A Guide to Hosting a Monero Konferenco

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Original document: A Guide for HotNets General Chairs

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This document is intended to explain (i) how the first Monero Konferenco hosted in Denver in June 2019 went and (ii) how future local Konferencos could be hosted by Monero community members elsewhere. This document references the following documents.

* A Guide for Konferenco Organizers
* A Guide for Konferenco Steering Committees
* A Guide for Konferenco Content Comittees

Every year, a similar document should be produced by the KO. The content of a Post Morto should also evolve from year to year to reflect more relevant information than the previous year.

*I make no guarantees that any of the information in this document is up-to-date or complete. If you notice that any of the information is out of date, please update this document, and consider this a living thing.*

# HOW DID THE KONFERENCO GO (NON-BUDGET)?

The first Konferenco was a wild success in some senses, and left many areas for improvement in other areas.

* **Attendance**
  + The Konferenco provided *gratis* 27 speaker tickets, 13 sponsor tickets, 4 volunteer tickets, and 3 media passes.
  + The Konferenco sold 4 student tickets, 9 platinum tickets, and 58 general admission tickets.
  + All other folks in attendance were staff.
  + Total nonstaff attendance: 118
  + Original target: 20 speakers with 230 other attendees, totaling 250. Amended to 150 once the venue was selected.
  + Some surprise last-minute attendees included a few folks from the ministries of finance of various nations who happened to be visiting town. Of course, we had a few feds in the crowd. Plus, two unicorns.
* **Quality of content:** Our streamed web content was extremely popular, with up to 2000 live viewers at once. The content produced in particular by the MoneroTalk interviewers was very popular. We should all be proud of the quality of the content produced at the first Konferenco, and we should aim to maintain that same level of quality. We had speakers champing at the bit and decided on more content than originally planned.

# HOW SHOULD MONEY BE HANDLED IN THE FUTURE?

**What happened last time:** The net profits from the first Konferenco were pledged to future Konferencos, but any losses were to be suffered by the Konferenco Organizer (Surae). The first Konferenco was financially underbudget on actual income from tickets, overbudget on speaker accommodations due to heavy interest by speakers, overbudget on A/V, underbudget on actual income from Monero CCS funding due to market volatility. In total, the first Konferenco left Surae in the red.

**What should happen next time:**

* The Konferenco needs a line item in the total budget for promotion and outreach.
  + The Konferenco needs a plan for outreach. Occasional reddit or twitter posts is insufficient.
* Future Konferencos do not need to fly speakers to the event or pay for their hotels.
  + This is a luxury, one that Surae insisted upon for this conference.
  + Most conferences do not pay for travel costs for their speakers.
  + Some conferences will hold lotteries for speaker airfare support, or have some needs-based approach.
  + The way your local Konferenco does it will be up to your steering committee (see below).
* Audio/Visual is an absolute must-have.
  + We were wildly over budget because the plan changed:
    - Initially we were only going to record talks, later edit videos, and then post them on youtube.
    - We ended up streaming everything, editing slides into speaker talks live, recording the result as well as the inputs.
  + We still saved money:
    - The venue donated some complimentary A/V equipment for use by the Konferenco.
    - RIAT donated some complimentary A/V equipment for use by the Konferenco.
  + If talks are to be streamed, picking a single room from which they should stream is a good way to mitigate on costs.
  + Streaming content will triple (at least) the budget for A/V compared to merely recording.
* Reducing market volatility:
  + The Konferenco should cash out 100% of CCS funds as soon as they are received, up to the amount in fiat required to run the conference.
    - Since the majority of expenses are paid in fiat, it is extremely difficult to budget without knowing exactly how much money you have.
    - We are all fans of hodling in our personal financial lives, but when you must plan for expenses months in the future, hodling is merely gambling.
    - The remainder should be held in crypto. This money is already outside of the projected budget, so save it for later; see below.
    - If funding comes up short due to market volatility, make a follow-up CCS request to make up for the shortfall.
* Reducing Organizer or Steering Committee financial risk:
  + The Konferenco should not pledge 100% of net profits to future Konferencos. This makes organizing a Konferenco a negative-sum game for the organizer.
  + The Konferenco Organizer should charge a flat rate, similar to the program manager, for the number of hours of work spent on the event.
  + The Konferenco should specify a percentage of net profits to pledge to future Konferencos to literally pay it forward.
  + Profits put forward to future years of Konferencos should be collected and hedl’d by the general fund/CCS folks.
  + If Konferenco Metropolis puts 100 XMR towards future Konferencos…
    - at least 50 should be reserved by the general fund/CCS folks specifically for Konferencos that take place in Metropolis.
    - Same with Gotham, Central City, and so on; at least half of the locally generated net profits should stay local.
    - This encourages the local Monero economy, instead of sucking funds away from Central City to spend on a Gotham conference, which is frankly ridiculous.
    - The remaining 50 can be spent by the general fund/CCS folks for any (or several) future Konferenco funding request they deem worthy.
  + If the Konferenco fund gets very large…
    - This is possibly unlikely, but this is a situation where events should be making positive amounts of money, so it may instead be inevitable.
    - There can only be so many annual Konferencos before an additional Konferenco begins to eat into the profits and attendance of other Konferencos.
    - We recommend picking some N number of Konferencos that can reasonably take place each year globally, compute C the average cost of a Konferenco, and set a “Konferenco Fund” soft cap at N\*C.
    - If the Konferenco fund exceeds the soft cap by some margin (say 20%), income should either start going toward other CCS requests/the general fund.
    - Another alternative: funds should start going towards donations to non-profits that are related to cryptocurrencies, privacy technology, and Monero.

# WHO’S IN CHARGE HERE?

In most places, we still have to pay with fiat, which means converting any Monero community funding. This means tax liability for an individual or an organization. The event may end up having liabilities for one reason or another. This means legal and insurance issues for an individual or an organization.

Someone’s gotta write the checks.

**What we did:** In 2019, the host (Surae) started an LLC (Colorado Crypto Cons) with the express purpose of 1) receiving Monero community funding, 2) spending it on a Konferenco, and 3) preventing the host from suffering tax liabilities directly. Surae then became a benevolent dictator of the Konferenco. This worked okay, and there’s nothing stopping you from doing this or from ignoring the guidelines in this document.

In other words, Surae acted as KO (Konferenco Organzier), SC (Steering Committee), and CC (Content Committee). These are definitely at least 3 separate jobs, and possibly the KO should be split also (we used a paid program manager with a decade of experience organizing conferences in the pharmaceutical industry).

**What we recommend:**

* We recommend that the Konferenco organization be largely handled by three individuals or groups:
  + **A steering committee (SC).** These folks make most final decisions, sign contracts, negotiating sponsorships, and have final approval of budget items.
    - *Whoever is legally and financially responsible for the Konferenco should sit on this committee as chair.*
    - If a corporation or LLC is running the Konferenco, then the corporation or LLC should select a representative to act as chair of the SC.
  + **A content committee (CC).** These folks are in charge of obtaining speakers and panelists for your Konferenco and planning the schedule.
  + **A Konferenco organizer (KO).** This individual (and their program manager) is in charge of basically everything else, from getting estimates to the SC to getting invoices in and payments out, and has some responsibilities that overlap with both the SC and the CC.

# IN WHAT ORDER SHOULD THINGS PROCEED?

Check “A Guide for Konferenco Organizers,” “A Guide for Konferenco Content Committees,” and “A Guide for Konferenco Steering Committees” for details.

* **Basically, things start like this:**
  + The KO starts getting estimates from venues, caterers, hotels, restuarants, and A/V options.
  + The SC starts seeking corporate sponsorships, non-profit supporters, and media partners.
  + The CC starts seeking invited speakers and updates the schedule.
* **Then, things go like this:**
  + The KO negotiates contracts to be signed by the SC, starts sourcing welcome bags, poster programs, badges, and starts working on websites and outreach.
  + The SC approves of the estimates from the KO, finalizes the budget, and signs contracts provided by the KO.
  + The CC starts reviewing submitted proposals and sending out acceptance/rejection letters and updates the schedule.
* **Right before the event:**
  + The CC sends the finalized schedule to the KO.
  + The KO sends out registration information and announcements and makes a “run-of-show” based on the finalized schedule from the CC.
* **The day of the event:**
  + The KO assembles bags, sets up registration and works with volunteers, and checks everything is working with A/V.
  + The CC members emcee each session and introduce each panel.
  + The SC members sit back and enjoy the show.
* **WARNING:** This bullet list glosses over many details. Make sure you check the three guide documents, or otherwise you’re going to miss out on a whole lot.