A Guide for Konferenco Organizers

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Original document: A Guide for HotNets General Chairs

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Congratulations on organizing a Monero Konferenco! Hosting can be a really rewarding experience. This document is intended to help make the process as easy for you as possible.

*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 If you notice that any of the information is out of date, please update this document, and consider this a living thing.*

# What do Konferenco Organizers do?

Everything making the Konferenco run. Your responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

* Budget design and reporting
* Venue
* Audio/visual (A/V) recording or streaming
* Catering
* Speaker dinner
* Online registration
* Website
* Assisting the SC with handling sponsorships
* Travel and accommodations for speakers
* More.
* More than that.
* No, even more.
* All the little things that make a Konferenco work but are easy to take for granted (badges, posters, power, wifi, …)
* Handling money: getting money in, getting invoices out.

**Table of Contents**

KNOW WITH WHOM YOU ARE WORKING 2

NAIL DOWN DATES AND HEADCOUNT 3

GET BUDGET TEMPLATE AND PREVIOUS BUDGETS 4

ESTIMATE COST OF TICKET MANAGEMENT 4

SPONSORS, SUPPORTERS, PARTNERS 5

ESTIMATE SPEAKER AIRFARE ASSISTANCE 7

CHOOSE AND RESERVE THE VENUE. 7

BEGIN AIRFARE RESERVATIONS FOR SPEAKERS. 9

CHOOSE AND RESERVE THE HOTEL. 9

ESTIMATE SPEAKER LODGING ASSISTANCE. 10

CHOOSE AND RESERVE AUDIO/VISUAL. 10

CHOOSE AND RESERVE THE CATERER. 11

CHOOSE AND RESERVE THE RESTAURANT. 13

ESTIMATE WELCOME BAG, POSTER PROGRAMS, BADGES. 14

COMPILE AND FINISH BUDGET. 15

GET CONTRACTS DRAWN UP, RESERVATIONS MADE, DEPOSITS PAID. 16

WEBSITE AND OUTREACH. 16

SEND OUT THE REGISTRATION INFORMATION AND ANNOUNCEMENTS. 18

FINALIZE ATTENDEES AND VOLUNTEERS. 18

WELCOME BAG PREP & ORDER. 19

CONFIRM SCHEDULE, MAKE “RUN-OF-SHOW” 19

MAKE BADGES, EVENT POSTERS, PROGRAMS, WELCOME BADGES. 20

CHECKLISTS. 21

LOOK OUT. 22

# KNOW WITH WHOM YOU ARE WORKING

As the steering committee, you make most of the biggest decisions of how money is spent.

One of you is likely to be the individual (or individuals, or a representative of the entity) upon whom tax liability for this event ultimately falls.

Your right-hand-person is the Konferenco Organizer and their program manager, who work together to act as a bridge between you, the content committee, and all other groups that make a Konferenco run, like the venue/rental/catering/hotel representatives, A/V, web developers, and of course speakers, sponsors, panelists, moderators, and other Konferenco personnel.

Here’s what some of these are broadly responsible for.

* **Steering committee (SC):** These individuals steer the ship.
  + Approving of budget submitted by the Konferenco Organizer (you).
  + Receiving regular updates to make sure everything is coming together.
  + Helping clear roadblocks and act as contact point for decision making.
  + Knowing what has and hasn’t worked in the past
  + Identifying tiered sponsorship structures and sponsor benefits.
  + Working with Konferenco Organizer (you) with the sponsorship income part of the budget.
  + Finding and negotiating sponsorship deals.
  + Ensuring sufficient sponsorships are made to meet the budget.
  + Final decision authority rests here.
* **Program manager (PM):** The Konferenco Organizer may be the program manager and not know it. The Konferenco Organizer will probably seek approval from the SC to hire an independent program manager. We recommend event organizers with experience in organizing academic conferences or organizing engineering, medicine, science, or technology conferences outside of academia. The program manager is responsible for, among other things:
  + Obtaining cost estimates from vendors and venues.
  + Reviewing and negotiating contracts, insurance policies, etc.
  + Day-to-day operations
  + Handling travel and accommodations for speakers, panelists, etc.
  + Assisting the KO with welcome bag assembly and event day registration
  + Assists the Konferenco Organizer with everything Konferenco-related, ranging from spreadsheets to budgets to ordering, handling, and assembling welcome bags.
* **Content committee (CC).** These individuals select the content for the Konferenco, invite speakers, act as masters of ceremony of the event, and coordinate publications of proceedings of the Konferenco.
  + Nominate, invite, and confirm invited speakers (collecting abstracts), panelists, and panel moderators.
  + Define submission requirements for online proposals
  + Collect and judge submissions for inclusion
  + Set the schedule of sessions and panels.
  + Sending up-to-date speaker, panelist, and sponsor information to you for posting on the website.
  + Act as masters of ceremony (introductory remarks, introducing speakers, introducing panels, possibly acting as panel moderators).
  + If proceedings are to be published, coordinate the collection of printer-ready papers, permission forms, and write frontmatter of proceedings.
* **Contacts for sponsorships, media partnerships, and non-profit supporters.** Members of the steering committee find sponsors, media partners, and non-profit supporters, negotiate the terms of these sponsorship/partnership contracts and supporter memoranda-of-understanding. Once terms are negotiated, members of the SC provide contact details to the KO.
* **Venue/catering/hotel/restuarant representatives.** These individuals are our contact points.
  + Venue needs a “run-of-show” (minute-by-minute schedule of event day).
  + Rental representatives provide chairs, tables, electronic equipment, etc, that is not provided packaged with the venue.
  + Catering needs menu choices, number of attendees.
  + If catering is paid by-consumption, wants to receive instructions throughout event.
* **Audio/Visual.** These individuals run all A/V.
  + Recording all talks and panels.
  + Streaming talks and panels to the web, if applicable.
  + Renting and operating A/V equipment, if applicable.
  + Accurately estimating the inventory and configuration of equipment necessary to provide the show requested.
  + “Conference call”-style interactive presentations and dry runs, if any are planned.

# NAIL DOWN DATES AND HEADCOUNT

Before anything else can happen, you need to nail down with the steering committee the date and capacity of the Konferenco, the date that event registration will begin, how many staff are needed, and how many guests of each type (student, general, platinum) sum up to capacity. The first Konferenco was around 115-120 people and a handful of staff in June. The Steering Committee will largely decide these (taking into account other major calendar events).

* **What you need to do:**
  + **Dates:** Identify a (mostly) comprehensive list of local conflicts with time/space with the conference for a large range of dates and inform the SC.
  + **Headcount:** Content Committee decides upon the target number of speakers.
  + **Dates and headcount:** Provide to the SC three estimates for three different venue rental costs (one cheap venue, one medium venue, one luxury venue). See Step 6 for some helpful details! For each venue, the estimate should include values taking into account:
    - Different event capacities
    - Different catering costs (if catering is bundled with venue rental)
    - Different hotel room costs (if the venue is a hotel and rooms are bundled with the venue rental)
    - Number of vendor tables/spaces available for the event.
  + For apples-to-apples comparisons, try to ensure either all of the estimates come with bundled proposals or none of them do.
    - You don’t want to think about catering or hotel yet, although you will have to think about them soon.
    - You don’t want to have to think about A/V yet, and many venues will require bundled A/V.
    - The bigger the bundle, the bigger all the estimates need to be. Try to avoid bundles unless they are very comprehensive and a very good deal.
* **Warning:** Some venues are skeptical to provide estimates without knowing a firm headcount. Ask the SC what ranges you can use to get estimates.
* **What you do not do:** Do not sign any contracts; the SC handles that. Just get price quotes and ask to reserve it until you get the budget finalized by the SC. The same applies for the caterer (if it is distinct from the venue) and the restaurant for the speaker dinner.
* **What will happen next:** The SC will select one of the proposed dates and pick an event capacity (broken down by ticket tier: student, general, platinum, or speaker). This probably will also force a choice of venue and possibly other choices like A/V or hotel. Communicate these dates to the CC.

# GET BUDGET TEMPLATE AND PREVIOUS BUDGETS

If you haven’t already, get the Konferenco budget template from [here](https://www.getmonero.org/). You will be filling it in piecemeal over the following few steps. Also, as a point of reference, you should request budgets from previous years. Use the previous budget as a rough guideline.

# ESTIMATE COST OF TICKET MANAGEMENT

Ticket management can be done one of several ways.

* Big Neon, Tari, Eventbrite can all handle ticketing in a closed-source way and charge fees, but they are very convenient to use and scale well with larger events.
* There are some open-source conference management software packages like OSEM.io, which require a much more hands-on approach but require no fees. I’m not sure how well they handle payment processing, though, or how easy they are, or how well they scale.
  + This choice will probably have to be justified to the SC due to the additional (unforeseen) overhead in manpower operating an unknown system.
* You can use the system the first Monero Konferenco used, which had some serious inventory problems/bugs, most of which have been fixed by now…
  + but it’s still sort of ugly to use, although it’s nearly free. Contact surae@getmonero.org about this.
* Lastly, you could design your own inventory management system to work with both the Globee and Stripe APIs using serverless approaches with services like AWS, which costs either time or money in web development (and sometimes cloud service and email) instead of paying fees on tickets.
  + This project can only be reasonably undertaken more than six months in advance of the date of registration.
  + We only recommend this if you plan on organizing more than two or three Konferencos.
  + Functionality should include special registration by code that bypasses payment, for both speakers and sponsors.
  + This choice will probably have to be justified to the SC due to the additional (unforeseen) web development costs and overhead in manpower.

**What you need to do:** Use the headcount provided by the SC to construct an estimate for different ticket management systems. Send these estimates to the SC, and they will tell you which to put on the budget under projected expenses.

# SPONSORS, SUPPORTERS, PARTNERS

Corporate sponsorships, non-profit supporters, and media partnerships go a long way with a small conference like the Konferenco. The Steering Committee will largely be responsible for soliciting sponsors, supporters, and media partners, but you can (and SHOULD) solicit for sponsors on your own, as well. If the event is being hosted by Colorado Crypto Cons, CCC issues invoices to the sponsors and collects the money.

* **What to look for:** The SC will put you in touch with contacts from sponsors and media partners, along with how much they’re willing to donate/the terms of the partnership, and the benefit they get in return. Ask the SC if they intend to solicit coffee sponsors and/or catering sponsors and whether you should take point on that.
* **Another thing:** Local restaurants, breweries, or coffee houses may be interested in acting as catering or coffee sponsors in exchange for their names and locations being placed in the back of the program for the lunch break. Ask the SC about these possibilities.
* **A privacy note:** Ensure that media partners will take steps to protect attendee privacy, i.e. holding interviews in side rooms, only recording with permission, avoiding sweeping shots of the audience, etc.
* **What you need to do:** You are (or may be) responsible for all of the following.
  + Sending cold-contact emails drafted by the SC.
  + Forwarding sponsorship information to the Konferenco host (CCC or otherwise) to obtain a payment invoice from the host. This sponsorship information should include the amount or description of the donation, sponsor name, description of the donor, and contact information.
  + Sending the invoice to sponsors and ensuring collection of payments.
  + Obtaining from sponsors their desired self-descriptions/blurbs for the website and high resolution or vector versions of sponsor logos for our media.
  + Putting paid sponsorships into the budget under projected income and actual income. Do not put “promised” amounts anywhere in the budget.
* **Take note of:** Keep the contacts’ info; you’ll write them later when you are putting together the website, and these contacts are convenient for certain panel/speaking engagements.
* **Non-profits are weird:** Non-profit support is important but often non-monetary.
  + Sometimes they will be able to send materials like t-shirts and stickers for gift bags.
  + Sometimes they will be able to fit sponsorship into their budget as part of their mission.
  + Sometimes they won’t be able to spend resources on the Konferenco at all, when it is either out of their mission or when a member of their organization would financially profit from such an expenditure of funds.
  + Non-profits usually just want table space for promoting their mission, and are usually extremely tight on budget.
  + Non-profit participation ended up being both nonmonetary and critical to the success of the Monero Konferenco. We recommend thinking outside the box with non-profit support.
  + Example: All but two members of the Board of Directors of MAGIC played a critical role in the Konferenco, ranging from handling A/V to selling shirts. They were all acting outside their capacity as directors, but their support was critical and for this reason we treated MAGIC like a full corporate sponsor.

# ESTIMATE SPEAKER AIRFARE ASSISTANCE

If the SC has included speaker airfare in the budget, you can use for projected expenses the US average from the Bureau of Transportation statistics for a round-trip in and out of the Konferenco city, or you can use GSA.gov to obtain airfare numbers for specific city pairs. Averaged over many speakers, this will end up being a good projection.

**What you need to do:** Send an estimate for assisting all speakers with airfare to the SC.

**What happens next:** The SC will send you the details to insert in the projected expenses part of the budget.

# CHOOSE AND RESERVE THE VENUE.

What to look for: The SC will direct you which venue should be included in the budget if it is not obvious from the choice of date of the event, or they may have you select the venue from those quoted in Step 1.

Here is what you are probably looking for:

* In terms of space:
  + Classroom seating (speaker up front, everyone facing the same direction).
  + Seating for roughly 15-20% more people than you expect to attend)
  + Separate space for eating lunch or many nearby places.
  + Separate space to have all-day drinks and snacks in the morning and afternoon (ideally just outside the room where the Konferenco will be).
  + Availability in the main room from 8:30 – 5:30 or 7:30 – 6:30 (the conference will probably be 9-5, but you’ll want some extra time on either end).
  + Acceptable acoustics within the main room: if the ceilings are too high, or the speaker system isn’t very good, then it might be hard to hear the speakers.
  + Availability for vendor, sponsor, and supporter tables/booths is critical. The total number of vendor spaces is critical to communicate with the SC.
* In terms of location in town:
  + Safe to walk
  + Good public transportation: bike shares, buses, trains
  + Near restaurant locations
  + Near interesting attractions: The first Konferenco was across the street from the Money Museum, the Denver Mint, and the Federal Reserve. Most cities have a safe museum district, and this is usually a good (if expensive) district for venues.
  + Many choices for accommodations like AirBNB, hotels, and etc.
* **Warnings about venues: A/V is tricky**.
  + If A/V is not taking place with the venue, ensure that the A/V team will have access to event space for early set-up, preferably the day before the event.
  + The SC will decide which rooms are to be not recorded, which rooms are to be recorded, and which rooms are to be recorded and streamed. Recording and streaming has pros and cons, but we generally recommend that everything is at least recorded with quality sound and saved. This way, if everything else goes wrong, there is the original recording.
  + Media partners may also want access to one or more dedicated hard lines for streaming content, which is not free. Make explicit in media partnership proposals that the cost of audio/visual and high speed internet connections is to be paid by the media partner.
  + The venue may have strict A/V requirements that require you use their A/V team and/or equipment.
    - This may be a contractual obligation, and is probably a dealbreaker if they cannot support streaming content.
    - Must get an estimate for A/V along with the estimate of the venue if they are bundled. This makes life hard for a few reasons, because you don’t want to have to worry about A/V this early in the process. See the note below.
    - The venue may be less strict in that they allow outside labor or equipment to assist with A/V.
  + The venue will (probably) charge you for:
    - Projector.
    - Camera.
    - Podium with microphone and appropriate audio system.
    - Two or three extra wireless microphones to be used by the audience or by panels.
    - Wifi access for all participants.
    - Dedicated high-speed ethernet access for streaming content.
    - Powerstrips and extension cords for charging.
    - Tablecloths, tables, chairs.
    - Table space for conference registration.
    - Table space for vendors.
    - Poster stands/tripods (step 16).
* **Note:** Some or all of A/V, hotel room blocks, and catering are sometimes offered in a package bundled with space rental at hotel venues. This can seem like a deal because it generally reduces venue rental costs, but this can be a bad choice for the budget and planning in the end, because you have to start thinking about A/V long before you need to, practically. At any rate, such venues must provide a complete estimate of their services to be considered.

# BEGIN AIRFARE RESERVATIONS FOR SPEAKERS.

Direct your program manager (or travel agent) to book flights for speakers.

**What to look for:** The Steering Committee (SC) will send you speaker information as it is decided upon, including contact information for the speakers. This is an ongoing process that will take a long time.

**What you need to do:** Pass contact information for speakers along to your PM as you receive it. Your PM should send you back itineraries and receipts to keep.

# CHOOSE AND RESERVE THE HOTEL.

This section assumes the venue is not itself a hotel. Attendees will need a place to stay: ideally someplace within walking distance, but at the very least easily commutable, preferably with public transport. Be sure to coordinate with the SC to see if you or they should be picking the place. If there’s one logical place, e.g., the venue is a hotel or a reasonably priced hotel is available very near the venue, then the SC may be fine with you taking the lead. Otherwise, it may be best to let them handle it, since they may be able to get better deals.

**What to look for:** Busy times of year make for expensive hotel rooms. Make sure you get estimates from more than one hotel. Saving money here is critical, but is a sure-fire way to have grumpy attendees if the belt is tightened too much.

**What you need to do first:** Nail down with the SC and the program manager when you expect attendees to register (this should have been done already). They’ll start registering as soon as invitations go out, which will presumably be not too long after acceptance notifications go out.

**What you need to do next:** Unless the SC says otherwise, call hotels directly, and ask about getting a room block. See if they have deals for groups. Many hotels will let you block off a few dozen rooms without requiring you to guarantee that you’ll fill all the rooms, usually with an attrition rate between 65 and 85%. Get such estimates from three or more hotels. Your program manager may negotiate with some local hotels to find a good deal, and should be able to help you determine how many of each room type to count for these estimates. Only make reservations if there is no financial penalty for early cancellation.

**Note:** The SC may not be budgeting for speaker accommodation. In this case, the hotel rooms are filled and paid for by the conference attendees, hopefully filling the block. On the other hand, if the SC is budgeting for speaker accommodation, this block must have enough rooms for speakers in addition to the conference attendees.

**Note:** An attrition rate of 65% means that if fewer than 65% of the block is not occupied, then the Konferenco will cover the bill up to 65% of the total block, even if rooms are empty. This guarantees the hotel at least 65% of the desired income from the block. If there is an attrition rate, we recommend using the attrition rate in the budget under projected expenses as a worst-case scenario.

**What you need to do last:** The SC will direct you to which hotel proposal has been selected; make the reservation if you haven’t already and cancel any other reservations; add the corresponding estimate to the budget under projected expenses.

**Take note of:** price, dates, website, and address of the hotel. Also ask about getting a reservation code or direct link to your booking deal. You’ll need this when you start sending out registration information to invitees.

# ESTIMATE SPEAKER LODGING ASSISTANCE.

**What you need to do:** Get an up-to-date copy of the speaker list from the CC and give it to the SC. The SC will direct you whether partial or full speaker lodging assistance will be made available, to whom, and in what amounts. This goes in projected expenses in the budget, and this money will got toward the hotel block to pay for speaker rooms.

# CHOOSE AND RESERVE AUDIO/VISUAL.

If A/V is not contractually obligated at the venue, seek three estimates from local audio-visual companies to pass to the SC, who will direct you which to add to the budget and reserve.

* **What you need to do:** 
  + Contact three A/V options for estimates, describing the needs of the Konferenco:
    - Two days of recorded talks with slides per room of the Konferenco
    - A microphone and podium for the speaker and one or two projectors with screens (again, per room)
    - Two or more additional microphones for audience questions (again, per room).
    - A cameraman to operate the camera, which should be rather tightly focused on the speaker and avoid audience shots… per room.
    - The camera should be set up to record to an SD card before sending video to be merged with the feed from the projectors… per room.
    - One or more A/V tech to set up introductory slides and switch feeds between speakers and slides, recording the combined content, and streaming it… per room.
    - One or more A/V tech to ensure that sound maintains integrity: in the absolute worst case, if audio recording is all you save from the Konferenco, that’s still a win… per room.
    - Panels require a microphone for the moderator, a microphone for each panelist, and one or two additional microphones for questions from the audience… per room with a panel.
  + Obtain previous work/portfolio from A/V teams to send to the SC along with the estimates.
  + If some speakers are presenting hardware, they may be interested in a document camera for use during their presentations.
* **Don’t forget to do this:**
  + Be sure to solicit help and advice from the community; in the first Monero Konferenco, community contributions amounted to thousands in A/V equipment rental fees. Be sure to include with your estimates as much detail as possible about the A/V equipment available without a rental charge.
  + Ensure that A/V is aware of Konferenco-specific requirements for Audio/Visual, such as no sweeping shots of the audience, no candid shots of observers, etc.
  + Ensure that speaker slides can be switched into the video before streaming or recording; most folks assume “we have the slides, and we have the talk on video, we can stitch these together later.” It never happens, and they sit on recordings forever and people get mad and then they post the recordings super late with no slides.
  + Panels don’t present a difficulty for A/V, but conference-call-style panels occurring between two conferences simultaneously can be difficult. Ensure that the A/V team is capable of recording or, preferably, recording and streaming a Zoom conference call.
  + With A/V, you typically get what you pay for. A two day conference can be simply recorded for $5000 USD, but it may not be great quality, you won’t have streaming, and you won’t have interactive switching between slides and speaker shots.

The SC will decide on A/V based on your three estimates, and you will put the estimate under projected expenses in the budget. Be generous with your budget here, because if A/V fails, so does everything else. Be skeptical here also, because a lot of multi-thousand-dollar rentals can be purchased for a few hundred bucks… assuming A/V will even allow outside equipment or help.

# CHOOSE AND RESERVE THE CATERER.

There are several things you need from the caterer over all days of the Konferenco:

* **All-day beverage service:** 
  + Bottled waters (for speakers), coffee, tea, juices, and soft drinks.
  + Try to make sure that beverage options include healthier drinks and not only sugary drinks. Try to minimize plastic waste.
  + Ensure coffee/tea service spans the entire day length.
  + Ensure the coffee is good.
  + Catering choices in other categories may include beverage service (example: continental breakfast buffets often come with beverage service) which overlap with the all-day beverage service. Ask the caterer whether a discount can be applied since you are already paying for all-day beverage service.
* **Breakfast (on hand before the Konferenco starts):**
  + Typical “continental” buffet of things like bagels, danishes, fruit, etc should suffice, but a little extra (especially protein) towards breakfast is recommended, encouraging attendees to hang near the conference location.
  + Buffet or display-style works well with time constraints.
  + Round tables.
  + More seats than the number of attendees to give people a little choice… or… on the other hand… exactly the headcount to encourage socialization?
* **Food restrictions:**
  + Vegetarian options (seafood is not vegetarian). You can expect roughly 15% of the people will identify themselves as vegetarian or vegan.
  + If you have special meals ordered (e.g., Halal or kosher), announce that you have ordered such meals, as the attendees might assume otherwise and leave to eat elsewhere
  + Keep in mind your attendees’ nationality and home cultures. A conference largely attended by folks from China should almost certainly have a different breakfast spread than a conference attended by folks from Arkansas.
* **Morning snack (15 minutes, typically after the second session):** “Continental”-style breakfast items here are very popular in the US and Europe, if boring. Can sometimes save on more interesting snack choices by catering “by-consumption,” only paying for what people eat. Some catering options intended for a dessert at dinner or an appetizer at lunch may present unique and cheaper options for a breakfast spread (Example: a zucchini bread + apple chips + meat and cheese plate was a very popular breakfast spread at the first Konferenco).
* **Lunch (1.5 hours, within the hours of 11:30 and 2 pm; the Content Committee will nail down the specific times).** 
  + We recommend against providing lunch; bullet points above about Breakfast apply.
  + Unless you are catering lunch on the premises, ensure at least 1.5 hours for lunch.
  + If folks don’t have to leave the venue for lunch and you are catering, you can get away with 1 hour in a buffet situation.
* **Afternoon snack (15 minutes, typically around 3:30 pm):** Cookies, granola bars, nuts, fruits, candy bars.
* **Things you need to do:** Get three estimates from three caterers, including taxes, staff costs, etc. The SC will direct which should be added to the budget under projected expenses and will sign contracts.

# CHOOSE AND RESERVE THE RESTAURANT.

Konferenco hosts a speaker-sponsor dinner the first evening of the Konferenco. Because Konferenco is relatively small, you have the opportunity to set up a really nice dinner. The SC will let you pick the restaurant, unless the resulting budget is far out of historical norms.

* **Location & transportation:** Dinner doesn’t have to be at the Konferenco venue, but you will want to make sure there is a way for all invited speakers (10-15 a day per room) to get there without knowing your city all that well; the first Konferenco, we walked together down the street. Look for places close enough to travel to for under something like $10, either by Uber/Lyft, train, bus, or some other public transportation. Ask the SC if you should budget for transportation, like Metro fare cards or a charter bus. These can be non-trivial costs, so you should nail down those details as much as you can before preparing the budget.
* **Budget:** It can be a bit tricky to budget this meal until you have an idea of how many corporate sponsors there will be and how much the registration fee will be. Try to budget at least $40 per diner before wine, or otherwise you are not going to have a very nice dinner at all; usually $100 per diner is usually overkill.
* **Call around:** You might be surprised what restaurants can and can’t support more than 50 people, and at what costs. Try some of your favorite places (or ask a foodie for tips).
* **Menu:** Ask the restaurant what they recommend. Here are a few guidelines:
  + **Dietary restrictions.** Tell the restaurant that you will give them the rundown of allergies, vegetarians, vegans, etc. when you get closer to the event. Ensure that dietary restrictions are collected with speaker information when the Content Committee decides upon acceptance and rejection contacts, and when sponsorships are agreed upon.
  + **Drinks.** This is dependent upon the restaurant.
    - Sometimes, restaurants will allow a large party to work like this: each attendant gets a pre-dinner drink for free, each attendant gets a drink with their dinner, and otherwise there is a cash bar.
    - Sometimes, restaurants will allow a large party to work like this: each attendant can order from a prepared wine list with no limit, and sometimes there is also a cash bar.
    - **Pick a red and a white wine.** Ask your contact at the restaurant what they recommend, but averaging about half a bottle per person should be fine. Let them know that you are going to be on a pretty strictly defined budget, so the wait staff should not push the wine too hard or open the bar (unless attendees pay for it individually).

Be a bit adventurous with the menu, but not to the point that you alienate anyone. Make it memorable and delicious.

# ESTIMATE WELCOME BAG, POSTER PROGRAMS, BADGES.

Attendees will often forget sparse swag bags or bags filled with useless garbage. Attendees will often remember really good swag bags filled with useful things. No matter what, swag bags are a big source of plastic waste for these events; try to minimize this. We recommend the following for the projected expenses part of the budget.

* Get an estimate from a graphic designer (ask Thunderosa or The Monera) about designing a thematic graphic for the Konferenco, as well as badges, t-shirts, posters, flyers, and print advertisement using the thematic graphic (which should have the Konferenco logo somewhere in it).
  + Budget more than you think for this.
  + Always pay graphics artists, even if you end up not using their material.
  + Always pay graphics artists generously. If you want cool logos in the future, treat your people correctly.
  + If someone like Thunderosa is volunteering, budget something as a donation to that person in line with the previous years’ budget.
* Budget for $1-12 per attendee for simple (non-electronic) badges ranging from paper to plastic, from low to high quality. Badges are more expensive closer to the event date, and more expensive with higher quality. Cheap badges can be found for under a dollar a piece.
* Budget $115 for each pull-up banner and $55 for each foam-core poster.
* Use the previous year’s budget to estimate a welcome bag cost.
* The welcome bags must include the following:
  + A tote bag of some sort printed with a logo.
  + The printed Konferenco program (see below).
  + Gifts or promotional material by sponsors.
* 2019, as a tester year, was possibly an outlier:
  + Bags that cost in total around 30 USD per bag. We recommend going lower in future years to keep ticket prices low.
  + This extra cost was partially due to including t-shirts, instead of selling them as a product.
  + This extra cost was also partially due to ordering items too close to the event.
    - This is always a gamble: too early and you may misjudge attendance and end up with a lot of waste, and too late will drive up costs.
* We recommend the following:
  + Assume a certain percent of attendants, which is roughly invariant from year to year, always sign up “last minute” in the 2 weeks preceding the event.
  + Use the previous year’s budget to estimate this invariant percent.
  + Two weeks before the event, project how many additional attendants will sign up. If outreach is going well, you may want to bump this up a bit, and if outreach is going poorly, you may want to pull it back a bit.
  + Use this projected number to determine how many welcome bags and gifts to order.
* Popularity of the shirts at the Cyphermarket table seems to indicate that selling Konferenco shirts *could* be a good way to mitigate costs of the event, if the event is of sufficient size… on the other hand, if the headcount is smaller (say under 200), skip the t-shirts unless you get a few extra sponsorships, and expect to not sell too many.
* If the budget is wildly different than previous years, the SC will ask questions. Otherwise, you don’t need SC approval to design your own unique welcome bag.

# COMPILE AND FINISH BUDGET.

You should at this point have most of the information you need to fill out the projected expenses of budget.

* **What you need to do:** Get the previous years’ budgets and just modify them: replace all projected expenses with your figures, add any expenses already incurred under actual expenses, empty the actual income section, and modify the projected income section to reflect the headcount of various ticket types as directed by the SC. Here are a few notes:
  + Add in corporate sponsors here (nail down corporate sponsorship early and often, but don’t ever stop looking for sponsorships, even the day before the event: it will be a significant portion of your budget). Note: you can only include amounts already paid by corporate supporters under projected income and not what you have been “promised”.
  + Registration/ticket fees: Leave registration fees/ticket prices equal to those of the previous year; the SC will direct you on how/whether to modify prices before final approval after they have anticipated expenses (including ticket management fees).
  + If the SC has included speaker lodging in the budget, then the corresponding rooms in the block of rooms at the hotel need to be added to the budget under projected expenses.

Send the budget to the SC to get it finalized; they will respond with modifications, and you will ping-pong back and forth until it is approved by the SC.

# GET CONTRACTS DRAWN UP, RESERVATIONS MADE, DEPOSITS PAID.

**What you need to do:**

* You or your program manager now need to negotiate contracts for venue, caterer, hotel, and restaurant.
* Send these contracts to the SC.
* The SC will either send back signed contracts or they will request amendments and/or authorize a delegated signature by the KO or the PM (however contracts are working this year).
* After signing, obtain invoices and add to the projected expenses portion of the budget.
* Either pay the invoices or pass them along to the SC (however invoices are to be paid this year). Make sure deposits are paid ASAP, not last-minute and add these to the actual expenses portion of the budget.
* Any contracts with time-sensitive contractual conditions (such as a certain amount must be paid to the venue by a certain date) should have that data put into the budget under projected expenses. The deadlines should be marked on a calendar and after those expenses are paid, they should be added to the actual expenses portion of the budget.

# WEBSITE AND OUTREACH.

**What you need to do:** Ask the SC whether promotion, website, and outreach budgets should be copied from the previous year; the SC may decide to increase or decrease the amount of marketing, for example.

* The budget should include posters to put up at local coffee shops, hacker/makerspaces, universities, and so on.
* The budget may include some local print or radio advertising; these are often bundled with some sort of social media package, which is usually Facebook. How you handle that is up to you.
* The budget will include online promotions through Twitter, Reddit, and similar venues.
* Once the SC indicates the budget to you, it’s time to find a graphic designer. Ask Thunderosa.

**Website:** You will be largely responsible for keeping the website up to date and for promoting the event. Your graphic designer should have a good poster design by now and possibly some other outreach materials for promotions on Twitter, Reddit, and local newspapers, as well as helped develop a theme for the website. There are several things you’ll need to update on the website over time.

* **Update the Konferenco description.** Originally we had: “The Monero Konferenco is an annual meeting of privacy advocates, cypherpunks, scientists, and philosophers. The Konferenco is funded by generous donors from the Monero community, designed to disseminate scientific and technical results in privacy and financial technologies like censorship-resistant digital cash.” **Maybe something like this could be better. “**Each Monero Konferenco is an event bringing together privacy advocates, cypherpunks, and researchers to engage in a lively debate on broad future research agendas in Monero and privacy technology more broadly. Konferencos are venues for disseminating scientific and technical results in privacy and financial technologies, and for presenting new ideas that may signficantly impact privacy technology.”
* **Update the local information page.** Previous years should serve as a guideline, but here is the rough set of things to include:
  + Which airport(s) to use.
  + The conference hotel name, address, and phone number (you can avoid putting the room block information here and just send it to invitees).
  + Different modes of transportation between the airport and the conference hotel, and links to navigation instructions through Google Maps. A brief description of how to get from the airport to the conference hotel using public transportation is appreciated by students.
  + Information about local public transportation, including specific bus/metro/train lines and local bike shares.
  + Local businesses should not be mentioned unless they have agreed to a corporate sponsorship. However, local non-profit entities that are touristy attractions (like museums or botanic gardens), are great information to mention on the website.
  + Pointers to alternate places to stay (optional). Again, unless a corporation is deciding to sponsor the Konferenco, try not to make money on behalf of that corporation using Konferenco resources like the website.
* **Add corporate sponsors’ logos.** This is an ongoing process. Take them from other conference websites if they haven’t been provided by the SC (write to your contacts from step 4 to double-check that the logos are sufficient).
* **Contact the Content Committee:**
  + The invitation czar of the CC has a list of speakers so far, their contact information and food restrictions, and possibly their photos and blurbs. Get these from the CC and contact speakers for any missing information (blurb, photo, food restrictions).
  + Speakers may not want their names or photos to appear on the website, or some may want to use an avatar instead of a photo and a pseudonym instead of a name. This is fine, but check with each of them. The invitation czar should have requested permission to use their likeness and put people on video in their invitation email.
  + Get session titles and drafted schedule from the Content Committee.
  + Post these online.
  + Keep these for printing in the program.
* **Link the ticket management system selected earlier to the website.**
* **The call-for-proposals links go directly to the CC.**
* **Engage with media partners for publicity.**

**What next?** Once the website is up to date, it’s time to start a promotional campaign. Aim to peak this campaign in the 2 weeks leading up to your event, and to begin at least 2 weeks before registration begins. Ask the SC: they are likely to just tell you to use the previous years’ budget numbers.

**Note:** Website design is very important for attendees, who often check it for schedule information/updates. It’s wise to consult a professional designer. It’s also a living website: as the content committee decides upon more content, the website will have to be updated with the most up-to-date schedule, at the very least.

# SEND OUT THE REGISTRATION INFORMATION AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.

One of the Content Committee chairs will be the “invite czar” who sends out invitations to speakers and sends out acceptance/rejection emails. Invitees will need a link to special ticket registration for speakers (recall that our ticket management system has functionality to take a special code like this).

**What to do:** Using the ticket management system selected earlier, generate codes for speakers (or links to special registration for speakers) and send them to the invitation czar.

# FINALIZE ATTENDEES AND VOLUNTEERS.

At least 2 weeks before the Konferenco, double check the set of registrants and see how close you are to the target number of attendees.

* Determine with your program manager and the SC how many volunteers are necessary (these are free tickets). Employ outreach to get the requisite number of volunteer tickets.
* If you’re still off by a lot, then inform the SC and CC chairs. There are a few options at that point; you’ll probably have to do some combination of (and in the following order of priority):
  + Remind any unregistered invited speakers to actually register. Some might say that they aren’t able to make it, in which case…
  + Invite other speakers (the CC can help).
  + Invite local people, if possible (the CC may have guidelines for this).
  + Identify local interest hotspots. A large tech company may have a campus nearby or a relevant government agency like the Federal Reserve may have a local branch. Reach out to these entities to invite them to send representatives.
  + Send out reminder/announcement emails to local universities:
    - Get a list of local universities.
    - For each university, determine which departments/colleges/schools are relevant.
    - Each department/college/school has a chair or some sort of leader, an associate chair or some sort of “hand to the king,” and usually some sort of executive assistant or administrative secretary. Cold-email the chair, CCing the associate chair and the administrative secretary. Most likely, the administrative assistant will forward your email to everyone in the department using an internal listserv.
  + Another round of promotional posts if publicity/promotion are not overbudget.

# WELCOME BAG PREP & ORDER.

**Things to do:** Contact sponsors with up-to-date attendance numbers and solicit welcome bag gifts at least 2 weeks before the event. Most items need to be ordered at least two weeks in advance.

**The welcome bags must include the following:**

* A tote bag of some sort printed with a logo.
* The printed Konferenco program (see below).
* Gifts or promotional material by sponsors.

Some good choices:

* USB battery packs for phones
* USB data blocker/USB condoms
* hardware toys with a functional purpose or mathematical-ish toys with no real purpose
* artsy things that will actually be used like really cool stickers (they get put on laptops)
* promotional pamphlets from sponsors, partners, and supporters
* educational materials, perhaps from non-profit sponsors.

Try to keep plastic waste to a minimum.

# CONFIRM SCHEDULE, MAKE “RUN-OF-SHOW”

Reach out to the CC to obtain the final version of the schedule for printing on programs and updating the website.

* Any changes to the schedule from here on out will not go on the website or in the program, but will be announced at the event. The schedule is now finalized and ready to post online and be printed.
* Take the schedule proposed by the CC and create a “RUN-OF-SHOW,” which is a minute-by-minute schedule needed for each room with A/V.
  + You may ask “but we already have a schedule, what’s up with that?”
  + The answer: the schedule will almost certainly change between now and the event, and the schedule is on a 15-minute time resolution (approximately) which is insufficient for audio/visual.
  + From here on out, the run-of-show is the only schedule document to be modified (the schedule has already been finalized, remember?!)
* Confirm the run-of-show with the CC, making changes if needed.

# MAKE BADGES, EVENT POSTERS, PROGRAMS, WELCOME BADGES.

Your graphic designer should have a badge, a poster, and a t-shirt design ready. We recommend sharpies be made available and badges be writable so that attendees can write their own name and affiliation in.

**What goes on the badge:**

* The Konferenco logo
* The annual Konferenco graphics
* The logos of sponsors on the “Badge” tier of sponsorship
* If the dinner is being held off site, then it can be useful to include the following on the back of the speaker or sponsor badge:
  + Name, address, and phone number of the speaker dinner location
  + Map and directions

**What badges to get:** If you are going to be printing them at Kinkos, then consider going with the Avery Hanging Style Name Badges (Two-Sided Printing, Laser & Ink Jet, 3”x4”), item number 74459, 100 count. These include the paper to print on, soft plastic covers, and strings. If you are using a custom design from your graphic designer and you want slightly higher quality badges that can be written on with sharpies, try frosted PVC 3.94” x 5.51” (check out customlanyard.net). Save the receipt.

**When to make the badges:** Wait until just a couple days before the Konferenco, and print 5-10% extra in case there is a last-minute rush (and to be recycled otherwise).

Posters containing the schedule of the talks can serve as a nice addition that people reference during the breaks, to be put up around the venue. Some general guidelines:

* Reflect the schedule as on the website (so don’t print it up until the schedule is finalized, 1-2 days before the Konferenco)
* Have a separate poster for each day of the Konferenco; put up the poster du jour
* Make it large (20” x 30” is a good size)

When you have it printed, go for a matte finish on poster board at Kinkos.

It is also useful to print up a couple smaller posters that say Konferenco with arrows on them to place around the venue for lost attendees. These are good choices to be printed on foam board instead of paper, and they can be kept from year to year.

The programs should be a quick and easy reference for attendees to look at the schedule, and should have space for writing notes.

**What goes on the program:**

* The complete schedule.
* The complete abstracts, titles, and institutions for each talk and panel.
* (Optional) a biography section with avatars/photos and speaker blurbs.
* Some blank space for taking notes

**When to make welcome bags:** Two people can generally assemble welcome bags on the day of the event in less than an hour, depending on attendance. This is a good use for volunteers.

# CHECKLISTS.

Here are some handy checklists; these should be edited and amended in future versions of this document, possibly with timelines attached.

* **Early-on checklist**
  + Corporate sponsor invoices sent
  + Hotel block reserved
  + Venue priced and reserved
  + Caterer priced and reserved: All-day beverage service, Breakfast, Morning snack, Afternoon snack
  + Dinner restaurant priced and reserved
  + Budget submitted and approved
  + Contracts signed and delivered (Venue, Caterer, Dinner)
  + Local information on website
  + Registration information sent to invited speakers
  + Konferenco schedule on website
  + Posters and badges designed
  + Begin media outreach
  + If sponsors are contributing items to welcome bags, contact them with headcounts and ask for gifts to include; they need at least 4 weeks.
  + Pay invoices for deposits toward venue, caterer, hotel, restaurant, and possibly A/V, if relevant.
  + Pay invoices for speaker lodging assistance for the hotel room block, if relevant.
* **30 days before checklist**
  + Deposits for venue, caterer, hotel, and restaurant due
  + Guaranteed payment for room block due to hotel
  + Contact sponsors about welcome-bag gifts and to see if they need anything.
  + Record actuals-to-date in budget (actual income, actual expenses).
* **Weeks-before checklist**
  + Order the welcome bag gifts
  + Contact sponsors re: welcome bag gifts and headcounts
  + Get invoices for all minimum payments and pay them. Often venues, caterers, hotels, and restaurants may require a minimum payment in the weeks before the event, and then provide a final invoice after the event.
  + Update actuals-to-date in budget (actual income, actual expenses).
* **Days-before checklist**
  + Print the badges and posters.
  + Send the dinner restaurant the latest information on headcount and dietary restrictions (they might need it sooner, or possibly not at all).
  + Verify that everything is ready to go with: Venue, Caterer, Dinner, A/V, Transportation to dinner (if any), Hotel, Inform the SC and CC chairs that everything’s good to go (or if there are problems).
  + Assemble welcome bags.
  + Update actuals-to-date in budget (actual income, actual expenses).
* **Day-of checklist**
  + Arrive early. Ideally 1 hour or more ahead of time. Assist with A/V setup if required.
  + Make sure the Konferenco venue is allowing access to attendees.
  + Lay out the badges.
  + Make sure the projector and microphones are working.
  + Make sure video and audio recording is working.
  + Make sure livestreaming is working, if relevant.
  + If you have transportation to the dinner location, check to see if there are any delays.
* **Day-after checklist**
  + Put your caterer, venue, dinner restaurant, and whoever else necessary in touch with the program manager so they know where to send invoices.
  + Write all final checks and update actuals-to-date in budget and send to the SC.
  + If you have a budget surplus, ask the SC:
    - Consider donating to the Monero Outreach team. They all work on a volunteer basis and none of them expect any profit from any Konferenco, but without them, the event would be bland and literally artless.
    - Consider contributing to the Monero general fund or any open funding requests.
    - Consider contributing to the non-profit supporters of the event.
    - Consider donating as much as possible to the next year’s Konferenco; it will make the sponsorship struggle much easier.
    - Lastly and finally, if you have suggested all of the above in selfless amounts, then you consider asking the SC for a cut of the profits; you did a fuckton of work.
  + Write a Monero Konferenco Post Morto
  + Update this document :)

# LOOK OUT.

Identify who the “invitation czar” is on the Content Committee and forward any solicitations to speak to them. Example: A CEO of a wallet company reaches out and wants to speak at your Konferenco. Forward the solicitation to the invitation czar.

You will also get emails from invitees asking about local arrangements. Some people like to make travel plans well in advance, so do your best to point them in the right direction as quickly as you can.