



Guidance for ASTC Forum Chairpersons:

Theme: Many of the most successful ASTC Forums have been centered around a theme. Past examples include: New technologies, sustainability, music spaces, theatre automation, acousticians, large venues, etc. If no theme is established, the members-on-members format in which members are invited to present to the group on a topic of their choice has also been successful.

Timing: Most Forums have been held in September or October. When scheduling the Forum in September, avoid dates that might exclude some of our members, such as High Holy Days.

Format: Many ASTC Forums have included venue tours, invited speakers, consultant roundtables, and organized attendance of cultural events. But there is no requirement that a particular format be followed, as long as there are meaningful opportunities for continuing education, member collaboration, social interaction, and some time set aside for a business meeting of the Society. Some earlier Forums used a retreat format. And our 2019 Forum in Cuba was a unique example of a special program organized by professional tour guides.

Location: Theme, format, and location are often intertwined. Typically, the Conference Committee recommends a location to the Board of Directors, based on Committee discussions and member input. Any ASTC member is welcome to suggest a location, theme, or format to the Conference Committee. In general, we try to move the Forum location around the continent so that all members have an opportunity to participate in person. Some Forums have been co-located with other conferences when the opportunity has arisen (e.g., OISTAT Architecture Commission Meeting, NATEAC), but most of our Forums have been stand-alone events solely for our members.

Accommodations: Once a theme, time, format, and location for the Forum have been established, the Chairperson(s) should explore:

- **Hotel:** This may include visiting potential hotel sites and reviewing the meeting rooms, typical hotel rooms, and catering options. This process should begin 6-9 months in advance, and contracts should be completed 4-6 months in advance.
- **Restaurant for the Forum dinner:** Traditionally the ASTC members meet for a special meal on one night of the Forum. Other nights of the Forum can be left free for members to explore the location, or scheduled events (e.g., organized attendance of performances.)
- **Tours:** If the Forum will include venue tours, make arrangements with the venue, or solicit the assistance of the ASTC consultant most closely involved with the venue to be the point-of-contact for making the arrangements.
- **Transportation:** If tours, Forum events, or the Forum dinner restaurant are not within reasonable walking distance of the hotel, arrangements should be made for transportation of members. This usually involves arranging for a bus service. In all cases, plans should

be made to provide transportation for members with limited mobility. Consideration should also be given to the climate and anticipated weather. A “walkable” location may become unwalkable depending on the weather.

- **Contracts:** While the research is typically accomplished by the Forum chairperson(s)/committee, the contracts are executed, and payments made by the ASTC Secretary.

Audio-Visual Services: In order to make the ASTC Forums as accessible as possible to all members, we are committed to an in-person/hybrid model insofar as is practical. Typically, this means that presentations, roundtables, and the business meeting are made accessible to all members, even those who are not present, electronically. This is a relatively new effort, and our goal is to create an AV committee for each Forum. The ASTC owns some AV equipment (currently stored at the home of the ASTC Secretary) and we also contract with the meeting facility for AV equipment. The ASTC Secretary executes the AV equipment contracts but has other significant responsibilities during ASTC meetings and should not be expected to manage the AV equipment.

Final thoughts: The goals of our Forums are to enhance our collective practices, learn from each other, and from our guests, discuss issues related to our work and to provide us with an opportunity to interact socially. Creativity and new ways to make Forums more accessible, inviting, and engaging are always welcome. If you have an idea, propose it!

Thank you for your service to the ASTC!

The ASTC Conference Committee