

Canadian Association for Global Health (CAGH)

Volunteer Policy for the Canadian Conference on Global Health

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1. Introduction

The Canadian Association for Global Health (CAGH) deeply values the dedication and expertise of its volunteers, particularly those who provide their skills and leadership on the planning committee and critical teams for the Canadian Conference on Global Health (CCGH). This policy outlines the roles, responsibilities, and benefits for CCGH teams and committee volunteers to ensure a transparent and rewarding volunteer experience.

2. Overall CCGH Coordination Structure

Figure 1 outlines the coordination structure for the CCGH.



Figure 1: CCGH Coordination Structure

3. Steering Committee

The Steering Committee serves as the central hub, overseeing all conference activities and ensuring alignment between the various teams, the mission and vision of the Canadian Association for Global Health and the funders' expectations. The committee provides overall leadership, coordinates work across teams, oversees the budget and engages with CCGH sponsors and partners. Committee members will actively promote the conference within professional networks to enhance visibility and participation and assist in identifying potential sponsors and partners to support the conference. They will collaborate to identify and select

a conference theme and help identify and invite keynote and session speakers, ensuring diverse representation across disciplines and regions. The Steering Committee also applies for an event code each year with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada prior to the conference.

4. Steering Committee Membership

The Steering Committee should comprise of:

- Two conference Co-Chairs
- Chair of the Board of CAGH and at least one other CAGH Board member (there may be more)
- At least one local representative from where the conference is being hosted
- At least one student
- At least one member from a LMIC
- The leads of the various teams will also be invited to the Steering Committee meetings when their work is active.
- The paid conference event planner, any part-time conference staff or interns would also attend the Steering Committee meetings where appropriate.
- Representatives from key sponsors or partners in the CCGH might also be invited to specific meetings of the Steering Committee.

5. Specific Roles of Conference Co-Chairs

The CCGH Co-Chairs will provide strategic direction and oversight for the Steering Committee. They will lead regular committee meetings, setting agendas and ensuring effective communication. The Co-Chairs will serve as the primary point of contact between the Steering Committee and CCGH Sponsors, CAGH leadership and CCGH teams. They will address and mediate any issues or challenges that arise within the committee or teams. At the event, the CCGH Co-Chairs have the opportunity to address the conference participants at the opening and closing ceremonies and help to determine future CCGH leadership, themes, locations and initial Steering Committee memberships.

6. Specific Roles for CAGH Board members on the CCGH Steering Committee

As CAGH is the organizational host of CCGH, it is important for the CCGH to align well with the mission and vision of CAGH and for there to be effective communication between the Steering Committee and CAGH Board. The Chair of the CAGH Board will be invited to all Steering Committee meetings and will attend where possible. At least one other current CAGH Board member will also be a Steering Committee member to ensure effective communication and alignment during all stages of CCGH planning, implementation, and reporting.

7. Specific Roles of Student, LMIC & Local Members on Steering Committee

Students, LMIC and local members on the CCGH Steering Committee may be delegated specific tasks (as with any member), but ideally, they also take on general advisory roles and

will bring trainee, LMIC and local participant issues and perspectives to the overall planning of the annual CCGH.

8. CCGH Teams

Nine specific teams help to carry out the work that makes CCGH possible each year. At least one Team Lead is identified each year to stand, as needed, on the Steering Committee. As outlined in Figure 1, these teams include:

- a. Scientific Program (SP) Team: This critical team manages the development and implementation of the conference's scientific content, including keynote addresses, plenary sessions, panels, workshops, and oral presentations. The Scientific Program Team works with members of the Steering Committee to bring the conference theme to life through its scientific content. Team members have the opportunity to identify and invite potential speakers and work closely with the Abstract Team to ensure the conference scientific program is innovative, comprehensive and engaging. The Team also helps apply to receive Canadian Medical Education (CME) accreditation credits.
- b. Virtual Experience (VE) Team: This team works with the D.E. Systems conference platform support staff to help inform the platform design and oversee the conference's virtual components. The team ensures accessibility and engagement for online attendees and works with the Communications, SEP, and NSE teams to ensure virtual participants have a comparable and positive conference experience.
- c. Abstracts Team: This team works with the D.E. Systems platform and staff to ensure an effective and positive abstract submission, review, and notice system. The team oversees the development of the call for abstracts, helps identify and coordinate abstract reviewers, and collaborates with the SP Team to develop the conference program. The abstract team also ensures that conference presenters receive a certificate of acknowledgement.
- d. Communications Team: This team is responsible for internal and external communications, including conference email, media relations, social media, and conference marketing. They are a critical team for advertising, celebrating the conference, and promoting specific aspects. The team works to build interest among potential volunteers, attendees, and sponsors from local to international. Conference participants can request invitation letters directly in the D.E. Systems conference software, however, the Communications Team assists people with concerns related to conference travel and VISA applications where possible.
- e. Student and Emerging Professionals (SEP) Team: The SEP Team works with Steering Committee members and other teams to ensure that students and young professionals have opportunities to participate in and benefit from CCGH. The SEP Team develops and coordinates activities and opportunities for students and emerging professionals, including working with the NSE Team to enhance mentorship programs and networking events for SEPs.
- f. Networking and Social Events (NSE) Team: As networking is a critical goal of the CCGH, this team will develop and coordinate specific networking and social events for both in-person and virtual attendees.

- g. Awards Team: This team will oversee the process for the CCGH/CAGH awards given out annually at the conference. These include lifetime achievement awards, poster awards, the Vic Neufeld Mentorship award, student awards, and any others that may be awarded from time to time.
- h. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Team: The M&E Team works closely with Steering Committee members and the CCGH paid staff and interns to develop a system for tracking progress, measuring outcomes, evaluating, and reporting on the conference's success. An M&E Plan will be developed each year and will also align with funders' needs.
- i. Site Operations (SO) Team: The SO Team oversees aspects of the conference venue, local accommodations, event logistics, and on-the-ground components during the event. It is generally led by the Event Planner and any assistants. Conference on-site volunteers will also be members of this team.

9. Time Commitment

- **Steering Committee Members**: It is anticipated that Steering Committee members will dedicate approximately 40-60 hours to advance planning and promotion of the conference, plus 3 to 5 days for on-site or virtual activities during the event. Time commitments may vary based on the size and scope of the conference and the number of volunteers and event staff each year. Bi-weekly meetings are expected for the 3-4 months prior to the conference.
- **Co-Chairs**: Due to additional leadership responsibilities, Co-Chairs may expect a higher time commitment, including more frequent meetings and strategic planning sessions.
- **Other Team Members**: The required time commitment of the various teams is diverse due to the varying nature of each team's activities. Additionally, some team activities happen earlier (or later) than others. Team members should be prepared to dedicate 2-3 hours per week leading up to the conference, with some also being more active in the days immediately before or during the event. Time commitment should be discussed at the outset of any volunteer engagement.

10. Overall Expectations of Volunteers

Overall, once a volunteer commits, they should attend scheduled meetings and actively contribute to discussions and tasks. Volunteers should complete assigned tasks promptly to ensure that conference planning progresses smoothly. All volunteers commit to fostering an inclusive environment, ensuring positive and diverse representation in all aspects of the conference and will be positive ambassadors for CAGH and CCGH in all of their activities. Volunteers should declare any potential conflicts of interest to maintain transparency and trust. If the ability to commit changes during a volunteer's activities, the CCGH Co-Chairs should be informed to help ensure that the volunteer duties can be covered and that the implementation of the conference is not affected. All volunteers should inform their Team Lead or members of the Steering Committee if they require support or have concerns with any aspect of their volunteer role.

11. Volunteer Benefits

In recognition of the invaluable contributions that volunteers make to the CCGH annually, the following benefits are shared:

- **Professional Development:** Steering Committee and Conference Team members will have many opportunities to enhance leadership, management, and communication skills.
- **Networking:** Steering Committee and Conference Team members will have access to a broad network of professionals in the global health community.
- **Recognition:** All recognized volunteers will receive formal acknowledgment of their contributions in conference materials, before, during and after the event. If a specific volunteer role title is appreciated, this can be formally recognized as well (e.g., CCGH Virtual Experience Team Lead). Letters of reference can also be requested. All general volunteers who contribute at least 10 hours of time to the conference will receive a certificate of appreciation and a \$50 reduction in the conference registration fee (virtual or in-person). Conference Co-Chairs will receive full complimentary registration and will have their conference travel and accommodation covered if required. Active members of the Steering Committee and recognized Team Leads or Co-Leads will receive a 50% reduction in their conference registration fee. In order to qualify for this benefit, Steering Committee members must attend the majority of Steering Committee meetings, contribute actively to the committee's work and must be approved by the CCGH Co-Chairs. Team Leads or Co-Leads must be approved by the CCGH Co-Chairs and must fulfill their expected role successfully.

12. Volunteer Application and Selection Process

The CAGH Executive, Conference Planner and previous CCGH Co-Chairs help to guide the selection of conference dates, sites and acquisition of funding 1-2 years into the future. The previous year CCGH Co-Chairs, Event Planner and CAGH Board Chair will strike the initial Steering Committee in January each year, with invitations also being sent to at least one student, LMIC resident, local resident and CAGH Board member. This group will meet to discuss a potential theme, early funding requests and process for building the rest of the Steering Committee and CCGH Teams. A call for CCGH volunteers will go out in early March. Interested volunteers are invited to complete a Google form and/or email info@cagh-acsm.org outlining their experience and motivation for volunteering. They should specify any interest in specific roles. The initial Steering Committee will review applications and invite members to fill out the Steering Committee and the various CCGH Teams (see Figure 1) based on relevant experience, interest, needs, availability, and capacity.

13. Term Duration

Volunteers would typically commit to volunteering at a single CCGH. They would likely be involved during the planning (as early as January prior), implementation (typically late October annually), and evaluation phases (completed within 3 months of the end of the conference). Members may request to continue serving in subsequent years with approval

subject to performance, capacity and mutual agreement with the following year's initial Steering Committee.

14. Conclusion

CAGH is committed to providing a supportive and rewarding environment for its volunteers. This policy aims to ensure that volunteers involved in the annual Canadian Conference for Global Health clearly understand their roles, responsibilities, and the benefits they are entitled to. We hope that this document helps provide clarity and fosters greater collaborative effort to convene a successful international meeting every year.