

EAA HANDBOOK PART 5 ANNUAL MEETING GUIDELINES

5.1: Guidelines to bid for hosting an EAA Annual Meeting

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5.1.1 Introduction

The European Association of Archaeologists (EAA) holds an Annual Meeting (AM) yearly in late August / early September in partnership with different host organisations all around Europe. The AM provides EAA Members with the opportunity to meet annually for their academic conference, committee meetings, roundtable and community discussions. Events during the AM afford Members an opportunity to present academic and discussion papers, to network and to socialise. The AM also provides a welcome opportunity to visit and experience the culture of a new region each year and to participate in a variety of special tours to archaeological sites in the locality and sometimes further afield.

5.1.2 Brief history of the EAA Annual Meetings

The EAA was officially founded on 22 September 1994 at its Inaugural Meeting in Ljubljana, Slovenia (1994). The number of EAA Members and AM delegates has grown steadily especially in recent years. EAA Annual Meetings have taken place at:

Location	Year	No. of participants	Sessions submitted	Sessions approved	No. of parallel sessions	Papers	Posters
Ljubljana	1994	250	no record	18	6		
Santiago de Compostela	1995			26			
Riga	1996			22			
Ravenna	1997			36			
Göteborg	1998			55			
Bournemouth	1999			61			
Lisbon	2000	500	no record	51		300	25
Esslingen	2001			41			
Thessaloniki	2002			59			
St. Petersburg	2003						
Lyon	2004	600+	no record	60			
Cork	2005	681	no record	59	12	460	26
Krakow	2006	745	60	65	16	600	21
Zadar	2007	605	63	58	13	500	44
Malta	2008	581	no record	55	11	490	28
Riva del Garda	2009	671	no record	51	12	474	69
The Hague	2010	1026	83	71	16	536	64
Oslo	2011	835	63	59	14	490	90
Helsinki	2012	1156	104	78	18	700	80
Pilsen	2013	1283	119	91	18	954	195
Istanbul	2014	2300	159	150	40	1929	267
Glasgow	2015	2020	185	173	35	1676	300
Vilnius	2016	1476	124	108	22	1293	165
Maastricht	2017	1789	200	177	34	1294	166
Barcelona	2018	2970	275	260	47	2803	174

Bern	2019	1854	180	166	31	1530	104
Virtual	2020	1973	230	167	n/a	1293	127
Kiel Virtual	2021	2631	261	235	n/a	2283	97
Budapest	2022	2355	201	196	36	1841	135
Belfast	2023	3333	328	278	50	2470	106
Rome	2024	5172	535	359	65	3719	416
Belgrade virtual	2025	2037	265	252	20	1472	198

In 2018, after twenty-five years of highly successful AMs and a gradual growth in attendance numbers, the EAA has developed its administrative structure in order to provide direct services to AM Organisers and to work more effectively on conference management in partnership with host institutions. The EAA now provides substantial assistance to local organisers by taking responsibility for:

- i) AM registration management
- ii) AM academic programme management (calls for session submissions, papers and posters, abstract handling and communication with presenters, preparation of the AM Programme and Abstract Book and Programme Summary, assistance to the Scientific Committee, preparation of the AM web site and repository)
- iii) assistance with the European Archaeology Fair (EAF; communication with exhibitors, booking management).

Please refer to the attached organigram for detailed task distribution.

5.1.3 The local AM Host and AM Organiser

The local host organisation (AM Host; typically, a university, academic institute, museum or other academic body) works in partnership with the EAA on the AM themes and academic programme, as well as the on-site organisation, the key social events (Opening Ceremony, Welcome Reception, Annual Party and Annual Dinner / Closing Ceremony and Reception), the EAF, poster sessions, excursions and side programme, project presentation, institutional and other promotion. The local Host is also responsible for essential sponsorship and fundraising.

The EAA provides significant guidance, advice and practical assistance to the AM Host during the bidding process. The AM Host in cooperation with the EAA generally seeks the assistance of a local professional conference organisation company (AM Organiser) to handle the practical arrangements and communications locally, such as booking the venues, preparing budgets, managing the key social events and managing the block booking of hotels and other accommodation, etc.

Close cooperation between the EAA, the AM Host and the AM Organiser has always been critical to the acclaimed success of the EAA's AMs.

The AM Host typically sets up several committees to assist in the organisation and promotion of a successful AM:

- an Organising Committee that is responsible for setting up and administering the AM
- an Advisory Board that advises on wider issues; its members should be drawn from as wide a constituency as possible – universities, museums and heritage agencies, etc.
- a Scientific Committee that works on and decides the detail of the academic programme. It consists of at least five members nominated by the EAA Board and at least five local members in an equal (50:50) ratio. It can be larger if necessary. The Scientific Committee is centrally involved in defining the choice of the AM motto and themes and provides key input on the development of the chosen themes, drawing on local academic experience, emphasis and insight. The Scientific Committee proposes the keynote speakers, selected together with the EAA. The Scientific Committee undertakes the task of evaluating the session proposals that are submitted.

Generally, at least one person (normally a local senior professional archaeologist affiliated with the AM Host organisation) coordinates the preparation locally and liaises closely with the EAA Secretariat. This person is expected to have a thorough knowledge of the culture and requirements of EAA AMs and the requisite knowledge and ambition to ensure a successful AM. This person can be assisted by a local AM Manager. These key personnel are typically in place at least 24 - 15 months prior to the AM.

5.1.4 The bidding process

Upon preliminary contact, the AM Host is invited to submit an initial bid to the EAA Senior Manager at administrator@e-a-a.org. The bid typically includes:

- A) information about the venue, location and facilities, including sustainability assessment
- B) a site and capacity plan (specification of venue and room capacities)
- C) a preliminary budget (different scenarios according to the anticipated number of delegates)
- D) a list of partnership/supporting organisations

Following evaluation of the bid by the EAA Executive Board and staff, a preliminary visit to the venue is carried out by the EAA President and / or a small delegation of the EAA's Executive Board and staff members. The aim of this first meeting is to meet the people in charge, discuss ideas, evaluate local commitment to the budget and plan, and discuss venue suitability.

The EAA covers the travel expenses of this visit, while the AM Host carries any on-site costs associated with the visit.

The bid should be submitted by 31 January, five years in advance of the proposed AM (i.e., 56 months prior to the AM). A final decision is made within six months of submission of the initial bid. Thereafter, the cooperation is formalised by the signing of a binding Memorandum of Agreement between the EAA, AM Host and AM Organiser.

5.1.5 Location

The EAA AMs have become a major annual event for most European archaeologists. The attractiveness, culture and accessibility of the host location are an important factor for EAA Members. Location essential infrastructure includes

- a local airport
- sufficient and up-to-standard accommodation (hotels, guesthouses and hostels)
- sufficient restaurants providing a range of choices and prices reasonably close to the venue
- efficient public transport to provide easy access to the venue.

Since the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic, EAA AMs are to be conceived as hybrid events, i.e. enable remote participants to fully engage in the academic content and as much as possible of the rest of the programme.

5.1.6 Venue

The growth of the EAA has had implications for the management of the AM's academic programme and venue capacity requirements. Most of those attending do so in order to give a paper or present a poster. EAA AMs aim to be as inclusive as possible (subject to considerations of scientific quality control).

The Venue requirements are briefly listed here:

A. Lecture Rooms

In recent years the number of parallel sessions has averaged 41, but reached 65 in 2024. The number of fully equipped (computer/laptop connected to internet, projector, screen, loudspeakers, microphone, camera) lecture rooms correlate to the number of parallel sessions that can be accepted. The minimum capacity of a lecture room should be 35 - 40 seats.

B. Lecture Theatre(s)

A large hall or lecture theatre with 1,000+ seats (or an alternative arrangement, e.g. live streaming) is necessary for the Opening Ceremony; a lecture theatre with 150+ seats is necessary for the keynote lectures and the Annual Membership Business Meeting.

C. Coffee Breaks

Coffee breaks must be provided in different locations within the Venue, to ensure that delegates can get to and from their session venues in good time.

D. Other rooms

D1 – Meeting rooms are required for special meetings (EAA Executive Board, *EJA* Editorial Board, EAA Communities, EAA Task Forces and EAA Committees) on the Tuesday and Wednesday of the AM week.

D2 – EAA Office (a dedicated room/office with full IT capability, including a printer, three desks and storage space) must be provided for the EAA staff for the duration of the AM. It must be large enough for meetings of small groups.

E. Poster display area

Sufficient space for poster presentations must be provided at or very close to the Venue. If possible, digital poster boards are preferred.

F. Exhibition (EAF) area

The EAF area should be where most AM delegates' activities and traffic (registration, poster display, coffee breaks, lunch boxes delivery) occur.

G. Central administration area

A spacious area is required for onsite registration, the EAA Desk, info point, any other services and a central coffee break area.

H. Press room

A room reserved to meet media correspondents and journalists, to join private interviews and video recordings. It should include a photo-wall / banner / roll-up with the corporate identities of the EAA, the AM and the AM Partners.

I. Canteen/restaurant facilities

On-site restaurant/canteen/food-truck facilities are required at lunchtime during the days of the scientific programme (Thursday-Saturday). A range of pricing and dietary requirements should be catered for (vegetarian, gluten-free, lactose-free, etc.). Additional facilities must be arranged if there is insufficient capacity at the Venue.

Lunch boxes can be pre-ordered by delegates during registration.

J. Wifi

Internet connection must be available free of charge for all delegates and exhibitors at the venue.

5.1.7 Dates and time schedule

The EAA Annual Meetings are held over a 5–6-day period, traditionally in late August/early September. It is important, however, that clashes with dates of other international archaeological associations (like WAC, UISPP, SAA, SAfA, PanAf, etc.) are avoided.

AM week time schedule:

Days leading up to AM

- Pre-conference excursions

Tuesday

- EAA Executive Board meeting
- Volunteers' introduction and training

Wednesday

- *EJA* Editorial Board meeting
- AM on-site registration and the EAF open

- Meetings of EAA Communities, Committees, Task Forces and possibly others related to organisation/events during the AM
- Opening Ceremony and Welcome Reception

Thursday

- academic sessions
- Annual Party

Friday

- academic sessions
- Annual Membership Business Meeting (AMBM)
- MERC Party

Saturday

- academic sessions
- A follow-up meeting of the EAA Executive Board
- Annual Dinner

Sunday

- Post-conference excursions

5.1.8 The Scientific Programme

Sessions

Typically, sessions consist of one to four 2-hour blocks:

Session block 1:	08:30 am – 10:30 am (2 hours, 8 presentation/discussion slots)
Coffee break 1:	10:30 am – 11:00 am
Session block 2:	11:00 am – 13:00 pm (2 hours, 8 presentation/discussion slots)
Lunch break:	13:00 pm – 14:00 pm
Session block 3:	14:00 pm – 16:00 pm (2 hours, 8 presentation/discussion slots)
Coffee break 2:	16:00 pm – 16:30 pm
Session block 4:	16:30 pm – 18:30 pm (2 hours, 8 presentation/discussion slots)

Each AM delegate can present one contribution only. Presentations are of 15 minutes' duration unless specifically required to be otherwise. Time allocation for papers and presentations depends on the format of the session, the number of presentations, the estimated attendance, the venue and ongoing trends in archaeological presentation and discussion.

Annual Membership Business Meeting (AMBM) is held on Friday at 16.30 – 18.30. Sessions end at 16:00 pm (after the 1st block of the afternoon) to allow delegates to attend. If necessary, the AMBM can take place after the session block 4 (i.e. 18:40 – 20:00).

The total number of time blocks for sessions (parallel sessions with presentations and discussion, depending on the AMBM timing, Thursday to Saturday) is 11-12 blocks (i.e. 4 + 3 + 4 or 4 + 4 + 4 over the three days). This provides

- a maximum of 8 oral presentations x 12 blocks = 96 oral presentation/discussion slots per lecture room over the three days of the scientific programme,
- a minimum of 6 oral presentations x 11 blocks = 66 oral presentations / discussion slots per lecture room over the three days of the scientific programme.

This calculation does not include any gaps in the programme (inevitable in view of schedule conflict etc.) and is vital in determining the number of rooms necessary regarding the anticipated number of AM delegates (please note that virtually all AM delegates wish to present a contribution).

Session organisers are allowed some discretion about the content and organisation of the presentations in their sessions. Sessions typically include an Introductory/Opening presentation and

time reserved for discussion led by those nominated to chair session blocks. Discussion can also be reserved to take place in the middle or at the end of the session.

Session formats normally include:

- Regular session (15 minutes' oral contributions, poster presentations and discussion)
- Session with presentations of 6 slides in 6 minutes
- Session with keynote presentation followed by presentations and / or discussion
- Session with pre-circulated papers
- Discussion session (with formal abstracts)
- Roundtable (without formal abstracts, only list of confirmed discussants to be provided)
- Workshop
- Other formats / meetings can be accommodated on request

5.1.9 Social programme

The AM Organiser plans and is responsible for running the key events of the AM's social programme. These include:

Opening Ceremony and Welcome Reception: Free of charge, Wednesday afternoon and evening. This tends to be a major, high profile, civic event that typically involves key local politicians, academics and a keynote speaker, as well as presentation of EAA prizes and awards. It also normally includes a local/regional music performance, drinks and finger food. Sponsorship is always required to support the cost of the Welcome Reception.

Annual Party: Free of charge, Thursday evening and night. The Annual Party generally offers one complimentary drink (often sponsored).

MERC Party: Specifically charged, Friday evening. Location, ticket price and any complimentary drinks to be agreed with representatives of the MERC Community.

Annual Dinner: Specifically charged, Saturday evening. The Annual Dinner is a ticketed event and must be self-financed (av. 400 attendees; volunteers are normally invited free of charge).

Closing Ceremony and Reception: This is an alternative to the Annual Dinner, budget permitting – it is open to all delegates and should offer drinks and finger food.

Excursions: Specifically charged, Monday – Tuesday and Sunday (typically).

Venues must have sufficient capacity for the key social events (it is envisaged that two-thirds of the total AM attendance participate in the social events); care must be taken to prevent the risks of overcrowding or long frustrating queues for food and/or beverages.

5.1.10 Other events

It is desirable that the AM Host with the help of the AM Organiser schedule other local events of interest during the week of the AM to complement the programme (for example: museum exhibition openings, book launches, project launches or launches/presentation of local cultural events and programmes etc.). These side events are generally locally sponsored and self-financed and should not be part of the AM budget.

Other organisations, the AM Host and the EAA itself can organise additional events or receptions, as relevant. These must be scheduled in advance and booked (e.g. special presentation or an event sponsored by a company or an institution, etc.).

5.1.11 Student Volunteers

At least 100 student volunteer helpers are required and recruited annually by the EAA and the AM Host. These are local and international archaeology students; it is recommended that approx. 30% of the volunteers are international. They serve an essential role in assisting delegates with on-site registration, way-finding/assisting with directions within venue, helping at the EAF and providing

support during the academic and social programme. Volunteers' on-site activities are coordinated by the AM Organiser.

5.1.12 Finance

AM Registration Fee

The fee level is under constant review by the EAA Executive Board and must be kept consistent year on year. It is extremely important that the registration fee is reasonable and attractive to EAA Members, many of whom have limited resources. The fee should not increase dramatically from one year to another. At the current level of registration fees, the AM budget requires a very significant level of local financial support and sponsorship.

The EAA caters for the significant differential in income levels across Europe in its membership fee and AM registration fees for Members and delegates from identified countries.

- Full (A country): 234 / 264 / 294 EUR
- Full (B country): 164 / 194 / 224 EUR
- Student / Retired (A country): 164 / 194 / 224 EUR
- Student / Retired (B country): 129 / 159 / 189 EUR
- Accompanying person: 129 EUR

The fees are the same for onsite and online delegates.

Grant assistance for attending delegates may be possible if external funding is available (subject to review of an application).

Preliminary budget

The AM Organiser is expected to propose a preliminary budget with the initial bid to host the AM (see above). The budget should have regard for different scenarios and the anticipated number of delegates. The budget should include the following items:

Identifier	R/C	Category	Subcategory	Description
1	Revenues	Registrations	Registrations	Registration fees
2	Revenues	Sponsors	Sponsors	
3	Revenues	EAF	Booth booking fee	to cover costs in line 18
4	Revenues	Paid programme items	MERC Party	to cover costs in line 29
5	Revenues	Paid programme items	Annual Dinner	to cover costs in line 30
6	Revenues	Paid programme items	Lunch boxes	to cover costs in line 31
7	Revenues	Paid programme items	Printed Programme Book	to cover costs in line 32
8	Revenues	Paid programme items	Excursions	to cover costs in line 33
9	Costs	Coordination	AM presentation at AM Y-1	attendance to promote at preceding conference 1 x 5 days, this includes travelling days
10	Costs	Coordination	Volunteers	Volunteers T-shirts, accommodation, catering, invitation to Annual Dinner or alternative event
11	Costs	Coordination	EAA	EAA service fee
12	Costs	Coordination	PCO	PCO management fee
13	Costs	Design and printing	Design and printing	Design & artwork of AM branding (logo, visual manual, Programme and Abstract book covers, badges, etc.)
14	Costs	Design and printing	Design and printing	Design & artwork of promotion materials
15	Costs	Design and printing	Design and printing	Printing of AM name badges
16	Costs	Design and Printing	Production	AM delegates' bag
17	Costs	Design and Printing	Production	AM promotion materials
18	Costs	EAF	EAF onsite infrastructure	Booth equipment hire, setting up the EAF, etc.
19	Costs	Infrastructure	Venue	Venue costs incl. all equipment
20	Costs	Infrastructure	IT support	onsite for academic sessions
21	Costs	Infrastructure	Online platform	for hybrid event
22	Costs	Infrastructure	Mobile app	
23	Costs	Infrastructure	Live streaming	
24	Costs	Infrastructure	Catering	Coffee breaks and any other complimentary catering
25	Costs	Infrastructure	Production	Venue setup, signage, etc.
26	Costs	Infrastructure	Infrastructure	Poster boards
27	Costs	Infrastructure	Public Liability Insurance	
28	Costs	Other expenses	Contingency	
29	Costs	Paid programme items	MERC Party	Venue and catering
30	Costs	Paid programme items	Annual Dinner	Venue, catering and entertainment
31	Costs	Paid programme items	Lunch boxes	
32	Costs	Paid programme items	Printed Programme Book	
33	Costs	Paid programme items	Excursions	Venue, catering and entertainment
34	Costs	Scientific program	Invited speakers	free accommodation x 2 nights plus flight
35	Costs	Social Events	Opening ceremony	Venue
36	Costs	Social Events	Welcome reception	Venue, catering and entertainment
37	Costs	Social Events	Annual Party	Venue, catering and entertainment

Budgetary management and IT support

The EAA Secretariat has developed an efficient software programme that is used for all the anticipated budgetary and cash flow requirements of the AM and for providing supportive management to the AM host organisation.

Start-up funding

The AM Host needs to obtain start-up funding; the EAA does not have the financial resources to fund AM start-up costs. It is strongly advised that the AM Host employs a local AM Manager. The cost of this person and other start-up costs need to be covered in advance locally. An ability to cover these start-up costs must be demonstrated at the time of the bidding process.

VAT

VAT requirements in the host state, and the circumstances in which they apply, need to be clearly outlined at a very early stage in the planning process. Clarification is essential to ensure the accurate development and efficient management of the business model, budget and cash flow between the

EAA Secretariat and local AM Organiser. Additional requirements, specific to an individual state, which could lead to amendments or further customisation of the software for a particular AM, may lead to extra costs for the AM budget.

Management of EAA Membership fees and AM Registration fees

The EAA Secretariat receives and manages payment of the AM registration fee and EAA membership.