



GrassWorks Conference Planner Position Description

GrassWorks is the Midwest's premier 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 that showcases locally sourced meals and a grazing-focused exhibition hall. 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 and logistics, and communicate effectively with vendors, sponsors, GrassWorks members, and the grazing community.

The 2025 GrassWorks Grazing Conference will be held January 23-25 at Chula Vista Resort in Wisconsin Dells, WI. Our 2024 conference had 450 attendees.

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

To apply: Send a resume and cover letter to apply@grassworks.org. Deadline to apply is April 26, 11:59 pm Central Time.

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, and coordinate with GW bookkeeping system.



- 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 the March 2025 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 donors of local food and discount foods and coordinate with the conference venue.
- Plan and manage silent & live auctions, including soliciting donations.
- Bookstore. Coordinate with outside organization to plan books, setup, sales including merchandise, and manage volunteers.
- Develop & order logowear/swag with approval of the conference committee within budget.
- Possible GW Foundation fund drive .

Planning

- Collaborate with the CC to effectively build a conference program.
- 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.
- Work closely with the CC and present updates to the ED and BOD.
- Collaborate with the ED and CC to incorporate National Grazing Lands Coalition grant deliverables into conference programming and reporting.
- Collaborate with CC to produce programming that generates grant deliverables.
- Review the previous years attendee evaluations & recommend changes.
- Develop conference “tracks” and day/room schedule.
- Develop conference theme.
- 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.

Communications, Promotion, Data-entry

- Develop/compose ads and coordinate with GW to distribute through: email newsletters, 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.
- Database data entry related to conference interactions such as entering attendees.



Logistics

- Registration system development and execution.
- Food: Research, coordinate, and develop menu in conjunction with the venue chef, local food availability, and donations. 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.
- Coordinate transport of materials and food, as needed, to the conference venue.

Execution

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

Follow Up

- Prepare a post-conference report.
- Work with Conference Committee Chair and ED 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 2025 BOD Meeting.