

Seattle Worldcon 2025 Smofcon 40 Questionnaire

General

Name of Convention?

Seattle Worldcon 2025 - Building Yesterday's Future For Everyone

What dates will your convention run?

August 13-17, 2025

What is your proposed convention host city?

Seattle, Washington

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

Our site is in the heart of downtown Seattle.

In-Town Travel:

King County Metro provides buses, light rail, and street-car options for travel. You can pay directly with cash on the bus, but the other options require an ORCA card. ORCA cards can be purchased at all light rail stops. The card costs \$5 and can be reloaded at any time. You can load cash onto the cards or purchase a monthly pass.

Orca Cards also have a mobile app option so that you can use your smartphone as your card and tickets.

Additionally, Seattle is served by several bike-share and scooter companies such as Bird, Lime, and Veo.

There is not a significant amount of street parking available in the downtown core, but parking garages are plentiful. If you are willing to park a little further out, you can find cheaper street parking down by the waterfront. We will provide information on our website about pricing options which can vary from \$10 to \$50/day.

For accessibility information for getting around Seattle, we highly recommend AccessMap Seattle.

For more information, this article describes the service fairly well: <https://seattle.curbed.com/2017/2/14/14601070/tcat-access-map-seattle-pedestrians>

You can access the map at: accessmap.io

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

Our main facility is the Summit Building of the Seattle Convention Center.

Our headquarters hotel is the Seattle Sheraton, which is 5-7 blocks away from the convention center depending on which door you exit.

We also have hotel blocks with the Hyatt Group, which includes the Hyatt Regency across the street and the Grand Hyatt and Olive 8. The Grand Hyatt and Olive 8 are approximately 4-5 blocks from the Summit building.

More details are on our website.

Who is your convention chair?

Our convention chair is Kathy Bond. A bio is available for her on our website.

Who is on your committee?

A staff list is available on our website.

What experience do they have in running Worldcons?

Our team consists of people who have worked at various levels on Worldcon as well as people who have never worked on Worldcon.

If applicable, have you agreed to participate in Pass-Along-Funds? Would you be willing to increase the percentage from 50% to 70%?

We will participate in Pass-Along funds.

What is the sponsoring organization?

Seattle Genre Alliance

Is the sponsoring organization a 501(c)(3) or otherwise a non-profit? If not a 501(c)(3) but a non-profit, please explain.

Seattle Genre Alliance is a Washington State Nonprofit Corporation and is a federally recognized 501c3 organization.

Is the sponsoring organization tax-exempt for local taxes, especially sales tax?

Yes

What is your website and/or Facebook group?

www.seattlein2025.org

Who should people contact for additional information or questions (email preferred)?
info@seattlein2025.org

Travel

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

As airfare rates are in a state of continual change, it is hard to give answers to this that are meaningful. Most major US carriers fly in and out of SeaTac (Seattle).

Do international flights, as well as domestic, fly into your local airport?

The nearest international airport is SeaTac International, which is a hub for Alaska Airlines and has non-stop service from several international cities and cities throughout the United States, including direct flights from Dublin, Tokyo, London, New York, Washington D.C., Chicago, Los Angeles, and Boston, among others.

All major U.S. carriers and most international carriers have some sort of flight into and out of SeaTac. In addition to SeaTac, regional travelers may also benefit from the newly opened Paine Field in Everett, Washington. Wait times can be shorter there, although Everett is further from downtown Seattle.

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, shared ride service (Lyft/Uber/etc.), and taxi from that airport/train station?

SeaTac International is 15 miles from downtown Seattle. There are many fantastic options for transportation into Seattle from the airport. Link light rail is a 50-minute train/subway ride from the airport directly to downtown Seattle.

From the Westlake Station stop, you will be approximately six blocks from the convention center. Cost for a one-way ride on link light rail is \$2.25 to \$3.25, and tickets can be purchased on the platform.

There is also a well-marked area for picking up taxis, Lyfts, or Ubers from the airport to the city. These rides cost approximately \$40-\$60. Town cars are also available for a flat \$50 fee, and a service called Shuttle Express that picks up in the same area with advance reservations. Shuttle Express will take you anywhere for approximately \$30/person. Most downtown hotels no longer have shuttle service to the airport.

Finally, Amtrak and Greyhound have stations in downtown Seattle. Seattle is served by Amtrak's Empire Builder route, which goes across the United States, and the Coast Starlight route, which travels along the West Coast of the United States.

What is the visa situation for citizens of foreign countries to attend your convention? What countries are eligible for ESTAs (Electronic Travel Authorizations which are generally a formality)? What countries would require visas? How long does it normally take to get a visa, and what does it cost?

Because Visa situations are fact specific if the US State Department Guidance is not sufficient, members can reach out to our team at visa@seattlein2025.org and we will help as much as possible. We plan to offer letters as necessary for our international members.

Facilities

All current information about our hotel facilities is available on our website including distance from our main site and rates.

All hotels in downtown Seattle have an additional 15.6% tax.

We have signed contracts with all the hotels on our website as well as with the Convention Center.

Our large events will be held in the Convention Center.

Please describe the restaurant scene near your site.

The cuisine available in downtown Seattle is varied and awesome. The convention center itself will have a variety of food outlets, to be determined closer to their opening date. The existing convention center (one block away) has a crepe shop, Subway, Taco Del Mar, a Mediterranean restaurant, two coffee shops, Juicy Cafe, and a general café.

Across the street is an Indian restaurant. A block farther is a Cheesecake Factory and a steak house. Two blocks away is Pacific Place with a food court. On weekdays, Westlake Center has a food truck extravaganza. Pike Place Market, with several food options, is a seven block walk from the convention center, and well worth it. Many more restaurants are within a five-block radius of the convention center, and are changing all the time.

In addition to the above, Seattle is an allergen and dietary friendly town. There are vegetarian, vegan, and paleo options for dining.

Nightlife ends at 2 a.m. in Seattle when the bars close. However, there are a lot of bars.

There is a club scene within walking distance of the convention center for people who want to see live music or go dancing.

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

Parties will be allowed in sleeping rooms at our Headquarters Hotel, the Seattle Sheraton. There are 30 suites of different sizes throughout the hotel.

There is some flux regarding what permits or licenses may be required for party groups, and we will have more information for those groups soon. We already have a dedicated person for party groups on our team who will be able to help coordinate logistics for the group.

In addition to the party suites, we will have evening programming at the Seattle Sheraton in a small area that will include gaming, late nite filking, and dances. These areas will have a cash bar provided by the hotel and may also be an arena for party groups to sponsor if they do not wish to have a suite.

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

Smoking is not allowed inside buildings anywhere in the city of Seattle. This prohibition extends to within 25 feet of doorways, and includes both tobacco and marijuana products.

Miscellaneous

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

August weather will make you suspect that Seattle residents lie about the rainy weather. It will likely be glorious, in the 70-80s degree range Fahrenheit, and sunny.

Recent summers have shown fire season to be a concern for residents throughout the West Coast of the United States. While Seattle has not typically experienced significant fires in modern times due to its geography, air quality can be affected (although not the same extent as in Eastern Washington, California, or other regions closer to fire zones).

In August we will have had plenty of notice about the fire season, be able to source masks for people for whom air quality is an issue, and provide notice so people can bring their own masks.

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

There is no shortage of fun things to do in Seattle, whether your tastes run to the educational, natural, or quirky. Within walking distance of the convention center, check out Pike Place Market, one of the country's oldest continuously operating farmers' markets, for a variety of produce, food, art, and crafts. Also close at hand are the Seattle Art Museum, the Museum of Pop Culture (MoPOP), which includes the Science Fiction Hall of Fame, the award-winning Seattle Public Library, and the Olympic Sculpture Park.

Just outside the downtown core, you'll find Elliott Bay Bookstore, the Pacific Science Center and much more. From the Seattle waterfront, you can take a variety of tours on the water, including boat rides through the Ballard Locks, tours of Elliot Bay, and day trips to Blake Island.

A bit farther afield but still in Seattle, you'll find the Museum of History and Industry (MOHAI), the Woodland Park Zoo, the Museum of Flight, and the Burke Natural History Museum. Local

neighborhoods add personality, fun shopping, and more great restaurants – check out Fremont, the University District, or Ballard.

For people with a few extra days, Olympic National Park, Mount Rainier National Park, and Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument are all in day-trip range from downtown. The

Hoh Rainforest is stunning, as is the Olympic Hot Springs Resort, a wine trail, several cideries, and again, plenty of opportunities for amazing natural views.

For a guide to the standard tourist attractions, check out Visit Seattle's list of Top 25 Things to Do. <https://visitseattle.org/things-to-do/sightseeing/top-25-attractions/>

For a slightly more offbeat Seattle experience, take a look at Atlas Obscura's list of quirky attractions. <https://www.atlasobscura.com/things-to-do/seattle-washington/places>

Are you planning to have any membership discounts for certain demographic groups, such as historically marginalized groups, young adults, seniors, or military?

We spend a lot of time thinking about the affordability of Worldcon and have several ideas for reducing costs to increase affordability. At the moment, we have free memberships for children up to age 12 as well as discounts for members between 13-24. After our first rate rise in mid January 2024, we will also have rates for First Worldcon and Staff.

The Seattle Community Fund will also offer funds for fans in need.

We are also still considering offering tiered membership options similar to the system used by local YMCA camps, which offer three prices for a week of camp, and members choose which price point they can afford to pay. Several other non-profit events in the area also use similar pricing plans.

How do you plan to recruit staff? Will there be a discount membership rate for staff? Do you plan crash space for staff? Etc.

Staff will have a discounted rate after January 17, 2024 and there is also a staff rate for our hotels.

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

Seattle Worldcon 2025 wants to invite the Worldcon community to our city to experience Pacific Northwest fan culture and to engage with our fandom community of learners, readers, doers, makers, and creators. We want the Worldcon community to experience Seattle, and give our local community the opportunity to learn from and create with the Worldcon community.

To accomplish the above, we will make diversity, inclusion, access, and affordability separate, yet intertwined, poles of all our planning. This will come from the top down and include ongoing work to reach out to under-represented groups to join our bid and to be advisors in areas where we lack lived experience, including through our advisory committee.

We are engaging our local community with fan tables, panels, and room parties at our local conventions. We are recruiting local convention runners to work in partnership with Worldcon regulars on our convention committee.

Outside of fandom groups, we also are in the process of developing a sponsorship plan to foster our relationships with local groups such as Clarion West, MoPOP, Amazon, Microsoft, Wizards of the Coast, F5, Arena Net, Starbucks, Seattle Public Library, and many others.

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

Seattle has a long-history of fandom. From hosting Seacon in 1961 to this bid, the Pacific Northwest has a shared history of coming together to throw events, learn together, and participate in creating new things. Our region has numerous conventions that put together many different types of events like Norwescon, GeekGirlCon, OrcaCon, PAX, OryCon, Sakura-con, Conflikt, Radcon, Emerald City Comic-Con, Crypticon, Foolscape, and so many others. Additionally, the Seattle region is well-known for its maker culture and tech entrepreneurs. Our conventions tend to have a significant number of hands-on workshops and ways for people to come together, create together, and learn together.

We plan to do active outreach to local organizations, tech companies, and cultural organizations representing Seattle's local Native American and LGBTQ communities, and more.

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

Yes, our code of conduct is available on our website.

What do diversity and inclusion mean to you?

As stated in our vision, we are making diversity, inclusion, access, and affordability separate, yet intertwined, poles of all of our plans and planning. This comes from the top down and includes ongoing work to reach out to underrepresented groups to join our bid and to be advisors in areas where we lack lived experience.

It also includes highlighting creators who are members of traditionally marginalized communities in programming, outreach, and other events. We plan to partner with cultural programs that support marginalized communities in our area. A non-exhaustive list of organizations that we will reach out to include Wa Na Wari, Langston, Wing Luke Museum, El Centro De La Raza, Duwamish Longhouse, 3 Dollar Bill Cinema, and the Hugo House.

How are you working towards your goals in these areas?

We have formed an advisory committee with diverse members, and are soliciting art from diverse artists from the Pacific Northwest.

We've also specifically invited new people to our committee and are listening to their ideas.

What are your plans, if any, regarding handling the COVID-19 pandemic?

We have committed to having a fully fleshed out policy before people will likely be making final travel plans to attend.

Have you planned for a virtual component to your convention?

Yes, we have a Division Head for Virtual Integration and plan to bake it in from the beginning. Plans are still underway.

If applicable, are you prepared to run a site selection process should it be required?

Yes

If applicable, how do you plan to facilitate the Hugo Finalists input to your convention?

We will facilitate as large a role for Hugo finalists as we can in the timeframe available. Our team has experience doing this for Philip K. Dick Award nominees with respect to Norwescon programming. We are paying attention and listening to the critiques that have emerged over the past few years from Hugo finalists.