

Site Applicant's Resource Guide

Organization and Conference Introduction

What is the Glass Art Society?

The Glass Art Society (GAS) is a 501(c)(3) organization that was founded by artists in 1971 as a means for individuals working with glass to exchange information about new techniques and technologies. The GAS office is fully remote with an official mailing address in Seattle, WA, but was originally incorporated in New York state. Day-to-day operations are run by a small staff of four full-time and two part-time employees. The organization is led by an internationally-based Board of Directors.

What is the GAS Conference?

The GAS conference has been the primary tool for the exchange of information since the organization's inception. It is a way for artists, educators, and enthusiasts to come together once a year to share and learn from each other.

The Glass Art Society's Board of Directors selects a city to host its annual conference every year. The conference captures the personality and cultural feel of the host city while providing a slate of programming and events that appeal to the diversity of GAS members. Vital to the conference experience are demonstrations, lecmons (the combination of a lecture and a demonstration), lectures, panel discussions, exhibitions, a vendor market, educational opportunities, performances, special events, and tours.

Conference Expectations

- Conference attendance fluctuates from year to year, but you can expect between 900-1,700 people to participate in some way
- Conference attendees are generally between 18 – 65 years of age
- Conference attendees are students, mid-career artists, educators, arts professionals, scientists, tool makers, product vendors, gallery owners, and art collectors
- All event and programming decisions are made by the GAS Staff and Board of Directors in partnership with a local Site Committee

GAS Roles and Responsibilities

- GAS will be responsible for all final programming decisions
- GAS will approve all conference expenses
- GAS will develop all promotional materials
- GAS will promote all aspects of the conference and its activities to more than 30,000 glass enthusiasts within its contact base and social media platforms
- GAS will develop and host a web site for the conference
- GAS will coordinate with the Site Committee on all press and media releases
- GAS will coordinate with the Site Committee on vendor selection

- GAS will manage registration for the conference and all related events and will be the recipient of all proceeds generated through conference and event registrations
- GAS will recruit work exchange participants to assist at all venues during the course of the conference

The Site Committee

All conference planning is led by the GAS Office in partnership with a Site Committee, made up of local delegates from the region. As a host site, you are responsible for organizing the site committee.

Site Committee Roles and Responsibilities

- The Site Committee is responsible for securing local support and local promotion
- The Site Committee will guarantee a minimum of \$150,000 in financial support of the GAS Conference
- The Site Committee will meet in person or via phone or video call a minimum of once a month starting at least of one year prior to the conference date
- The Site Committee co-chairs will meet with the GAS Executive Director or Conference Manager via phone or video call a minimum of twice a month starting at least one year prior to the conference date
- The Site Committee will assist in establishing an overarching theme for the conference
- The Site Committee will secure the following venue partners for the conference:
 - An Opening Ceremony venue with A/V and wifi capabilities and seating for 700 – 1,200 people
 - 4-6 lecture venues with seating for 200-500 people at each location
 - Venues for hot glass (typically 2-3 venues), flame working (1-2) and cold working (1) demonstrations with seating for 100-300 people at each location
 - Hotel rooms for approximately 1,200 guests
 - A hotel or other large space with areas that can be used as exhibition space, 50+ vendor booths and a registration area
 - Gallery or large exhibition space for hosting the Member and Student Exhibitions
 - *If the appropriately sized venues do not exist for Opening Ceremony, lectures and/or demonstrations, temporary venues may be built **at the expense of the host city***
- All conference venue partners will sign an MOU with the Glass Art Society outlining the responsibilities of all groups
- Conference venue partners will provide in-kind donations of most or all venue rentals, equipment, supplies, and labor required for demonstrations or lectures at their location
- The Site Committee will secure participation from local galleries, museums and artists for special events and activities

- The Site Committee will work with local organizations/artists to offer pre- and post-conference workshops
- The Site Committee will work with local bars/restaurants/breweries to offer discounts to conference attendees (they will be promoted heavily before and during the conference)

How to organize your site committee

Finding the right mix of people willing to give their time and energy to build a GAS Conference is vital. This group of local people will spend a lot of time together in meetings and working on logistics together - so think of people who are good at decision making and working in a team. An appreciation and passion for glass and the arts definitely helps too! Be selective - site committee members need to commit to monthly meetings, keep appointments and deadlines, and assist in advertising and promotion among various other duties.

Site Committee Chair (or Co-Chairs)

This person(s) takes the lead on all communication with the GAS Office and delegates work to other Site Committee members. This person is in charge of holding deadlines in place, organizing financial obligations, and keeping the GAS Office in the loop with local updates.

Site Committee Members

Who in your area is passionate about your arts community? When considering your Site Committee think about people who are: business owners, non-profit leaders, cultural institution representatives, artists, art collectors, and educators. It is also very useful to have someone from your city/county tourist industry involved.

Consider people who: are high energy, involved, detail-oriented, have good management skills, have a skilled technical knowledge (hot shops, audio/visual, marketing, graphic design, etc.), know the city well, and are fiscally responsible.

Host City Obligations

Financial Obligation

Fundraising in the host city is an important component of GAS' annual budget. Because of the nature of our activities, fundraising is usually done around the conference itself. Please be aware that each conference is expected to pay for itself, generate half of the organization's annual administrative costs, and half of the cost of the annual GAS Journal. This usually requires raising a minimum of \$150,000 from the conference host city itself in addition to in-kind contributions to support the conference activities.

Revenue can be generated from any combination of the following:

- Grants
- Corporate sponsorship/support
- Individual donations
- Fundraising events

- And/or other creative ideas

Please discuss the potentials for funding with your Site Committee and other engaged members of your local community.

Conference Theme

The theme of the conference is key to the promotion of the conference and the selection of presentations for the conference. When a city submits an application for the GAS conference, they should include theme ideas for a conference in their city. It does not need to be a fully formed theme at this point; it can be a selection of ideas they would like to focus on or that the city thinks reflects the region. After the city has been accepted as a conference location, the Site Committee will work with GAS to select the final theme.

Lodging

Having a central hotel is ideal for the programming of the conference. It creates a “hub” for the conference by providing rooms for a large number of attendees, and in some cases, lecmo & lecture rooms, space for GAS Market vendors, and an area for the educational resources and opportunities. Rarely does a central hotel have enough rooms for all attendees so we need additional lodging options at a variety of different price points. It is not uncommon for the Site Committee to work with local options outside the central hotel to arrange special rates.

Travel & Transportation

The conference brings people from around the globe, so it is imperative that there be adequate transportation into the city from both regional and international locations. Once at the conference, attendees will need to be able to easily travel from one venue site to another. If the venue sites are not within a very short walking distance, some type of transportation (trolleys, busses, etc.) will need to be contracted to make a loop between them. Transportation to and from the Closing Night Party is also imperative.

Sample Timeline

36 Months Out

- Call for proposals
- ED site visit + preliminary meetings to determine interest + appropriateness of the site
- Letters of financial commitment due

24 Months Out

- Official site selection made by GAS Board
- MOU + Contract finalized

15-18 Months Out

- Preparation of preliminary budget
- Site Committee members officially secured
- Theme + logo confirmed
- Preparation of sponsorship materials

12-14 Months Out

- First half (\$75,000) of total financial obligation due (*must be received prior to the conference announcement*)
- Announcement of conference location, dates, and theme
- Proposals open for conference presentations
- Planning meeting and preliminary program schedule draft

6-9 Months Out

- Conference registration opens with Early Bird pricing

2-5 Months Out

- Conference program finalized and confirmed
- Logistics, including staffing schedule in final stages of development
- T-shirts and other merchandise confirmed and printed

1 Month Out

- Program Book finalized and printed
- All conference signage printed
- Second half (\$75,000) of total financial obligation due

1 Month Post-Conference

- Evaluations and debriefs from attendees, site committee, and GAS Board/Staff
- All financial obligations tied up and bills paid

6 Months Post-Conference

- GAS Journal is printed and mailed

Annual Conference Programming

At the heart of the GAS Conference is its programming. We offer a variety of programs in order to appeal to as many people as possible. In order to provide attendees with the opportunity to experience as much of the conference as possible, we must balance the various activities and avoid overlap. All ideas for demonstrations/ lectures/ lecmos/ performances, etc. must be submitted through the GAS Office.

Annual conference programming includes:

- An Opening Ceremony with award winner recognition, featured demonstration, and reception for all attendees

- Demonstrations - Hot, cold, flame, neon, kiln
- Lectures – *including named lectures*
- Lecmos (a combination lecture and demonstration)
- Performances
- GAS Film Festival (A separate program from the conference but running in tandem with conference dates, as well as at other events throughout the year)
- GAS Market (an exhibition hall/vendor marketplace)
- First Timers + Student Meet-ups
- A Closing Night Party for all attendees

Special Events

Many of GAS' conference programs look different every year. These events bring the host city and the GAS community together outside of normal conference hours.

- *Firestarter*, a social event the night before the Conference Kick-Off
- GAS Member, Student and Green Exhibitions
- Gallery Hop
- Jewelry Trunk Show
- Goblet Grab
- Glass Class Auction

Professional & Educational Resources

In addition to conference programming, providing resources for both our student and professional members is a key component of the GAS Conference. Whether there is a student interested in a graduate program or a working artist looking for new tools, the conference is a place they can find what they are looking for.

- Portfolio Review
- Education Resource Center
- Emerging Artist Panel
- Student Scholarships
- Interactive programming (workshops and extended panels)

Additional Opportunities

We hope every host city will want to put their own spin on the conference by working with GAS to schedule special events and programming that are unique to their location. All additions to the GAS schedule must be submitted to the GAS office for review before promotion can take place.

- Pop-up and special exhibitions
- Pre/post conference workshops
- After parties
- Studio and site tours and open houses

Media and Publicity

Promotion of the GAS conference, by both the Glass Art Society and the Site Committee, is necessary to the success of the conference. Early promotion is important in attracting desirable presenters, which in turn, can be used to attract attendees. Through joint marketing and promotion, GAS and the Site Committee will reach a wide range of people from all parts of the glass community. This joint promotion will also help raise community awareness and interest which can lead to additional funding support.

A Marketing & PR plan for the Conference (including announcements, social media posts, and press releases) will be developed as a joint effort between GAS and the Site Committee with final approval belonging to GAS.

The GAS Journal

The annual GAS Journal serves as a record for each conference. Presenters are asked to submit articles relating to their artwork or research discussed during the conference. The Journal is published digitally as a PDF and printed. Printed copies are available at an additional cost, and archive copies are kept in the GAS offices as well as sent to glass library collections around the world.