

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

CIES 2011 & CIES 2012 Annual Conferences

The Comparative and International Education Society (CIES), the oldest and most prestigious of professional societies in this field, is inviting agencies/institutions with demonstrated experience in conference planning to submit proposals for an initial two-year cooperative arrangement in helping to plan and organize the Society's 2011 and 2012 annual meetings.

The last conference (CIES 2009, in Charleston, SC) and the upcoming annual conference CIES 2010 (early March 2010, in Chicago) have been organized with the support of Indiana University Conference Services. IUC has offered to extend its services to us, but their services are mostly restricted to conference registration services.

The 2011 conference is scheduled for May 8-12, 2010, and will be held in Montreal, Canada. Professor Ratna Ghosh (McGill), Vice-President as well as Chair of CIES 2011, has already made preliminary arrangements for the 2011 conference and tentatively booked facilities. The CIES 2012 is mostly likely to be held somewhere in the United States. This 2-year arrangement may then lead to a longer-term contractual agreement.

Since its origins in the mid-1950s, CIES has expanded its membership significantly to include over approximately 2,000 individual and 1,000 institutional members. As indicated in Appendix 1, attendance at annual meetings of the society has almost doubled over the past ten years. Although most conference attendees are US-based, approximately one-third come from other countries. The recent size and complexity of the logistics associated with the annual meetings has placed a substantial burden on the incoming vice-president, who traditionally has been responsible for planning and organizing all aspects of the conferences.

For these reasons, this Ad-hoc Committee of CIES seeks bids from qualified conference planning entities to provide services in the areas of: 1) venue selection; 2) all phases of conference registration and associated correspondence (off- and on-site); and 3) managing all aspects of the logistics and administration of the conference at the selected site. More specifically, services should include:

- Formulating site recommendations in coordination with the CIES Vice-President (applies only to CIES 2012; the location for CIES 2011 has already been selected and preliminary arrangements have already been made)
- Negotiating hotel rates and complementary benefits;
- Managing registration and all related correspondence;
- Coordinating services and logistics associated with special conference functions (such as banquets);
- Coordinating AV needs associated with individual panels and events;
- Managing the registration desk and addressing conferees' questions and special needs;
- Assisting with special entertainment options for VP-elect review;

- Preparing a venue “Welcome Booklet” containing information on local sites, dining and entertainment options;
- Negotiating book advertisements in the conference program;
- Assisting with the printing of the conference program;
- Handling billing and payment of vendors;
- Arranging for conference amenities (such as “conference bag”, note pad, pen, etc.) as discussed and agreed with VP;
- Managing conference registration funds and associated accounts;
- Preparing a conference report on attendance (by category), financial statement, and list of problems and recommendations.

Proposals will be judged on three main criteria: 1) scope and appropriateness of services offered ; 2) track record of the organization with regard to past history of working with similar professional societies and the experience and qualifications of staff directly responsible for working with the CIES Vice-President and Secretariat; and 3) cost of services provided. Proposals should not exceed fifteen (15) pages in length, including a description of the budget, but not appendices and CVs. Proposals should adhere to the following organizational structure:

- Relevant experience (organizational capability statement attached as annex);
- Bio statement on lead person/s (with CVs attached);
- Proposed handling of tasks in the RFP
- Special ideas/ suggestions;
- Strategy for liaising with the VP / Board;
- Cost Proposal with possible options if desired

Questions and submissions should be sent electronically to Professor Gita Steiner-Khamsi [gs174@columbia.edu], preferably by Wednesday, October 28. The other members of the committee include Professors Steven Klees (University of Maryland; past president of CIES), Ratna Ghosh (Vice-President of CIES and Chair of CIES 2011), and Hilary Landorf (Treasurer CIES). We intend to submit our recommendations to the Board of CIES in November.

Appendix 1 provides basic information on the CIES conferences 2000-2009, i.e., conference sites, number of registered attendees and conference fees for various categories of participants as well as various tasks that the CIES Vice-Presidents have typically undertaken in the past.

Background Information on CIES Conferences - Appendix 1

The Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) has experienced explosive growth recently—the number of registered nearly doubled over the past ten years. Typically, CIES conferences in large cities and the vicinity of comparative and international programs or international organizations (e.g., Washington, Stanford, Baltimore, New York) tend to attract a larger number of participants. A major surge in registrations occurred at the conference in Stanford with close to 1,000 participants. Prior to the 2005 conference at Stanford, registration ranged—with the exception of the conference in Washington—between 721 and 775 participants. A ten-year perspective on conference attendance informed our decision to hire a professional conference planner/manager. The financial returns to the Society from those meetings (CIES 2000 – CIES 2009) ranged from \$10,000 - \$80,000 per conference.

Table 1. Conference Sites and Attendance, 2000 - 2009

| Year | Conference Site | Registered Attendees |
|-------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 2000 | San Antonio | 870 |
| 2001 | Washington, DC | 1,040 |
| 2002 | Orlando | 775 |
| 2003 | New Orleans | 721 |
| 2004 | Salt Lake City | 725 |
| 2005 | Stanford | 1,000 |
| 2006 | Honolulu, HI | 950 |
| 2007 | Baltimore, MD | 1,250 |
| 2008 | New York, NY | 1,803 |
| 2009 | Charleston, SC | 1,425 |
| Average | ----- | 1,247 |

Close to fifty percent of the participants tend to be students and register at a reduced conference fee. The conference fees have been substantially raised for CIES 2010, in

particular for non-members. It is likely that the fee structure for CIES 2011 and CIES 2012 remain unaltered. The fee structure for the CIES 2010 is presented in the following:

Table 2. Conference Fees Structure, CIES 2010

| Membership Category | Early Rate on or Before February 1, 2010 | After February 1, 2010 or On-Site | SIG Dues |
|----------------------------|---|--|-----------------|
| Members | \$185 | \$250 | \$10 |
| Non-members | \$300 | \$350 | \$10 |
| Student-members | \$70 | \$95 | \$10 |
| Student-non-members | \$150 | \$175 | \$10 |
| One-day Registration | 80.00 | 100.00 | NA |

Major responsibilities for past Vice-Presidents have included selection of venue, selection of hotel, program planning and scheduling of panels and coordinating with hotel on room assignments, pre- and site registration, as well as other coordination of volunteer and paid staff for the conference. We hope to strike an effective balance between allowing VP's some flexibility for organizing the conference while relieving them of the burden of attending to the time consuming logistics of a conference with an average of over 1,200 participants.

All the points mentioned above—increased conference participation, increased conference fees, stable financial condition of the Society, and the heavy burden placed on prospective Vice-Presidents, who may not have adequate student and staff support—lead us to propose that CIES considers hiring a professional conference planner on a trial basis to assist vice-presidents beginning with the 2011 conference. We believe this experiment would be most effective if we choose to work with the same planner over a trial period of 2 years. In addition, a permanent conference planner would be able to learn from past experiences and transfer knowledge acquired from one conference to the next.