



**Society for Music
Teacher Education**

Procedures and Values for Symposium Site Selection

How is a site selected for the biennial Symposium on Music Teacher Education?

[The SMTE Executive Board](#) is solely responsible for selecting the Symposium location through a deliberative process and vote. Executive Board members are selected from among the SMTE membership by vote of the current board members every two years (in April of even years), with most offices holding six-year staggered terms. Any SMTE member may self-nominate to be considered for a position on the Executive Board.

A call for site proposals for the biennial Symposium is circulated via the SMTE website. Members are encouraged to propose a suitable venue and offer the support of their home institution. These proposals, as well as other options investigated by the Symposium Chair, are considered by the Board, where a decision is made on the final location. In the event that unanticipated circumstances make the selected site no longer compatible with the values described in this document after a decision has been announced, the Board will make a decision about moving or cancelling the Symposium based on available time and alternatives.

Historically the Symposium has had strong ties to The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, as UNCG music education faculty members were instrumental in creating the very first symposium in 2005. The first five Symposia were all held in Greensboro, North Carolina due to the strong support provided by that institution and its faculty. As the organization has grown, a desire to broaden the reach and inclusivity of the Symposium has led to consideration of other venues.

This statement of values and description of procedures was adopted by the SMTE Executive Board on March 3, 2020.

What values are considered when choosing a site?

Many values are weighed when selecting a site for the Symposium, in terms of the state, city, and actual meeting venue. While no site will ever be ideal, the Executive Board strives to balance the values of the organization in selecting a site that reflects the elements described below. The order of these elements as listed here does not represent a hierarchy or priority; all are valued.

- *Availability* – SMTE values the gathering of music teacher educators early in the academic year of odd calendar years, in harmony with the plethora of other professional meetings that exist in a two-year cycle. To allow for attendees to plan ahead, dates in September of odd years are desirable in order to secure venue commitments 12 months or more in advance. As SMTE also values an inclusive attendee population, conflicts with holidays (including religious holidays) are avoided.
- *Geographical location* – Considering representation among the attendee population, possible rotation within the six [NAfME regions](#) of the United States is examined in site selection.
- *Inclusive values* – The site should reflect a cultural and governmental commitment to inclusive values, including a positive record of nondiscrimination for all peoples inclusive of race; ethnicity; gender; sexual orientation; gender identity; age; religion; language; national origin;

physical ability; health conditions; socioeconomic status; marital, domestic, or parental status; veteran status; and citizenship status.¹

- *Ease of travel* – Recognizing that travel to professional meetings involves costs in terms of both time and money, the site should allow for as direct travel as possible, at as minimal cost as possible, for attendees coming from varied regions of the country.
- *Facilities* – SMTE values the small, focused nature of the Symposium, and therefore seeks a venue that has sufficient space for 300-400 attendees while preserving a format that allows for common plenary meetings mixed with breakout presentations and ASPA meetings. Accessibility for individuals with disabilities, family-friendly spaces, and cost of the venue are also considered.
- *Lodging* – The site area should offer sufficient availability of hotel rooms at affordable rates, and in proximate location to the meeting spaces.
- *Logistics* – Other logistical factors are considered, including availability and costs of food, audiovisual support and cost, availability and cost of local transportation between lodging and meeting spaces, and a record of fair labor practices by the vendors to be engaged.
- *Local support* – The Symposium represents a professional collaboration of music teacher educators. Unlike larger meetings, SMTE does not engage a professional conference planner or hire a firm to perform conference coordinating services. All conference planning is done by volunteers as a service to the organization. Therefore, the local support of one or more higher education music institutions is critical to the success of any Symposium site. The Executive Board values and relies on the collegial support of music teacher educators, graduate students, undergraduate students, administrators, and many others within a local higher education institution when selecting a site.

How can SMTE members exercise agency in Symposium site selection?

SMTE members who wish to have a voice in the Symposium site selection can participate in one of two ways. The first is to self-nominate for open board positions on the biennial cycle in the spring of even years. The Executive Board reflects and acts on behalf of the membership of SMTE, and encourages new voices. Second, any member may submit a site proposal when the call for such proposals is released, according to the announced timeline. Music teacher educators have close connections with institutional resources and facilities that can meet the needs of a small professional meeting like ours, and the Executive Board strongly encourages members to volunteer these assets to contribute to the success of our organization's biennial meeting.

¹ We encourage members to read the American Educational Research Association's *Annual Meeting Site Selection and Review Procedures* document, available on the AERA Association Policies page: <https://www.aera.net/About-AERA/AERA-Rules-Policies/Association-Policies>