

## Florida Library Association Conference FAQ

### 1. Number of Participants

- How many people attend the annual FLA conference? *Conference registrants – 500 to 700; Exhibitors – 120 to 150*
- How many exhibitors participate in the FLA conference? *90 to 100 companies exhibit*

### 2. Hotel Accommodations

- How many hotel rooms does FLA require at the annual conference? *Between 600 to 700 hotel rooms (for one night each) during the week of conference.*
- Why do FLA hotel room rates sometimes seem higher than rates paid by other conferences? *The FLA conference is not large enough to get highly discounted hotel room rates.*
- Why does FLA sometimes run out of hotel rooms before the conference begins? *Hotels only hold as much space at the conference rate as they and FLA agree to. If this number of rooms is filled, FLA does not have to pay for meeting rooms. If all the hotel nights held are not filled, FLA has to pay for meeting room space so FLA is conservative in the number of rooms held.*

### 3. Programs and Meeting Rooms

- How many meeting rooms does FLA require? *Usually 8 to 10 breakout rooms per program time slot along with a large ballroom for events that can be subdivided into medium sized event space.*
- How are meeting rooms assigned? *The FLA Conference Committee and FLA's conference management company assign programs to meeting rooms based on a number of factors: program coordinator/speaker request, historical scheduling of special events, potential conflict with other programs, estimated seating needed, and efforts to spread multiple programs on a similar topic across the days of the conference.*
- Why are two or more popular programs scheduled in the same time slot? *Unlike a workshop, conferences offer multiple options at one time. More than one may be of interest to you. We would rather have more interesting programs than you can attend than an array of programs that do not interest you. Other conference participants do not have the same interests as you and we have to consider a wide array of interests.*
- Why aren't programs repeated so that more people can hear popular speakers? *See response above. We have limited meeting room space and would rather provide a different program in each room during every time slot than repeat programs. We believe this approach meets the needs of more people.*
- Does FLA have program tracks? *FLA is not currently using program tracks at the conference. We used them in the past along with a form so attendees could get speaker signatures as evidence of which sessions they attended but there was little interest so this service was discontinued. The Conference Committee does pay a lot of attention to assuring that various topics get covered, however, just as if tracks were being published.*
- How do you request to speak or coordinate a program or suggest a speaker for the FLA conference? *Information and a form for proposing an FLA conference program is available at the Association web site: [www.flalib.org](http://www.flalib.org). Suggestions for speakers can be*

*made to the Chair of the Conference Committee whose contact information is available at <http://www.flalib.org/committees.html>.*

- How do you submit a poster session proposal and how are poster sessions selected?  
*Poster sessions at the FLA conference are managed by the Continuing Education Committee. The committee advertises the opportunity to submit an electronic proposal, accepts proposals, and determines which proposals are accepted. Information about proposing is available on the FLA web site by late fall each year.*
- Does FLA pay speaker fees and expenses? *Yes, FLA pays fees and reimburses travel expenses for selected speakers. These speakers may have been invited to speak by the Conference Committee or they may have requested payment when submitting a program proposal.*

*FLA cannot pay speaker fees or expenses to FLA members or persons working in Florida libraries, library service organizations, and library education organizations.*

#### 4. Conference Locations

- How are conference sites selected? *The FLA Executive Director, staff from the conference management contractor, and the Vice-President/President Elect for whose conference the location is being selected work together to develop a list of possible sites. A Request for Proposals is sent out to potential sites in the preferred geographic area and proposals are then compared. Site visits are made and negotiations on costs begin with one or several sites identified as having adequate space and meeting FLA needs. The FLA Executive Board makes the final decision.*
- Where is the next FLA conference going to be and how far in advance do we secure a location? *The 2009 FLA conference will be at the Doubletree Hotel at the Entrance to Universal Orlando, May 5 – 8. Typically, the work of locating and securing a conference site begins two to three years before the conference date. We are currently working with a hotel in Orlando for the 2010 conference.*
- What sites have historically had the highest registration? *Conferences held along the I-4 corridor (Daytona Beach, Orlando, Tampa Area) have had the highest attendance. Conferences held in the far south or north of the state have had significantly lower registration.*
- Why do we go to different sites, instead of staying in one location? *Moving the conference around the state allows more people to attend across a period of years. FLA offers single-day registration which is attractive to people living/working in the area where the conference is being held. Moving around the state allows more of this type of participants to attend. Also, the conference location, to some extent, is based on the preferences of the person who will be President during the conference.*

#### 5. Revenue

- How much revenue does the FLA Annual Conference contribute to support the services and programs of the Association? *The amount of revenue varies from year to year but FLA relies on the conference to provide from 35 to 45 percent of total revenue.*

## 6. Planning Process and Calendar

- What member groups are involved in overall conference planning? *The FLA Conference Committee has the lead in conference planning. The Local Arrangements Sub-Committee of the Conference Committee also has a vital role. However, because FLA uses a program proposal process for most conference programs, any member group can also participate in the planning process by submitting proposals and many do.*
- When do registration and hotel reservations open for the FLA Annual Conference? *Typically, conference registration begins in December/January. Hotel reservations can be made at any time after FLA has signed a contract with the conference hotel, but the reservation information is usually not available until December/January when the preliminary program is published.*

## 7. Other

- Why aren't meals included in the conference registration or provided by vendors? *Hotel food and beverage costs are very high compared to restaurants. Providing meals would require a significant increase in registration cost. Also, many people prefer to eat outside the hotel and would not want to pay the higher rate to have meals provided. In 2008 we added an early morning Coffee Klatch that some people used as breakfast. We also provide snacks and beverages in the Exhibits in mid-morning and mid-afternoon. These are provided at no additional cost.*