

The Toronto Program Committee requires new members and a Chair. Steve is moving on. And, Darla's current job responsibilities and other commitments continue to limit her contribution to providing occasional administrative assistance. During this time of transition, we thought it may help the Board for us to share insights from participation on the Program Committee over the past years.

◆ **Value of Program Committees in Toronto and Ottawa**

→ The Program Committees' work is the face of OAIA in the community. This may be tempered somewhat if we "grow" our web site and "policy-input" roles, but it will never negate the need for people to interact face-to-face.

◆ **What has Worked in Toronto? Hosting Events That Are:**

→ timely (for example: 2 past "hydro" events and the current CEAA event all scheduled for release of new government proposals)

→ practical (highlighting topics that show the application of EA "in the field" or how government proposals will affect the practice of EA)

→ diverse (spanning areas of science, provincial and federal requirements, communicating difficult messages, etc.)

→ delivered consistently (no break in service)

◆ **When Does the Committee Function Best?**

Here's what helped the Committee to function well over the years:

→ 4-6 people on the Committee to: share the work, have a synergy of ideas, and provide a range of perspectives and contacts

→ Committee members being involved in diverse aspects of EA work

→ Committee and Board members being really committed to developing and hosting successful events ("successful" being defined as directly relevant to EA practice and well-attended)

→ regular communication between the Board and the Committee

→ Board members supporting program activities through attendance at events whenever possible

◆ **What Have Members of the Toronto Program Committee Done?**

Committee members have shared the following tasks over the past 5 or 6 years to develop/host seminars and, with the Board of Directors, help organize and run 3 annual conferences:

- held regular planning meetings
- researched/sought out topics for seminars (timing is important - there have been good ideas we couldn't use because of timing and/or project sensitivity)
- found speakers/developed biographies on speakers
- made logistical arrangements (research and implementation): venue, food, cost, equipment, registered people at events, issued receipts at events, set up/clean up
- researched/purchased speaker thank you gifts (and occasionally wrote follow up thank you letters)
- networked with other related organizations
- wrote advertising notices
- forwarded for processing any new membership forms received at events
- made sign in sheets available at each event and used the information to provide updates to the e-mail contact lists
- provided OALA and IAIA information at each event
- wrote event summaries for web site and/or newsletter
- communicated with the Board and other Committees, including the preparation of work plans
- answered questions/promoted the event/OALA/IAIA
- managed the costs of the event (budgeting, collecting money at the event/issuing receipts)
- photographed events
- note - our experience shows that the *minimum* time required by the Committee as a whole to organize, run and follow-up on an event is 20 hours, assuming that there is: only one speaker, the topic is obvious, and the event is being held at a venue we've used before. Any event with additional parameters (more speakers, formal venue etc.) takes more time. If there are 4-6 people on the Committee to share the work and there are 2-4 events per year, it's not a huge time commitment for anyone on the Committee.

◆ **Future Needs**

- retaining a chair and 3-5 new members who are committed to developing and hosting several events a year (government departments and companies who have historically supported OALA and attended events could be approached to provide membership on the Committee)
- having a Board member sit on and/or chair the Committee to ensure efficient and effective two-way communication