Introduction
The AROHE biennial conference offers two full days of stimulating workshops, discussions and networking opportunities. Whether you are a seasoned retiree organization leader, a retiree interested in starting or improving a retiree organization or a campus administrator wanting to connect more effectively with retired faculty and staff, you are encouraged to attend. Nothing can replace the value of a professional conference with colleagues from across North America offering new perspectives, ideas and resources.

This toolkit provides information about the expenses and benefits of the conference. Using this information, you can demonstrate to your Board of Directors or your campus administrator that attendance at the conference will strengthen your organization and benefit the campus as a whole.

Budgetary considerations/return on investment
Many AROHE members, even those with modest budgets, have realized a great return on investment by sending one or more representatives to the biennial conference. Others have obtained professional development funds from their campus to attend.

Whenever decisions are made about allocation of limited resources, two components are critical:

- Expense (the “investment”)
- Return on Investment (ROI)

This toolkit has been developed to provide information about the expenses and benefits of the conference to help you demonstrate the ROI of attending.

AROHE conference expenses
The following Expenses Worksheet will help you to develop a cost estimate for attending the AROHE conference.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expense</th>
<th>Guideline</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conference Registration</td>
<td>Register by June 20 for this rate</td>
<td>$260 (member) or $360 (non-member)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AROHE Academy:</td>
<td>Pre-Conference Workshop</td>
<td>$75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evening tour</td>
<td>Optional; register by June 20 for this rate</td>
<td>$25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flight</td>
<td>Use <a href="http://kayak.com">http://kayak.com</a> to get a quick estimate</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lodging</td>
<td>Hotel conference rate, including taxes, is $146.29/night (consider sharing rooms to reduce expenses).</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation: airport to hotel</td>
<td>If flying: taxi, car rental, Light rail?</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation: hotel to airport</td>
<td>If flying: taxi, car rental, Light rail?</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mileage reimbursement</td>
<td>Driving to conference? To the airport for your flight? Multiply miles by 56 cents/mile (IRS standard for 2014)</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking reimbursement</td>
<td>At airport for flight departure or at hotel (hotel rate is $15/day (self) or $20/day (valet)</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>Include costs for dinners and meals while traveling (continental breakfasts, lunches and breaks on 8/11 and 8/12 are included in conference registration fees)</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X total number attending</td>
<td>$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>= Total</td>
<td>$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Quantifying the Benefits
While conference expenses are easy to quantify, it is difficult to assign a dollar figure to the benefits. The vast majority of past AROHE conference attendees rank networking as the top benefit of the conference. Although undoubtedly the most important aspect of any conference, it is also the toughest to quantify. When proposing attendance at the AROHE conference, it is best to focus on what you will specifically bring back to the organization as payback for the investment:

- **Emphasize the benefits to your organization**—Save an enormous amount of time and money by learning from others about everything from successful pre-retirement planning classes to popular social programs to unique mentoring programs.
- **Showcase the benefits to your campus**—Ideas shared at the conference will help your academic institution harness the invaluable talents and skills of retired faculty and staff. Successful programs utilizing retirees as mentors, teachers, volunteers and important campus advocates will be highlighted.
- **Focus on your challenges**—Is your organization struggling to attract members, garner campus support, find volunteers or attract retirees to programs? The conference will offer workshops, round table discussions and networking opportunities to address these issues.
- **Expand your network**—develop connections with colleagues who can provide ongoing support.
- **Highlight the takeaways**—Presenters will share research data, resources and successful practices that can translate into practical action steps. Speaker materials will be available on the AROHE website.
- **Spread the word**—Offer to deliver a short presentation to your colleagues upon your return. You may give a talk, distribute speaker slides or handouts, or conduct a question and answer session to share what you have learned and how it can benefit your organization or the campus.

Selling your proposal
An outline of conference expenses/benefits will give your Board of Directors or campus administrators the information they need to decide the value of your proposal. Salespeople work the same way by outlining specific benefits and emphasizing the ROI. Sell your conference proposal!

For retirees associations that receive little or no funding support from their campus, a proposal to fund attendance at the conference can be an important first step toward creating additional win/win partnerships between the association and the campus. Most AROHE member associations that receive financial support from their campus get funding from one or more of the following departments:

- **Human Resources**—usually interested in pre-retirement planning classes, phased retirement or other transitioning programs
- **Academic Affairs**—usually interested in encouraging emeriti to be mentors, teachers or advisors and in programs that assist faculty in their transition to retirement
- **Development/Advancement**—interested in programs that encourage a culture of philanthropy
- **Alumni Relations**—usually interested in engaging retired faculty and staff in campus life and including them in alumni and/or mentoring programs

Conference proposal template
On the next page, you will find a “Conference Attendance Proposal” template — a letter to your Board of Directors or campus administrators outlining how attendance at the AROHE conference will advance your organization or contribute to your campus’ mission. This template can be customized for your organization or your campus’ particular needs by copying the text to a Word document.
AROHE Conference Proposal Letter

Dear <name>,

I am writing to request funding to attend the biennial conference of the Association of Retirement Organizations in Higher Education (AROHE), August 10 - 12, 2014, in Minneapolis, MN. This event is an excellent opportunity for education, networking, and professional development. I believe my attendance would be very beneficial for collecting new perspectives and ideas for <insert some challenges here> to better engage and serve our retirees for the mutual benefit of <name of your organization> and <name of your campus>.

I am seeking funding for the registration fees, travel expenses to and from the conference, and lodging/meal expenses. A detailed cost breakdown is included below.

The AROHE conference will feature workshops, discussions and networking opportunities tailored to the development and improvement of academic retiree organizations, programs and services. Specific benefits to <name of organization> and <name of campus> will include:

- **Savings of time and money**—conference presenters will share details of successful programs, from pre-retirement planning classes to social programs to unique mentoring programs.
- **Support for the institution**—workshops will outline successful mentoring, teaching, volunteering and advocacy programs that harness the invaluable talents and skills of retired faculty and staff.
- **Solutions to our challenges**—we are currently struggling with <insert some challenges here>. The conference will offer workshops, discussions and networking opportunities to address these issues.
- **Concrete takeaways**—Conference presenters will share research data, resources and successful practices that can translate into practical action steps. I will be able to access presentations and handouts on the AROHE website following the conference.

Upon my return, I can deliver a short presentation to <name or organization> outlining some specific steps we can take to improve <insert details.>

**Conference expenses:**

- Conference Fee: $260 (before June 1) or $360 (after June 1)
- AROHE Academy: $75 (optional pre-conference workshop)
- Evening tour: $25 (optional)
- Roundtrip Airfare: <xxxx>
- Other transportation/parking: <$xxxx>
- Hotel: <$xxxx> ($146.29 per night, including taxes)
- Meals: <$xxxx>
- Total: <$xxxx>

The opportunity for me to network with colleagues across North America and gain knowledge in specific areas of <your area of need> makes my attendance at the AROHE Conference a wise investment which will yield rich dividends for <name of your organization and/or campus>. I appreciate your consideration of my request.

Sincerely,