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# 2012 Site Selection Guidelines and Application Information

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January 3, 2011

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# Overview

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The Commission on Presidential Debates (CPD) is accepting applications to host a 2012 presidential debate. The deadline to submit a proposal to host a debate is March 31, 2011. All submissions must include a non-refundable \$7,500 application fee, which will cover administrative costs, a site survey, and technical evaluations. Below is a timeline for the submission process:

**March 31, 2011** Due date for proposals

**April-June 2011** Site surveys scheduled and conducted by CPD production staff

**July-September 2011** Review of proposals and site surveys

**Fall 2011** CPD Board selects 2012 sites and dates

For pre-selection site surveys, site applicants must provide ground transportation, hotel accommodations, and technical survey manuals to CPD production staff. Specific information will be provided by the CPD.

To apply, submit five copies of your proposal to the CPD in five separate 3-ring binders. The proposal should address all items in the site guidelines presented in the following format:

- Section 1:** Application Form
- Section 2:** Facilities
- Section 3:** Telecommunications
- Section 4:** Hotels
- Section 5:** Transportation
- Section 6:** City Services and Security
- Section 7:** Catering
- Section 8:** Additional Items
- Section 9:** Finances
- Section 10:** Additional Information (optional)

Following the proposal deadline, no significant changes may be made to the application. Please note that each prospective site will be considered as a location for either a **presidential** or a **vice presidential** debate. In addition, the Town Hall debate will require some additional space, financial obligations, and transportation.

These guidelines are subject to change. The debate host's and the CPD's respective obligations ultimately will be set forth in a formal contract, the execution of which will be a prerequisite for selection as a debate host.

If you have questions regarding the application process, please call (202)872-1020 or e-mail [nancy@debates.org](mailto:nancy@debates.org).

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# 2012 Debate Host Application

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**Name and address of entity applying:**

In addition to this application, you must also provide:

1. Your non-refundable application fee of \$7,500 (payable by check to the Commission on Presidential Debates) that will cover administrative costs, a site survey, and technical evaluations. If additional surveys are required prior to site selection, there may be additional fees.
2. Five copies of your proposal in five separate 3-ring binders that address the 2012 Site Selection Guidelines.

Please mail to:                      Commission on Presidential Debates  
   1200 New Hampshire Avenue, NW  
   Box 445  
   Washington, DC 20036

By signing this form, I confirm that I am an officer of \_\_\_\_\_, (name of entity) \_\_\_\_\_, which agrees to the terms of this application and 2012 site selection guidelines. We have enclosed our non-refundable application fee of \$7,500 as well as information on our institution that addresses the 2012 site selection guidelines. We will provide ground transportation and hotel accommodations for production staff during the pre-selection survey. We understand that this application does not guarantee selection of our site to host a debate. In addition, we understand that our institution may be selected to host a presidential debate, a vice presidential debate, or be selected as one of two alternate sites. We understand that if our institution is to be selected to host a debate or to serve as an alternate, a formal contract will be entered into between the Commission on Presidential Debates and our institution setting forth the parties' respective rights and obligations in detail.

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**Signature of Authorized Representative**

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**Date**

**Signing Officer:**

**Primary Contact:**

Title:

Title:

Institution:

Institution:

Email:

Email:

Office Telephone:

Office Telephone and Cell:

Mailing/Shipping Address:

Mailing/Shipping Address:

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# 2012 Site Selection Guidelines

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## Facilities

In addition to addressing the requirements for each facility, the following supporting materials are required with each proposal:

1. For all facilities, electronic drawings, architectural drawings, and detailed engineering specifications in PDF format. These documents should include square footage for each space and indicate all entrances and exits, both above and below ground level.

If there is more than one facility that a host would like to propose, please send information on each.

2. Two overhead maps, such as satellite maps. The first should closely illustrate the proximity of each debate-related facility. The second should more broadly illustrate the debate facilities in relation to the surrounding area (such as a campus), roadways, and other significant buildings or other items of interest. These maps should be provided in hard copy and in PDF format. Each item should be clearly identified. Each map should include a compass rose or overlay indicating due north.

3. A brief video that highlights the following main facilities:

- Debate Hall, its subset rooms, and adjacent parking
- Media Filing Center (or tented location), its subset rooms, and adjacent parking
- Ticket Distribution Center and adjacent parking
- Accreditation Center and adjacent parking
- Free Speech Area

Identify each location with captions. The video should not be longer than five minutes and will only be used for technical review. Include a copy of the video on DVD in each of the five application binders, and as a web address to a video link, if available.

4. A description of the insurance policies covering the use of the proposed facilities.

For all facilities, the debate host must supply skilled operation, maintenance, and security personnel who will be available 24 hours a day during the week immediately preceding the debate, the day of the debate, and the day after the debate. CPD staff will need limited access to these areas during the weeks leading up to the debate, and unlimited and exclusive access to these areas during the seven days immediately prior to the debate and the one day after the debate. The debate host should contact local utility and telephone companies to ensure that extra capacity and backup systems can be provided during debate production.

Some spaces within a facility will require additional 110-volt distribution.

## Debate Hall

The CPD will require one hall of at least 17,000 square feet where the debate will be held. It must have the following features, which should be described in the proposal:

- A. Minimum ceiling height of 35 feet.
- B. Overall floor depth of at least 140 feet.
- C. A stage with minimum measurements of: 65 feet in width and 30 feet in depth; 30 feet in height of backdrop; 4 feet in height above the floor of the hall.
- D. A maximum distance of 90 feet from the candidates' position on stage to the floor location where the TV platforms will be constructed at the rear of the house.
- E. The Debate Hall must be air conditioned, with relative indoor humidity not to exceed 50%, and shall be comfortably ventilated. The air conditioning must have a minimum capability of achieving 68 degrees Fahrenheit for the house audience area and 65 degrees Fahrenheit for the on-stage areas (with individual overhead vents for the candidates). The following conditions are required for both areas: 1,000 people or 250,000 BTU per hour, and a full lighting load of 20,000 watts or 68,240 BTU per hour. The air conditioning system must operate at a sound level that does not add to the noise level of the room or interfere with the debate broadcast.
- F. Lighting: The Debate Hall shall have sufficient work lights for the crews setting up for the debate. It shall also have sufficient architectural lighting so that when the CPD's lighting is turned off, the Debate Hall will be displayed in an attractive manner for electronic broadcast. The Debate Hall shall also have sufficient exterior lighting on the façade or main entrance to present the outside of the Debate Hall in an attractive manner for remote electronic broadcast.
- G. Rigging: All necessary rigging points should be accessible from the facility floor or have OSHA-approved grid access.
- H. Electric power: Adequate electrical shore power shall be provided for general use of the Debate Hall, including pre-debate preparation and construction and post-debate clean-up. During the three days prior to the debate and the day of the debate, power must be provided by a temporary redundant installation (i.e., portable twin-pack event generator) with a minimum total power of 2,800 KVA. All power shall be 3-phase, 4-wire, 60-cycle power. *Extensive power distribution will be required.* The detail for this distribution will be provided by the CPD.
- I. Excellent acoustical qualities.
- J. Comfortable, fully padded seats with unobstructed views of the stage.
- K. Fully carpeted floors.
- L. Easy access and parking for passenger vehicles and buses.
- M. A large parking area close to the Debate Hall for up to 30 television remote trucks, trailers and/or satellite trucks up to 53 feet in length. Media will be running cables from this parking area into the Debate Hall, Media Filing Center, and Media Interview Area. Adequate power for 30 office and production trailers should be available from sources in close proximity to the lot.
- N. A parking area as close as possible to the Debate Hall for the pool television production truck. At a minimum, this area shall be large enough to park two 53-foot expandable mobile units, two satellite uplink trucks, and a small crew van, and shall be supplied (from the paragraph "G" power source) with a clean uninterruptible power source in the amount of 400 AMPS (3-phase, 4-wire).
- O. Sites will be required to provide 100 reserved parking spaces seven days prior to the debate within close proximity to the debate facilities.
- P. The Debate Hall must be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

- Q. The Debate Hall must have sufficient security systems and personnel to ensure the safety of all debate-related equipment and installations, from three days before the debate until one day after the debate.
- R. The Debate Hall facility should be within a 10-15 minute drive of the primary hotels that will be used.
- S. The Debate Hall must be in a facility that offers:
  1. CPD Office Space: Approximately 4,000 square feet of workspace available five days prior to the debate. The space should include a large open workspace, a minimum of three conference rooms, and approximately 10 private offices. The debate host will be responsible for equipping the CPD Office Space with appropriate furniture, equipment, CATV television system with monitors, internet, and telecommunications as specified by the CPD.
  2. Moderator Space: This includes a private office and adjoining sitting area that seats a minimum of six people. The debate host will be responsible for equipping the moderator space with appropriate furniture, equipment, CATV television system with monitors, internet, and telecommunications as specified by the CPD.
  3. United States Secret Service Space: To be determined by the United States Secret Service.
  4. Candidate Holding Rooms: Each candidate will need approximately 750 square feet with separate bathroom facilities within close proximity to the Debate Hall. The candidate holding rooms should be wired for telephones, internet, CATV, and other electrical equipment to be provided by the campaigns.
  5. Additional Work Rooms: A minimum of 4,000 square feet per campaign with wiring capacity for telephone, internet, CATV, and other installations provided by the campaigns.
  6. White House Press Pool Holding Room: Equipped with tables and chairs for 20 members of the working press, CATV television system with monitors, and adequate telephone, internet, and electrical power.
  7. Ticketed Guest Holding Area: A holding area adjacent to the Debate Hall for all ticketed guests to wait until doors open. The facility should offer restrooms and some seating.

## **Media Filing Center**

The event requires a second hall, either in the same facility as the Debate Hall or extremely close to the Debate Hall, that is a minimum of 20,000 square feet. (It may be a tented facility.) This will be used as a working press room for approximately 3,000 journalists who will cover the debate. This facility will require:

- A. Air conditioning to be maintained at 70 degrees Fahrenheit with relative indoor humidity not to exceed 50%.
- B. A CATV television system with 50 television monitors.
- C. Work tables and chairs for 750 journalists. Each work station will be equipped with a telephone line, internet connection, and two 110-volt AC electrical outlets for equipment to be provided by the journalists. Journalists will pay a usage fee to the host site for workspace, trailer parking space, live stand-up position space, data and telephone connections, office equipment, etc.
- D. The Media Filing Center shall have electrical and lighting systems appropriate for its use as a working media center.
- E. If the Media Filing Center is a tented facility, the debate host will be responsible for providing mobile restroom trailers as specified by the CPD.
- F. CPD Media Information Office: Approximately 750 square feet of space adjacent to the Media Filing Center. The debate host will be responsible for equipping this space with appropriate furniture, equipment, CATV television system with monitors, and telecommunications as specified by the CPD.

- G. Network Workspaces: May be located in the Media Filing Center, Debate Hall, or nearby parking area. Requires five generally identical areas, to accommodate approximately 25 people each. The workspaces must allow broadcast interconnections to the debate venue and/or broadcast parking area. Sufficient power and cable paths must be provided to facilitate such use.
- H. Pool Workspace: May be located in the Media Filing Center, Debate Hall, or nearby parking area, and preferably located with the Network Workspaces. Requires one area generally identical to the Network Workspaces and able to accommodate approximately 25 people. The workspaces must allow broadcast interconnections to the debate venue and/or broadcast parking area. Sufficient power and cable paths must be provided to facilitate such use. The debate host will be responsible for equipping this space with appropriate furniture, equipment, and telecommunications as specified by the CPD.
- I. Additional TV Workspace: A minimum of 1,500 square feet of workspace that can be divided into several meeting rooms. The space must be in or extremely close to the Media Filing Center.
- J. CPD Media Desk: A work area for approximately five people located within the Media Filing Center. Electrical specifications for this space will be provided by the CPD. The debate host will be responsible for equipping the Media Desk with appropriate furniture, equipment, and telecommunications as specified by the CPD.
- K. Media Catering Area: An area within or adjacent to the Media Filing Center for media catering, which is provided by a third party. The debate host shall equip the Media Catering Area with electrical service, lighting, CATV television system with monitors, telecommunications, and other equipment as specified by the CPD. The host site shall permit alcoholic beverages to be served within the Media Catering area. This space will be identified by the crew during the survey.
- L. Media Interview Area: Located within or adjacent to the Media Filing Center, used for interviews by working press prior to, during, and after the debate. This space will be identified by the crew during the survey and will require:
  - 1. Air conditioning to be maintained at 70 degrees Fahrenheit with relative indoor humidity not to exceed 50%.
  - 2. A CATV television system with 10 television monitors.
  - 3. Bike rack to define and secure the area, if located within the Media Filing Center.
  - 4. Pipe and drape.
  - 5. 110-volt power distribution.
  - 6. Telephone lines and internet connections. Specifications will be provided by the CPD.
  - 7. Cable access to the media parking area.
- M. Outdoor Standup: An outdoor standup platform, located in front of the Debate Hall, with at least 50 positions, each measuring approximately 6x8 square feet. Specifications will be provided by the CPD.

## **Media Satellite Parking Lot**

The event requires an additional space to serve as the Media Satellite Parking Lot, located approximately one-half to one mile away from the Media Filing Center. The space should include easy access and parking for approximately 500 passenger vehicles, as well as a staging area for shuttles transporting the media to the Media Filing Center and Accreditation Center.

## **Ticket Distribution Center**

The event requires a facility of approximately 4,000 square feet for a Ticket Distribution Center, located approximately one-half to two miles away from the Debate Hall. The facility's parking should allow for up to 600 vehicles, as well as an area adjacent to the facility for staging debate shuttle buses. The facility should offer some seating, restrooms, an area for distributing tickets, and an area for light catering. A tented walkway should lead from the Ticket Distribution Center to the staged bus location. Electrical specifications for this space will be provided by the CPD. The debate host will be responsible for equipping the Ticket Distribution Center with appropriate furniture, equipment, and telecommunications as specified by the CPD.

## **Accreditation Center**

The event requires a facility of approximately 3,000 square feet for an Accreditation Center, located approximately one-half to one mile away from the Debate Hall, with parking for up to 75 vehicles. The parking area should allow enough space to stage shuttle buses. The debate host will be responsible for equipping the Accreditation Center with appropriate furniture, equipment, CATV with monitors, and telecommunications as specified by the CPD.

## **Free Speech Area**

The event requires an outside area for free speech that will not be affected by security parameters.

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# **Telecommunications**

## **Dial Tone**

Approximately 1,300 individual dial tone lines are required. These lines service the Debate Hall, Media Filing Center, Media Interview Area, and Accreditation Center. The detail and standards for this distribution will be provided by the CPD.

## **Internet Connections**

Connection to the internet will be required in all workspace areas including the Debate Hall, Media Filing Center, Media Interview Area, and Accreditation Center.

At minimum, all media work areas must have a WI-FI network in addition to the hard line connections (including Network Workspaces and Pool Workspace – see Media Filing Center “F” and “G”).

Network capacity for the debate event is required to be provided as redundant, dedicated, independent bandwidth for the event, and as such should not be based on the use of existing network capacity typically available for normal university or facility purposes. The details and standards for the networking requirements will be provided by the CPD.

Any costs incurred in the provision of such network capacity are to be borne by the debate host, including any construction costs for dedicated services from common carriers.

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# Hotels

## Hotels

The event requires that a host site have approximately 3,000 hotel rooms available for the event. It is preferred that the total number of rooms be provided in a minimum of three hotels, with a maximum of seven hotels, within 30 minutes by car from the facilities.

Please provide information on the services of each hotel property included in the proposal, including available transportation to the Debate Hall and to major air and rail terminals.

## CPD – Post-Selection Surveys

Sites must provide hotel accommodations for CPD production staff for post-selection surveys at the hotel designated for use by the CPD.

## CPD – Debate

The CPD will require a minimum of 85 hotel rooms, at a property approved by the CPD, guaranteed and paid for by the host site, with most rooms available approximately seven days prior to the debate. The property will be reviewed and approved during the survey process. All rooms must be held through the debate, without exception.

In addition, the CPD will require a minimum of 40 hotel rooms, at a property approved by the CPD, guaranteed by the host site but not paid for by the host site, with 10 rooms available five days prior to the debate and 30 rooms available one day prior to the debate. Ideally, these 40 hotel rooms will be located in the same property as the 85 rooms outlined above. The property will be reviewed and approved during the survey process.

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# Transportation

## Transportation

The event requires that host sites be located near adequate air and ground transportation networks. Please provide a description of air and rail carriers that service the area and ground transportation options from the airport(s)/rail station(s) to the hotels and debate venue.

## CPD – Post-Selection Surveys

Sites must provide ground transportation for CPD production staff for post-selection surveys.

## CPD - Debate

Beginning five to seven days prior to the debate, the host site is required to provide adequate ground transportation for CPD production staff and associates. This includes, but is not limited to, transportation to and from the airport to the designated CPD hotel(s), and transportation to and from the designated CPD hotel(s) to the venue. The CPD will provide specifics to the host site regarding vehicles and shuttle schedules.

## **Media Satellite Parking**

The host site is required to provide shuttle transportation between the Media Satellite Parking Lot, the Accreditation Center, and the Media Filing Center/Debate Hall beginning approximately three days prior to the debate and on the day of the debate. Shuttle service should include access for the physically impaired.

## **Debate Attendees**

The host site is required to provide debate day shuttle transportation for all debate ticket holders between the Ticket Distribution Center and the Debate Hall. Shuttle service should allow access for the physically impaired. The CPD will provide specifics to the host site on vehicles and shuttle schedules.

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# **City Services and Security**

The CPD will need the host's guarantee of complete city services, including any necessary police, fire, bomb disposal, and rescue personnel to ensure the safety of the debate. The coordination of this function is the responsibility of the United States Secret Service, whose agents will work with city officials to establish procedures for securing all aspects of the event. The CPD requests information on the size of the police force in host sites, the location of the trauma center nearest the Debate Hall, and the availability of mobile medical units to be at the hall. A list of any events that have been held at the host site under United States Secret Service direction would be helpful.

The host site must provide additional security to that coordinated by the United States Secret Service. This may include, but is not limited to, temporary perimeter fencing surrounding the debate facilities; security personnel at various entry points within the facilities; pre-debate credentials; and a police escort for the moderator the night of the debate.

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# **Catering**

The host site is required to provide food service for the CPD production staff beginning five days prior to the debate until the day after the debate. The host site shall also provide light catering to ticketed guests at the Ticket Distribution Facility. Specifications for these services will be provided by the CPD.

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# **Additional Items**

## **Signage**

The host site is required to provide appropriate signage throughout all facilities, including that specified by the CPD.

## **Pipe and Drape**

The host site is required to provide pipe and drape as specified by the CPD.

## Technical Survey Manual

For pre-selection and post-selection surveys, site applicants must provide technical survey manuals, which include maps and floor plans, for use by the CPD crew. Specific information will be provided by the CPD.

## Washington, D.C. Meetings

Representatives of each selected debate site will attend one, possibly two, meetings in 2012, located in Washington, D.C. The debate site should plan to cover all travel costs associated with these meetings.

## Letters of Support

The CPD prefers to receive any letters of support with the submitted application.

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# Finances

Each debate host will pay \$1,650,000 to the CPD to cover the production costs of a single debate. The CPD is recognized as a 501(c)(3) corporation under the Internal Revenue Code.

The debate host will bear the cost of all the goods and services enumerated in these site selection guidelines except those listed in this document as exceptions. Additional costs to the debate host include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Application fee
- Equipping the facilities with necessary furniture, equipment, CATV, and telecommunications
- Television monitors
- Necessary personnel
- Hotel accommodations for the CPD production staff during all surveys and debates
- Ground transportation for the CPD production staff and associates during all surveys and debates
- Shuttle transportation for the media
- Shuttle transportation for all debate attendees
- Catering service for the CPD production staff and ticketed guests
- Additional costs related to hosting a Town Hall format debate, including, but not limited to, a conference facility, additional buses, and catering
- Travel costs associated with site representatives attending one, possibly two, meetings in Washington, DC
- Technical survey manuals
- CPD office and moderator office long distance charges
- Signage
- Any additional costs the host site must incur to meet host requirements

Each proposal should include a statement that host site officials are confident that the funds can be raised.