Edgar Cayce's Association for Research and Enlightenment

A.R.E. Headquarters-Sponsored Field Program
Operations Overview

Dear Friend:

Thank you for expressing an interest in hosting an A.R.E. Headquarters-sponsored program in your area! We are excited to have you on our team. The following is an overview of what is required from you and your team of volunteers to help make this possible. Once you've reviewed this document and understand the various duties to get a program underway, we can send you a more detailed, step-by-step guide. We are available via email and phone to support you and answer any questions. You will be the key contact with the Field Conferences Coordinator at Headquarters (HQ), and you will work with the Conferences team to create an experience that will be meaningful and transformative for the audience.

Note: All local program team members **must have access to email** and check it on a regular basis, as this is the primary source of communication, backed up with phone calls when necessary. You will also need access to a printer for printing important materials relevant to the program.

All key contacts, program hosts, and local teams are considered volunteers.

I. Choosing a Speaker and Program Date

The A.R.E. Field Conferences Coordinator will work with you to select a speaker and topic. HQ will make the initial invitation and will continue direct contact with the speaker up until a few weeks before the program. At that time, you as the Host will contact the speaker directly to double check any speaker needs. Factors we consider when choosing a speaker include:

1. Popularity of speaker and topic (to ensure a successful program and to draw as large an audience as possible)
2. Whether or not that speaker or topic has appeared in your area recently
3. Availability of speaker on date desired
4. Date is not in conflict with any other major event in your area, or with certain holidays or national events, and is not too close to the date of another A.R.E. program in your region.

II. Selecting a Venue (Meeting Room) and Room Set-Up

Most often our volunteers suggest the place where the program will occur and make the arrangements directly. The following are simple guidelines to use when selecting a venue for the program:

1. A venue that is (in order of preference): church lecture hall (such as Unity), community room, school auditorium, or hotel ballroom. It should accommodate 100 to 150 people and be in a convenient or centrally located area. Contract should be sent to HQ.
2. Program times vary but usually start at 9:00 or 9:30 a.m. and end at 4:00 or 4:30 p.m. depending on the venue, with a 1-1/2 hour to 2-hour lunch break (depending whether or not there is a restaurant onsite or close by), giving the speaker 6 hours of presentation time. In addition, your team will need at least 30 minutes to 1 hour to set up for registration and 30 minutes after the program to clean up.
3. Space will need to be allotted for registration tables, an A.R.E. information table, and book sale tables.
4. All room charges, deposits, etc., for the above are paid for by A.R.E.'s Corporate VISA card. We will fax credit card authorizations directly to the venue's sales office. If necessary, we can send a check.
5. Speaker accommodations are made and paid for by HQ and are either at the venue (if they have rooms) or a hotel near the location of the program. In some cases a speaker may be housed with a local team member.
6. The speaker's audiovisual/computer requirements, venue room and chair set-up, registration and book sales tables (coordinated with Area team or directly with A.R.E. Press), and scheduled breaks* are coordinated and confirmed in advance by HQ and you, the Host.

   *HQ sponsors and pays for one morning coffee break, if it is financially viable (some venues charge significantly more than others). Sometimes the local team will find a donor or sponsor to underwrite the break refreshments.

III. Hosting the Program

As our main contact person, you are considered the program Host. The following are the responsibilities for you and your team of volunteers:

1. Provide individuals with information and directions to the program.
2. Find someone (you or another volunteer) to locate local newspapers, websites, and radio stations in the area of the program to find out if they have free local calendar listings for community events, and make arrangements for our program to be listed. Submissions for some calendars may need to be made several weeks in advance.
3. Find someone (you or another volunteer) to locate local Unity Churches, metaphysical bookstores, and health food/natural food stores to leave flyers.
4. Find someone (you or another volunteer) to emcee the program. This involves:
   a. announcing the door-prize winners (if offered)
   b. pointing out where individuals can find more information about local study groups, area/region meetings and activities
   c. welcoming and recognizing A.R.E. members, Life members, and first-time attendees
   d. encouraging those individuals who are not yet members to pick up membership information

     e.   showing the "A.R.E. Activities Update" DVD (before program start or during the last few minutes of the end of the lunch break)

     f.   notifying conferees of break and lunch times and keeping people/speaker on schedule

     g.   introducing speaker and bringing speaker back up after the lunch break

     h.   closing remarks and announcements (if any)

5. Making sure the program runs smoothly and that the needs of all attendees are met and serviced (i.e. room temperature, sound, etc.).
6. Hosting the speaker during the duration of his/her stay (see item VI below).

IV. Registration and Check-In for Attendees and At-Doors

A preliminary roster for the program will be sent to you by email Friday, along with complete registration instructions, a week before the program. You will also receive a mailed box that includes speaker handouts, literature, forms, checklists, evaluations, etc. The final roster will be emailed the Thursday before the program. In order to prepare for registration, you will need to designate three or four volunteers to work with you at registration, and make certain you have "Hello My Name Is" sticky badges (to give to registrants) as well as marking pens for use at check-in. Although further instructions will arrive with the roster, at-door registration generally consists of:

1. Checking off people from the roster who have preregistered as they enter and provide them with badges, handouts (if any) and/or evaluation forms, collecting any moneys still due. Register "at-door" attendees following instructions and forms provided.
2. Returning all registration materials, moneys, and a final roster to A.R.E. **immediately** after the program using the forms provided.
3. Saving any receipts for program expenses incurred by you, and returning them to our office for reimbursement in a timely manner. (Usually sent along with registration materials.)

V. Revenue

1. Funds raised through advance and at-door registrations are returned to A.R.E. to support Field Conferences and the organization.
2. Funds generated through the local team book sales table stay with the local team to support local programming efforts.
3. Some venues such as churches and schools may offer to sell boxed lunches to attendees to raise funds for the Church or school. These are set up and arranged by the venue with the Host.

VI. Hosting the Speaker

1. You or a volunteer will be responsible for hosting (most speakers prefer staying at a hotel) and transporting the speaker from her/his arrival through departure. (Travel itinerary will be prepared by HQ and sent to you prior to the program.)

2. Make certain that arrangements are made to have the speaker picked up from and delivered to the airport. Give the cell phone number of the volunteer(s) to HQ at least two or three weeks prior to the program. If the speaker is staying somewhere other than where the program will be hosted, also make arrangements so that the speaker will be delivered to and from the program on time.

3. Be sure the emcee can give a professional quality introduction at the beginning of the program (generally the bio on the brochure with any added anecdotes), setting the tone for the day.

4. If the speaker will be on his/her own for meals, make certain that the individual is aware of where meals can be obtained.

If you have any questions about any of the above, please let us know. We will keep in touch along the way as the program date draws near.

VII. Headquarters Field Conferences Team Duties

1. We will work with you and your team to select speaker, speaker topic, and venue. We contract the speaker and pay speaker honorarium, travel, and hotel.
2. Help direct you to other local volunteers or study groups who might be available to be part of your hosting team.
3. Sign venue contract and pay for deposit and venue rental, fees for A/V, and for one coffee break, if it is financially viable (some venues charge significantly more than others). Sometimes the local team will find a donor or sponsor to underwrite the break refreshments.
4. Create and distribute full color promotional mail piece, mailing to targeted names (A.R.E. members, past area attendees, study group members, etc.) in a radius from venue. Send targeted promotional email to same.
5. Promote event via A.R.E. website, *Venture Inward* magazine, and Newsletter.
6. A.R.E. customer service will register attendees by phone, mail, email, and online, sending a confirmation to registrant.
7. Send weekly email to Host with current registration counts.
8. Field Coordinator will mail a box of speaker handouts, A.R.E. literature, "A.R.E. Activities" DVD (to show at start of program or during breaks), membership offer with instructions, door prizes, attendee badges, evaluation forms, check lists, and current roster to local team host approximately two weeks before program date. Please only use current information and brochures.
9. Process all funds collected at-door.
10. Answer any questions and address any concerns the Host and/or local team may have in regards to program set-up and procedures.

Thanks for making our Field Conference programming possible!