AAPT's Guide to Organizing a Workshop

Thank you for volunteering to organize a workshop at an AAPT national conference. Your support is critical to the success of our meetings.

Workshops are central components of AAPT's national conferences, offering professional development opportunities for AAPT members and non-members alike. Workshops can be half-day (4 hours) or full (8 hours) and are held at the start of the meeting, Saturday and Sunday. Workshops are organized and led by volunteers, sponsored by Area Committees, and scheduled by the Program Staff.

The overview of the process is as follows:

Approximate Timeline			
Winter	**Summer**	**Task**	
January (i.e., at winter meeting one year in advance)	July (i.e., at summer meeting one year in advance)	I.	Come up with a topic idea for a workshop, tutorial, or field trip, and volunteer to lead it (or find a volunteer to do so). If the idea was not developed in conjunction with an Area Committee, seek out the best committee (or two) to sponsor the workshop. This must be done a year in advance, i.e., at the meeting one year prior to when you want to hold the session.
Within ~2-3 weeks of deciding meeting		II.	The Area Committee Chair will submit the workshop as part of the "Approved List."
~early Feb-early Apr	~early Sep-early Oct	III.	You will then submit a "Workshop Request" through AAPT's online system, putting in the details described below.
~Oct-mid Dec	~Apr-mid Jul	IV.	Communicate with the Program Chair, AAPT programs staff, and/or workshop site facilitators as needed regarding special equipment or set-up needs.
January	July	V.	The workshop leader hosts the workshop at the designated meeting.
January (immediately after meeting)	July (immediately after meeting)	VI.	The workshop leader can request reimbursement from the AAPT Executive Office for certain expenses.

Each of these steps is described in more detail in the following sections. Exact dates will be provided by the Program Chair in advance of the respective meetings, or can be found at http://aapt.org/Conferences/meetings.cfm > Calendar of Key Dates and Activities (in the second section, about halfway down the page).

Tutorials (shorter than workshops) and field trips are also submitted via this format, and will follow the same basic process. For simplicity, all further discussion will refer to "workshops" but should be inferred as "workshop, tutorial, or field trip."

I. Workshop Idea Generation

Typically, workshop topics are generated during an Area Committee meeting one year prior to when the session will be held (e.g., discussed during SM14 for a session to be held in SM15). Area Committee members or "friends" (non-committee members who nonetheless attend the committee meeting) may all contribute ideas. Sometimes committees will discuss ideas prior to the meeting in question via their email listserv. Sometimes individuals come up with workshop ideas completely on their own, and must seek out an Area Committee or the Program Chair for consideration.

Each Area Committee has an allotment of workshops for a given meeting. A committee can also submit "wish list" items that go above their allotment, but there is no guarantee that these will be approved by the Program Chair. Although many committees have some "standard" workshops that they always host and so their full allotment may not be available for new workshop ideas, we encourage new ideas so as to keep the meetings fresh and engaging.

The Area Committee will decide which workshops they will sponsor, how long (half- or full-day or a 2-hour tutorial), and who the leader will be.

Workshop Lengths

Workshops fall into the following categories:

1. Full-Day: This workshop will last 8 hours, with a break midday for lunch (not provided), 8a-5p.
2. Half-Day: This workshop will last 4 hours, and will be held before or after lunch (typically 8a-12n or 1-5p).
3. Tutorial: This is a 1-3-hour format that is intended to be less involved than the longer workshops.
4. Field Trips: These rare, off-site organized trips can be half- or full-day.

Workshops and tutorials are typically (but not exclusively) held on a local college or university campus that may be off-site from the main meeting location. Workshops and tutorials with low equipment needs may also be held at the meeting hotel.

II. Area Committee "Approved List"

The Area Committee Chair will submit a list of their approved workshop titles, lengths, and leaders' name and email address. This typically happens in the ~2-3 weeks after a meeting during which the decision was made. At this point the leader does not need to do anything but make sure the Chair has your up-to-date and frequently-checked email address.

III. Submitting the Workshop Request Form

The Program Chair will review the Area Committees' Approved List and give a final approval (or not) for the given workshops, filling out empty spaces with wish list items when possible. At this time, the Program Chair will begin contacting the workshop organizers to ask that they submit the "Workshop Request" form online. This occurs over a ~2 month period, starting about one month after the meeting at which the decision was made.

The name is a little misleading, since you've already requested the workshop in item (I) above, but the idea here is that you now submit more detail about the workshop that you intend to lead. Gather or generate the following information before you go to fill out the form (http://www.aapt.org/conferences/wksprequest.cfm):

A. Workshop title: Although a title was submitted at the previous stage, it can be corrected or changed at this point. You must select the original title from a drop-down menu on the form, but can enter a new title, if desired, in the form's Comments box near the end.
B. Workshop Description: This will go on the registration page, and so is the way that people who are considering attending a workshop will know about yours. The description has a 150-word limit, should be catchy and inviting, and should describe the topic in sufficient detail so that a potential attendee can decide whether to attend.
C. Full contact information for the workshop leader/organizer (name, address, phone, email, fax if available), as well as the names and affiliations of any co-organizers/co-leaders.
D. Preferred length of workshop, based upon the above descriptions.
E. Date and Time Preferences: If you already know, for example, that you cannot lead the workshop on Sunday afternoon because you are a Section Representative, this section will allow you to indicate preferences. Please also note hard conflicts in the Comments box. Please be aware there are no Sunday afternoon workshops at winter meetings.
F. Is this a PTRA Workshop? You should know whether your workshop will be associated with PTRA. If you don't know what PTRA is, the answer to this question is no.
G. Minimum and maximum number of participants: If registration hits the maximum number, registration will be closed. If at a month prior to the meeting, the minimum is not yet met, the AAPT programs staff will determine, in conjunction with the leader, whether it should stay open (optional if close to the minimum) or should be cancelled (if zero or lower than the minimum).
H. Budget: AAPT charges a minimum workshop fee, but you can also request a fee for certain types of workshops. This fee can cover reimbursement of materials and related expenses. It cannot be used toward workshop leader travel or stipend. Guidelines for determining this amount can be found at http://www.aapt.org/Conferences/wrkshpfees.cfm.

   Note that if you do not create a budget, you will not be eligible for any reimbursement; likewise, your available amount is limited by the number of participants who register given your per-participant budgeted amount.

I. Commercial financial support: If you are being paid by a commercial entity or they are a major supplier of your materials, check "yes" in this question. Your workshop may need to be classified as a Commercial Workshop, which is handled through a different process. When in doubt, contact the AAPT Programs and Conferences office.
J. Equipment and Room Needs: Do you need a physics lab and specific equipment? A computer lab with

seating for individuals? This is where you request any and all A/V and room-related needs.

K. Comments and other requests: Any other information you think the Program Chair needs to know. A title change request would go in this box.

IV. As-Needed Communications

As the meeting gets closer, the AAPT program staff and/or local site representatives may be in contact with you regarding equipment set-up needs. Information will be sent out about where you can ship workshop materials in advance and transportation between the meeting and workshop locations, if needed. If you have special needs or are asked questions regarding your workshop, please remain in timely communication with the program staff or other representatives.

V. Lead the Workshop at the Meeting

The workshop leader will host the workshop at the AAPT meeting. The details of how you run the workshop are up to you, but note that the participants will be given the opportunity to provide feedback on your workshop and plan accordingly. Be sure to be respectful of the time limitations, especially when workshops are held off-site, as participants (and you!) may be limited by the bus schedule.

VI. Provide Feedback and Request Reimbursement

During registration, the workshop leader will be given a form that asks for feedback on the workshop, including general reaction and attendance. You will also have certificates for participants who request documentation of hours. Finally, you will receive a reimbursement request form for any expenses you plan to charge. Please fill these out and turn in per then instructions on each form.

Final Thoughts…

The Program Chair and Area Committee Chairs are both willing and able to assist if you have questions during this process. Don't hesitate to contact them!

The volunteers who lead workshops are a huge part of a successful meeting. Thank you for being involved in this process.