

ISA SITE SELECTION POLICIES FOR ANNUAL MEETING AND OTHER CONFERENCES.¹

General Objectives and Principles

Selection of venues for ISA's conferences has been left to the discretion of its executive director. In turn, the executive director's decision is guided by a combination of recent ISA Governing Council policy decisions, past practices, and a set of general principles in identifying the appropriate sites for ISA's annual conference and those other conferences overseas for which ISA is a major participant and sponsor. The general principles and objectives include:

Rotation of Sites

ISA rotates its annual convention across the United States and Canada in order to equalize travel costs and time demands for members in different parts of North America as well for the overseas members who may be traveling from Asia, Europe, Latin America, and the Middle East (the majority of non-North American participants). The rotation includes concerns about weather challenges during the winter months.

Urban Settings

We hold our meetings in large urban settings in order to guarantee quality transportation access to venues and to a variety of activities for members after program hours.

Choices of Venue Properties

It is the practice of the association to hold the conference in a hotel setting rather than a convention center.² This is done to reduce costs and to create an atmosphere less impersonal than that of a convention center. The "convention hotel" then typically hosts nearly all the program activities of the annual program, and it provides typically the bulk of sleeping rooms contracted. Depending on the size of the hotel, we contract for overflow properties within a short distance of the hotel for additional sleeping rooms and occasionally some program activities. Note that the decisions to stay away from convention centers, coupled with the growing size of the convention, limits site selection to a few major cities across North America and Europe.

Minimizing Costs

In combination with a variety of other objectives, sites are chosen to reduce costs to participants and the association. Typically, this is a function of negotiations with hotels over minimum occupancy, the specific dates of the conference, and costs for sleeping rooms. Whenever possible we contract with hotels only under the condition that they waive fees for the use of rooms for program activities, and for some basic audio visual services.

¹ These policies were adopted by the ISA Governing Council, at its annual meeting, February, 2009, and takes effect for new contracts. We gratefully acknowledge Michael Brintnall and APSA's work on a similar document which has helped greatly the evolution of this policy for ISA.

² We avoid convention centers for two reasons: extraordinary expenses charged by convention centers and the perceived impersonal nature of the facilities.

Non-Discrimination Provisions for Siting Decisions

As with most professional associations, ISA is committed to high standards of professional conduct and ethics in choosing a site, planning, conducting its meetings, and including protection of academic freedom, equitable access to opportunity, and a commitment to non-discrimination. We will meet in only those cities in North America and overseas where all of our members are welcome; and we will not meet in any city with known discrimination practices against any groups of its citizens. In order to protect the association from unknown actions between the time of signing of contracts and future actions of state or local governments, we will include the following language in all future contracts:

“ISA reserves the right of termination of this agreement, without penalty or liability, if the government of the city in which the hotel is located establishes or enforces laws that, in the estimation of ISA, abridges the civil rights of any ISA member on the basis of gender, race, color, national origin, sexual orientation, marital status, physical disability, or religion.”

Organized Labor

ISA will pursue two particular practices regarding labor issues. First, we will have in future contracts a provision that would allow ISA to terminate a contract in the case of “labor disputes and strikes without penalty or liability.”

Second, ISA will make every effort to give preference to a suitable unionized hotel and/or service provider, cost considerations being otherwise equal.

Accessibility

ISA works closely with all of our hotels to insure that all the facilities at the conference are consistent with ADA compliance. In addition, ISA’s governing council has agreed to provide accessibility and assistance to those with hearing impairment upon early notification by attendees on the program regarding their needs.