

# Call for Host Site

## HighEdWebDev 2008

### Introduction

The Higher Education Web Professionals Association (HighEdWeb) is looking for a site to host the annual HighEdWebDev conference in approximately October 2008. The association is committed to keeping the conference a high-quality event relevant to Web professionals of all kinds – programmers, designers, marketers, writers, managers, *etc.* – and to keeping the costs reasonable.

The conference today is the result of the combined efforts from the Association, then a loose-knit group in New York, and the Program Committee from WebdevShare, who looked for someplace to continue a conference when Indiana University decided to commit its resources in a different direction.

The motivation to move comes from two primary sources. First, our attendance has grown about 30% a year over the last three conferences. If this trend continues (and we hope it will!), we will simply not have a space in Rochester to effectively host the event in its present format.

Year	Registrations
2004	225
2005	310
2006	408

Second, the Association seeks to be national or international in scope. This reflects the diversity of conference attendance (our 2006 conference drew from 42 states and eight countries) as well as the universality of the issues we face in higher education. However, about a third of the attendees in 2006 were from institutions in New York. By moving the conference to different areas of the country, we believe we can encourage wider participation around the country.

We thank you for considering this opportunity to host HighEdWebDev in the future. We hope you will consider compiling a proposal for our consideration. We don't expect we will find a venue that will perfectly meet our hopes for a conference site. What follows is a description of our ideal site. Please address all of these areas in your proposal(s).

### Factor 1: Conference Facility

In Rochester, this event has been hosted at hotel facilities separate from college and university campuses. In the past, both predecessor conferences have been hosted in various on-campus settings. We are open to either option.

We anticipate a market of 400-600 attendees for the 2008 conference. Our ideal site would be able to accommodate all of them.

The conference has been split historically into 4 or 5 tracks. Each track room would need to host approximately 150-200 people theatre-style, as attendees do not evenly split into track rooms. One track has a history of being lower in attendance than the others, so we can live with 3 or 4 rooms of this size, and one additional room of a large, but smaller seating capacity.

In addition to large presentation spaces, the conference typically offers 5 or 6 workshops on Sunday afternoon before the conference officially starts and on Wednesday afternoon after the conference officially ends. These spaces could be the same as the presentation spaces, but ideally would be set up for a more intimate group, seating a maximum of 30 classroom style.

A schedule annotated with space needs is attached.

The ideal facility will have a reasonably high capacity wireless Internet network, with access points sufficient in number that the majority of attendees can use it at one time during the conference.

The ideal facility will have space for registration, for an attendee e-mail room, for a conference office, for 15+ corporate partner tables, and for a "demo room" with projector for the use of attendees or corporate partners. A diagram of the facility highlighting these and the presentation spaces would be helpful.

In addition, the facility should have a place where all attendees can congregate for the keynote and other plenary sessions. Ideally, a facility to host this many for lunch would exist as well (though the same space may have to work for all of these purposes).

Ideally, each room would have a projector and computer with PowerPoint available for presenters. In the past, we have used corporate partners to provide these. If the venue requires us to use their projectors and there is a cost, please include a budget estimate.

If use of the venue comes with a cost, food & beverage minimum, hotel room-night minimum, audio/visual service requirements or other contingencies, please describe.

## **Factor 2: Location**

For the reasons stated in the introduction, the ideal site for 2008 would be outside of New York, and outside the northeastern United States. However, this is not an absolute requirement.

The ideal location is reasonably close to a major airport with service by a variety of major and low-cost air carriers, with a shuttle service to conference hotel(s).

In addition, past attendees have shown willingness to commute to the conference. A location with easy access to an expressway is preferable. Also, a concentration of schools of higher education (or a network that is used to pulling together conferences on a smaller scale) is helpful.

## **Factor 3: Hotels**

Networking is an important part of the conference. In the past, attendees have "seen the local sights" together after hours. We have seen a benefit for the hotels and/or conference venue(s) to be close to restaurants, museums, and other cultural venues.

Hotels will generally grant a discount if we confirm a certain number of room nights with them. A good number of attendees have commuted daily to the conference, some by as many as 90 minutes or more. With 408 registrants, we used hotel room nights thusly:

<b>Day</b>	<b>Sat</b>	<b>Sun</b>	<b>Mon</b>	<b>Tues</b>	<b>Wed</b>	<b>Thurs</b>
Hyatt Rooms	51	176	179	166	13	1
Clarion Rooms	0	113	116	104	0	0

In addition to the conference venue, conference hotels should have a reasonably robust Internet option for attendees. Specifications on this connection are appreciated, as we expect most of the attendees will want to connect.

We typically negotiate a few comp hotel rooms based on the number of rooms booked. We use these for keynote speakers and other conference use.

## **Factor 4: Staff**

The Rochester group has been responsible for the following activities:

- Marketing Coordination/Scheduling/Writing
- Design of Conference Logo/Advertising
- Typesetting of the Conference Program

- Social Direction (coordinating excursion, visitor association, night life options, conference-branded attendee giveaways, etc.)
- Conference Logistics/Venue Coordination
- Conference Web Site Design and Maintenance
- Keynote selection and negotiation
- Corporate Partner Recruitment
- Overall Conference Leadership

It is possible that some current volunteers would like to continue in 2008. Also, the Association expects to provide assistance to the 2008 host institution(s), particularly in the areas of conference continuity, the existing Program Committee, and the budget. The Program Committee Chair has experience in moving the conference and he is committed through at least the 2008 conference.

Rochester has found it helpful to have a group of local colleges and universities pool volunteers to assist with these tasks. These institutions have also decided to sponsor the conference financially, with \$2,500 contributions to the Association.

#### **Factor 5: Dates**

Given the volunteer nature of the conference, we find the weekend vital to set up for the conference. Thus, a Sunday afternoon to Wednesday afternoon schedule has been important to the conference in the past. Where possible, the conference attempts to avoid competing conferences, particularly Educause (October 28–31, 2008). A different schedule to meet the unique needs of the host site, or to take advantage of some other opportunity, will be considered. In this case, extra host resources may be required for setup for the conference.

It would also be helpful to consider any homecoming or family weekend activities of local colleges (which have a tendency to fill hotels). If the proposal host facility is for a college campus, it may be advantageous to take advantage of a break in the class schedule.

The Association will consider a two-year site commitment if the host proposal requests it.

#### **Factor 6: Food**

The ideal facility would allow us to have a variety of menu options over the course of our three-and-a-half day conference. Setups would allow for reasonably quick service of 400-600 attendees, probably through buffet lines, and also allow us the flexibility to have a meal at an excursion venue. A sample

menu with sample prices per person for attendees would be helpful. See the attached schedule for food expectations.

### **Factor 7: Excursion and Entertainment**

One key item is that this conference has always been fun. We pack a lot of content into the days and it is nice for our attendees to unwind. The evening events encourage networking with other professionals and help to make this a conference that people want to come back to.

Our conference has had the pleasure of visiting several unique sites in Rochester over the past several years, and we would like to continue this if possible. Museums capable of working with our excursion group (typically 75% of the total conference population) with adequate food stations and seating areas are ideal. However, we are flexible on this, and would consider other types of venues or social programs (Casino Night, *e.g.*).

### **Attachment**

A sample schedule is attached for proposal and planning purposes.

### **Deadline and Submission Instructions**

The Association would like to *receive* all venue proposals by August 31, 2007, so that an announcement of the 2008 venue can be made at the 2007 conference. Submissions should address all factors above and can be made electronically to [slewis@brockport.edu](mailto:slewis@brockport.edu), by fax to (585) 395-5911 to the attention of Steve Lewis, or by mail:

Higher Education Web Professionals Association  
55 St. Paul St. Suite 229  
Rochester, NY 14604

Conference Event		Conference Office and E-mail Room	Other Space	Session Rooms	Dining Room	Food	
<b>Saturday</b>							
3 pm - 6 pm	Stuffing Party	E-mail/Conference: Two Rooms, Ideally Adjacent, each capable of holding 30-50 computers.		<i>Workshops at alternate site if facilities permit</i>			
3 pm - 6 pm	E-mail Room Setup						
6 pm - midnight	Combined Committee Meeting					pizza for 30 @ Netwkg Rm	
<b>Sunday</b>							
11 am - 8 pm	Registration	secure at night, key available to one conference staff member	<i>Nightly Networking Room at Hotel capable of holding 30-100 people. TV/DVD, table for cards, etc. Incl Sat Dinner if possible</i>	breakout into 5 rooms, seat 30 each classroom style			
11:45 pm - 12:45 pm	Lunch for presenters and workshop attendees					lunch for 125	
1 pm - 5 pm	Pre-conference Workshops						
2:30 pm - 2:45 pm	Refreshment break for workshops					break for 125	
5 pm - 5:45 pm	Orientation Session					Seating for 300, open for food stations	
6 pm - 8 pm	Welcome reception					grazing stations? For 300-400	
8 pm - 1 am	Nightly Networking						
<b>Monday</b>							
7 am - 3 pm	Registration	E-mail and Conference Office Open			Seating for 400-600		
7 am - 8 am	Breakfast						breakfast for 400-600
8 am - 9:15 am	Opening/keynote						
9:15 am - 9:45 am	Refreshment break						break for 400-600
9:45 am - 10:45 am	Presentations						
11 am - noon	Presentations						
noon - 1 pm	Lunch						lunch for 400-600
1:15 pm - 2:15 pm	Presentations						
2:15pm-2:45 pm	Refreshment break						break for 400-600
2:45 pm - 3:45 pm	Presentations						
4:00 pm - 4:30 pm	30-minute Showcases						
4:45 pm - 5:15 pm	30-minute Showcases						
6 pm - 7:45 pm	Free Night, or Dinner						<i>change for entertainment? 2005 Casino Night 8-10 pm</i>
8 pm - 1 am	Nightly Networking						

Tuesday								
7:15 am - 8:15 am	Breakfast	E-mail and Conference Office Open			Seating for 400-600	breakfast for 400-600		
8:30 am - 9:30 am	Presentations			breakout into 5 rooms seating 125-150 each				
9:30 am - 10 am	Refreshment Break						break for 400-600	
10 am - noon	In-depth Presentations							
noon - 1 pm	Lunch					lunch for 400-600		
1:15 pm - 2:15 pm	Presentations					Conversion to 18 peripheral tables for poster sessions by 3 pm	break for 400-600	
2:15 pm - 2:45 pm	Refreshment Break							
2:45 pm - 3:45 pm	Presentations							
3:45 pm - 4:45 pm	Poster Sessions							
4:15 pm - 5:15 pm	Networking / Special Interest Groups			change for 4:15 SIG?				
5:45 pm - 9:30 pm	Excursion Dinner or Social Activity	Generally an off-site venue -- Museum, etc. -- DJ or band (typ. 75% of attendees)						
9:30 pm - 1 am	Nightly Networking							
Wednesday								
7:30 am - 8:30 am	Breakfast / Best of Track Awards	E-mail and Conference Office Open		breakout into 5 rooms seating 125-150 each	Seating for 400-600	breakfast for 200-300		
8:30 am - 9:30 am	Best presentations							
9:30 am - 9:45 am	Refreshment Break						break for 200-300	
9:45 am - 10:45 am	Best presentations repeated							
11:00 am - 11:45 am	Closing remarks, prestige award, & door prizes							
11:45 am - 12:45 pm	Lunch						boxed lunch? for 200-300	
12:45 PM	Official Close of Conference			convert seating to 30 w/ tables by 1 pm				
noon - 1 pm	Workshop Registration	Conference Office Open						
1 pm - 5 pm	Post-conference Workshops							
2:30 pm - 2:45 pm	Workshop Refreshment Break					break for 100		