION / ON-SITE LOGISTICS

The entity will:

- Coordinate with the selected venues for the 2011, 2012 and 2013 conferences based on expected attendance, location desirability, meeting space, and other amenities required by American Art Therapy Association. Annual conference planning site visits made by American Art Therapy Association Conference Committee, ED, and conference management entity.
- Work with the chosen venue to arrange for all meeting space, audio/visual needs, food and beverage, and other on-site amenities as determined by the Association.
- Facilitate registration prior to the conference and on-site.
- Be responsible for securing all conference materials and distributing them on-site. Conference materials will include, but not be limited to: conference program book, name badges, conference bag, exhibitor materials, signage, and other items as required.
- Maintain a minimum of 6 persons on-site throughout the conference with key presence at all major sessions.
- Serve as the liaison between the conference venue and the Association.

Deliverables:

- Prepare full budgets for each conference 18 months in advance of the event to include all related costs (food/beverage, audio/visual, meeting space, etc) for American Art Therapy Association to include in its annual budget.

- Online registration capability for all attendees to register and pay via credit card through an on-line portal that interfaces with the American Art Therapy Association website/ or uses the Associations on-line registration capability.
- Outline of all meeting specifications (food/beverage, audio/visual, meeting room set-ups, etc) available to American Art Therapy Association four weeks prior to start of conference;
- On-line conference facility set up for major events, registration, and the exhibit floor.
- Complete bill reconciliation for all billable expenses within 30 days after the conclusion of the conference.
- Financial reporting to detailing budgeted payables and receivables as the conference planning and execution is underway.
- Electronic payment system tied to the financial record keeping of the Association.

Section IV: SPONSORSHIP MARKETING SALES & FULFILLMENT

The entity will:

- Create and market sponsorship opportunities to a prospective list of sponsors.
- Evaluate the Association's conference marketing and recognition assets to determine package benefits and pricing at various levels.
- Work to gain a national sponsor for all technology equipment.
 - Undertake a number of marketing efforts to promote sponsorship opportunities. The marketing efforts will include but not be limited to posting information on the conference web page and sending emails and making phone calls to prospective sponsors.
 - Responsible for sending sponsorship proposals and negotiating sponsorship contracts.
 - Develop and manage the final contract and agreements between sponsor and the Association, for American Art Therapy Association's review and approval.
 - Provide all on-site management and fulfillment of sponsor deliverables before, during, and after the Conference.

Deliverables:

- Develop forty or more (40) sponsorships and produce participation packages including price and benefits, in an on-line and hardcopy mailing version;
- Create and maintain sponsorship information on the conference web page;
- Advise and coordinate all agreements between American Art Therapy Association and each sponsor;
- Execute and fulfill all recognition deliverables as outlined between American Art Therapy Association and each sponsor.

SECTION V: BUDGET

The entity submitting a proposal should provide the cost estimate (draft 3 year budget) required to develop and manage the work outlined in the Scope of Work. The conference management expenses should be listed per category and should include the consulting and facilitation expenses as a separate line item. General conference expenses, listed separately, could include estimates of direct costs for design, production, and mailing of marketing materials; web design or web page implementation; on-line conference attendance registration

processing, hotel expenses including meeting space, audio/visual, and food/beverage expenses; and any direct costs related to sponsorship marketing, sales or fulfillment. It is fully acknowledged that the budget will be an estimate given the information provided in the RFP.

SECTION VI: PERSONNEL

The entity must detail how it will invest adequate personnel and business resources to achieve stated goals. The lead managers (names and backgrounds of principals) must be listed with their experience and background noted. If the entity is relying on additional outsourcing, the entity should list the outsource partners that may be used to undertake the conference management required. For example, if an on-site registration service will be used, name the firm that is being considered.

SECTION VII: TIMELINE

The conference management entity/firm will be selected by April 30, 2010. It is expected that the entity will immediately begin to manage the conference management activities required to conduct a successful July 2011 conference. A Conference Management timeline and marketing/promotional timeline will be required within 7 days of the signing of the contract.