

Guide to Hosting a Regional ABLE Meeting (RABLE)

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Extended Abstract

Hosting a Regional ABLE meeting (a “RABLE”) may sound daunting but is an attainable challenge for any ABLE member. Prospective hosts should consider these important steps: 1) Check with your home institution. Find others (preferably ABLE members) in your area who are also enthusiastic about bringing a meeting to your location. 2) Tentatively decide on an agenda and other critical issues like: What campus or other facility will you use? Will you go one or two days? (For first-time hosts, one day is recommended.) What kind of food should you provide? How much do you wish to charge attendees? About how many local presenters do you think you can secure? It won't matter initially that your answers to these questions will change as you get commitments. 3) Contact the current ABLE president and RABLE co-chairs. Prepare a brief cover-letter explaining the reasons for your RABLE (locals want it!), the venue you'll use, the date(s) and a clear indication of the support provided by the hosting institution (venue only, no money provided, is common). Prepare a tentative agenda with dates and times. Prepare a budget. Food will usually be your biggest expense. Submit the budget, agenda, and cover letter to the ABLE board by sending an electronic copy to the current President. Your RABLE must be approved by the board and normally ABLE provides no financial support. However, some veteran ABLE presenters are able to travel and present at your RABLE without any support from you due to their home institution, granting agency, or publisher providing travel expenses. 4) Solicit donations from vendors and publishers that already work with your local institutions. These can lower registration costs dramatically. 5) Assemble a team of locals consisting of faculty, staff, grad students, and undergrads to tackle tasks like: personally contacting prospective presenters from the local area, pre-positioning food supplies and registration materials, staffing registration tables, helping presenters set up their rooms, buying and/or picking up food on the day of the meeting, posting abundant signs helping attendees find the right rooms/parking/registration. etc. 6) Contact the ABLE IT/web volunteers for help with a registration page and a RABLE informational web page. Templates for this based on the 2013 RABLE can be modified for your purposes. 7) Finally, beginning about 6-10 months prior to your event, deluge the local institutions with email, hard-copy fliers, and informational presentations about your upcoming event to solicit attendees! Continue the contacts up to about a week prior to your event. Expect late registrants. Finally, remember existing ABLE members with experience are here to help.

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