



## **RFP for hosting the annual meeting for the Eastern Chapter of the Society of American Travel Writers**

**The Eastern Chapter of the Society of American Travel Writers (SATW) is soliciting bids from interested resorts, cities, counties, regions and states to host its annual meeting to be held in 2023 and in future years.**

As you review this Request for Proposal, please know it comes with sincere appreciation for your interest and a commitment from SATW and its members to encourage responsible travel to the areas we visit. **Please see page 7 to learn more about SATW and its members.**

**What is a chapter meeting?** In addition to the national SATW convention each year, the individual geographic chapters of the organization each conduct an annual meeting. It is intended to provide on-site destination story and photo opportunities, give members the opportunity to exchange ideas and materials, offer professional development sessions and allow members to conduct chapter business. We typically have between 50 and 100 attendees.

### **Why Host Us?**

You'll have access to some of the top travel professionals in the industry, who will approach your destination with an eye to featuring it and your partners in everything from newspapers and magazines to web publications, broadcast media, and social media. You have the opportunity to further develop your media lists and to get to know working travel writers and editors, possibly developing long-lasting and fruitful relationships with them.

We will collect and compile published clips for you for three years following the meeting, and then present to you a report on the coverage and the clips themselves to tangibly demonstrate the return on your investment in SATW.

### **General Information**

**Dates:** The chapter is flexible on timing of the meeting; we are hoping to hold them sometime between late spring and summer, but if the host destination's shoulder season is at another time, we can consider those proposals as well. The only real restriction is that proposed dates must avoid conflicts with national board and council meetings, the Society's annual convention in the early fall and events such as the SATW/PRSA Travel annual convention and major holidays. We will supply you with any possible conflicting dates as we know about them.

**Length:** The core meeting is typically three nights/four days. See page 6 of RFP for the suggested schedule. In addition, we are asking destinations to provide discounted hotel rates for up to two

nights total per attendee, which can be used before and/or after the core meeting so that interested members can continue to research story ideas on their own.

**Hotels:** Preference is for one centrally located hotel with banquet facility and breakout rooms. Free Wi-Fi is required in guest rooms and meeting rooms. Parking and resort fees must be complimentary.

**Meals:** Host is responsible for providing all on- and off-site meals during the core conference. In the past, hosts have found that host hotels will work with them on subsidized meals. In addition, some meals might be covered in part or in whole by a hosting museum, restaurant or other venue eager to gain exposure to travel journalists.

Typically, the first night is a gathering of all attendees for cocktails and heavy hors d'oeuvres and the last night is a closing party with the same type of meal, though nothing is off the table. One night of the conference might be a dine-around, or gift cards might be given out for local restaurants.

**Transportation:** Attendees are responsible for their own transportation to the destination. Host is required to handle transportation to and from bus station/railroad station/airport(s) for arrivals and departures for all members for the core meeting and pre- and post-trips. Members arriving early or staying later are responsible for their own transportation to and from the meeting destination.

**Day Tours:** Beyond the time chapter members spend in meetings and professional development sessions, we want to get out and explore the destination with an eye toward reporting via a variety of media on the travel and tourism opportunities at the destination. Typically, these would be small group tours on a van or bus.

**Space, A/V, Signage:** Host provides a meeting room for a two-hour Executive Committee meeting on the first day; standard audio-visual setups (screen, microphones, projectors, audio cables) in breakout rooms (2-3 for professional development sessions); space and tables for a small media marketplace; and in-hotel signage for registration, designating meeting rooms, etc. The signage can be standard hotel signage.

**Registration and processing of monies:** Working in concert with the host destination, the SATW Eastern Chapter will handle registration. The Chapter will also process all monies and pass along the agreed-upon amount to the host. The Chapter will also take responsibility for creating and maintaining a conference website; the host is required to supply content for the website by an agreed-upon date. Content will take the form of descriptions of the area, the hosting hotel and other venues as well as the suggested sightseeing opportunities. Photos are required as well. A mutually agreed-upon deadline for materials will be determined.

**Meeting planning:** The SATW Eastern Chapter will have a meeting planner who will work in conjunction with the host's meeting team. The destination host takes the lead in designing, arranging any group, and securing admission to sights, while the SATW meeting planner will work primarily on the logistics of meetings, professional development and the media marketplace. Any changes to schedules or tours must be mutually agreed upon.

**Pre- and post-tours:** The host provides two-to-three-day pre/post tours of the area which are facilitated by the host and the state or region where the meeting is being held. Most attendees come for the core meeting but many members will come earlier or stay later to research stories. These tours help facilitate more coverage for the area. Fees can be charged for these and are kept by the host (usually ranging from \$100-\$250, depending upon the experience). They must be approved by SATW in advance and confirmed 90 days prior to the meeting.

**Pricing:** We have four levels of all-inclusive pricing for the core meeting. The lowest is reserved for Actives, the next for Associates, followed by Emeritus, and finally, the highest is for accompanying spouse/guest sharing a room. The price charged by the host must include hotel room, meals, resort or hotel fees, complimentary Wi-Fi, parking and free passes for sightseeing.

A one-day Mini-Meeting price is also offered, to include breakfast, lunch and professional development only for Marketplace day (evening events are generally not included). The cost of tipping restaurant staff, etc. for hosted meals should be built into the overall conference fee.

**Sponsorships:** The host is encouraged to defray costs by soliciting in-kind and monetary sponsorships from their state tourism office, industry partners and companies that market to the tourism community. The Chapter will seek its own sponsors to defray the cost of professional development and will not contact any potential sponsors that the host is seeking.

### **Additional Information**

- Should more than one hotel be used, pricing should reflect any difference between higher and lower end facilities that some of our members may prefer. Hotels should ideally be within walking distance of each other and the professional development and meeting sites.
- Destinations are expected to secure discounted lodging rates for members for up to two days before and two days after the meeting so that interested journalists can continue to research story ideas in the area beyond what they are able to do during the core meeting.
- Once a bid is accepted, the host agrees to work with the SATW meeting planner and the First Vice Chair by phone, email and, if feasible and/or necessary, in person to tour facilities, attractions, suggested tours, etc. and fine-tune meeting details.

### **Important Dates**

We accept bids on a rolling basis for meetings in 2023 and beyond. If you are instead interested in hosting the entire Eastern Chapter in a future year, please request the appropriate RFP for that type of meeting.

### **Contacts:**

If you are interested in hosting or have any questions, please contact:

Terri Marshall, First Vice Chair, in charge of site selection,  
[terri.marshall60@gmail.com](mailto:terri.marshall60@gmail.com)

Caroline Eubanks, Chapter Chair, [caroline.eubanks@gmail.com](mailto:caroline.eubanks@gmail.com)

### **Sample All-Inclusive Conference Fees Based on 3-Night/4-Day Meeting\***

(Note that the chapter will add \$50-\$65 to each participant's cost to partially offset our meeting costs. The chapter will keep that amount, with the remainder going to the host. Thus, if the host decides that each Active attendee can be accommodated fully at, say, \$300, the Active will be charged \$350 to \$365, with the additional amount retained by SATW Eastern Chapter.)

Active: \$400 Active Spouse/Partner: \$500 (must share same hotel room)  
 Associate: \$500; Associate Spouse/Partner: \$600 (must share same hotel room)  
 Emeritus: \$550; Emeritus Spouse/Partner: \$650 (must share same hotel room)

#### **One-day Mini-Meeting Fee: \$150**

(Includes breakfast and lunch, Eastern Chapter business meeting, Media Marketplace and professional development sessions, but no dinner or overnight stay)

\*Please note that fees are simply provided as guidance for the hosting destination, and that the destination can raise or lower the fees to suit the costs associated with their destination.

#### **IMPORTANT**

In 2021, the Eastern Chapter experimented with separating the hotel fee from the registration fee, ie., the host negotiated with the hotel for a group rate and attendees booked their own hotel room (after registering for the meeting with SATW) with a special code. If this is something you would like to discuss, please let us know. Visit <https://satweast.org/satw-east-2021-meetings/> to see how this was handled. In general, all attendees liked this method and it did let the host and SATW off the hook for room block guarantees (up to a point).

## **Sample Conference Schedule (Subject to Change)**

### **Pre Tours**

#### **Day 1**

10 a.m. – 6 p.m. Arrivals & Registration

3 p.m. – 5 p.m. Executive Committee meeting

2 p.m. – 5 p.m. Self-guided tours of area

6 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Welcome reception with heavy hors d'oeuvres

#### **Day 2**

8 a.m. – 10 a.m. Registration continues

7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. Breakfast provided by host

9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Chapter meeting

10:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m. Marketplace setup

11 a.m.- 12:30 p.m. Marketplace

12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. Lunch

2 p.m. – 5 p.m. Professional development sessions (with break)

Evening: Touring and dinner (courtesy of host)

#### **Day 3**

7:30 a.m. – 8:30 p.m. Breakfast provided by host

8:30 a.m. – 6 p.m. Full or half-day tours and lunch provided by host

6:30 p.m. – Reception/dinner provided by host

#### **Day 4**

Early a.m. Breakfast provided by host

Departures

### **Post Tours**

## About the Society of American Travel Writers (SATW)

Founded in 1955, SATW is a professional association whose purpose is to

- promote responsible journalism;
- provide professional support and development for our members;
- encourage the conservation and preservation of travel resources worldwide.

Our 1,000 vetted members include writers, photographers, editors, broadcast/video/film producers, bloggers, influencers, website contributors and owners, creators of mobile apps and public relations representatives. Our work appears in leading magazines and newspapers, travel books and guides, radio and television programs, and on websites, blogs, social media and mobile apps. SATW is the only organization of travel journalists that requires members to attain and maintain specific levels of production to become, and remain, members.

**About the Eastern Chapter:** Our 300-plus members come from New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Bermuda, the Caribbean and Latin America.

SATW members are classified by job types:

**Actives** — those employed by publications as well as freelancers who are editors and publishers, writers, photographers, broadcasters, website owners, bloggers, influencers and more who produce and distribute quality content about travel destinations

**Associates** — public relations and marketing professionals within the travel/ hospitality industry, representing CVBs, resorts, attractions, destinations and transportation providers such as cruise lines

**Emeritus** — longtime Society members who may still be publishing or working with travel clients but choose not to meet SATW's minimum production standards and instead contribute time and talent to the society as volunteers.