African Studies Association of the UK Biennial Conference 2024:

Invitation to Bid

The African Studies Association of the UK welcomes bids from Universities offering to host the conference which takes place every two years, and will take place in Autumn of 2024 (late August or early September). Bids should include a response to the requirements outlined in the Invitation, with a clear indication of the financial picture, and with a statement of the institution's motivation for, and interest in, hosting the conference. All bids must be received by 31 January 2023.

Background

The ASAUK is seeking bids for a UK university to host its biennial conference in September 2024. The conference hopes to attract an audience of between 300 and 500 attendees (post-Covid these predictions are harder to make but we anticipate a conference of around 500 people), and we normally hold the conference in September. Our conferences are central to our objective of the dissemination of knowledge. We invite bids from universities who wish to build their African studies programmes or to highlight important research or collections.

In order for potential university partners to evaluate their ability and eligibility to host the conference, below please find a description of what would be involved:

Required

Ability to organise and host a pre-conference day on which rooms are made available for editorial board meetings and an ASAUK council meeting (5 rooms that can host 30 people each). This is the day before the actual conference starts.

A large common space such as a hall or central building atrium that can act as a town square, where registration happens and where teas and coffees are served; a space where delegates hang out between panels. Having a central area for socialising is a crucial ingredient for a good conference.

Sufficient room numbers for 3 days of conference panels, running in 10 to 15 rooms which can each take between 30 and 50 people, for the three days of the actual conference. We anticipate there would be 5 or 6 panels running throughout a day (2 or 3 in the morning, 3 in the afternoon), in parallel across the 10 to 15 rooms and an evening programme of events such as film screenings.

Catering facilities to provide coffees and teas on each of the 3 days, morning and afternoon

A range of lunch options for all delegates, ideally a cooked lunch or cafeteria voucher rather than sandwiches

An auditorium style lecture theatre for the AGM and keynote speeches, probably a slot on 2 of the conference late afternoons

A venue for a dinner and dance party on the Saturday evening

A space where publishers can set up their tables and which is secured at night so that books can be left there overnight. This space would be open for the entire 3 days and ideally publishers would want to set up on the Wednesday evening/afternoon

A conference office that could handle visa letters for African delegates (we anticipate there could be as many as 50, which would need to be handled in good time as visa wait periods are now very long)

A conference office that could work with an ASAUK conference administrator to manage the submission system for panels, which will be linked to a registration system for the conference

Evidence of administrative support provided by the university eg a conference administrator or sufficient buy out/workload allocation to allow an academic to devote sufficient time to the whole organisation from planning to end.

Accommodation (en suite rooms) for around 200 delegates (possibly more), at a reasonable cost

Some nursery spaces for young parents

We anticipate the conference will have some online component, and will need IT support (filming of some panels, to go on ASAUK YouTube after conference)

To discuss any of the above, please be in touch with the President of the ASAUK, Carli Coetzee, at asaofuk@gmail.com or cc76@soas.ac.uk.