

TO: ALA Executive Board

SUBJECT: Site selection criteria

BOARD REQUEST: Board Feedback

CONTACT PERSON:

Earla Jones, Conference Services Director

Lessa Pelayo-Lozada, ALA President

Patty Wong, ALA Immediate Past President, Conference Committee Board Liaison

Kathy Carroll, ALA Executive Board Member, Conference Committee Board Liaison

Larry Neal, ALA Executive Board Member

DATE: June 22, 2023

BACKGROUND:

To help inform the site selection criteria discussion.

Criteria for conference site selection and any subsequent changes

Conforming to ALA Policy

Cities shall not be selected where state laws would require libraries in the city to conduct business in any manner that violates approved policies of the American Library Association at the time the site selection is made.

<http://www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/policymanual/updatedpolicymanual/section1/7conferences#A.7.1>

All ALA Division selections shall be made in conformity with Section VIII of the ALA Policy Manual, "Division National Conferences, Preconferences, and Related Activities."

<http://www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/policymanual/updatedpolicymanual/section1/operatingagreement#division>

For ALA Annual Conference and LibLearnX, site selection is based on the recommendation of ALA management in consultation with the ALA Conference Committee. For ALA Division conferences and events, site selection is based on the recommendation of ALA management in consultation with the unit's board. Final approval of all site selections rests with the ALA Executive Board.

Site Selection Priority Criteria

- Safety of all attendees regardless of gender, race, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, beliefs, or any other attribute, based on a review of community efforts or programs designed to protect the safety of attendees.
- Compliance with ALA policy prohibiting the selection of a city where there are state laws that require libraries in the location to conduct business in any manner that violates approved policies and core values of ALA at the time the recommendation is made. (See Policy Conformance above.)
 - Note: Legislation that is on the books but not yet passed in any city or state under consideration may be a factor if it would: repeal existing legal protections or prohibit the passage of legal protections against discriminatory or exclusionary policies or practices; allow discrimination or exclusionary policies or practices against individuals in employment, housing, public accommodations, services, or otherwise; or prohibit individuals from accessing facilities.
 - This PPA resource provides ongoing legislative updates:
<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/adverse-legislation-states>.
- Accessibility of the venue, transportation and lodging for attendees with disabilities.
- Affordability for attendees, exhibitors and the association.

- Availability of exhibit space, hotel rooms, meeting space on the preferred pattern of days and dates. The main hotels and convention center must be in a centralized location, close to cultural attractions (landmarks, museums, concert halls, theaters, and restaurants).
- Ease of travel to and from the city via air, train, and bus, as well as local ground transportation to and from various airports, terminals and hotels.
- Commitment of the location to sustainability.
- Rotational fairness geographically considering all ALA, units' and affiliates' events to provide the maximum opportunity for members to attend.
- Rotational fairness to consider the impact of a national event on a state chapter.
- Impact of state travel bans on members' ability to attend.
- Host city and libraries' interest in collaboration/ability to collaborate.

Change of Site Criteria

If legislation or other uncontrollable circumstances change for a selected destination, the ALA Executive Board in consultation with ALA management and the appropriate committee or board may determine that alternative sites should be considered. Factors considered for changing a location include:

- Opportunity to mitigate the negative change by assisting local colleagues in educating the community and supporting local businesses in alignment with ALA's core values.
- Availability of an alternative location that meets the original criteria to host the event.
- Lead time to inform members, adjust staff logistics, reassign meeting rooms, and modify exhibit floor plans.
- Potential financial penalties to the association to fail to meet contractual obligations for the venue(s), hotel blocks, destination services, etc.
- Potential financial impact to attendees who may have booked airfare or based their decision to submit a program proposal in part based on the location of the event.

General considerations/understandings

- No conference/meeting site is immune from future political actions or legislation contrary to our values.
- Conference planning cycles may begin as early as 10 years out; we monitor but cannot predict what may happen in a host city or state.
- We will use language in our hotel/convention center contracts that specifically spells out our civil rights' values and principles and will be proactive in seeking sites that best align with those values and principles.
- We represent members, stakeholders, libraries, schools, and communities in all 50 states.

- While offering high quality educational opportunities we also seek to educate around and to share with host communities our core values and principles, especially regarding EDIA.
- Conferences and events offer inclusive content and are planned to be inclusive and welcoming to all. Units will consult the recommendations from the ALA Task Force on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion to guide planning and will work with appropriate groups as needed (e.g., ALA ODLOS) as necessary to meet this goal.
- An intended outcome of association events and conferences will be to raise awareness and ultimately, to impact changes to policies and law that are discriminatory. We will use our presence to educate and inspire action.