

Selecting an AAW Symposium Site

The basic **guidance** is from the Policies and Procedures Section D paragraph 2.

“The Board shall schedule National Symposia in a pattern that traverses the geographic United States from year to year, such that AAW members in different regions of the country will have an opportunity to attend this event at least once every five years without having to travel a great distance. The Board shall endeavor to schedule symposia sites at least three years in advance.”

The **process**:

1. AAW conference committee and Executive Director define a geographic region for a symposium site. For example, for 2013 the region was roughly a triangle formed by Jacksonville, FL, Mobile AL, and Chattanooga TN.
2. The Meeting Planner identifies candidate sites. These sites must have:
 - Conference or Convention Center facilities for 17 demonstrations, tradeshow, galleries, banquet.
 - Airport with service to major US cities.
 - Hotel space for 1,100 – 1,200 attendees.
 - Be in the general geographic region provided by the AAW
3. The Meeting Planner presents quotes and available dates submitted by the candidate cities to the AAW board. These quotes are basically the cost of the convention center, rates for the hotels, and promotional information provided by the city. For 2013 candidate cities were Atlanta, Orlando, and Tampa.
4. The AAW board evaluates the sites considering:
 - Date available must be in late June early July
 - Convention center cost
 - Hotel rates
 - Strength of AAW local chapters in the region
 - Tourist appeal

The evaluations process is a bit of apples and oranges. The AAW received a wide range of proposals for symposiums in 2012, 2013, 2014. Convention center rent ranged in cost from free to \$60K. Hotel rooms ranged from \$112 to \$200. The numbers of AAW chapters near candidate cities ranged from 1 small one to 5 larger ones. AAW members have expressed interest in having the Symposium in some of the candidate cities. The promotional information features historical, cultural, natural, and tourist attractions were of course different. Through discussion the board narrows the list and reaches a consensus.

5. The board votes to approve the symposium in a particular facility.
6. The Meeting Planner then negotiates a contract on behalf of the AAW.
7. Symposium sites under contract are announced on the Web.