**TO:** PLA Board of Directors

**FROM:** Lian Drago, Meetings Manager

Sara Goek, Program Manager

Melissa Faubel Johnson, Conference Manager

Angela Maycock, Manager, Continuing Education

**RE:** PLA 2022 Conference Preliminary Report

**DATE:** May 3, 2022

With the hard work and support of the Conference Committee, Program Subcommittee, and Local Arrangements Subcommittee, along with the PLA Board of Directors and staff, preliminary results point to the PLA 2022 Conference (March 23-25, 2022) as a success. This preliminary report covers final registration numbers, survey results and preliminary analysis, and preliminary revenue results as of April 30, 2022.

**REGISTRATION**

A total of 6,005 librarians, exhibitors, speakers, guests, and others registered for PLA 2022, compared to 8,694 registered for the 2020 conference in Nashville. Attendee registration was 3,794, compared to 6,598 in 2020. The number of exhibitor representatives was 1,025, compared to 2,096 in 2020. In 2020, 103 individuals and 68 groups registered for the virtual conference. The group category was eliminated for the 2022 conference. Virtual conference participation was at an all-time high, with 1,186 individual registrants.

**PRELIMINARY REVENUES\***

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **2022 Registration Revenue (Budget)** | **2022 Registration Revenue**  **as of April 30,** | **Variance** |
| $1,512,500 | $1,285,206 | ($227,294) |
| **2022 Virtual Conference Revenue (Budget)** | **2022 Virtual Conference Revenue**  **as of April 30,** | **Variance** |
| $80,000 | $349,663 | $269,663 |
| **2022 Preconference Revenue (Budget)** | 2022 Preconference Revenue  **as of April 30,** | **Variance** |
| $115,000 | $59,985 | ($55,015) |
| **2022 Exhibit Revenue (Budget)** | **2022 Exhibit Revenue**  **as of April 30,** | **Variance** |
| $1,212,500 | $1,209,800 | ($15,346) |

***\*****Preliminary revenue figures are based on PLA vendor reports. FY22 financial reports for Q2 and Q3 will not be available until later in the year. Release dates have not been confirmed as of today.*

Although conference revenue appears on track to meet budget, the full financial picture will not be clear until ALA financials are available. Notable is exhibit revenue which comes in only $15K under budget – a testament to the extensive outreach to individual exhibitors on the part of PLA Conference staff and Corcoran during the “Delta variant” months leading up to the conference. Also notable is the tremendous success of the PLA Virtual Conference, which PLA will continue to grow as an asset.

**PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK**

PLA fields three participant surveys:

* Overall conference survey – completed post-conference from home, sent to virtual and in-person participants
* Individual session survey – completed during the conference by in-person participants
* Individual virtual conference session survey – completed during the conference by virtual conference participants

PLA inputs also include feedback from the PLA Board, partners, vendors, ALA staff, and other stakeholders. PLA is still gathering inputs and the below represent preliminary highlights and select data points as of April 30, 2022. PLA staff will be meeting the week of May 12 for an extensive conference debrief, beginning the process of evaluating data to inform future conferences, and support for PLA members.

**Conference Participant Survey**

PLA invited all 6,005 in-person and virtual conference participants to complete the post-conference survey and received 1,143 responses, a 19% response rate. 1,065 of respondents said they attended the conference in person, and 97 confirmed they attended virtually.

* 87.7% of survey participants who responded to the question about how their registration fees were paid reported that their employer paid for the entirety. Only 3.5% paid for themselves, 1.8% paid some part of the fees, and 5.7% received a scholarship or other sponsorship. 72.7% of respondents said their employer paid for their hotel and travel expenses.
* 98.7% of respondents said they visited the exhibit floor and of those, 82.3% said they visited 3 or more times.
* As for the overall conference experience and the usefulness of each type of special activity or program, participants rated the opening session, big ideas sessions, and closing session most highly.
* *Net Promoter Score: 52 (*This is a key indicator of how successful the conference was overall, and one that PLA has used in the past based on responses to the question about how likely they are to recommend PLA conference to a colleague, on a scale from 1 to 10. The score is lower than in in 2020 when it was 65, but the same as in 2018. 60.3% of respondents were identified “promoters,” giving a score of 9 or 10, while 31.8% were “passives” (scores of 7 or 8), and 7.9% were “detractors” (scores of 0 to 6).

**Virtual Conference Survey**

97 respondents affirmed that they attended the virtual conference, and, like the in-person participants, rated the educational content of the programs and professional development as the two most important reasons they attended.

* Asked about the length of the virtual conference, 81.6% of respondents said it was just right. 13.8% found it too short and only 4.6% said it was too long.
* On a scale from 1-10, the respondents rated the online platform 8 for ease of use. Suggestions for improvement include a wider selection of virtual programs and more online networking opportunities.

**Educational Sessions**

In total, 95 educational sessions were delivered in-person in Portland – 89 programs and 6 preconferences – and an additional 22 programs were delivered as part of the Virtual Conference. The HOW TO Stage offered another 29 short form learning opportunities and the Intellectual Freedom Forum offered three learning and networking sessions as well.

Evaluation data from educational sessions indicate that programs and preconferences met PLA 2022 attendees’ expectations. PLA considers a score of 4.0 (on a 5.0 scale) to be a baseline for the quality of our conference programming. Across all preconferences, attendees rated overall value for the investment at 4.3 and overall quality at 4.5. Across all programs, attendees’ rating that they learned something new to help in their work was strong for both Virtual Conference programs (4.43) and in-person programs (4.16).

**Scholarships**

As part of PLA’s commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion in the library profession, PLA awards scholarships in two areas:

* Thirty scholarships were distributed among three categories: Early-career Library Staff Scholarships, Non-Salaried or Unemployed Library Staff Scholarships, and Library School Student Scholarships. This represented double the number of scholarships awarded in 2020, with funding from donors to the Friends of PLA.
* Four scholarship were awarded to ALA Spectrum Scholars, providing them with travel stipends of $1,000.

**Pandemic**

PLA instituted unprecedented protocols and related communications for participants and stakeholders regarding COVID safety. Multiple contingency plans were in place to address communications, testing, and safety needs of participants in the event of individual and/or mass COVID diagnoses. No COVID cases were reported to PLA by participants or hotel management during the conference. This is a remarkable result, and speaks to the wisdom of the choice to engage Safe Expo and additional temporary workers to support proof of vaccination/negative test requirements, as well as the masking requirement at OCC.

**PLA STRATEGIC GOAL LINK (check all that apply)**

TRANSFORMATION  LEADERSHIP  ADV. & AWARENESS  E.D.I.S.J.  ORG. EXCELLENCE