

# DIVISION HANDBOOK

Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of  
the Blind and Visually Impaired

*January, 2016*



Dear Division Leader,

On behalf of the Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER), I want to thank you for volunteering to be a part of the Division. With the dedication and support of division leaders, the Council of Division Chairs and other division volunteers, AER is able to provide a wide range of services and opportunities for AER members. Divisions are the backbone of AER. Divisions help AER to fulfill its mission, “to support professionals who provide education and rehabilitation services to people with visual impairments.”

AER and Division Leaders work together to make sure that vision professionals who are members of AER will have the knowledge, skills and abilities to help individuals who are blind or visually impaired to reach the greatest level of independence, confidence and success. To accomplish this goal, divisions provide activities and events, referred to as “core services.” Each division is expected to examine the needs of the division members and work to address those needs through responsive services and opportunities.

Before you start division activities, please take some time to read this handbook. It is a “handy” tool that will help you understand AER Divisions, roles, responsibilities and general functions. It will answer many questions that you might have about divisions; and it can also help you achieve the highest level of member satisfaction within your division.

The staff at AER’s central office is a valuable resource. Please remember to connect with the Director of Professional Development and Internal Relations. This is your primary AER contact.

Once again, thanks for being a part of the division! We look forward to working with you to ensure that AER is meeting the needs of those who provide education and rehabilitation services and division members have the highest level of member satisfaction.

Sincerely,

Lou Tutt

## Introduction

AER's divisions play an important role in the association. The role of divisions is explained in-depth in this handbook. This handbook is designed to provide practical guidance on how division leaders and other volunteers manage and provide services through divisions, in accordance with AER bylaws, policies and procedures. This handbook is subject to change and can be updated as required by AER's Council of Division Chairs with input from AER staff and approval of the AER Board of Directors.

### 1.1 The Council of Division Chairs

The Council of Division Chairs (CDC) is the coordinating arm of AER divisions. The purpose of the CDC is to help divisions thrive as active and integral parts of AER. A central function of the CDC is to facilitate communications among division leaders, AER officers, directors, and AER staff. The CDC considers policy and administrative issues affecting divisions, makes recommendations and provides information to AER and division leadership.

#### 1.1.1 Membership

The CDC consists of division chairs, chair-elects and immediate past chairs of each division. It shall be the responsibility of this group to formulate policies relating to governance of the divisions including formation of new divisions, dissolution of existing divisions, and other policies affecting divisions (AER Policies and Procedures 4.2).

#### 1.1.2 AER Board Representative

Divisions are group according to 4 categories: (1) Large Divisions, (2) Adult Services, (3) Instructional Services and (4) Related Services. One person from each category will be elected to serve as an AER board representative. Each representative shall be responsible for reporting AER board activity to their respective divisions, help divisions with required forms, and answer questions, if needed. One of these four representatives will be elected to serve as the CDC chair. Please refer to AER Policies and Procedures 4.3 and 4.4 for more information.

### 1.2 Communicating with Division Members

AER staff is responsible for maintaining a database that contains current and accurate division membership information. The database includes both active and inactive members. Division chairs can request a list of division members from AER staff.

If there is a mass email/e-blast that needs to be sent to Division members and or to others on behalf of a Division, the Division chair shall contact AER staff, namely the Director of Professional Development and Internal Relations. All mass emails/e-blasts are sent by AER staff. This enables AER to manage member communications, apply all standards related to member data safeguards and ensure that all communications follow generally acceptable practices and guidelines related to AER brand management.

Please note: Division leaders are encouraged to schedule mass email broadcasts/e-blasts in advance to ensure timely disseminations. From time to time, AER staff will receive multiple e-blast requests for the same day. Therefore, it might be necessary to move a request either up or back as every effort is made to ensure that multiple bulk e-blasts are not scheduled to go through the system on the same day. Should this be necessary, AER staff will inform the Division chair. Please note: the AER Director of Professional Development and Internal Relations will review and if necessary, will edit the content of all e-blasts. Significant edits and or suggested language/content changes will be shared with the Division chair for feedback and agreement.

In addition to e-blasts, Division chairs can communicate and provide information to Division members and others on behalf of the Division through the website, forums or blogs. Please note: in most cases, items posted do not have to be sent to AER's Director of Professional Development and Internal Relations for review and edit.

*Items which promote paid events cannot be posted on AER forums and blogs. E-blasts that are deemed a "solicitation of a paid event" cannot be distributed via AER e-blasts. Division chairs are asked to contact the AER Director of Marketing for fees and guidance on such solicitations.*

## 2 Division Governance

### 2.1 Division Policies and Procedures

The Division Policies and Procedures manuals (P&P) came into effect in 2014. They are designed to foster new energy and provide better leadership continuity with divisions. They replaced all individual division bylaws. The P&P's are deliberately limited to the essential functions of divisions, to remove any obstacles to the pursuit of innovation. All Divisions shall have a set of Division Policies and Procedures that are not in conflict with AER Policies and Procedures. If the Division does not have a set of current Policies and Procedures, the AER Director of Professional Development and Internal Relations should be contacted immediately.

### 2.2 Division Officers

Each division is led by an executive committee of elected division officers. Division officers must be active/current members of the division and active/current members of AER. Duties of officers are provided in the AER Policies and Procedures Manual: 4.7 and if available, within the Division's own Policies and Procedures Manual.

Division officers are responsible for the following:

1. To serve as a communications link between the division membership, the AER Board Representative and the AER central office.
2. To oversee all division activities to ensure that core services for that division are met.
3. To call for volunteers to form the Nominating Committee when elections are due.
4. To attend the AER International Conference and conduct the biennial meeting of the division.
5. To organize or delegate other special activities, such as special publications.
6. To submit a quarterly report to the AER board, using the standardize AER form, that provides the division's activities, concerns and other requested information. The completed form is sent via email to the applicable AER staff. The actual due dates for the board reports are provided by AER staff. Please refer to Appendix B for the form.

7. To submit an annual division budget. Please refer to Appendix C for the form.

Please refer to the AER Policies and Procedures Manual Section 4.5 for a list of Division Standards.

Good communication among division officers, AER Board, and AER staff is a key part of success. It is suggested that officers should gain experience on division committees before serving. It is important to consider the broader Association view when new ideas arise, since there are issues of fairness and precedents that should be considered—divisions are not autonomous groups, but rather are part of the larger whole.

### 2.3 Division Executive Committee

The division executive committee assumes responsibility for Division functioning at any given time. The executive committee will usually be composed of the chair, immediate past chair, chair-elect, secretary and treasurer. Divisions may at times find it necessary to have one person handling more than one role. Each Division chair is free to decide how to set up the executive committee in order to best serve division members. One thing to keep in mind when choosing division leadership is that new Division officers should come from within the division's governance structure in order to promote continuity, so all division chairs should have potential successors in mind. In order to increase the pool of potential successors, divisions might choose to give division members who are emerging leaders tasks that will help develop their leadership skills and give them visibility within the division and AER. Divisions can also consider inviting past chairs to join division committees to provide continuity and advice.

#### 2.3.1 Division Executive Committee Meetings

Typically, each Division should hold between 3-5 Division meetings per year. The frequency and duration should be determined by the goals and objectives of the Division and the schedules of its members. Each Division should have at least one meeting devoted to establishing the annual goals and objectives of the Division and to prepare the Division's annual budget for the following year. Please note: the Division's budget is typically due in the fall. Divisions are

also encouraged to meet and discuss the progress toward goals and objectives and to discuss the work of sub-committees. During the biennium years, Divisions might opt to have more meetings as the workload of the Division and action items usually increases. For example, during the biennium years, there will be board nominations, presentation proposals, business meeting agenda, awards nominations, and other division activities needed to make the AER biennium conference a success.

### 3 AER Board and Central Office Staff

#### 3.1 Board Support/Oversight and Board Report

The AER Board takes great interest in the work of the divisions and enthusiastically supports each division. Good and effective communication between divisions and AER Board of Directors is central to the success of AER and its Divisions. Each division completes a board report. The board report provides a great opportunity to communicate the accomplishments, focus, dynamics and concerns of the Division. The report, which is completed by the Division, is provided to the board 4 times per year. Division reports should give an overview of key activities and or changes since the previous report. Division reports provide an excellent opportunity to communicate the status of each goal and objective established by the Division. Divisions will receive a reminder when board reports are due. Please refer to Appendix B for a sample copy of the division report.

#### 3.2 AER Central Office

The AER Executive Director assigns the primary staff person to oversee the management of Division activities. In addition, the Executive Director and other staff members may be involved in specific areas, as required.

### 4 Core Services

Each division has a set of core services. The core services provided by the Division reflect the goals and objectives of the respective Division; and relate to the strategic plan of AER.

As core services are established, please keep in mind that the primary functions of each division are to: (1) increase responsive professional development that meets the needs of vision professionals, (2) provide an opportunity for networking, and (3) share and circulate value added information related to the Division's concentration area. Typical core services that can be provided by AER divisions:

- Professional interaction and networking.
- Mentoring and support.
- Regular publications (i.e. newsletter).
- Educational sessions at the AER International Conference.
- Division Website Notices and updates via email/e-blasts and division listservs.
- Webinars, Water Coolers and Podcasts.

#### 4.1 Website

Divisions may host a website through AER as a basic benefit for their members. Website content should be regularly updated. Divisions are encouraged to update the website routinely to ensure that content is relevant and current; and serves as a "helpful" resource for members. Division Websites templates are provided by AER's central office. Divisions should contact AER's Director of Professional Development and Internal Relations for assistance with setting up a Division website.

##### 4.1.1 Website Content

Websites should contain, at a minimum, the following information:

- Homepage with AER logo prominently displayed.
- Names and contact information for Division officers and committee members.
- Link to the division's social media outlets.
- Link to current and past issues of the Division's newsletter.
- Link to position papers within the AER website.

##### 4.1.2 Recommended Website Layout

The following is a recommended layout for a Division website. As this is a recommended layout, Divisions can add or omit any elements of the recommended layout. The aim is to have a website that is helpful and provides a "go to source" for the respective Division to provide relevant and meaningful information.

- Homepage: list of current officers and contact information.
- An “About Your Division” section. This section provides a chance for the Division to describe the purpose of the division; and the goals and objectives of the division. News & Events (Note: this can be separated via links or just be imbedded.)
- Online Resources (Provided via via links to each resource.)
- Links to archived Division newsletters or other Division related articles.
- Division conference events.

#### 4.1.3 Content Management

AER is the host for all division websites. Division leaders are encouraged to become familiar with AER policies regarding website and website content. Each division should designate a division member to manage the website’s content. Information provided on the division website should be directly related to the division’s field of interest, its members, and events. Content is submitted to the AER central office for uploading. The website should be continuously monitored to stay up-to-date by adding new material and removing outdated items.

Personal advertisement of a member’s services, discussions that are inappropriate or outside of division’s focus area, disparagement of other individuals, ad hominem attacks and similar such acts are discouraged by AER and will not be permitted on the website. However, constructive communications and dialog about the division and or AER policies related to or that impact the division is acceptable as long as it does not infringe upon the rights of others.

#### 4.1.4 Website Fee

Each division that has a website must include website maintenance costs as an expense in the budget for their division. Divisions shall work with AER’s central office to determine website costs.

#### 4.2 AER Listserv

AER maintains division listserv as a forum that allows communication among division members. The division listserv

provides an excellent networking vehicle for division members to exchange and receive information. The listserv is, in some cases, the main source used for exchanging ideas, soliciting information and expressing concerns and or satisfaction. For some divisions, where many members take advantage of this networking opportunity, this is the main avenue used for information exchanges. All content posted on the listserv must follow AER's established guidelines.

Please note: All discussions should be related to the division's area and the profession. The Division's listserv monitor oversees the listserv. A moderator can be a division officer or a designee from the division membership. The moderator will be responsible for determining if the content is appropriate for this listserv and remove any inappropriate material. The AER office is a silent group owner. Membership lists that are used for the listserv for each Division should be reviewed annually by AER staff and the Division leadership to ensure that participants are current members of AER and the division.

#### 4.3 Other online networking venues

Some divisions are beginning to use social media platforms such as Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook for networking and communicating. Some divisions use none of these; some use all three or an amount in between. Currently, these social media platforms are not currently part of the core services for AER divisions. However, they could be added.

The AER central office is a silent group moderator or administrator.

Social networking such as Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook are part of the division's membership benefits. The Division should assign a member to serve as the social forum moderator. The two main tasks for the social forum moderator are: (1) to ensure online forums are ran smoothly and (2) to ensure that individuals seeking to participate/join are members of AER and the division. The moderator or someone assigned by the Division must contact AER central office membership department to determine if the individual is a member of AER and the division.

#### 4.4 Division Newsletters

Each division is encouraged to provide a Division Newsletter. A Newsletter is an easy and informative tool to communicate announcements, events\*, information, helpful tips and so forth to division members. The newsletters shall be made available on the division's website.

*\*must follow AER guidelines for solicitation and promotion of paid events.*

##### 4.4.1 Newsletter Editor

Each Division should select an editor for their newsletter. Finding and/or selecting an editor for a newsletter is a key task for every division chair. There are no term limits for editors; and they often remain in the position through more than one executive committee's term. The newsletter editor is selected from the Division's membership. He/she can be on the division's board or a division member designee. Typically, the newsletter editor will work with the division officers and other division members to produce the newsletter. While each division is encouraged to have a newsletter editor, often, a division's newsletter is created by multiple members of the division due to time constraints or other variables. Divisions can also choose to have what is called "co-editors." Once the newsletter is approved by the appropriate division officer (i.e. chair or past-chair), it is sent via email to AER's Director of Professional Development and Internal Relations for review and circulation. The "appropriate division officer" is determined by the Division. The AER Director will have the newsletter circulated by e-blast to the Division's membership and posted on the Division's website.

##### 4.4.2 Content

The specific content of division newsletters is determined by the division leaders and editors. AER office reviews all newsletters before circulating. AER reserves the right to edit and make suggested changes, if necessary, prior to circulating. All content must be in accordance to AER's policies, procedures and standards.

The type of material appropriate for division publications can include, but not limited to:

- Announcements and reviews of division activities, including conference educational presentations and social activities.
- Announcements and reviews of other activities and events relevant to the main focus of the division and general interests of division members.
- Administrative announcements and discussion of division and AER administrative decisions.
- Reviews of industry articles, papers and etc.
- Member profiles and reports on member activities.
- Interviews of members or other people of interest (often a good way in for people who don't want to develop their own material, but want to help, and also a good way to get 'stars' to be involved without having to write).
- Discussions related to the professions of the division members.
- Discussion of developments in or aspects of the industry that are the main focus of the division.
- Excerpts from interchanges on the web relevant to the division's focus.
- News articles and editorials related to division concerns.
- Entertaining and/or amusing material related to the focus of the division.
- Pictures/photographs illustrating articles or depicting members and article authors.

Division chairs are encouraged to make a regular contribution to the newsletter. Other division officers may share this task or write their own articles or columns. Editors can also work with an original author to write or modify articles related to the focus of the division. In addition, editors can include a recap/summary of a conference session, applicable to the division that highlights the most useful information.

#### 4.4.3 Permission

Submission of original material to a division newsletter is taken to mean the author has given permission and is in agreement with the publication of the material in the newsletter. Therefore, the Division must secure permission prior to submitting the newsletter for circulating to AER. In addition, if the material is substantially changed in the editorial process, the original

author's permission to publish in the new form must be additionally secured. Persons seen in pictures must give their consent before publication.

Material reprinted from other publications or media is acceptable for use in division newsletters. However, authors' or other copyright holders' permission must be secured and the original source and permission statement must be cited. Links to online articles or other materials are acceptable and encouraged.

#### 4.4.4 Pre-publication and Publication

Divisions should develop an annual timeline for producing and circulating their newsletters. Divisions are encouraged to consider the AER's publications calendar when developing the division newsletter timeline. Having this information in advance will help divisions see how the division's activity/newsletter fits into the larger schedule. When a newsletter issue is ready for publication, the editor will send it to the AER office for circulation via broadcast email/e-blast and posting on the division's website. Once the newsletter is posted, the editor or division chair may also use the division's other means of communication (online forum, Facebook group post, Tweet, website news update, etc.) to announce the new posting/issue.

#### 4.4.5 Honoraria

Divisions may choose to pay a modest honorarium per year to volunteer editors of their newsletters or other communications. The honoraria, in this case, are not meant to reflect current market rates or serve as full reimbursement for time spent. Rather, it will be a "token of appreciation" for the volunteer's effort. The actual rate can be based on the number of newsletters produced each year. If the division chooses to pay honoraria to the editor, it must be included as an expense in the annual division budget when submitted to AER.

### 4.5 AER International Conference

One of the goals of the AER International Conference is to provide a balance of educational sessions that reflect the needs of vision professionals across many subject matter domains. Divisions play a vital role in identifying presenters and sessions. Divisions are asked

to provide input related to the topics and issues to be covered during the conference. Divisions host division related events and activities during the conference.

All divisions are invited to be a part of the abstract review process for the international conference. Typically, division officers are asked to review abstract proposals that have been submitted for inclusion in the AER conference. A division member may be designated by the chair to be a reviewer. Once the reviews have been completed, the abstracts are presented to the Conference Committee for a final review and approval.

#### 4.5.1 Presenters

Divisions are encouraged to identify and recommend presenters for the international conference. Presenters should be recognized experts and or practitioners in their field. Division members are also encouraged to provide conference presentations.

When recommending presenters, please note that each presenter is responsible for all expenses related to his/her travel to and from the conference. Presenters are responsible for making all travel arrangements related to his/her participation in the conference. Presenters pay a reduced conference registration fee. Please note: funds from the division budget cannot be used to provide gifts, including flowers to presenters.

#### 4.5.2 Division Events

Each division should assign one person to serve as conference coordinator to manage division events at the conference (i.e. division meeting, award ceremony, etc.). It is the responsibility of the conference coordinator to work with the AER Director of Professional Development and Internal Relations to schedule division events. Typically, the past chair serves as the coordinator as he/she has had experience attending the events. Though, it is at the discretion of the Division to determine exactly who serves.

##### 4.5.2.1 Division Social Events

Many divisions choose to have receptions or other social events during the conference to provide division awards or as a division networking opportunity. Division coordinators for the

conference work with the AER Director of Professional Development and Internal Relations to plan the event. The AER Director will work with the coordinator to plan the logistics including scheduling, room set-ups and so forth. All logistics and details, including changes, are finalized and communicated to the venue by the AER Director of Professional Development and Internal Relations.

#### 4.5.2.2 Division Business Meetings

Divisions are encouraged to hold a division business meeting during the conference. This provides an excellent opportunity to have a “face-to-face” meeting with division members. A division’s business meeting during the International Conference is an important part of a division’s schedule of activities. If a Division Chair has a preferred time for their meeting, he/she should submit a request to AER’s Director of Professional Development and Internal Relations, who will make every attempt to accommodate the request. Meetings cannot be scheduled during educational sessions and other AER special events.

The division business meetings should have a published agenda and minutes (from the previous biennium meeting). The minutes should be drafted and shared with the division membership. After the meeting, AER encourages all divisions to submit the minutes from their meeting to the AER Director of Professional Development for circulation within 60 days, but no later than 90 days of the meeting.

#### 4.5.3 Division Exhibit Tables

Divisions are given an opportunity to promote their division during the conference. Each division is provided a division exhibit table. This is a great opportunity to promote the goals of the division and recruit membership for the respective division. It also provides a unique opportunity for current members to connect with each other face-to-face during the conference.

In preparation for the exhibit tables, each division’s leadership should think about how to best present their division to the general membership, and plan to provide information for how

interested members can join. Note that the space (usually a table) provided is often small, so smaller items like business cards or fliers are ideal. Creative and informative displays are encouraged.

#### 4.5.4 Conference Hotel

Divisions are expected to encourage all conference participants and presenters to stay at the conference hotel. From time to time, participants might find what appears to be a least expensive option; however, the full conference experience is best achieved with the conference hotel. To ensure that everyone has a chance for convenience, networking and accessibility, AER makes arrangements with the conference hotel for rooms for conference participants and presenters. To help fulfill the obligations associated with these arrangements, AER asks that Divisions promote the use of the conference hotel for the International Conference. Promotion of other hotels is prohibited by AER divisions.

## 5 Other Services

### 5.1 Division Surveys

Divisions may choose to survey its membership. There are a number of reasons why a division will want to issue a survey, including but not limited to, gain ideas, gain opinions and so much more. Should a division need to issue a survey, the division chair or person designated by the chair will contact the AER Director of Professional Development and Internal Relations. The division will provide the AER Director a draft of the questions. The AER Director will edit. Once finalized, AER will publish the survey using an online survey service such as Survey Monkey. After the survey has been uploaded, the division will prepare the language for a blast e-mail to publicize the survey to the division's membership. AER will send out the survey to the division's members. Once the survey deadline has expired, the AER Director will provide the survey results to the division chair or designated recipient.

Short surveys typically yield the highest response rates. When drafting a survey, please consider including the following:

- A title
- A short introduction explaining the purpose of the survey and information on how the survey results will be used.
- Approximately how much time the survey will take.
- A privacy notice ("Answers are anonymous. Your name and contact information will not be collected/shared.")
- Closing date.
- A Thank You page/language.

## 5.2 Additional Learning Programs

Divisions are encouraged to provide additional continuing education opportunities for division members. Divisions should contact AER's Director of Professional Development and Internal Relations for assistance with planning other learning programs (i.e. webinars, water coolers and podcasts).

### 5.2.1 Virtual Learning Portals

Virtual Learning Portals like webinars, water coolers and podcasts offer another great way to provide professional development and communicate information to Division members. They are great for providing topic specific and general "how to" information to division members. They can be offered as a member benefit. The AER Director of Professional Development and Internal Relations will work with you to develop the events. Please contact the AER office to explore these opportunities for the division.

## 6 Elections

As previously described, each division has division officers. Elections occur every two years, and the election procedures are the same for all AER divisions. Divisions are to elect their officers during the spring of the biennium year, no later than June before the International Conference. The new officers will be announced during the business meetings held during the international conference. Please refer to 4.7 of the AER Policies and Procedures Manual for the governing principles guiding the process.

Divisions should designate a nominating committee from their membership. It will be the responsibility of this committee to elicit nominations for future division officers and their resumes for consideration. In the event that the division does not have a nominating committee, the executive board will be responsible for eliciting nominations.

## 6.1 Forming a Nominating Committee

Elections occur every other year. One year prior to the conference, the chair of the division should ask for volunteers, who together, will form a Nominating Committee that will handle the election process during the year. Some divisions may choose to have division members elect the committee during the biennial elections. The O&M division elects a nominations committee. The committee must consist of at least two people, but may be larger. Most divisions aim to have committees of three people to avoid ties. All Nominating Committee members must meet the requirements in the AER Policies and Procedures Manual

### 6.1.1 Requirements for Nominating Committee Members

Nominating Committee members must be a voting member of AER and a member of the division. A person who is running for office should not be on the nominating committee.

## 6.2 Nomination Process

The Nominating Committee evaluates members of the division as candidates for division board members and selects a candidate or candidates for each position. Preference is given to candidates with previous involvement in division activities. The AER office sends a broadcast email to division members notifying them of the name(s) of the selected candidate(s). Should division members wish to see other candidates on the ballot in addition to those nominated by the Nominating Committee, division members may submit names to the Nominating Committee. Qualified candidates must be added to the ballot.

## 6.3 Election Procedures

Elections should be held in the spring of the biennium year, no later than June of that year. Elections are usually done electronically through an online survey service. Winners should be notified as

soon as the election results are finalized. New officers are usually announced at the International Conference during the division business meeting and then can be broadcasted usually through electronic media.

## 7 Division Finances

### 7.1 Division Budgets and Core Services

Funds are allocated to Divisions by the Association for the core services of the division.

From time to time, a division may elect to develop a specific project that extends beyond the core services. Such projects, typically, will benefit a broad cross-section of a division's membership. A proposal and a budget must be submitted to AER central office, to the Director of Professional Development and Internal Relations; and must be approved by the AER Board of Directors.

Division officers have fiduciary responsibilities to AER. While divisions are distinct special interest groups within AER, they are not separate, financially independent entities. The AER Board of Directors bears responsibility for division expenditures.

### 7.2 Division Budget Planning

The AER fiscal year begins January 1 and ends December 31. Division budgets are due by mid-September and are reviewed by the Executive Director or Treasurer (Please see section 8.4 in the Policies and Procedures Manual). An actual due date will be provided to the divisions by the Director of Professional Development and Internal Relations. The budget is then reviewed and voted on during the December meeting of the AER Board of Directors.

AER covers all ongoing core services, such as the regular publication of a newsletter, as well as one-time activities, such as a redesign of a division website.

When developing an annual budget, take into account these expenses. This should be discussed during division officers' meeting(s) (please refer to Appendix C for budget spreadsheet). Divisions will need to plan

for various needs for conference years and off years. Some suggestions for expenses that divisions may incur include:

- Website maintenance
- Email blasts to membership
- Honorarium for newsletter (if applicable)
- Webinar speaker fees
- Group conference calls for officers
- **During Biennium year:**
- Awards during biennium year
- Division business meeting costs
- Division reception costs
- Printing costs

### 7.3 Fiduciary Responsibility

Funds cannot be spent for the sole benefit of an individual or a small group within the division. A division may coordinate a voluntary donation of funds from members for a specific non-political cause. An example might be the purchase of a wreath for the funeral of a former division member.

#### 7.3.1 Contracts

Contracts for all division events and publications, including venues, hotels, speakers and etc., are handled and managed through AER central office.

#### 7.3.2 Payments

If a Division event or publication requires a deposit, a written request detailing the reason for the payment must be submitted to AER central office.

Invoices for an event or publication must be submitted to AER with a completed expense reimbursement form. The reimbursement forms must include the original or scanned electronic images receipts/invoices and the signature of the division chair or treasurer, signaling approval of the expenditure.

Requests for payment of editor honoraria must be approved by the division chair and then submitted to AER Director of Professional Development and Internal Relations.

### 7.4 Expenses and Reimbursements

Division officers must submit for reimbursement approved expenses that are incurred to AER office to the Director of Professional Development and Internal Relations within 90 days of the receipt's date. Division chairs must keep receipts for approved expenses and copies of their reimbursement requests. Reimbursement requests that are older than 90 days must be approved by the AER Executive Director.

## 7.5 Division Fundraising

Divisions are permitted to fundraise for their respective division. Please note: the division leader shall provide to the AER Director of Professional Development and Internal Relations the name or names of all potential donors (individuals and businesses) prior to the Division making the solicitation. This will allow for a coordinated and seamless AER fundraising strategy. Funds secured by the division can be used for travel and or for other purposes approved by AER central office.

## 8 Establishing or Dissolving a Division

AER members who wish to establish a new division can petition the AER Board of Directors to establish the new division. In addition to a valid petition, an aspiring division must have volunteers willing to take on the roles required to provide the division's core activities.

### 8.1 Steps to Establishing a Division

- Contact the chair of the CDC to discuss the proposed division.
- Communicate informally with the potential members of the new division. You may request the help of AER staff in identifying such individuals amongst existing AER members and in promoting a potential division through AER publications.
- Once core interest is established, arrange with AER to send an announcement through email, notifying the membership that there is interest in establishing a particular division focusing on a particular area, and asking for 50 signatures from voting AER members who would be willing to join this new division. AER is the contact point for obtaining signatures for the petition. All 50 signatures must be obtained before the petition can be presented to the Board for approval.
- Present the following to the Board:

- o The proposed division's written proposal to include statement of purpose and goals of the division.
- o A petition list requesting division status that has a minimum of at least 50 signatures from individual AER voting members.
- o The name of an AER member with voting status who is willing to serve as the new division's chair.
- o The name of an AER member with voting status who is willing to serve as the new division's chair-elect.
- o The name of an AER member who is willing to be a newsletter editor for the division (can be the same person as either of the above)
- o The name of an AER member who is willing to work with AER on a website for the division (can be the same person as any of the above).

#### 8.1.2 Board Approval

The Board must approve any action relating to establishing a division. When the conditions for establishing a new division have been met, the Board will review the petition before voting to establish the division as a part of AER.

Note that the board meets quarterly, and that completed proposal submissions will be due approximately two weeks prior to the meeting in order to be considered. The Chair of the CDC will work closely with AER staff to help new divisions complete all necessary steps.

#### 8.2 Dissolving a Division

On a yearly basis, the CDC chair will receive a report from the AER office of divisions and division officers that are not in good standing. The AER office will attempt to notify the division officer to let them know that membership dues have expired. The CDC chair and division board representative will make all attempts to contact division officers to work with that particular division to get them back in good standing. If suggestions are not being met, then the CDC chair will bring the concerns before the CDC for discussion (please refer to section 4.9 from the Policies and Procedures Manual).

## APPENDIX A – Division Categories

- Large Division
  - Any division with membership that comprises 20% or more of the organization's entire membership. (Policies and Procedures 4.3)
  - Orientation & Mobility division currently meets this requirement
- Adult Services
  - Rehabilitation Counseling
  - Employment and BEP Services
  - Vision Rehabilitation Therapy
  - Aging
- Related Services
  - Administration & Leadership
  - Psychosocial Services
  - Information & Technology
  - Low Vision Rehabilitation
  - Personnel Preparation
  - International Services and Global Issues
  - Physical Activity and Recreation
- Instructional Services
  - Infants/Preschool Division
  - Deaf-Blind/Multi-Impaired Division
  - Educational Curriculum Division
  - Itinerant Division

## APPENDIX B: Division Report Form



### **Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired**

1703 N. Beauregard St., Suite 440 • Alexandria, VA 22311-1744 • (877) 492-2708 • (703) 671-4500 • Fax (703) 671-6391 aer@aerbvi.org • www.aerbvi.org

### AER Division Report

Date:

1. Division Name:

2. Division Chair:

3. Major Goals of the Division this Fiscal Year:

4. Update on Division Activities/Projects to achieve Goals:

5. Recommendations, proposals and requests (in the form of a motion)  
for Board consideration:

# APPENDIX C: Division Budget Form

AER DIVISION PROPOSED  
BUDGET 2015

Division:	2015 Budget Proposal
EXPENSES	
TELEPHONE	
POSTAGE	
PRINTING	
OFFICE SUPPLIES	
IT SERVICES	
AWARDS / SCHOLARSHIPS	
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	
SHIPPING	
COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES	
TOTAL EXPENSES	

## Assumptions:

Conference Calls: \$.03/minute/person (Telephone)

Broadcast emails: \$.03/message (IT Services)

Division Website Maintenance: \$120/year (IT Services)

Webinar speaker fees: \$500/speaker/Webinar (Professional Services)

Committee Activities: Division-related Conference Registrations

# EXAMPLE

Division:	2015 Budget Proposal
EXPENSES	
TELEPHONE	\$70.20
POSTAGE	
PRINTING	
OFFICE SUPPLIES	
IT SERVICES	\$210.00
AWARDS / SCHOLARSHIPS	
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	\$500.00
SHIPPING	
COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES	
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$780.20

## Budget Worksheet:

### Telephone:

4 exec comm calls w/6ppl x 60 minutes each \$43.20

3 prof dev comm calls w/5ppl x 60 minutes each \$27.00

### IT SERVICES:

AER Website \$120.00

12 Division broadcast emails \$90.00

Professional Services:

Division Webinar

\$500.00

Total

\$780.20