

First-Time Attendee Guide and FAQ for the 2017 NCPH Annual Meeting

Before the Conference

Q: When should I arrive?

A: The conference kicks off with a full slate of workshops and an opening reception on Wednesday, April 19, so we suggest arriving on Tuesday or early Wednesday. Information for air, car, and rail travel is located on page 6 of the conference [Program](#). If you're looking to share a ride locally or from the airport, post offers and requests on our [rideshare board](#).

Q: Where should I stay?

A: This year, NCPH has reserved a [discounted room block](#) at [The Westin Indianapolis](#) at a rate of \$169 a night. Parking at the hotel is \$40-45 per day. Book your room by Wednesday, March 29, 2017 to take advantage of NCPH's group rate, but be aware that space fills up quickly, so the earlier you book, the better.

Tip: Sharing a room with one or more people can be an effective way to keep down costs at the conference. Post requests and offers to the [room share discussion board](#).

Q: What does my conference registration include?

A: A full conference registration includes access to all working groups and sessions, the exhibit hall, public plenary, poster session and other non-ticketed events. Registrants also receive a conference program and badge.

Special opportunities such as workshops, tours, and meal events may require additional fees. Visit the [NCPH Annual Meeting webpage](#) for more information on registration rates.

For other questions on registration, see our [General Registration FAQ](#).

Q: What should I wear?

A: In general, the dress code for conference events is business casual. Some evening events, like the Opening Reception, may be more formal. Be sure to dress in layers; conference centers often range from drafty to stuffy, so be ready to change dress accordingly. There is no need to bring a full suit.

Spring is relatively mild in the Indianapolis area with temperatures ranging from 40 – 70°F (10 – 20°C). Rain and wind are likely, so check the forecast before you pack.

Tip: Walking tours and field trips happen rain or shine, so bring a coat and umbrella.

Q: What should I bring?

A: We recommend bringing business cards and résumés for networking. If you plan to use electronics during the day, remember to bring chargers with you. Some attendees also bring water and snacks with them to stay fresh during the day.

Tip: [123Print](#) and [VistaPrint](#) are two quick, easy, and affordable options for business cards.

Q: Where can I acquire funding for the Conference?

A: To learn about potential cash prizes and travel grants, consult the [NCPH awards](#) page. Award nominations must be received by December 1, 2016. Students should contact their advisor, department, student government, or other campus associations to find out if they provide travel grants for conference attendance. Professionals should consult their employers for available funding opportunities.

To save on registration costs, be sure to register during the [early bird registration period](#), which ends March 8, 2017. NCPH also offers a limited amount of volunteer spots for student members. Conference volunteers receive free registrations, but space is limited, so apply early. See the [Volunteering page](#) on the conference website for more information.

During the Conference

Q: Where do I check in on the first day?

A: Registration is open from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm on Wednesday, April 19 (and 7:00 am to 5:00 pm every day through Saturday the 22nd) in the Grand Ballroom Foyer, on the 2nd floor of the conference hotel, The Westin Indianapolis. Give yourself enough time on your first day to register and pick up your conference [Program](#) and badge. Be prepared to wait in line at registration, especially during Wednesday and Thursday. Registration hours can be found on pages 2-3 of the conference [Program](#).

Q: What types of activities are available?

A: There are four basic types of activities: Sessions, Working Groups, Workshops, and Tours/Trips. All topics and presenters are listed in the conference program. Generally, conference sessions last for 90 minutes, but check the [Program](#).

Check activity times closely. The final conference [Program](#) you'll receive after check-in lists times and locations for all conference events. Times and locations occasionally shift after the [Program](#) is printed, so make sure to check the Errata sheet given to you when you register for updates.

Tip: You can use the Schedule-at-a-Glance on pages 2-3 of the [Program](#) to choose which sessions and events you would like to attend. Keep an eye out for our mobile app!

- **Sessions** feature 3-6 speakers and generally have room for 50 seated attendees. Attending sessions is included with your conference registration. Some sessions feature scholars presenting a paper or a case study; others are composed of practitioners in the field reflection on a problem/solution they have encountered or engaging with each other and the audience in a structured conversation format. Tweeting during the session is encouraged, unless the presenter specifies otherwise. If you choose to leave a session, please be courteous as you exit. Everyone is welcome to ask questions! If a speaker is an expert in a subject related to your field of study, consider taking the opportunity to meet them after the session.
- **Working groups** are designed to facilitate extended conversations on particular topics in a seminar-like style. They feature a group of 10-15 discussants, selected in October. Each participant prepares a case statement to share with the working group. These case statements are circulated and discussed among participants prior to the group's meeting at the conference and everyone is prepared to participate actively in the discussion. Working groups are open to other conference-goers (unless otherwise noted), but we ask that they respect the co-chair's need to potentially limit audience participation.
- **Workshops** feature outside presenters giving a "how-to" talk on a specific topic and are usually hands-on and participatory. Note that these sessions usually require additional fees and it's best to sign up before the conference. Workshops are generally longer than a typical conference session, often lasting a full morning or afternoon. Please see pages 20-21 of the [Program](#) for details on this year's workshops.
- **Tours and trips** are organized by the Local Arrangements Committee to take participants to points of interest in Indianapolis. Tours and trips are typically 60 minutes to 3 hours long. These events require advance registration and additional fees. Spaces can fill up quickly, so it's best to register before you come. The list of tours and trips is on pages 14-15 of the conference [Program](#).

Q: Do I have to attend each session?

A: No, you do not need to attend each session. There are sessions occurring concurrently in every timeslot, so you couldn't attend each session even if you wanted to. You should consult your [Program](#) ahead of time to plan a schedule of the sessions that most appeal to you. It's tempting to pack your schedule full, but you may get as much benefit from taking a break to interact and network with other public historians.

Q: Do I have to pay for each session?

A: Normal sessions, such as panels and working groups, are included with conference registration. Other events like trips and workshops require an extra fee. Some free events, including Speed Networking, require you to sign up in advance of the conference.

Q: Can I bring my spouse or a guest to an evening event or tour?

A: Yes. Guest registrations and tickets to select events can be purchased for non-public historians who would not otherwise attend the conference. Guests can be added on the fourth page of the online registration system with a guest fee of \$35.

Q: Why is my name not on the conference participant list?

A: During the registration process, every attendee is asked if they want to omit their personal information from the participant list. If you choose this option, you will still be registered for the conference but will not be listed. Be sure to check your email for your confirmation. If you cannot find it, please email ncph@iupui.edu or call (317) 274-2716.

Q: Are there any events tailored to first-time attendees or graduate students?

A: There are several special events to help new conference attendees network with other professionals and graduate students. For information, see pages 16-18 of the [Program](#).

On Wednesday, April 19, consider participating in:

- The **First Time Attendee and Mentoring Connection Meet-Up** is free with your ticket to the Opening Reception. The Meet-Up is located in The Westin Indianapolis, and then attendees can walk together to the Indiana Historical Society for the Opening Reception.
- At the **Résumé Review Workshop** attendees can have their résumés reviewed by a professional in the field. Registration before the conference is required.
- Meet and mingle with fellow attendees at a local restaurant with the **New Professional and Graduate Student Social**. Tickets cost \$5 and always go fast, so sign up early!

On Thursday, April 20, remember:

- Meet new and experienced members of the organization and learn more about NCPH, the conference, and the public history field at **NCPH's New Member Welcome**.
- **Speed Networking** connects graduate students with professionals in a relaxed setting to learn about the careers available to public historians. Sign up in advance with your conference registration, as spots go fast. Check out [our video](#) for more information.
- **Out to Lunch** is designed to help public history professionals to meet fellow colleagues in an informal setting. Prior to the event, attendees will be placed in groups of 4-5, which will then meet for lunch at a restaurant of their choosing. For more information, visit the [Eat and Engage page](#) on the conference website.

- At The **Poster Session** attendees, many of them graduate students, present their work in an informal setting. The deadline to submit a poster for 2017 has passed, but this is a great opportunity to see what your peers are working on and perhaps find inspiration for future conference participation.

And on Friday, April 21:

- **Out to Lunch – *Grad Student Edition*** is designed to help public history graduates to meet fellow students in an informal setting. Prior to the event, attendees will be placed in groups of 4-5, which will then meet for lunch at a restaurant of their choosing. For more information, visit the [conference homepage](#).
- Attend the **Public Plenary** in the evening. Conference attendees and members of the public are invited to join this free moderated conversation. The plenary, *Making LGBTQ History American History: A Public Conversation on Stonewall and Beyond*, will focus on the evolving landscape of LGBTQ historical memory.

Stick around on Saturday, April 22:

- The conference continues through Saturday, and some of the best sessions are in the afternoon. Keep that in mind when making your travel plans and don't leave early!
- Come to the **Awards Breakfast and Keynote Address** to hear Devon Akmon, Director of the Arab American National Museum, speak. The event and address are open to all conference registrants, though a ticket is required for the breakfast meal.
- The **Service Trip: Indiana Deaf History Museum** on Saturday afternoon is a great opportunity for conference attendees to lend a helping hand to a local museum's collection. No previous archival experience is required!

Q. How can I network while at the conference?

A: One of the most important aspects of attending the conference is the opportunity to network with academics, professionals in the field, and other graduate students.

The conference is an opportunity to network for potential interviews in the future, not a job interview. Be tactful in handing out your business cards and resume. After sessions, most presenters linger, providing an excellent opportunity to connect. Another useful approach is to introduce yourself to the person you would like to meet and get their card. Then, if you want to pursue a conversation, you may contact them a few days later.

If someone you follow on Twitter is at the conference – consider introducing yourself. It's an easy way to start a conversation. Live tweet during the sessions (unless the presenters say otherwise) and engage with other attendees' tweets.

Q: How should I spend my evenings?

A: Most days, sessions and workshops end between 5:00 and 6:00 PM; evening events last until about 7:00 PM. Our “Dine ArounDs,” which stretch later into the evening on Thursday, April 20, facilitate small group discussions on pre-determined topics over dinner at local restaurants. You can sign up for a Dine Around at the registration desk on the first day of the conference.

You will have free time in the evenings, and we recommend that you take advantage of this time to explore Indianapolis and get to know fellow attendees. Find a list of recommended restaurants and things to do on pages 8-11 of the conference [Program](#).

Tweet to #ncph2017! If you're enjoying a particular session or event, let other people know about it. Attendees who don't have a Twitter account can still follow real-time conference discussions online. Twitter is also a great way to find fellow attendees who share your interests.

After the Conference

Follow up with your new contacts. Send an email to those you've networked with. Follow them on Twitter and connect with them on LinkedIn.

Complete the post-conference survey. NCPH emails a post-conference survey to all registrants. This survey is important because it helps us improve future conferences. Please take a few minutes to share your experiences.

Q: How can I present next year?

A: The deadline for submitting a proposal for the 2018 annual conference in Las Vegas is July 15, 2017. You can find session participants through networking or by submitting an early topic proposal by June 1. If you are interested in presenting next year, make the most of the conference by making contacts with potential presenters through the various social events and by contacting this year's speakers. Please keep in mind that proposals which present a diversity of voices and experiences are more likely to be successful.

Presenting a poster at the Poster Session is a great way for new professionals to present research or projects at NCPH. The deadline for submitting a poster session proposal for Las Vegas is October 1, 2017.

Q: Where can I learn more about attending conferences?

A: There are many links that provide additional information on attending conferences. Here are a few worth investigating:

- [ProfHacker](#) has a comprehensive collection of articles on preparing for, attending, and live-tweeting conferences.
- [Tessa Lau, “How to Attend an Academic Conference”](#)
- [Megan MacKenzie, “Survival Guide for Grad Students: The Essential Clothing, Food, Shelter, and Networking Dos and Don’ts”](#)
- [Ethan Morris, “5 Tips for Making the Most Out of Your First Conference”](#)
- [Sarah Dawley, “5 Things You Need to Know to Successfully Live-Tweet an Event”](#)
- [Ernesto Priego, “Live-Tweeting at Academic Conferences: 10 Rules of Thumb”](#)
- [American Historical Association, “The Dos and Don’ts of Live-Tweeting at an Academic Conference: A Working Draft”](#)
- [Kimberly Maul, “6 Ways to Make the Most of a Conference When You're Attending Alone”](#)
- [Janice Klein, “Packing Shoes for Conferences and Other Somewhat Serious Thoughts on Professional Footwear”](#)