

# Regional Conference Advisor Guide

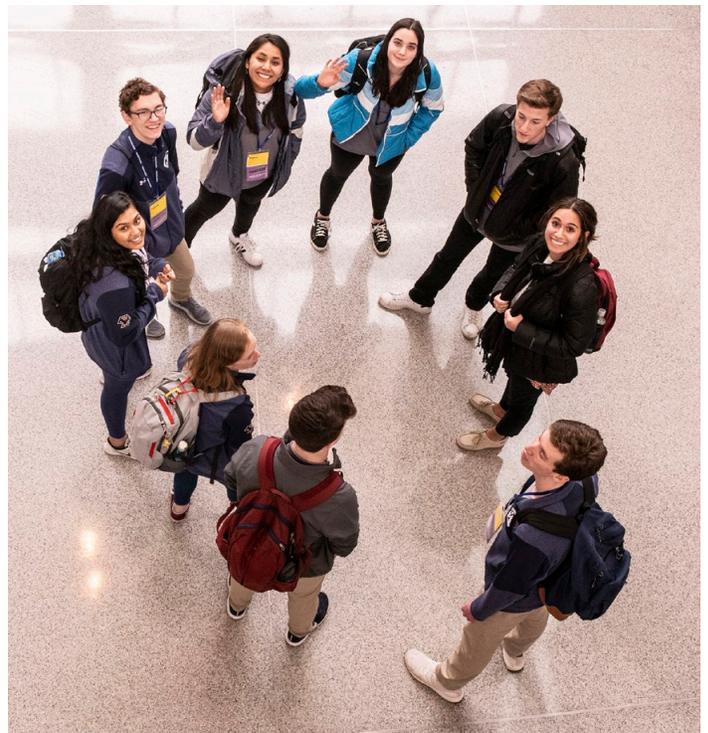


When you attend a National Association for Campus Activities Regional Conference, you'll find it packed with activities and events. Before you arrive, review these guidelines and share them with the students you advise.

## BEFORE the Conference



- **Know your team's goals/needs/wants** before you arrive. This will help you target what you need and help you get business done.
- Encourage students to **consider their conference experience as career development**. Regardless of what careers they pursue, learning how to negotiate, network, work as a team and make decisions are all important business skills.
- **Delegate** conference planning and on-site tasks to students. Encourage and praise them. Be sure they know you trust and support them.
- **Educate** your delegation about how NACA works before the conference, making sure they understand the four major conference components and how to achieve your goals:
  - ▶ **Campus Activities Marketplace** – An exhibition of entertainment and services that could benefit your institution.
  - ▶ **Showcases** – Performers apply and are selected through an extensive process to showcase their talent to conference attendees.
  - ▶ **Educational Sessions** – Learn the latest trends and tips rooted in NACA competencies from peers, associates and other experts.
  - ▶ **Block Booking** – By working with other schools in your area and the agencies at the conference, you can save your school money! Everyone can participate, and no contracts are signed on site.
- **Review the conference schedule** ahead of time. Know in advance what your days will look like and help you determine who needs to be where at which time. Are there two concurrent sessions that your delegation doesn't want to miss? Have your delegates split up and cover both.
- **Review Showcasing Acts** – Take a look at the showcasing acts selected for your region.



- **Bring notebooks, planning calendars, pens and contact information** to use and share during the conference. Produce any printed materials you might need before you leave campus to save money.
- **Download the NACA® App** – Get instant schedule updates and access details on educational sessions.
- **Allergies?** – If anyone in your delegation has food allergies, make sure to include that in their registration. Waiting until you get on site doesn't guarantee staff will be able to accommodate.



- **Talk to other schools**, ask questions and have fun while you're doing it! You can share ideas, learn about what works on other campuses and form partnerships.
- **Attend everything you can.** Choosing to skip a showcase, marketplace or educational session may mean that you and your delegation miss a wonderful programming opportunity or idea to bring to your campus.
- **Regroup** after every Campus Activities Marketplace, educational session block and at the end of the day. What were the highlights/lowlights of what you experienced? Discuss and brainstorm with your delegation on how to do business creatively.
- **Keep an open mind** about working with new companies. Give everyone a chance to show you what they have to offer.
- **Be approachable, professional and easy to work with.** Have knowledge of the industry. NACA is a great place to listen to new music, watch new acts and learn about what is going on in the entertainment world.
- **Collaborate.** Find schools similar to yours so you can share ideas. This is a great professional development opportunity and one of the few times where you get to be in the same location with other student programmers from other areas. Take every chance to learn about event ideas, marketing strategies, acts that have been successful, agent customer satisfaction, etc.
- **Ask questions.** You might be interested in a band or novelty program. Ask what their tech and hospitality needs are for a performance. This allows you to know if you need to budget for additional costs, like rented sound equipment, generators or hotels.
- **Use the NACA® App:** Get real-time schedule changes and discover educational sessions.

## CONFERENCE SURVIVAL KIT

Your delegation will be on their feet and on-the-go for long days, so plan accordingly:

- **Wear comfortable shoes.** Stress the importance of being able to dress quickly and that there usually is a bit of walking.
- **Dress in layers.** Convention centers can have variable temperatures and layering will help you adjust.
- **Try a backpack** rather than an over-the-shoulder bag for a comfortable way to contain the information and materials you collect.
- Pack **lip balm and lotion.** Many conference venues have very dry air.
- Bring a **refillable water bottle** to stay hydrated.
- Don't forget **portable chargers.** Your phone won't last long if you're taking videos and posting on social media about all the fantastic things you're seeing.



Join us for NACA® Live, the reimagined national convention, from Feb. 20-24 in Pittsburgh, PA!  
[naca.org/nacalive](http://naca.org/nacalive)



## SHOWCASE ETIQUETTE

Performers invested time and money for the opportunity to showcase, so return the favor:

- **Come with an open mind** about how acts could possibly fit on your campus.
- **Do not use your phone while an act is performing** unless you're creating a social media post to support the act or submit a booking form.
- **Do not leave the venue until all acts have performed.** Artists and agencies pay for that time and your institution has paid for this as a part of the conference experience. Don't waste anyone's hard-earned money!
- **Make notes** in your program about artists/acts and potential dates/occasions for your campus.
- **Cheer and applaud** for all acts to show your appreciation, and keep an eye out for Samplers, Special Events and Roving Artists.

## BUSINESS TIPS

NACA's live events are where deals are made and where you can save money. Block Booking, a member benefit, is when three or more geographically close schools coordinate to maximize routing for an act or performer. Schools that can't commit on site should still attend Block Booking meetings to be aware of what blocks are forming so they can take advantage of limited-time deals after the conference. Before you leave campus:

- **Teach your delegation about Block Booking** and how it can save your school money on entertainment.
- **Show your delegation how Block Booking works with NACA® 24/7.** An overview is in the "Help" section of the website.
- Discuss in advance **to what extent your delegation can partake in the Block Booking process.** There is a place for everyone, from those who cannot commit on site to those who can lock in a contract.
- Don't miss the **How to Do Business Orientation.** It's a great way to educate yourself and your board, learn about updates to the process and explore how it may work for your campus.
- Know that **business doesn't end at the conference.** Be sure to follow up on your Block Booking forms and request contracts on those shows you intend to book.
- **Attend NACA 24/7 & Block Booker training.** This session focused on the basics of Block Booking and connecting you with schools that are regionally close to each other so that your caucusing can start through the GroupMe and in NACA 24/7.

## CAMPUS ACTIVITIES MARKETPLACE TIPS

The Campus Activities Marketplace can be overwhelming – not only to new attendees but sometimes even to experienced delegates. It can be manageable, though, if you keep the following in mind:

- **Prepare to engage in conversations about your campus needs.** For example, a programming calendar with specific dates you're looking to fill will help steer conversations on availability and routing for an artist. A student chair of a programming area (concerts, comedy, novelties, etc.) should be prepared to talk about specific campus interests.
- If an agent does not meet the needs of what you book, **let them know** and either steer them toward someone on your delegation that may be interested, or take their contact information for future reference.
- **Know what your campus can and can't do** with regard to requesting dates, rider accommodations, sound, travel, contracts, etc. and **know your budget and calendar** to avoid booking conflicts.
- **Share appropriate contact information** so agents can follow up with you.
- **Interact with all the booths.** Some won't have showcasing acts, so you might not know what they can offer unless you speak to them.
- **Network** and make relationships, and talk about your school's culture and what works or doesn't work on your campus.
- **Visit acts in their booths** after they've showcased to thank them and/or welcome them to NACA, and look for booth demos: They can be very informative.
- Take **promotional materials** and information, but only if someone from your delegation hasn't yet done so.
- Plan times and locations where your delegation can **meet daily** to discuss booking possibilities.

## EDUCATIONAL SESSION TIPS

- **Divide and conquer!** Plan who from your delegation will be going to specific educational sessions.
- **Take notes** to share with your committee and share what you've learned when you return to campus.



**Follow up** on discussions you have at the conference, whether with associates or other schools. It shows you care, and they will want to continue to collaborate with you.

Know that **business doesn't end at the conference.** (See Business Tips above.)

