

Interviewing at Professional Meetings

Search committees should actively promote position vacancies by meeting prospective applicants at professional meetings and distributing materials about the position, the department/unit, and the University; however, several general considerations should be kept in mind when attempting to enlarge the applicant pool or assist in the selection of promising candidates.

At all times, equity in the search process must be assured. No applicant can be eliminated from consideration because the person cannot accept an invitation to interview at a conference.

Several useful procedures have been identified by departments/units that have conducted interviews at conferences. Search committees must prepare a list of questions in advance to use in all interviews, which helps assure equitable treatment. With consent of the candidate, the interview can be recorded to be heard by the committee members not in attendance at the conference. If the interview is not recorded, the U of I representative makes notes immediately following each interview. If more than one U of I representative meets the candidates, they should compare notes soon after the interviews.

The approach preferred to allow maximum equity for all applicants and to assure an unassailable search procedure is to secure approval of the applicant pool from the AAC prior to any meeting with candidates at conferences. In these instances, a search committee should:

- Advertise the application deadline to precede the conference and indicate that those interested in a screening interview must meet the application deadline.
- Schedule interview appointments at the conference with qualified candidates.
- Accept no new resumes at the conference nor offer any walk-in interviews from those whose applications have not been reviewed and approved by AAC, and Human Resources – Workforce Diversity.

If the search committee wishes to take advantage of a conference held prior to the application deadline to increase the size or quality of the applicant pool, care should be taken to avoid potential challenges by:

- Advertising that representatives will hold information session(s) at the professional meeting.
- Providing information about the position to all interested applicants, distributing the Job posting, and accepting application materials from all interested applicants.

Caution: At a conference, committee members may unintentionally acquire information about race, ethnicity, creed, color, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability, or veteran status—information that is improper to consider during the search process. Committee members should ensure that no such information gained during the conference is used to prejudice the evaluation of any applicants.