

GrassWorks Conference Planner Position Description

GrassWorks is the Midwest's farmer-driven grazing organization providing learning and networking opportunities. GrassWorks serves its growing membership by fostering farmer-to-farmer learning, networking, and community building. Our signature "GrassWorks Grazing Conference" is an annual 3-day learning and community building event. We serve as a clearinghouse of grazing information for Wisconsin, the region, and beyond. The organization has leveraged its strengths through engagement with state and federal agencies, technical colleges, universities and strong partnerships with other non-profit organizations in the region.

GrassWorks (GW) is seeking an experienced Conference Planner to manage production of our annual conference and to bring GrassWorks' conference vision to life. The ideal candidate will be dedicated to developing a smooth-running and memorable event. This position reports to the Executive Director (ED) with input from the Conference Committee (CC) and Board of Directors (BoD).

Job skills and experience include the ability to balance many tasks simultaneously, create and negotiate contracts, manage budgets, creatively design and problem-solve logistics, and build relationships and communicate effectively with vendors, sponsors, GrassWorks members, and the grazing community.

The 2024 GrassWorks Grazing Conference will be held February 1-3 at Chula Vista Resort in Wisconsin Dells, WI. Our 2023 conference had 500 attendees.

Compensation: This is a variable-part-time contract position at \$25,000 for the contract with potential performance bonus.

To apply: Send resume and cover letter to apply@grassworks.org.

Duties include:

Administration

- Work within a shared Google Drive & keep all files organized & backed-up.
- Create a timeline based on the master-list of ALL activities needed to successfully carry out the conference to ensure timeliness of task completions.
- Create a draft budget using outline provided with income and expense projections to be presented to and approved by the BoD.
- Maintain ongoing documentation of monitoring expenditures to remain within budget, keep records in accordance with the requirements of the GW Treasurer and ED.
- Risk mitigation: Train conference committee members to be ready to step in if needed. Assure they maintain familiarity with all aspects of the conference to be ready to step in.
- Develop, distribute, collect, & review attendee evaluations.
- Prepare post-conference report to be presented at March 2024 BoD Meeting.

Fundraising

- Sponsors, exhibitors, advertisers: Develop sponsor categories & ad prices, design mailer and send to potential sponsors, make sure proper credit is given via ads/slideshow/booths, manage on-site exhibitors, follow-up with thanks.
- Invoice sponsors/advertisers/booths, collect payment and forward to ED.
- Recruit and secure food donors and discount foods and coordinate with the conference venue.
- Plan and manage silent & live auctions, including soliciting donations.
- Bookstore. Order books, setup, price & sell, including swag & signs, manage volunteers, secure stock in evenings, pack up and return unsold books afterward, manage within budget.
- Develop & order logowear/swag with approval of the conference committee.
- Possible GW Foundation fund drive

Planning

- Review the previous years attendee evaluations & recommend changes.
- Develop conference “tracks” and day/room schedule.
- Develop conference theme
- Solicit speaker ideas from the CC, research speakers & inquire price/availability/topics, report back to CC, make final selections and travel/payment arrangements with speakers.
- Develop and arrange for virtual track as needed, including securing permissions with speakers, videographer selection/contract, room/internet plan arranged with Chula Vista, cost/payment structure for registration, post-conference distribution plan.
- Work closely with the CC and present updates to the ED and BoD.

Communications, Promotion, Data-entry

- Develop/compose ads and distribute through: Powermail/Databank, Grazing Gazette, GW Social media accounts. Find broader-reach marketing opportunities as well (print ads, etc).
- Develop a conference program with descriptions of sessions/speakers, room locations/map, sponsor advertising, GW member photos, etc.
- Design/print other materials such as nametags, meal tickets, post-conference evaluation surveys, etc.
- Databank data entry related to conference interactions such as entering attendees.

Logistics

- Registration system development and execution.
- Food: menu development in conjunction with venue chef, local food availability, and donations. Research and coordinate all these things. Confirm meal numbers and menu with the facility/catering.
- Communicate with venue regarding rooms, audio visual equipment, and meals.
- Secure & set up laptops for each room, etc.
- Ordering supplies needed.
- Record keeping for the conference such as registrations, meal tickets, etc.
- Volunteer recruitment, scheduling, and training.

Execution

- Onsite volunteer training, support, and coordination.
- Monitor conference rooms setups such as chairs/tables, podiums, screens, AV equipment.
- Direct conference registration.
- Monitor food & meals, snacks, coffee etc.
- Direct money management onsite in cooperation with the Treasurer.
- Available at all hours to handle any problems that crop up.

Follow Up

- Prepare a post-conference report.
- Work with Conference Committee Chair to collect and summarize attendee evaluations.
- Review and approve all invoices for payment relative to the conference prior to sending to GW for payment. Inform all vendors that invoices are paid by GW the first week of each month.
- Create a budget-versus-actual report for BoD.
- Evaluate the conference in the final report at the March 2024 BoD Meeting.