

## **CLA Conference Planning Feedback**

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### **Issues:**

#### Conference size and limits to session proposals.

A further exploration of the size of the conference is warranted. For example, there are a significant number of proposals that get rejected each year. Some due to quality or content, but many as a result of limited time slots. Rejection of so many proposals is not good member relations. When attending the conference, there are often many sessions where the room is overflowing. A venue that permits a higher number of concurrent sessions could alleviate the high proposal rejection rate and minimize room crowding – but the cost of doing so would have to be looked at. However, the expectation would be that more and varied sessions = more conference registrations. There may be opportunities to increase conference revenue via sponsorships and the trade show if a larger conference.

#### A program that reflects the member needs

Some Interest Groups have expressed concern over lack of content relevant to their groups. If the conference cannot offer a program that speaks to the membership – those members cannot justify attending. There needs to be a planning process that actively engages Divisions and Interest Groups during the proposal process to build a program that responds to, but also challenges, the membership. The online repository of proposals that was introduced last year could help this process if Council, IG convenors, staff, and planners can contribute to and watch the ideas as they are submitted – it would be an opportunity to identify logical alliances and partnering on sessions, plus build on good ideas. On this topic, perhaps the timeline should be examined. The turnaround between deadline for sessions and review and approval seems too tight and at an already very hectic time of year (early September). However, if the planning process is broader allowing for more dialogue during the summer months, then that may minimize the process in September.

#### Partnering with local library association conferences

I am not aware of the financial and logistical arrangements that prevent or make this happen – but we need to find a way to build a great joint conference experience beneficial to each of the partnering associations and to local and national members. Perhaps one strategy would be to create a liaison committee committed to making this a success significantly in advance of the conference (perhaps this happens).