



# Hosting a Grassland Conference

## Guidelines for the Local Organising Committee March 2019

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## **Introduction**

The NZGA Conference has been held since 1931, and is a major event for both the NZGA and the New Zealand pastoral industry, typically with 250-400 attendees including farmers, researchers, consultants and agribusiness professionals.

It is the only agricultural science conference that is delivered in the regions, alternating between North and South Islands. This is to encompass the variation in climate and farming systems found through New Zealand.

These guidelines are designed to help the Local Organising Committee (LOC) run a successful Grassland Conference in their region.

## **Conference Timetable**

### **Conference Year – minus two**

November Discuss potential location at AGM during conference

### **Conference Year – minus one**

May/June Hold first meeting to form LOC and book venue and accommodation

September LOC choose themes and logo

EO start to contact sponsors

November Venue confirmed at conference AGM

December Themes confirmed at Executive meeting

### **Conference Year**

March Papers accepted for conference

April LOC select field trip stops, chairpersons and speakers

National publicity begins\* (Exec responsibility)

April -Jun LOC Conference expenditure budget to Exec for approval

June/July Executive Committee LOC-Liaison visit to view venue and possibly field trip stops

Budget and programme finalised

July/August All sponsors confirmed

All papers refereed

Programme circulated

September Start of advertising (promotion)

Registrations OPEN

Journal of NZGA printed

October Local paper run through carried out

Start of radio advertising

Oct/Nov CONFERENCE

December Collating invoices for payment and forwarding of all documents to the Executive Office

Feedback from LOC

## Format

The conference is held over three days in early November. The format is typically:

- Starts 8.30-9 am on a Tuesday morning, finishing around lunchtime on Thursday afternoon. This can vary depending on the location and venue constraints. Location of the conference should be taken into consideration, as attendees prefer to get home on the final day.
- For the first two days, mornings are taken up with sessions presenting science papers, followed by field tours in the afternoon. On the third day all sessions present papers. This can vary depending on requirements (e.g. only one half day or one full day field tour).
- On the first morning, there is an expectation that there will be:
  - o One or two papers overviewing the region (15 min each) - climate, topography, regional challenges, agriculture in general (and grassland farming in particular), by respected and experienced local professionals, and;
  - o One to two papers delivered by leading farmers in the region describing their farming operations, and the challenges and opportunities they are addressing.
- The Conference Dinner is held on the second night.
- The NZGA AGM is normally held immediately prior to the Conference dinner.
- Additional social events can be planned.
- The Agronomy Society of New Zealand annual conference is often held in conjunction with the NZGA conference, typically via concurrent sessions on one or more mornings. The Agronomy Society may organise their own field tour, or join with the NZGA field tour.
  - o Concurrent sessions, including Agronomy papers, require rooms to hold at least half **(150+)** delegates.

## Conference Objectives

- Communicate new developments, latest research results, industry trends as well as regional and national issues affecting the pasture-based livestock industries.
- Facilitate networking with others in the pastoral industries.
- Create two-way communication – visitors learn about the host region, and the host region learns from visitors.
- Deliver a smoothly-run, stimulating conference at a reasonable cost.

An NZGA Exec member is appointed each year to provide assistance to the LOC. The chair of the LOC is an ex-officio member of the NZGA Exec the conference year.

## **Responsibilities**

The LOC, NZGA Executive Committee and NZGA Executive Office work together in preparing the conference, with an outline of the responsibilities of each listed below.

***The NZGA Executive and membership appreciate the effort put in by the LOC each year.***

### **Local Organising Committee**

The LOC organises and runs the majority of the event locally which includes:

1. Select and book venue/s (see [Conference Venue and Accommodation](#))
2. Choose the themes for conference (see [Conference Themes](#))
3. Choose local people to present the regional overview and farmer papers for the conference programme, and liaise with those people regarding their presentations including their written papers (see [Regional and Farmer Papers](#)) - LOC-liaison to assist
4. Provide itemised budget of expected expenses (NZGA provides a template) and arrange for invoice payments through NZGA Executive Office (see [Budget](#))
5. Organise venue management (including venue preparation and maintenance of a conference registration desk), audio-visual systems and catering (see [Conference Management](#))
6. Organise field tours, including host farms, transport, speakers and facilitators, Health & Safety Event management and Biosecurity procedures and toilet facilities and material for a Field Trip Booklet (see [Field Tours](#))
7. Arrange local publicity - discussion groups, local consultants and agribusinesses and their email databases and newsletters, local paper, local radio. Coordinate with national publicity as appropriate (see [Publicity](#)).
8. Provide nominations for NZ Grassland Trust Awards for the region (see [Appendix 1](#))

### **Feedback**

At the end of each conference, it would be appreciated if LOC members give feedback to the Executive on the conference, and suggestions to improve future conferences.

### **NZGA Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee's role is to support the LOC, organise presented papers, coordinate registration and national sponsors of the NZGA, and produce the Journal. Executive Committee responsibilities include:

1. Ratification of conference location (usually 24 months in advance).
2. Ratification of national themes for conference (18 months in advance)
3. Call for conference papers (early Dec), selection of science papers for inclusion in the programme and Journal of NZGA (early March), and correspondence with authors
4. Appoint one NZGA Executive Committee member to join the LOC (the "LOC-Liaison"). This person is the link between the LOC, Executive Office and Executive Committee, and will assist the LOC as required.
5. Endorse field day programme and venue
6. Ratification of LOC expense budget (June/July)
7. Development of the conference programme (see [Conference Sessions Programme](#)).
8. Preparation of the Conference Programme Booklet (which may incorporate the Field

- Trip Booklet) - in discussion with LOC. (EO)
9. Select session chairs and assignment of sponsors to sessions
  10. Supply of Session PowerPoint title slides (including relevant sponsors) and NZGA signage/banners as required
  11. Provision of insurance cover (see [Insurance](#)).
  12. Other responsibilities during the conference as per the 'Executive responsibilities to the national conference' guidelines.

### **NZGA Executive Office (EO)**

The EO is a professional position employed to manage the financial and administrative roles in support of the operation of the NZGA, including in the oversight and organisation of the conference. The EO supports the Executive committee to assist in fulfilling their responsibilities.

1. The EO is the initial point of contact to NZGA, and will provide guidance for LOC on any matters that arise during the organisation of, and at the conference.
2. Oversight of the conference budget including providing a template for the expense budget, plus budgets from previous conferences
3. Coordinate national sponsors
4. Manage the registration process for conference delegates.
5. The preparation and printing of the Conference Programme Booklet (which may incorporate the Field Trip Booklet).
6. Provide a final list of delegates to the LOC for printing of name-tags.
7. Pay invoices for goods and services on behalf of NZGA for the LOC (see [Budget](#)).
8. Sending newsletters and reminders out to NZGA members with conference information.
9. Guide the LOC in the preparation of the delegate packs which may include the provision of materials such as a pen, writing pad, hat, copy of Journal of NZGA, and any sponsors material.
10. At conference; assist the LOC with meeting and greeting delegates and late registrations, represent the NZGA executive to delegates at conference, ensuring the Executive fulfils its roles, troubleshoots issues with delegates, sponsors and programme delivery.

### **Structure and function of the Local Organising Committee**

**Five to eight** members are recommended, bearing in mind that others can be co-opted from local networks when the workload requires. Members with experience from attending previous NZGA conferences will be useful.

The chair or secretary/admin officer records minutes of the LOC meetings and sends a copy to the EO (for the Executive), and is responsible for collating the budget and sending invoices to the EO for payment.

Note that NZGA will pay for airfares, accommodation, conference fees, and other reasonable costs for **one** person from the LOC (generally the Chair) to attend the conference held in the year before the one in their region.

It is recommended that LOC members be allocated responsibility for a certain task. These can include:

- Budgets/Finance
- Publicity
- Venue
- Field Tours

- Social Events
- Health and Safety

Progress is reported at each LOC meeting.

The LOC Chair can allocate **up to 10** complimentary registrations to LOC members (see Section 7).

### ***Engaging Professional Services***

It is strongly recommended that the LOC contract local businesses or community groups to deliver some of the key functions at the conference, particularly:

- *Audio-visual services* – including sound, projection, and videoing of key presentations, for the main conference sessions and for field trips. This should include an on-site technician. Note that AV is increasingly specialised and reliable, high quality, delivery is essential for a smooth-running event.
- *Catering* – for morning teas, (packed) lunches, and the conference dinner.
- *Local Printing/promotional* – This could include the printing of the conference programme booklet, conference nametags and LOC shirts.
- *Social event(s)* – e.g. at the end of the first day. If such events are planned off-site (i.e. away from the main conference venue), local community groups (sports clubs, Lions or Rotary etc.) are often keen to help as a fundraiser for them. This is encouraged. Note, however, that if such groups do not have a license to provide alcohol at events over a certain number as required by law, the LOC will need to organise such (usually via the Local District Council, costing approximately \$250).
- *Toilets* – for field trips.

Professional conference organisers have been used to deliver the complete package for some conferences. Please discuss this with the LOC-Liaison Officer before investigating this option because there is a risk of duplicating the EO's role, which may affect the conference budget.

## **1. Conference Venue and Accommodation**

Before the conference is confirmed at a location, the Executive Committee must be satisfied that there is a venue capable of holding all delegates in one room (depending on the location this could be 250 – 400 people), with accommodation (in-house or close by) for typically 150 - 300 people. Note that attendees will travel to attend so accommodation within 30-45 min drive can be considered.

Because concurrent sessions are usually required (e.g. for the Agronomy Society, but sometimes also for the NZGA programme), the venue must ideally have at least one other room capable of holding 150+ people, or one large room that can be split into two or more break-out rooms.

### ***Venue requirements***

- large room for 250-400 delegates
- extra spaces for concurrent sessions or workshops (holding 150+ people)
- space for the Agronomy sessions (room size 100 people)
- suitable space for morning and afternoon teas
- suitable space and placement for sponsor displays (15+ displays)
- suitability for audio-visual and sound
- internet/Wi-Fi strongly recommended

The simplest option is to hire a single hotel complex where the conference programme, dinner and most of the accommodation can be provided. **NOTE** Any Contracts or Terms of Trade with a venue must be signed by the EO or NZGA President/AC Chair.

Consider access to conference rooms and ability to move people quickly around the venue. It is useful if the presentation room has an unobtrusive entry point so that latecomers can enter the sessions without distracting the speakers or audience. Consider also the ease with which buses for field tours can gain access to the venue for expediting quick loading and unloading of up to 300+ people attending the field tours.

### **Accommodation**

The LOC will need to investigate the availability of hotels and motels. Local tourism offices or motel/hotel associations are usually happy to help scope the accommodation options, and potentially organise block bookings for the conference dates. However, **block bookings are not essential**, since the conference delegates bear the responsibility for their own accommodation. If block bookings are made in advance, delegates need to know that they must advise hotel/motel operators that they are attending the conference, otherwise they may be turned away.

### **Personnel at Venue**

The LOC needs to have at least five people present at all times during the conference sessions including an overall Venue Coordinator who serves as the key contact person for the LOC, the Venue staff, and the NZGA EO and Executive Committee.

Often LOC members wear bright coloured clothing (organised by the LOC) to identify them to delegates.

An expert is also needed to look after the audio/visual system (typically as part of AV Contract), plus someone in charge of lights and someone to put on and take off lapel microphones. Two LOC members will likely be required to distribute 'roving' microphones during question times. An Executive member will liaise with the AV team during conference as well.

Another key role is to ensure that delegates move from morning and afternoon teas promptly back to the sessions, and from the sessions to the field tour buses, so that the programme stays on schedule. The LOC can expect long days and some trouble-shooting during the conference, including the day before the event.

## **2. Conference Programme**

### **Conference Theme**

Conference publicity is helped by using a major theme and the NZGA logo.

The LOC are responsible for developing a major theme. This needs to be ratified by the NZGA Executive Committee.

### **Paper Selection**

The Executive calls for paper offers for the Conference (December). The papers are selected at the March Executive meeting. Consideration is given to appropriate papers from local scientists, consultants, agribusiness and farmers.

### **Powhiri**

Where appropriate, and with care, the LOC is encouraged to engage with local iwi and invite a traditional welcome as part of the conference opening formalities. It may be appropriate for a closing ceremony as well.

## **Regional and Farmer Papers**

A traditional feature of Conference is the opening session in the programme with the inclusion of one or two papers describing the overall physical and climatic resources of the region and current local trends and challenges faced in agriculture, particularly trends in the grassland farming sector. These contribute strongly to the Conference objectives and, over time, they provide a valuable record of agricultural development in New Zealand.

Local farmer papers are also a key part of the Conference and it is desirable to have at least two of these. Examples from previous conferences can be found in the NZGA on-line Proceedings. Typically, these describe the farm history and resources, what's happening now (the farm system, key physical and, if appropriate, financial and environmental indicators), the owner's goals/aims/philosophy, comments about current management practices, and some thoughts towards the future.

It is up to the LOC to solicit local people to deliver both the regional and farmer papers. In deciding who to approach, the LOC should consider their experience and standing, as well as their ability to deliver a concise and stimulating address. The LOC is responsible for liaising with those people regarding their presentations. This includes their written papers, which are important contributions to the Journal of New Zealand Grasslands, and need to be submitted in time (mid-May) to meet the Journal printing deadline. The LOC-Liaison member is a key source of guidance to assist in this.

## **3. Budget**

**The NZGA Executive Committee is ultimately responsible for the budget and financial accounts of the NZGA Conference.**

### **Conference Expenses**

1. The conference expenses should be drafted as soon as practicable and finalised by June/July. An expense template will be provided by the EO which includes an executive administration cost. Prior conference budgets are also available.
2. When the budget is submitted to the Executive it should include sufficient detail for the Executive to understand items.
3. The LOC are responsible for the local content of the budget (e.g. venue, sound system, dinner, bus hire).
4. The Executive will indicate likely income from National sponsors. **Note that the LOC are not expected to pursue local sponsorship.**
5. The Executive will estimate the likely number of attendees and with consideration of the estimated cost of the conference will determine the conference registration fees.

**The guidelines below are required to meet the legal Accounting and Audit requirements for Non-Profit organisations.**

### **Conference Accounts**

The EO handles finance on behalf of the LOC, and the conference accounts are included in the main Association accounts. It is important that there is a clear audit trail for all income and expenditure.

*Income (registration and sponsorship):* Will be handled by the EO.

*Payments:* All invoices and receipts should be sent to the EO as soon as practicable at the beginning of the month for payment on the 20th. All invoices need to be approved by the LOC before payment. Earlier payment can be arranged in discussion with the EO. Note that the NZGA Audit Committee Process means that this may still be at least 7 working days after receiving approved invoices.

The Executive Office can process credit card payments.

NZGA can pay in advance for some conference requirements such as venue deposit or part payment to small companies or local volunteer groups.

- It is **ESSENTIAL** an invoice is obtained for each payment made (with payee's GST number where applicable) to be forwarded to the Executive Office (finance.nzga@gmail.com).  
NB: ensure that payments to non GST registered people do not include GST.
- **All conference invoices** must be addressed to:  
NZ Grassland Association  
11 Montrose St  
Mosgiel 9024

**There should be no reason for accounts to be paid by LOC members and then require reimbursement.**

As a non-profit incorporated society, it is important the NZGA follows good, clear accounting procedures on behalf of its members. It is important that **all** conference income and expenditure be channelled through the NZGA bank account. It is not acceptable, for example, for some income to be banked to a private account of one of the conference organisers, and repaid at a later date; or for cash payments to be made from money not banked.

#### Payment for Consultants or Facilitators

When looking at employing consultants as facilitators, for example, they should first be approached on the basis of making a voluntary contribution. However, where the LOC has established a need to pay for these professional services a recommendation is to be recorded in the LOC minutes to go to the Executive and an amount entered in the budget accordingly.

## **4. Conference Management**

### **Before the Conference (optional)**

At some conferences, providing a location for delegates to meet and have refreshments the evening prior to conference has been popular.

### **At the start of the Conference - delegates**

**Conference Registration** - An easy to find area (with good signage) should be set up for delegates to 'check in' for an hour on the night preceding the Conference, and from early on the first morning of the Conference.

The great majority of delegates will be pre-registered, and can be given:

- A name tag in a round-the-neck lanyard. Name tags must be printed on BOTH sides in a large font, with the NZGA logo included. It is not necessary to include sponsors logos on name tags.
- A bag or satchel (LOC organise,- ask EO).
- A Conference Programme Booklet.
- Copy of the Journal containing the papers presented (EO).
- NZGA hat, pen and writing pad (EO).
- Sponsors material. This may include leaflets and other items such as pens and water bottles.

**Non-registered attendees** - there may be late attendees who choose to turn up. They need to register and pay the late registration rate. Printed copies of the registration form can be used to collect name and credit card details.

### ***At the start of the Conference - sponsors***

Sponsors (14+) will have displays to set up at the start of the conference.

- Delegate an LOC member with the responsibility for liaising with sponsors and their requirements at the start of the conference. The final sponsor list will be available from the Executive Office.
- Adequate areas for sponsor displays will need to be identified prior to the conference. Morning and afternoon tea areas, where delegates gather, are ideal for these displays.
- Ideally a time should be set aside for sponsors to set up displays prior to registration (e.g. the preceding evening).
- For ease spaces can be pre-marked for displays (e.g. masking tape on the floor).
  - Currently AgResearch, as premium sponsors, is in the auditorium beside the stage
  - Level 1 sponsors have priority placement over Level 2 sponsors.

### ***Announcements***

Please inform the **session chairs** as to required announcements - regarding events and logistics. These might include:

- Things need to run to time, so please move promptly when asked
- Specific H&S requirements (also in Conference programme and on PowerPoint)
- How morning/afternoon teas might operate
- Where buses are leaving from
- If people are late to a session where to enter room
- Field days - Reminders on sunscreen, wet weather gear

### ***Presentations/Audio Visual***

It is **ESSENTIAL** that presentations are both heard and seen. PowerPoint is the standard method of visual presentation. This and the sound system must be thoroughly tested to reduce the risk of problems during conference.

At least two large screens may be needed and these should be clearly visible by all the audience.

### ***Session title PowerPoint***

Each session has a sponsor, whose logo should be put up on the screen at the start of that session along with the session title if possible. The LOC-Liaison will provide the necessary PowerPoint session title slides for inclusion in the audio-visual sequence to be used at the conference (the LOC is not required to compile these). The AV service provider will sort the title slides and speaker's slides into sequence ahead of each session.

Each presentation session typically consists of four to five papers with time for discussion. Sessions are chaired by Executive members. The LOC should brief session chairpersons on logistical requirements and other matters. It is essential for all local speakers to have a run through of their paper before the conference. Local farmer speakers should seek the advice of the LOC-Liaison to help them prepare their papers and visual aids.

### ***Microphones for question time***

Ideally, two roving microphones are needed.

Technology (such as SLIDO) may also be used for questions/facilitated discussions.

Where a number of people want to ask questions, the session chair will manage the order in which these are taken and ensure that the discussion is wound up at the scheduled time.

## ***Videoring of presentations***

Levy Oration, Presidential address, Keynote speakers. This should be done by the AV team as part of their contract for service (includes editing). **NOTE** - If the video can record audio from the speaker's microphone rather than the mike on the camera, it will help us with our videos and podcasts, if it is possible.

## ***AV Checklist***

This includes venue, field days and videoring of presentations.

Main conference room:

- Laptop for presenter
- Typically, two projection screens (one on each side of the presenter room)
- Monitor screen for presenter to see what they are presenting
- Second personal monitor for Chair to see
- Lectern + microphone
- 1 x handheld microphone for Chair
- 2 x lapel microphones for presenters
- 3-4 x roving handheld microphones for questions
- AV Tech person onsite throughout (usually part of quote)

Concurrent sessions:

- As above (will vary depending on group size/number)

Dinner:

- Microphone for presentations and President/NZGT Chair

Field tour venues:

- At least two large speakers with support stands to deliver clear sound to 300+ people (often under windy conditions)
- Microphone each for speaker and facilitator (n=2)
- Two-three roving microphones for questions

## ***Lunch and Tea Breaks***

Lunches and morning and afternoon teas are served close to the conference room. Layout of the drinks/food should be planned carefully with 4-6 separate stations for both speed of distribution and flow of people. Putting the milk and sugar on separate tables speeds up the process remarkably.

## ***NZGA and Agronomy Society AGMs***

The NZGA AGM is usually held around 5.30-6.00 pm immediately prior to the Conference Dinner. The AGM requires a meeting room suitable for 50 or more attendees and should be near to where the evening meal is to be served so that delegates can attend on time.

**NB** the field tour needs to finish at an appropriate time to return to the venue and enable attendees to change for dinner before the AGM.

The Agronomy Society also usually holds an AGM during the Conference. Their attendance is smaller than NZGA, and they may need a room for 20-30 people.

## ***Conference Dinner***

For the Conference Dinner, MCs and entertainment are NOT required. The conference dinner includes 4-5 award presentations which take up time. We have found that delegates appreciate some unstructured time during the evening to catch up.

At the dinner the NZ Grassland Trust will present five awards

- two local farmers and a rural professional
- the David Scott Memorial Award
- the "Ray Brougham Trophy" for services to the pastoral industry.

These are given by the Chair of the NZGT.

NZGA may also award a Life membership to the Association at the dinner, recognising service to the Association by a distinguished member.

### **Conference dinner run sheet**

<b>Annual General Meetings</b>	5:30 – 6:30
NZGA in x room	
Agronomy Society in x room	
<b>Dinner and presentations - location</b>	
Drinks	6:30 - 7:00
President Welcome (name)	7:05
Sponsors welcome (name, sponsor)	7:10
OPTIONAL- NZGA Life Membership Award citation (presenters name)	7:15
Life Member response	7:20
Main course served	7:25
NZGT Award citations (NZGT Chair)	8:00
2 Farmer Awards	
1 Agribusiness Award	
Dessert served	8:30
NZGT Award (NZGT Chair)	9:00
Ray Brougham Memorial Trophy citation and response	
Coffee	
Finish	9:45

## **5. Field Tours**

Typically, this is two half days or one full day. These need to fit around the science papers presented as the key function of the conference

A key role for LOC is organising these to:

- Give delegates an insight into farming in the region.
- Acquaint them with local grassland management practices.
- Where possible fit into, and illustrate, the Conference theme.
- Allow for more informal networking

**Field day Sponsors** - These field tours will have an associated sponsor so LOC/LOC-Liaison need to check for conflicts of interest with farm suppliers, invited speakers etc.

It is important that sponsors are given the opportunity to display banners etc., plus for a representative of the sponsoring company/organisation to make a short address (2-3 minutes) at the start of stop. This needs to be factored into the run sheet, as does a short thank-you (2-3 minutes) from an NZGA Executive Committee member recognising the generosity of the host farmer/farm family and contributions of other speakers.

The simplest approach is for all delegates to go to all field tour stops at the same time. This is a consideration for the LOC when selecting field tour host farms as it will require all-weather access for up to 10 buses and other vehicles to the chosen sites for presentations and discussion.

It may be necessary, or desirable, to split the field tours so that the audience can more

clearly hear/see the points under discussion however time will be lost moving people to and from speaking sites. Bear in mind, however, that the logistics become more complicated when the group is split.

A detailed run sheet for the field tour afternoons (or day) should be drawn up, specifying when buses depart and arrive at each location, exactly where the speakers and discussion will take place, who will be speaking and for how long, and who will be facilitating at each stop. It is a good idea to also have on-hand run sheets for the wet weather alternative programme, and for a split field tour option should either (or both!) of these be needed.

The Programme co-ordinator (LOC-Liaison) is responsible for advising the sponsors of their allocated field tour host farm and answering any queries that they have. The LOC-Liaison will advise the LOC Chair and LOC field tour sub-committee chair of this.

### ***Health and Safety***

NZGA will have a Health and Safety Event Management Plan that needs to be completed by the LOC. The LOC-Liaison will be responsible for the implementation of this for the Conference, including the Field tours. (See NZGA Event Management template)

### ***Biosecurity management***

NZGA will adopt the Industry agreed guidelines regarding biosecurity issues relating to taking conference attendees onto farms.

<https://www.dairynz.co.nz/media/5788853/biosecurity-wof-a4-brochure.pdf>

This will include advising attendees to ensure they have clean footwear, advising bus companies of biosecurity issues, and reducing additional vehicles on field tours and ensuring they are clean.

### ***Selection of Stops***

The LOC should nominate a number of potential stops that are linked to the conference themes. The field trip sub-committee plus the LOC chairperson should inspect all the potential stops and select the preferred ones together with speakers. No more than two main farms/themes should be included in any one afternoon. If the stop is at a large property with many facets, then it is advisable to let this occupy the whole afternoon. A wide range of farm activities should be covered without undue concentration on one farm management or technical aspect.

***Each stop should have an alternative wet weather plan including an option for going under cover if necessary.*** If wind is a potential issue, consider an alternative plan for going on either side of a hill/hedge/building for shelter.

Excessive time spent travelling in buses should be avoided with preferably no more than one hour spent travelling in any segment.

### ***Stop Management***

Once selected, each stop should have an LOC sub-committee member appointed to liaise with the speaker(s) and organise the stop. Speakers at each stop (including the farmer) should contribute practical pointers of relevance to the farm or local region, and avoid technical lectures.

Each stop should allow the delegates to walk over pastures and view stock rather than to sit or stand in one place for long periods. Chairpersons should be experienced facilitators, and good cordless microphones provided for speakers (need to handle windy conditions). Portable toilets (2-4) should be provided at each stop.

### ***Field Trip Booklet***

This provides background farm data and other relevant information for delegates and saves time discussing farm details during the field trip. The information presented should also highlight what the delegates may expect on the Field Trip. It may be usefully

incorporated into the Conference Programme Booklet. Booklets from previous conferences are available from the EO as examples.

### **Buses**

A bus should be taken around the field trip stops with the field trip sub-committee prior to the conference to check travel times between stops, likely time required to move delegates from buses to speaking sites and back again, and consider wet weather alternatives.

Adequate air conditioning and sound systems are needed in each bus.

Eating prepared lunches on the bus (collected in a paper bag as delegates leave the venue) saves time and has become a popular practice. In addition, fruit juice and/or water should be available midway through the afternoon.

As little time as possible should be spent getting on and off buses – filling buses individually outside the venue and giving each bus a name or number helps the process.

### **Alternative Tours**

Not required. Where appropriate, suggestions can be made about local “what to do’s” for people who arrive early or stay on after the Conference.

## **6. Publicity**

### **Local**

At most conferences, local people make up at least half of the delegates and publicity should focus on raising awareness of the national conference as a key agricultural science event.

Any publicity targeting registration should occur well before the Earlybird registration closes off (usually 30 Sept). Use of paid advertising - radio and newspaper is costly, ineffective and not recommended.

### **National**

Most delegates are members of the NZGA and receive regular publicity through newsletters. However, national papers and farming magazines can help publicise the conference to non-members through regular media releases in conjunction with the Executive.

Don't forget to use LOC members networks (email website registration link to discussion groups etc.)

## **7. Registration**

All conference delegates including those on the LOC should register on-line at the [www.grassland.org.nz](http://www.grassland.org.nz) Events page or download the registration form PDF.

**For Health and Safety we need a full list of people present.**

### **Complimentary Registrations**

- *LOC Registration* - The NZGA provides a complimentary NZGA membership to LOC members for a year (this also ensures LOC members are covered by NZGA Insurance and H&S Act).
  - The LOC Chair can allocate up to **10** complimentary registrations to LOC members and needs to provide these names to the EO so they are registered. These registrations do not cover the costs associated with meals, accommodation etc. This is also a reason to have a small LOC as paid conference registrations enable us to keep the cost of attendance

- reasonable.
- The LOC must check with EO/LOC-Liaison re any other complimentary registrations.
- Media - Bona fide members of the media are entitled to complimentary registration including lunches, but not the Conference Dinner or accommodation.
- Level 1 Sponsors - Each Level 1 sponsor receives a complimentary conference registration. This does not cover conference dinner or accommodation.
- NZGT Award Winners - The two NZGT Farm Award and the Regional Award winners and their partners receive complimentary Conference Dinner tickets but **pay all** other registration fees if they wish to attend other conference sessions.
- Field day Farmers - receive complimentary day registration but pay to attend the conference dinner.
- Invited facilitators and Guest speakers - NZGA Executive allocates complimentary registration if required. **NOTE** many companies are prepared to pay these costs in support of the Association.
- Other Grassland Organisations - The NZGA has a reciprocal agreement with the New South Wales and Victorian Grassland Associations whereby visiting Presidents or their nominee have complimentary registration including meals and the Conference Dinner. *Accommodation costs are not included.*

## 8. Conference Sessions Programme

### **Programme**

The NZGA Executive Committee LOC-Liaison is responsible for organising the Conference programme, in consultation with the LOC. (See Programme Co-ordinator)

The conference programme is drafted after the March Executive meeting, and available by mid-August for people to view when registering for the Conference.

Programmes are emailed or mailed to a variety of national organisations (EO).

A printed Conference Programme Booklet should be supplied to all delegates on arrival at the Conference. This can be combined with the "[Field Trip Booklet](#)" into a single booklet. The EO will help in preparing this but this can be printed locally.

This booklet is limited to farm visit information, not advertorial articles, promotional or non-peer reviewed science.

### **Journal of NZ Grasslands**

The Journal, containing all the papers presented at the Conference, is published before the conference, which is the responsibility of the NZGA editor. Copies of the Journal will be supplied to the LOC immediately prior to the Conference to be given to all delegates when they register.

## 9. Insurance

The NZGA has insurance to cover potential losses and damage to any equipment that is used. The NZGA has public liability insurance through Crombie Lockwood, Palmerston North. This covers NZGA members or those acting directly for the association and provides insurance against gross negligence to the point where the injured party may claim for exemplary damages. This, however, is a very rare event in New Zealand.

## ***Appendix 1 - NZ Grassland Trust Awards***

NZGT Awards are made each year at the NZGA Conference, usually at the Conference Dinner. They include two farming awards, a regional award and the Ray Brougham Trophy. The trustees administering the Trust's fund are all NZGA past presidents.

### ***Farming Awards***

Each year the Trust presents up to two awards, for excellence in grassland farming, to enterprises within the Annual Conference region. Nominations are solicited from the LOC and individuals, consultants and relevant organisations in the host region, and are usually the farm-owning partners, but can be managers or sharemilkers. Nominations should be accompanied by a brief bios of the nominated people - this helps the NZGT selection process considerably.

The major requirements sought include:

- Good grassland farming - an impressive, profitable grassland-based business, run for at least five years on the property.
- Innovative approach - using the latest grassland technology effectively.
- Sustainable management - a good degree of sustainability in the enterprise and a strong responsibility for environmental matters.
- Communication skills - passing on good grassland farming skills to others in the region, including local effort.

Each winner receives a framed certificate and five years' NZGA subscription, to enable them to accumulate the latest grassland information through the NZGA Annual Conference and its Proceedings.

### ***The NZGT Regional Award***

This award was introduced in 1997 and is made to an appropriate person, usually based in the region where the annual NZGA Conference is being held. It recognises exceptional effort that supports technology development and application, to help maintain New Zealand farming's competitive edge.

### ***The Ray Brougham Trophy***

The Ray Brougham Trophy was instituted in memory of Dr Ray Brougham, director of DSIR's Grasslands Division from 1970 to 1985, an NZGA Life Member and GMT Chairman, who died suddenly in late 1993, not long after having organised the XVII International Grassland Congress in New Zealand and Queensland, arguably the most successful event of its kind.

When Ray died his family donated a bronze statue of a seed sower, and the Trust associated it with its special award for an outstanding national contribution towards the New Zealand grassland industry.

### ***David Scott Memorial Award***

This Award was introduced in 2019 and is instituted in memory of Dr David Scott who, in 2018, left a significant endowment to the NZ Grassland Trust for the benefit of members of the NZ Grassland Association.

It will be awarded annually to a mid-career and developing scientist /agribusiness specialist/ innovator associated with the pastoral farming industries who seeks to undertake travel for conference attendance or further (postgraduate) study with a focus on hill country or high-country research.