

# **Proposal to host the 42nd International Symposium on Archaeometry (ISA 2018) in Mérida, Yucatán, México**



Chichén Itzá, archaeological site, Yucatán. Source: México Desconocido.

## **1. The Venue**

Merida is the capital and largest city in Yucatan state and the cultural and financial capital of the region. It is a modern, cosmopolitan city with museums, art galleries, restaurants, shops and boutiques. As a major centre of commerce, Merida Yucatan is considered the crossroads of the region and one of the most important places to experience the Mayan heritage.

Merida was built as a walled city in the sixteenth century, and some of the old Spanish city gates still remain. The city boasts the second-largest historic place in Mexico; only Mexico City's historic centre is larger. Merida gets its nickname, La Ciudad Blanca (The White City), from the predominance of white limestone used as a building material; although locals today will say that it also has to do with the cleanliness of the city's streets and public areas, not to mention how safe the city is.

## **2. Travel and Access of the city through the international transportation systems**

As the Yucatan state's capital, Merida is extremely well connected by land and air to other parts of the region and the country. Merida is serviced by Manuel Crescencio Rejón International Airport with daily non-stop services to major cities in Mexico and international points (Miami, Houston, La Havana) and usually receiving charter flight services to and from Europe and Canada. Travelling to Merida is also easy through the international Cancun airport (4 hrs drive), which receives a wider variety of flights to and from North, Central and South America, Asia, and Europe.

To get from the Airport (by ground transport) to local destinations there are several options:

- Taking an authorized taxi cab or van.

- By public transportation.

## **3. Climate**

Merida features a tropical climate. The city lies in the wind belt close to the Tropic of Cancer, with the prevailing wind from the east. Merida's climate is hot and its humidity is moderate to high, depending on the time of year. The average annual high temperature is 33 °C (91 °F).

## **4. Tourist Attractions**

Merida is a wonderful mixture of colonial city and cosmopolitan destination. Churches and an important cathedral, haciendas and *cenotes* (sinkholes) are all within reach. As the state and regional capital, Merida is also a cultural centre, featuring multiple museums, art galleries, restaurants, movie theatres, and shops. Merida retains an abundance of beautiful colonial buildings and is a vibrant cultural place with music playing and dancing,

as an important part in day-to-day life. At the same time, it is a modern city boasting a comprehensive range of shopping malls, auto dealerships, top quality hotels, restaurants, and leisure facilities.

The city is also an excellent base from which to explore the rest of the region, including the archaeological wonders of Chichén Itzá and Uxmal and many other less well known, but equally important Mayan archaeological sites in the vicinity.

## **5. Participant institutions involved in the organization**

- Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán (Autonomous University of Yucatan), UADY
- Institute of Physics, National University Autonomous of Mexico, IF-UNAM
- El Colegio de Michoacán, A.C.
- Institute of Anthropological Research, National University Autonomous of Mexico, IIA-UNAM
- Red de Ciencias Aplicadas a la Investigación y la Conservación del Patrimonio Cultural (CONACYT). National Network of Applied Sciences for the Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage
- Laboratorio Nacional de Ciencias para la Investigación y la Conservación del Patrimonio Cultural (LANCIC-CONACYT). National Laboratory of Sciences for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage.

## **6. Members of the local organizing committee**

- José Luis Ruvalcaba (Chairman, IF UNAM)
- Rafael Cobos (UADY)
- Blanca Maldonado (El Colegio de Michoacán, A.C.)
- Luis Barba (IIA, UNAM)

## **7. Range of dates**

Symposium: May 20 – 26, 2018

Abstract submissions: August 15 – December 31, 2017

Applications for hosting next ISA (2020) August 15 – December 31 2017

Early registration: August 15, 2017 – February 15, 2018

Late registration: February 16 – May 20, 2016

## 8. Size, nature, and facilities of the lecture theatre

The conference will be held at the Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán (Autonomous University of Yucatan), or UADY, an autonomous public university in the state of Yucatan, with its central campuses located in downtown Mérida. UADY is the largest tertiary educational institution in the state. The main campus is located at historic center of the city, with a few faculties located in adjacent boroughs, and it is well-suited to hosting ISA 2018.

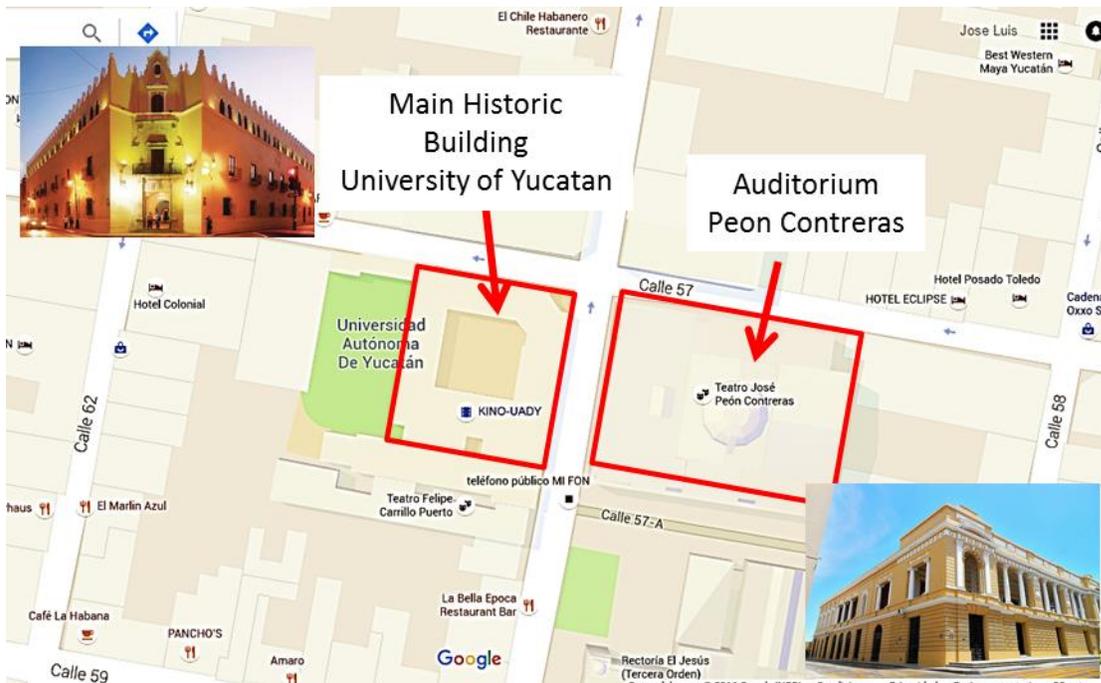
Talks will take place at the theater "Jose Peón Contreras", in front of the main building of the University, which provides more than 300 seats. Additional rooms are available at UADY.



Two large rooms can be used for poster, information and demo presentations at UADY, both located next to other smaller auditorium.

## 9. Space available for posters

Regarding the poster sessions, they can be carried out in the corridors of the historical building of the University of Yucatan. This building is just in front of the main auditorium Peon Contreras, which we proposed for the oral sessions, as you can see in the map below:



The main building of the University of Yucatan has three levels, each one with four corridors of 3.3 m wide and 13 m long (please see the photos below). The stands for the poster sessions can be set in the most suitable areas (second and third level), considering the sun light hours. We consider this space is the most appropriate and it is located close to the oral session place. We can have two poster sessions as it has been requested by the Standing Committee (SC) of ISA.





## 10. Lunch

In relation to lunch facilities, it is possible to cover the courtyard of the main building of the University of Yucatan –the same building proposed for the poster sessions - in order to provide a fresh meal with several options: salads, sandwiches, fruits, and some local food if you agree – avoiding chili or spicy ingredients. The food is provided by a catering service

that the University of Yucatan offers for this kind of meetings. This way the lunch can be carried out very close to the oral sessions and in the same area as the poster sessions.

## 11. Estimated registration fee

We provide a rough estimate of the budget with a number of 300 participants for break-even.

### **Registration Fee**

	<b>Early-Bird Registration</b>	<b>Late Registration</b>
<b>Normal</b>	245 USD	265 USD
<b>Student</b>	125 USD	145 USD

The registration fee will cover:

- Access to all sessions
- Coffee and lunch breaks
- Book of abstracts
- Social Events

Gala Dinner and the post-conference excursions have an additional cost. We consider that we can provide the conference dinner applying fees similar to those charged in previous meetings. This means the equivalent to 40 euros:

**Symposium Gala Dinner: 45 USD**

## 12. Availability and costs of hotels, dormitories and hostel accommodation

Most hotels in Merida are located close to the main plaza and along Paseo Montejo. The city offers a wide choice of places to stay that ranges from moderately priced rooms with basic facilities to grand five star hotels (40 to 120 USD). Accommodations and rooms can be reserved for ISA 2018 attendees in selected hotels at special rates.

Getting around the city is easy; the streets are laid out in a grid format and people can walk from the university to most central locations; even taking a cab to the places further away from the heart of the city is good value thanks to the well managed taxi system.

## 13. Grants

From the budget of the Symposium and some additional support, the organizers will provide some grants for students to attend the meeting.

#### **14. Martin Aitken best student poster prizes**

The amount of 400 € (2x200 €, or the equivalent in USD) will be provided by our organization for the Martin Aitken best student poster prizes.

#### **15. Suggested topic for a locally organized theme session**

##### ***Ancient Metallurgy in the Americas***

The development of technology in the New World followed its own path, both similar and different from that of the Old World. Metallurgy and metalworking emerged in the Andean region of South America, and subsequently transferred from south to north, as far as Mesoamerica, where it developed into local technological traditions. Copper and its alloys were the material of choice for most pre-Columbian metallurgical industries. These materials were fashioned mainly as ornaments used in religious ceremonies and for the enhancement of elite cultural status. Although increasing research has been conducted into the matter, the archaeometallurgical record for this vast region remains fragmentary and dispersed. The Purpose of this theme session is to comparatively explore different aspects of the metallurgy in different regions throughout the Americas.

#### **16. Publication of the ISA proceedings**

Unless otherwise instructed, the Proceedings of ISA 2018 will be published by Science and Technology of Archaeological Research (STAR), an open access journal by Maney Publishing's. The equivalent of 20 euros fee (25 USD) for the publication with Maney Publishing has been included in the registration fee for all the categories as it has been requested by the SC.

The institutions in charge of the administration may receive this fee and can transfer the money to the account that will be provided by the SC, to pay the publication of the ISA proceedings.

#### **17. Additional Information**

Due to its location, day trips can be made from Merida to explore either inland Yucatan or the coast. Merida is located two hours away from Valladolid and Campeche, two important colonial cities. Those interested in exploring traditional Maya towns, cenotes, and other Yucatan attractions, can actually spend the day in the Abalá region located just 30 minutes away. The ports of Celestun and Progreso, located to the west and north of Merida, can be easily reached in less than 60 minutes. Important archaeological sites, such as Chichén-Itzá and Uxmal, are also about 60 minutes away from Mérida. Excellent first class bus service can be used to get to these sites. Cancun and the Caribbean coast is 4 hrs away to the east and deserve extra time to enjoy it.



Dr. Jose Luis Ruvalcaba Sil  
IF-UNAM, Mexico