THE MEETINGS & HOSPITALITY ALLIANCE OF SOUTH FLORIDA
Principles of Cooperation & Collaboration
(Revised January 17, 2022)

The Meetings & Hospitality Alliance of South Florida is a strategic partnership among meetings, events, hospitality, and tourism industry organizations that share common interests and goals. The Alliance itself is not an association and does not directly undertake projects. It is an advisory committee, convened several times per year, comprised of the leaders of the participating organizations.

The Alliance was founded in 1998. Attending the first meeting were representatives of the South Florida chapters of HSMAI, ILEA (formerly ISES), MPI, and NACE. Since then, many more organizations have become partners.

Purpose

The Alliance was created to foster collaboration among our industry associations for the benefit of all the members of these organizations. Alliance meetings provide partners an opportunity to become personally acquainted with the leadership of other partner organizations. They share educational and networking event opportunities, discuss challenges experienced by individual organizations or the industry in general, and exchange views on best practices in the management of a volunteer association.

Many professionals in South Florida belong to several associations. The Alliance provides partner organizations the opportunity to coordinate the scheduling of events to avoid competition for attendance .

Some of the benefits experienced by Alliance partners' participation in leadership networking at Alliance meetings in the past have included:

- Organizations have publicized each other's meetings and special events through chapter newsletters, e-mail notices and web sites.
- Organizations have held joint meetings and special events. Among these have been the annual "Industry Holiday Party" (at times attended by over 400 people and raising as much as $15,000 for charity), and South Florida's participation in Global Meetings Industry Day.
- Organizations have given their members added value by supporting an extraordinary meeting or special event of another organization and directing their members to attend that event. In return, the organization hosting the event has admitted the members of supporting organizations at the same price that their own members pay.
- Organizations have created reciprocal links to each other's websites.

Basics of Partnership

1) INTERNET PLATFORM FOR COLLABORATION

MyProNews.com is a website dedicated to networking and education for professionals in our industry and has been designated by The Alliance as the official hospitality association portal for South Florida.

Linked under the Destination Alliances tab is a page describing The Meetings & Hospitality Alliance of South Florida. On the Alliance page, partner organizations are listed with their logo, a brief description, and a link to their website. Also on the Alliance page is a link to download this "Principles of Cooperation & Collaboration" document.

Additionally, on the MyProNews.com website is a Calendar of Events section. Listings can include a detailed description of the event, as well as links to the organization's website and directly to the event's registration page. This calendar includes live, virtual, and hybrid events. Listings are at no charge for non-profit associations in the meetings and hospitality industry, and simply require application for a free user account.

Publicity for the events of each partner organization will reach a greater number of industry professionals if the members of all our associations visit MyProNews.com regularly. It is to the benefit of everyone involved if each organization urges its members to visit this website so they can stay informed of the latest news regarding the meetings and events of all the associations. There is no fee for visitors to use this portal. Partner organizations are urged to provide awareness of the MyProNews.com website as a resource to their members through prominent links on their association website and through links in regular email communication to their association database.

Suggested wording: "Visit www.MyProNews.com, the official hospitality association portal, with a master calendar for all of South Florida's hospitality, meetings and event industry programs and opportunities."

2) COLLABORATION OF PROGRAM COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Program Chairs for associations are encouraged to check the "Calendar of Events" page at www.MyProNews.com regularly to avoid scheduling conflicts with other associations. Notification about new events and any changes (date, venue, program, etc.) should be posted to this calendar as soon as they are determined. Events for which the venue and/or programs have not yet been determined can be posted if at least a tentative date has been established.

Some ways in which Alliance partners' program chairs can benefit from collaboration with their counterparts:

- **Program resources** – Tap into the resources of other associations and use them as a speaker's bureau. Professionals want to know about related fields. Hypothetical examples: Hoteliers want to know about the process that planners go through in selecting a site; planners want to know about trends in food & beverage and how to get the most out of their catering budget. When specialized associations are developing programs to provide this kind of knowledge, some of the best speakers can be provided by allied associations. In the above examples, HSMAI could call upon MPI, and MPI could call upon NACE to provide top local professionals.

- **Remote meetings** – A challenge for some associations that cover an extensive geographic region is to create a schedule of meetings that is convenient to all its members. Not only does this tend to spread volunteer resources thin, but it is also difficult to attain a good turnout in remote areas. A solution could be that multiple associations collaborate to host joint meetings in places like Key West, Naples or Fort Myers. This could reduce the planning burden for each association and help ensure good attendance.

- **Major events** – Many associations have an especially significant educational or networking event in the course of the year. These events entail a greater amount of planning and commitment of resources. By broadening the involvement to include other associations whose members would be interested, attendance would be increased, and more professionals would benefit from the education and networking. Alliance partner associations could be asked to publicize the event to their members and to avoid scheduling competing events, perhaps in return for promotional consideration (as a supporting organization) and discounted registration fees for their members.

The contact information for the current Program Chair of each association is usually listed on that association's website. Links to the websites of all Alliance organizations can be found at https://MyProNews.com/South-Florida-Alliance. Also, the presidents of the Alliance organizations are provided with a contact list of all the presidents of Partner organizations and can facilitate a contact to the Program Chair.

3) "CONFLICTING" EVENT DATES

The number of desirable event dates in any given month are limited, so it is inevitable that programs of Alliance organizations will occasionally happen at the same time. This could be a concern when there is a lot of overlap in the membership/followers of the associations having the coinciding events.

If this is an ongoing situation because two associations have their "regularly scheduled" monthly events on the same date and time, it would be ideal if the two could work out an adjustment in their scheduling. This is encouraged by The Alliance but is left to the discretion of those specific associations.

Occasionally, an association might have a need to schedule an event on another association's "regular" date to take advantage of a special opportunity. Examples would be the rare availability of a distinguished out-of-town speaker or an opportunity to showcase a unique, rarely available venue. Such instances can be an occasion for the two associations to partner on a joint meeting, giving the membership of both associations the opportunity to benefit from the event.

Guidelines and Policies

- To be considered for Alliance partnership, a local association, or South Florida chapter of a statewide, national, or international association, must be primarily focused on the industry of meetings, events, hospitality, travel, and tourism. Preferably, partner organizations should meet the following criteria:
  - ➢ Be officially sanctioned or chartered, rather than a chapter-in-formation
  - ➢ Be not-for-profit, and governed by a formal board structure and leadership elected by the membership
  - ➢ Have bylaws that are approved by the membership and published for public review
  - ➢ Be incorporated
- Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs), which are government agencies representing and promoting a destination, are eligible for partnership in The Alliance.

- Acceptance as a Partner in The Alliance requires an affirmative vote of four-fifths of the Partner organizations.
- When issues are discussed around the Alliance table, it is imperative that the representatives thoroughly understand the goals and priorities of their organization and its members. Likewise, when representatives report back to their boards, it is important that the board is secure in having been well-represented and will give respectful consideration to the report of their representative.
Therefore, representatives to the Alliance should be top leadership, such as President or President-elect … rather than some other member or Board member. Possible exceptions would be a Past President who is still active on the Board, or an executive director. In the case of a CVB or other such organization, the appropriate representative would be the President, or a Vice President who reports directly to the President. The intention is to have representatives at Alliance meetings collaborate with their peers, rather than with others having lesser experience, responsibility, and authority.
- All Alliance partners are encouraged to promote the Portal for South Florida Hospitality Industry Associations, www.MyProNews.com, in their membership email correspondence, on their website and any other ways as they deem suitable, to cross-promote Alliance partner organizations and events & opportunities offered by all of the Alliance associations.
- Each organization has no obligation, financial or otherwise, to The Alliance or to other partner organizations, but only an obligation to The Alliance for collaboration and cooperation. Each organization will decide its own policies and practices. The Alliance does not dictate the behavior of its partner organizations.

Current Alliance Partners

- DTPB – Discover The Palm Beaches
- FAME – Florida Association of Meetings and Events Professionals
- FFEA – Florida Festivals & Events Association
- FRLA – Florida Restaurant & Lodging Assn. (affiliated with the National Restaurant Assn. and American Hotel & Lodging Assn.)
  - Miami-Dade County Chapter
  - Broward County Chapter
  - Palm Beach County Chapter
  - Lee County Chapter
- Focus Miami
- GMBHA – Greater Miami & The Beaches Hotel Association
- GMFEA – Greater Miami Festivals and Events Association
- HSMAI – Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International
  - South Florida Chapter
- ILEA – International Live Events Association
  - South Florida / Caribbean Chapter
- MPI – Meeting Professionals International
  - South Florida Chapter
- NACE – National Association for Catering and Events
  - Greater Broward & The Palm Beaches Chapter
  - Greater Miami & The Beaches Chapter
- NAWP – National Association of Wedding Professionals
  - Miami-Dade & Broward County Chapter
  - Palm Beaches Chapter
- SENFC – Sustainable Events Network, Florida & Caribbean
- SITE – Society for Incentive Travel Excellence
  - Florida & Caribbean Chapter
- SKÅL – Skål International
  - Fort Lauderdale & Palm Beaches Club
  - Miami Club
- Visit Lauderdale

For more information about The Alliance, contact Chairman, Steven Pollock, CMP, at spollock@helmsbriscoe.com