

ASLE Conference Proposal Guidelines

We welcome proposals to host our biennial conference (held in odd-numbered years).

About the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment (ASLE)

The Association for the Study of Literature and Environment (ASLE) seeks to inspire and promote intellectual work in the environmental humanities and arts. Our vision is an inclusive community whose members are committed to environmental research, education, literature, art and service, environmental justice, and ecological sustainability. ASLE was founded in 1992 by a group of scholars and writers interested in exploring the meanings of the natural environment and the complexities of human relationships with each other, and with the more-than-human world, and to deepening the impact of these explorations both within and beyond the classroom.

Conference Overview

Our conferences typically run for five days, from Tuesday to Saturday, ideally in mid- to late June. In addition to the paper sessions that are typical of most scholarly conferences, our conferences feature pre-conference seminars conducted by leaders in the field, roundtable discussion sessions, creative readings, workshops, field trips, sessions specifically geared toward graduate students and professionalization issues, and plenary sessions with prominent scholars and writers. We set aside one afternoon to feature field excursions, which offer a mix of activity levels and cultural experiences designed to highlight the specific history and geography of the region. Past plenary speakers have included Sandra Steingraber, Robert Bullard, Linda Hogan, Zakes Mda, Donna Haraway, and Donald Worster, to name just a few and highlight our commitment to excellence.

How Sites Are Selected

Site selection is the responsibility of our voting board, including the president, vice-president, diversity officer, and ASLE's six-member Executive Council.

Conference Proposal

To aid us in our decision-making, we ask that you prepare a proposal and send it to ASLE's current president (see <http://www.asle.org/discover-asle/leadership-staff/> for current contact information). The proposal may be prepared by the ASLE member(s) who would serve as conference host(s), but if hosted on a campus we would also like to see administrative approval in the form of an authorizing signature from a dean, provost, college or university president, or some other administrator who can pledge the college's or university's support. Proposals to be held in conference centers or retreat centers will also be considered if they have the requisite facilities and staffing to meet ASLE's needs.

The proposal should address the following:

1. Who are the ASLE member(s) on-site who would serve as conference host(s)? A team of local or regional members is the model that works best, given how much work is involved in an event of this size.

2. Is funding, or other support, perhaps in the form of a donation of university services, available from your college or university? Typically, we have received sponsorship/support in the amount of at least \$6,000. If funding is not available, is it possible that conference-planning services (registration, room rental fees, printing, staff support, etc.) could be donated in an amount approximating \$6,000 to \$8,000? If funding is offered, that amount could be recouped by the college or university through various services provided (catering, lodging, etc.). Relatedly, is the college or university willing to help make the conference sustainable—in terms of using recycled materials whenever possible, contributing to carbon off-setting, or in some other way?

3. Is there a conference-planning office at your college or university that can handle the registration process and help with other facets of conference planning (help coordinate the book exhibit, prepare informational packets, coordinate printing, assign audio-visual equipment to session rooms, etc.)? If there is not a designated conference-planning office, is there other staff assistance that could accomplish the same tasks? The ASLE president would put together the actual program, but the onsite details will be handled by the ASLE member(s) at the host college or university.

4. Is there adequate lodging, both in dorms and nearby hotels? In recent years, we have attracted 700-900 attendees. The majority would likely prefer the reduced costs of dorm housing, but some will prefer a hotel, and we want to be sensitive to the accessibility needs of a variety of potential attendees. Some would find nearby camping opportunities appealing. If the lodging options are more than a 5-10 minute walk from the conference site, can transportation arrangements be made for conference attendees—perhaps a shuttle that runs routinely between the lodging sites and the conference site?

5. Is there an adequate auditorium for the plenary sessions (seating at least 600, and preferably more) and classrooms or other rooms to handle our concurrent panel sessions (about 17-20 concurrent sessions per time slot)?

6. How good is access to the college or university by air? How far is it to the nearest airport, and does that airport serve major airlines? How would transportation from airport to campus be handled?

7. If you were to host the conference, are there any connections with the local community that would be of interest to ASLE members? Are you willing to explore the possibility of civic or corporate sponsorships for certain events (receptions, plenaries)?

8. Are there any other attractions of the site or the surrounding area that may be of special interest to ASLE? Possible field trips?

9. What are the resources available to help make the conference as sustainable as possible? Can local and/or organic food options be provided? Does the venue have sustainability practices and plans? See the full “Sustainability at ASLE Conferences” document at the ASLE website (http://www.asle.org/wp-content/uploads/ASLE_Conferences_Sustainability.pdf).

10. If the proposal is not accepted for the next biennial conference, are you interested in being considered for future conferences?

Thank you very much for your interest in ASLE, and we look forward to working with you.