



# REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

“I Love New York” Empire State Tourism Conference  
Years 2019 \* 2020 \* 2021

## Abstract

Three-day event including association board meeting, trade show, keynote and general sessions, breakout sessions, cocktail receptions, meals, networking breaks, silent and live fundraising auctions, local recreation and tourism activities, and after-hours hospitality/socializing for professionals from tourism promotion agencies, destination marketing organizations, chambers of commerce, industry associations, and tourism businesses operating throughout New York State, as well as allied vendors seeking to interact with tourism marketing professionals and business operators.

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# Request for Proposal

## Annual “I Love New York” Empire State Tourism Conference

**DEADLINE TO SUBMIT PROPOSALS: Tuesday, August 21, 2018**

### 1. Purpose of Request for Proposals

1.1. New York State Tourism Industry Association, Inc. (NYSTIA) hereby issues a Request for Proposals (RFP) for hosting the “I Love New York” Empire State Tourism Conference (ESTC). This event is typically held on Monday-Wednesday, targeting the weeks between the latter half of April and beginning of May. NYSTIA seeks the best dates available to minimize conflicts with other state/regional/national events within our industry, including similar states’ conferences, National Travel & Tourism Week, US Travel Association-related events, etc.

We are gathering proposals now for events to be held in 2019, 2020, and 2021. See Section 4 for submission instructions and deadline. Please indicate the years for which you are submitting, and the open date ranges in those years as of submission.

1.2. Seeking host DMOs, collective of partner entities, and/or local properties to provide for or facilitate the following conference needs and activities, including (but not limited to):

1.2.1.Lodging

1.2.2.Association Board Meeting

1.2.3.Keynote, General and Breakout Sessions (Professional Development)

1.2.4.Receptions, Dinners, Breakfasts, Lunches, Coffee Breaks

1.2.5.Silent and Live Scholarship Fundraising Auctions

1.2.6.Local Recreation and/or Attractions, including an offsite reception/dinner/excursion

1.2.7.After Hours Socials

1.2.8.Transportation (to off-site events, between conference facilities, etc).

1.2.9.Audio Visual Services

### 2. Background Information About NYSTIA

2.1. NYSTIA’s mission: The New York State Tourism Industry Association represents New York State’s tourism industry through collaboration, research, legislative awareness, and exceptional marketing.

2.2. NYSTIA is a 501c6 Not-For-Profit organization which serves members across New York State. Our association is not tax-exempt.

2.3. Additional information about NYSTIA can be found on the internet at [www.nystia.org](http://www.nystia.org).

### 3. Event Attendance:

We had approximately 230 attendees at the 2017 ESTC in Lake Placid, NY, with total F/B of about \$53,000. We had approximately 260 attendees at the 2018 ESTC in Schenectady, NY, with total F/B of about \$55,000. Our goal is to continue our upward trend in attendees and programming.

### 4. Submission information and Deadline

4.1. NYSTIA is primarily seeking proposals from DMOs or a collective of partner entities to provide a complete event experience, but will accept proposals from individual hotel/convention properties wishing to host all or

segments of the conference. Priority consideration will be given to proposals covering a complete conference experience, and including host properties/destinations that are NYSTIA members.

- 4.2. An electronic copy of the proposal should be emailed to the attention of ESTC Committee, at [info@nystia.org](mailto:info@nystia.org).
- 4.3. The deadline to submit proposals is **Tuesday, August 21, 2018**. NYSTIA reserves the right to extend the deadline if it feels it has not received an adequate number of viable proposals.
- 4.4. The proposal should include, at beginning of the proposal, the years for which you are submitting, and the open date ranges in those years as of submission.
- 4.5. The proposal should include contact information for at least three (3) references, similar to NYSTIA, that have held events at your property within the past three (3) years.

## 5. Selection Process

- 5.1. NYSTIA staff will do an initial review of proposals, select candidates, and make proposals to the ESTC Committee. NYSTIA staff will schedule/conduct site visits. Once site visits have been completed and additional information compiled, submitters will be notified of the committee’s decision. NYSTIA does not guarantee site visits to all proposed properties.
- 5.2. NYSTIA reserves the right to reject, in part or whole, incomplete or invalid proposals, without further inquiry or notice. Further, NYSTIA may, at any time, request additional information from all parties to assist with the review and evaluation of proposals.
- 5.3. NYSTIA staff and the ESTC committee will consider all information and items provided by the prospective host locations. Key interests include (but are not limited to)
  - 5.3.1. Amenities that will offer meeting attendees comfortable facilities and free access to internet and free parking
  - 5.3.2. Walking-distance proximity from lodging to meeting rooms
  - 5.3.3. Common areas for relaxation and socializing
  - 5.3.4. Opportunities for local dining and “tourist” activities that are easily accessible to attendees
  - 5.3.5. Group transportation options for planned off-site events/meals
  - 5.3.6. Easy accessibility for those arriving by various modes of transportation (car, train, air)
  - 5.3.7. Exceptional audio-visual capabilities in meeting and dining spaces
  - 5.3.8. Adequate space to accommodate a minimum of 25-30 exhibitor tables (minimum of 6’ tables and two chairs), immersed in a high-traffic area of the event.
  - 5.3.9. NYSTIA membership status of facilities/destinations included in the proposal.

## 6. Proposal Specifics

### 6.1. Accommodation Needs

6.1.1. The Typical pattern for this conference is to arrive on Monday morning, and depart on Wednesday afternoon. A small fraction of attendees (including staff) arrive on Saturday and Sunday night.

6.1.2. The following rooming needs are estimated is as follows:

Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
3 Rooms	30 Rooms	125 rooms	125 rooms	3 rooms

6.1.3. Expectations of Lodging Properties:

6.1.3.1. Willing and able to accommodate at least 50% of attendees needing early check-in and late check-out on event days with no additional charge.

- 6.1.3.2. Willing and able to provide NYSTIA with commissionable room rates booked online directly through the lodging facilities, or provide NYSTIA with a favorable room rate for use in our own registration, which we can upcharge to achieve our revenue goals.
- 6.1.3.3. Willing and able to provide room block and reservation cut-off date that does not exceed 10 days from the first day of the meeting.
- 6.1.3.4. Willing and able to release available rooms (if any) at end of room block cut-off without financial penalty to NYSTIA.
- 6.1.3.5. Indicate your proposed pricing with a flat rate for single/double occupancy, and a flat rate for suites or specialty rooms.
- 6.1.3.6. Willing and able to provide free wireless internet access and free facility parking.

**6.2. Reservations & Billing Arrangements:**

6.2.1. Event attendees will be responsible for all their own on-the-loose charges (i.e., room service, incidental charges, and meals not included in the event schedule). NYSTIA will pay for only those charges authorized by our representative(s) to be put on the master account.

6.2.2. The reservation cut-off date shall not exceed ten (10) days from the first day of the event. However, if rooms are available after the cut-off date, they will be provided to event attendees at the group rate. In addition, we ask that there will be no additional charges for early departure or for late checkout.

6.3. **Government Per Diem:** Many attendees are government employees and others will be traveling on behalf of a local government. Because of this we ask that the bidding property consider the base hotel rate being at or near the government per diem rate for all single and double occupancy rooms (factoring in the request for commission (see section 6.1.3.2)).

6.4. **Complimentary Accommodations:** Bidding properties should outline complimentary room policies.

6.5. **Rebates and Commissions:** Refer to sections 6.1.3.2.

6.6. **Financial and In-Kind Contributions:** For proposals being submitted by DMOs or a collective of partners, describe any financial contribution or in-kind service you plan to incorporate. Also describe any other donations, in-kind or otherwise, that will be obtained.

6.7. **Deposits, Cancellation Policies and Attrition:** All proposals must specify any applicable deposit policies, relevant cancellation and attrition policies, and relocation policies should the hotel/event property be unable to honor all guaranteed reservations for our group. Preference will be given to lodging properties that will allow NYSTIA to release available rooms (if any) from the block without financial penalty.

6.8. **Registration Area:** NYSTIA will require a dedicated space for processing attendees and managing the event, with access to the internet and electrical outlets, and the ability to secure materials during the day and overnight. Preference is for a built-in registration area within the facilities meeting/conference space.

6.9. **Meeting Room Requirements:** Please see the table below for the minimum meeting room needs associated with our event. Please note that space needs on given days are subject to change.

Day/Time	Function	Seating/Capacity	Set-Up
Day 1 (Monday): Afternoon will include at least one networking break with food/beverage service in the exhibitor area.			
Late Morning	NYSTIA Board Meeting & Lunch	20	boardroom
Late Morning	Exhibitor Set Up and Silent Auction Set Up		High trafficked area, to include space for

			food/beverage during networking breaks
Afternoon	General Session Space	260+	Crescent rounds facing podium
Evening	Offsite Reception & Dinner including entertainment/activity	260+	
After Hours	After Hours Social	100+	On-site bar/lounge?
Day 2: Day will include several networking breaks in the exhibitor area, with varying options for food/beverage service			
Morning	Breakfast buffet	260+	Rounds
Morning	General Sessions	260+	Crescent rounds facing podium
Morning	Breakout Sessions	75+ each room	4 rooms, option of classroom or theater seating as needed
Mid Day	Lunch buffet with speaker	260+	Rounds
Afternoon	General Sessions and/or Breakout Sessions	260+/75+ each room	See descriptions above
Evening	Reception & Dinner including live scholarship auction (on-site or off-site, depending on options and A/V service)	260+	Rounds
After Hours	After Hours Social	100+	On-site bar/lounge?
Day 3: Day will include one networking break in the morning, with coffee service left over from breakfast			
Morning	Breakfast buffet	260+	Rounds
Morning	General Sessions (up to 2)	260+	Rounds
Noon	Wrap Up		

6.10. **Food & Beverage Requirement:** All proposals must include food and beverage policies, minimum expenditure requirements, menus and costs for coffee breaks, luncheons, banquets, and other services. Looking ahead, we ask that pricing at time of contracting be honored during the event (or lesser cost if applicable/available). See Section 6.10 for estimated capacity for each event/activity.

6.11. **A/V Needs:**

- 6.11.1. All general session and breakout rooms will require a screen, projector (with clicker for speaker), podium with microphone, and wireless microphones with stands for 2-4 speakers at a head table. Wireless microphone for audience participation. Integrated A/V with upload, WIFI, sound and projection is preferred.
- 6.11.2. Complimentary highspeed internet and WFI throughout hotel and guest rooms is essential. Must be able to have multiple devices in use at one time.
- 6.12. **Destination Management and Host City Information:** DMOs and partner collectives that are submitting proposals should indicate any destination management services available. It is strongly suggested that these proposals include a profile of the host city and surrounding areas that may be of interest to event attendees. Indicate if any part of the event, excluding pre- and post-conference tours, is in another location such as an adjacent town. Also, please list possible tours, special events or receptions to be offered to attendees and identify local attractions and points of interest. Traditionally, NYSTIA holds their reception and dinner functions at an offsite venue. Please include details of possible venues for these events – including capacity, associated costs, transportation options, and A/V and internet capabilities.
- 6.13. **ADA Compliance:** Please indicate if your property and the suggested off-site destinations were either built to meet ADA compliance or if they have been retrofitted to meet all requirements.
- 6.14. **Accessibility to Areas of Interest and Transportation Services:** DMOs and partner collectives that are submitting proposals should indicate the ease of accessibility to restaurants, bars, local points of interest, and transportation services (airport, train) in your area. Also indicate if proposed lodging properties offer a complimentary shuttle to and from the transportation services or to and from the surrounding area. List any other modes of local public/private transportation for getting around your area.
- 6.15. **Shipping and Storage:** Speakers, sponsors and exhibitors from our group occasionally send materials prior to the event and require storage. Post-event, there may be a need for shipping services to send materials home. Please include your standard receiving and shipping practice.
- 6.16. **Contractors:** Please indicate if there are any additional requirements/policies for the use of contractors as related to your facility.
- 6.17. **Miscellaneous:** Please feel free to provide NYSTIA with any additional supporting information not asked for in this RFP, that you feel may be of interest or importance. All details in this RFP are subject to modification or elimination, including targeted time of year, schedule, and all numbers related to estimated attendees, room needs, lodging needs, etc. are estimates only for planning and budgeting purposes.

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Proposals due: August 21, 2018  
Submit to: info@nystia.org

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