

SSDS Event/Workshop Roles and Responsibilities

In order to aid other members in putting together a large event, SSDS has compiled a list of roles and responsibilities necessary for a successful workshop. This is based on the past experiences of members. Each role is followed by a description of the responsibilities of the person playing that role. One person may play several roles depending on the size of the event. This document is intended to be used in conjunction with the SSDS Policies and Guidelines document regarding workshops.

In smaller events, one person may play be able to perform all necessary tasks. For a larger event, multiple chairs may be needed so that one person is not over-burdened with responsibilities. Examples of chairs are: *Organizer/Event Chair*, *Workshop/Registration Chair*, *Social/Dance Chair*. In smaller events, one person may play more than one role. These three roles must work together outside of SSDS meetings to coordinate the event. *Chairs and Captains normally receive some compensation for their volunteer work. That compensation is based upon current SSDS policy in effect.*

Organizer/Event Chair

The Event Organizer or Event Chair is the main “point” person for the event and the major liaison with SSDS who keeps the SSDS Board apprised of progress and problems. This person has the overall responsibility for the event and has final decision-making ability on all matters regarding the event. The Event Chair is also responsible for making sure the event proceeds in accordance with stated SSDS policy or must justify why it doesn't. Major responsibilities include:

- Present workshop proposal to SSDS Board describing nature, scope and purpose of the event. Receive SSDS Board approval.
- Coordinate dates and location of the event with *Workshop/Registration Chair* and *Social/Dance Chair*, making reservations as necessary. Schedule workshops far enough in advance to allow sufficient time for publicity and so that people can save the dates in their schedules. The event chair should consult SSDS policy regarding scheduling of events prior to selecting the final dates. Especially with national instructors, workshop organizers need to develop a plan and strategy to take advantage of best rates for air fare and lodging.
- When selecting venues, check for date and time availability, dance floor quality, adequate space, availability of air conditioning if summer event. Rely on SSDS member with contact with frequently used venues (i.e., Steve Ryan and the Ukrainian Home) to negotiate best rate.
- The Event Chair needs to present a budget and pricing structure to the SSDS board as well as the proposed schedule. Included in the budget are details regarding proposed volunteer compensation.
- Assign chair roles to other members/volunteers.

- Coordinate publicity/mailings with SSDS marketing. Publicity typically includes save-the-date flyers, general flyers, mass mailings, announcements at weekly SSDS dances, SSDS web site, announcements to email list. Try to combine mass mailings with other SSDS or instructor flyers to minimize expense.
- Coordinate workshop/event prices based on anticipated costs of the whole event. The price structure should be based on past experience.
- Arrange for pre-registration (includes receiving pre-registrations and creating some form of record of those to be handed off to the *Workshop/Registration Chair* and *Social/Dance Chair*. May also come up with some way of tracking registrants, i.e. bracelets, nametags.
- Instructors often want to leave blocks of time free to teach private lessons, which Event Chair coordinates in terms of venue, scheduling and publicity. The Event Chair needs to articulate a rationale consistent with SSDS guidelines for assigning private lesson slots.
- Establish schedule of workshops, including the number of workshops, length of workshops, times of workshops, levels and types of workshops. (Tip: Do not allow the instructor to determine the level or types of workshops—we know the area levels better than they do. Talk to other members if unsure. Also give the workshops “flashy” names—they sell better than intermediate I, etc.)
- Another scheduling tip: We often use a start time of 11 a.m. and a long afternoon break. Another option is late afternoon workshops going directly into a band or DJ dance in the evening. Under the latter option, SSDS may provide pizza or more substantial refreshments. Scheduling often depends on the instructors’ preferences. Prepare class descriptions to be used in advertisements that reflect the workshop skill level.
- Conduct contract negotiations. Fulfill or assign any other responsibilities that might arise from those negotiations (i.e., making travel and hotel arrangements, etc.) The SSDS Board must approve and sign the final contract.
- Assign someone to be present to attend to the needs of the guest instructor in terms of transportation, meals, etc.
- Arrange payment of any expenses like band, venue, etc. from SSDS funds. Keep and organize receipts for expenses.
- Assign any of these responsibilities to other volunteers, however, maintain final responsibility for all.
- Keep a list of volunteers to give to the board.
- After the event, the Event Chair needs to prepare a financial summary of the event for presentation to the SSDS board. Any “lessons learned” should be presented at that time also.

Workshop/Registration Chair

This person is the contact person for the instructor(s) and reports to the *Event Chair*. Many times this role is filled by the *Event Chair*. Responsible for assisting the *Event Chair* in developing a workshop schedule, class descriptions and publicity and for implementing that schedule at the event. This Chair often will be the person who handles details like travel and lodging for the instructors. This Chair is responsible for coordinating on-site registrations before and in-between workshops and for checking in pre-registrants. The Chair is not responsible for doing the work alone, but is expected to coordinate and schedule a team of volunteers. Responsibilities include:

- Make sure that the workshop schedule is adhered to and the event runs smoothly, especially during transitions between classes. Recruit sufficient people to handle registration and check-in. Ensure sufficient space to handle on-site registration and check-in, which may mean placing multiple registration tables at different locations in the venue. Our goal is to avoid people waiting in long lines.
- Work out a registration schedule and the number of volunteers needed. (Tip: Two people should work registration for at least the first two shifts, after that, one is usually sufficient. For example, on a Friday night before the first workshop of a weekend event, and again Saturday morning before the first workshop of the day usually need two people.)
- Solicit volunteers to work those shifts. Any uncovered shifts become the Chair's responsibility. Make certain volunteers understand if and how they will be compensated.
- Obtain pre-registration information from the *Event Chair* or collect it directly. Obtaining any instructions for the on-site registration.
- Instruct the volunteers for on-site registration.
- Collect and organize all information and turn over to the *Event Chair* according to arrangements made with the Chair (most likely at the end of the weekend.)
- Keep track of instructor(s) expenses over the course of the event and turning them over to the *Event Chair*.
- Coordinate venue and publicity with *Social/Dance Chair* and *Event Chair*.
- Assign any of these responsibilities to other volunteers while maintaining ultimate responsibility for all.
- Keep track of all volunteers and collecting the list of volunteers.

Social/Dance Chair

The Social/Dance Chair is responsible for the “extra-curricular” or social activities of the event, including dances, whether DJ'd or live band, any contests, demos, setup/cleanup, and MC arrangements. The responsibilities include:

- Work with *Event Chair* to determine format of social activities, and making necessary arrangements for DJs or bands. Instructors often will serve as dance DJs, sometimes for additional fee.

- Work with *Event Chair* and *Workshop/Registration Chair* on venue determination and arrangements, and publicity for the event.
- Work out a schedule or agenda for the social activity (whether made public or not).
- Work out billeting for out of town students or appoint someone to handle housing availability and requests.
- Appoint *Contest Captain(s)* (role explained later) for any and all contests to be run during the event, and communicate any necessary instruction or information regarding the Captain's duties.
- Appoint an MC (or serving as MC) for each activity scheduled.
- Arrange for any demos with outside or associated groups (participants in demos may be given free access to the activity with *Event Chair* approval.)
- Appoint *Event Setup/Cleanup Captain* (role explained later), and communicate any necessary instruction or information regarding the Captain's duties.
- Assign any of these responsibilities to other volunteers while maintaining ultimate responsibility for all.

Other Event Captains

Captains work the event to a lesser degree, and may or may not be necessary depending on the size of the event. They are generally appointed by Chairs to solicit volunteers to work throughout the weekend. Captains and volunteers recruited by the Captains may be compensated in line with current SSDS Volunteer policy.

Event Setup/Cleanup Captain: This Captain is responsible for making sure all setup, including refreshments, and cleanup is taken care of for the workshop portion of the weekend. This Captain is not expected to do the work alone, but is expected to coordinate a team of volunteers to do the work. Those responsibilities include:

- Make arrangements/recruit volunteer for any sound system pickup/delivery, microphones, etc.
- Make arrangements/recruit volunteer for refreshments during both the workshops and any social activities (usually something simple like water, crackers, chips during workshops, could be more extensive for the social activities.) Could be separate volunteers for workshops and dances/activities.
- Coordinate with and get refreshment budget from *Social/Dance Chair*.
- Make sure room setup is appropriate before each activity/workshop and picked up afterwards according to whatever arrangements are made with the particular venue. Cleanup can usually be accomplished by recruiting workshop/dance stragglers without compensation. Setup help may need to be made in advance and those volunteers may need compensation.

Contest Captain: This Captain (of which there may be more than one) is responsible for all arrangements regarding the particular contest(s) he or she is in charge. Those responsibilities may include, but are not limited to:

- Come up with contest ideas or getting instructions for contest(s) from *Social/Dance Chair*.
- Coordinate with *Social/Dance Chair* on the scheduling of the contest(s) within the event (what time, how long do you have, etc.)
- All necessary paperwork for contests. This is where most of the work is.
- Recruit volunteers as necessary to help conduct the contest. Those volunteers could be: judges, registration people, contest DJ, contest MC, etc.
- Coordinate with *Social/Dance Chair* for publicity for contests.
- Coordinate with *Workshop/Registration Chair* in case the instructor(s) are needed to help with any part of a contest.

This document is a work in progress and is certainly not exhaustive, nor is it mandatory that all events follow this document exactly. Each event is unique and may have requirements not anticipated now. As we become more experienced, we can add to this document to give our members the benefit of that experience.

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