



DisCon III
SmofCon Questionnaire

Questionnaire Instructions

The questionnaire below includes some of the most asked questions for Worldcon/SMOFcons and bids.

Please email the completed answers to info@smofconeurope.com by **Saturday, 6th November, 2021**. The completed questionnaires will be posted on the Smofcon Website shortly thereafter and by Saturday 20th November, 2 weeks before the Fannish Question time.

Please answer all the questions *in line* below. If a question doesn't apply to your bid, please state: N/A.

If the answer won't be known until some future date, please provide an estimate of when you will be able to provide an answer. For example, for the question about room rates you might answer "These are expected to be agreed by [date]. Current internet rates are X per night room only for a double or twin and Y for single occupancy."

QUESTIONNAIRE

General

Name of Convention

DisCon III, the 79th World Science Fiction Convention

What are the dates of your convention?

The con will occur December 15-19, 2021

What is your proposed convention host city? Is your convention site in a city center location or a suburb? If a suburb, what are the transport options into the city centre? How far is the site from the city centre?

Washington, DC, USA. The OMNI Shoreham Hotel is in the city on the Metro line and is served by buses as well. It is three Metro stops from Metro Center on the Red Line.

What are your main facilities? How far are your hotels from your main venue?

Our physical venue is the OMNI Shoreham Hotel, so our on-site program will be happening within our main hotel. We are also offering an online programming component.

The OMNI is fully booked as of this date, with a waiting list available. There are many rooms available in overflow facilities. For information on them, consult: [Overflow Hotels - DisCon III \(discon3.org\)](http://discon3.org)

Who is your bid chair? Who is on your committee? What experience do they have in general? In running Worldcons?

Not applicable as the convention has already been voted on and confirmed. We have answered the question about the con chair below, and the full convention committee and staff list is available on <https://discon3.org/about/committee-and-staff/>.

If known, who will be the chair of the convention? What experience do they have?

The convention chair is Mary Robinette Kowal. Vice chairs are Marguerite Smith and Lauren Raye Snow. All three have extensive experience with science fiction conventions and events. Mary Robinette, besides her writing credentials and position as a past president of SFWA, has extensive experience in puppeteering and non-profit theater management and has organized the convention around the Nebula Awards, as well as working on Worldcon Program.

Have you agreed to participate in Pass-Along Funds? Would you be willing to increase the percentage from 50% to 70% of surplus?

Yes, we will participate in Pass-Along funds. The question of 50% vs. 70% is under consideration.

Travel

What is the typical current airfare to your closest airport from world cities such as London, Boston, Dublin, Los Angeles, Tokyo, Brisbane, etc.?

As you know, airline prices are in flux now, and the dates of Discon are soon. However, a search of United Airlines flights this week for the con dates had round trip flights from London starting at \$900, Tokyo at \$3,000, and Los Angeles at \$365.

Do international flights, as well as domestic, fly into your local airport? Which airlines? If not, where is the closest international airport? Are direct flights from the cities above flown into your local airport?

The three nearest airports to Washington, DC are Thurgood Marshall Baltimore-Washington International (BWI), Ronald Reagan National (DCA), and Dulles International (IAD). There are advantages to each, depending on your preferences in airlines. However, Dulles is the primary international airport, with over 130 non-stop domestic and international destinations on 40 airlines.

How far is your convention site from the nearest airport/train station and what is the likely cost of getting to the hotels by both public transport and taxi from that airport/train station?

Taxi rates to the OMNI: Dulles Airport - \$60, Regan National - \$25, Baltimore-Washington International - \$90. The hotel is accessible by public transportations, including the Metro, starting at about \$5. There are numerous methods from each airport listed here:

[Getting here - DisCon III \(discon3.org\)](http://discon3.org)

Facilities

What hotel(s) are being used for the convention? How many rooms have you secured, what type are they, do they accommodate accessibility needs, etc.?

The hotel has 834 rooms, of which we secured (and filled) most. There are eight overflow hotels, several of which are one stop away on the Metro. Because of the variety of overflow hotels, consult the website page for details:

[Overflow Hotels - DisCon III \(discon3.org\)](http://discon3.org)

What are your hotel room rates? Do these rates include breakfast? Do they include internet access in the room? How firm are these rates? What additional taxes and fees are there?

The rate does not include breakfast, but does include Internet access. Rates are totally firm, and as noted, the main hotel is now fully booked. The rates were \$169/night with taxes of 7.69% inclusive.

What does parking cost at your main hotels?

Parking is extremely limited at the OMNI Shoreham for the convention. The rate is \$35/day. Attendees are encouraged to take the Metro where possible. Overflow parking is in the final stages of being negotiated and will be included on the website as soon as possible.

What is the distance from the nearest door of your main hotel(s) to the closest entrance of the convention site? What are the transportation options for those who prefer not to walk or who have mobility difficulties?

The convention is being held in the OMNI Shoreham Hotel which is the main hotel. So, there is no distance.

Where will your large events (i.e. Hugo Ceremony and Masquerade) be held?

Our large events will be held in the Regency ballroom of the OMNI Shoreham Hotel, and will be streamed online.

Please describe the restaurant scene near your site.

Woodley Park is a neighborhood with a vibrant restaurant area a short walk from the OMNI. It is easy to find the cuisine of your choice.

What arrangements will be made for evening socialising and party space? Do you have a corkage waiver?

There are suites for parties as well as rooms, and there is a corkage waiver. Please be sure to register your party, so that you will have all the Covid-related information for your party.

Please describe the policies / laws regarding smoking in your hotel(s), convention centre, and city.

There is no smoking within the hotel. There is no convention center and according to local law, smoking is prohibited in all enclosed public places in the District of Columbia.

Given the current pandemic, have you considered any arrangements have been made for social distancing and the health and safety of members? If you have, can you describe what your current plans are?

Proof of vaccination is mandatory, along with matching ID and will be checked before a badge is issued. Properly worn masks are required at all times in convention space unless eating or drinking. The DC Covid tracker app is recommended for additional information on Covid in the area.

The entire policy is here and is recommended reading: [COVID Policy - DisCon III \(discon3.org\)](https://discon3.org)

Miscellaneous

What type of weather can we expect during your convention? What is the average temperature during that time of year?

The weather in Washington DC in December is highly variable. For example, in December of 2020, the high for the month was 66 degrees F (18.8 C) and the low was 23 degrees F (-5 C). Precipitation and changeable weather conditions may be expected.

What are some of the main tourist attractions of your city?

There are the numerous museums that comprise the Smithsonian, as well as many other museums. Close to the OMNI is the Smithsonian National Zoological Park. There are also all the buildings and monuments connected with the US's national government: White House, Capitol Building, and the Washington, Lincoln, and Jefferson Monuments.

Are you planning to have any membership discounts for certain demographic groups and which ones?

Besides the usual age and family discounts, DisCon III has the Capitalize! Fan Fund, which is sponsoring memberships that will be discounted for Washington, DC area residents or given out to fans and participants from marginalized communities, who have limited financial means, or who suffer from other barriers to attendance.

What is your vision for your Convention? How do you plan to make it happen?

Our goal is to create a convention with a strong sense of place and time -- we want our members to enjoy their Worldcon, but also to come away knowing that this was a DC Worldcon. DisCon III is committed to creating an inclusive program with interesting

guests and intriguing discussion topics. We want to combine experienced programming veterans with diverse new voices who can share their stories.

What is a notable aspect of your local fan culture and how do you plan to incorporate it into your Convention?

Besides participation from local conventions and fan groups in the area, DisCon III is partnering with the Duke Ellington School of the Arts to work on the stage design and presentation of the Hugo Awards Ceremony. Additionally, the Washington Metropolitan Gamer Symphony Orchestra will be performing at the con. We are excited for their participation, as well as that of the local creators who will be adding their talents to the convention.

Do you have a code of conduct? If so, is it available online and if so, where?

Yes, we have a code of conduct. The full Code of Conduct is on our website here: [Code of Conduct - DisCon III \(discon3.org\)](http://discon3.org) The overarching expectation is that everyone involved with DisCon III is expected to show respect towards the convention attendees, venue staff, the general public, and the various communities associated with the convention. This is a family-friendly convention; children will be present at many events and in open spaces, so please consider this in your conduct.

What do diversity and inclusion mean to you?

Worldcon, like the speculative fiction community as a whole, has a decades-long history of exploring humanity by reflecting societies back on themselves, as they are or as they should be. Unfortunately for all of us, this has generally been from a limited set of perspectives; often white or white-presenting cis men from the Anglophone global north, coming from a particular social background and class and not having caring duties or other duties that kept them at home. Not exclusively, by any means, but there have long been larger communities of thoughtlessly, unintentionally excluded people taking part in speculative fiction communities -- and sometimes creating their own.

Worldcon organisers have changed this a bit in past years by increasing program items which address introductory-level discussions such as racism in publishing, queer representation in comics, women in writing, and so on. We've now also had nearly a decade of specific fan funds to help people from marginalised or traditionally-excluded backgrounds attend Worldcons.

However, this is still not true inclusion, where we start building the convention with these people in mind. That means more fundamental planning, such as: Finding ways to reduce costs and/or increase funding to help members attend. Including captioning at

major events (at a minimum) and working to extend this to all items. Creating online participation from the start, so those who cannot travel (e.g. visa restrictions, monetary limitations) can still be heard. Ensuring the convention has gender-neutral toilets on every floor, quiet rooms in easily-accessible areas, breastfeeding and pumping areas, reliable step-free access to all areas, and more.

Inclusion also means that our committee and staff should comprise, as best as possible, the same breadth and depth of experiences as the community itself. With the best will in the world, outward organisation is never as complete as inward organisation, where people share their perspectives directly.

How are you working towards your goals in these areas?

Capitalize! is making the Worldcon more accessible to attendees who could not otherwise attend Worldcon. Program is working to open up the panelists to a wider group of authors/artists/creators.

What would concrete achievements look like in these areas?

We want to have participants and attendees as diverse as fandom itself.

What changes or challenges do you expect the current pandemic to present?

DisCon III has had all the challenges, including the bankruptcy of one hotel and having to move dates in order to be more sure of having an in person Worldcon this year. We continue to have challenges, as other in person cons have, of implementing the on site Covid policy and making it comfortable for fans to meet again in person.

Have you planned for a virtual component to your convention?

Yes, there will be a virtual component of at least three virtual tracks of program.

Your members vote for Hugo Finalists who are then excited and wish to play a full part in the convention programme. How do you plan to facilitate the Finalists' input as recognised by your community?

We have added a dedicated liaison to the Hugo Finalists, whose job it is to ensure that our honored finalists can communicate their wishes.