

SMOFCON 29 PROGRAMME ITEM DESCRIPTIONS

No.	Description	Participants
2	Communicating With Your Tech Crew – Hyde Park 5 - 16:00 Sat How do you ensure your tech crew keeps within budget? How should you keep track of their activities? At con, how should the interface with programme be managed? From the POV of the tech crew, in order to plan efficiently, what information do they need from the committee and when? What problems have you experienced arising from poor communication between con committee and tech crew? How did you resolve them or what would you do differently next time to avoid a recurrence?	Tim Broadribb, (M), Rick Kovalcik, Bill Parker, Kees van Toorn, Dermot Dobson
6	Advertising Your Convention Online – Hyde Park 1/2 - Friday Masterclass How can you use Twitter, Facebook and other platforms to market your convention? How should you interact with what your attendees are posting online? Can you supplement your newsletter with Twitter?	Masterclass workshop Vince Docherty (F)
8	Collaborative Convention Programme Planning – Hyde Park 1/2 - 15:00 Sat Worldcon programme development has become a very complex process requiring the participation of many people. Renovation had a geographically distributed team that needed to collaborate closely on the programme. A new web-based application was developed to support convention programme planning and communication. Ruth Leibig will demonstrate the application in the context of creating a Worldcon programme from start to finish.	Ruth Leibig (F), Ian Stockdale
9	Starting Worldcons From Scratch – Hyde Park 5 - 13:00 Sunday What would we want to see at worldcons if we were only just inventing them now? What would the key elements be? In what type of venue would we hold them? Is there anything we've had in the past that seems redundant now?	James Bacon, Claire Brialley, Stephen Boucher (M), Crystal Huff
10	Multilingual Conventions – Hyde Park 1/2 - 13:00 Sunday When worldcons attract fans with different native tongues, what are the particular challenges presented and options for addressing them? What has worked well in the past? What didn't work well and why? What other approaches have the potential to work well?	Kees van Toorn, Rene Walling, Vince Docherty (M), AAA
11	Promoting your convention to fans who have only been to pro-conventions – Hyde Park 3 - Friday Masterclass Do fans who attend commercial conventions not come to ours because they think we are more of the same? How can we let them know what our conventions are really like?	Masterclass workshop Vince Docherty (F)
12	Bypassing the Media – Hyde Park 1/2 - Friday Masterclass A visiting TV crew is always a mixture of an opportunity and a threat. The web makes it possible to make our own video and distribute it worldwide. Is this a good idea? If so, what would we want to show?	Masterclass workshop Vince Docherty (F)
23	Social Networking for Cons – Hyde Park 5 - 11:00 Sunday Many genre conventions, such as anime conventions, that attract significant numbers of younger people have very strong online communities engaging year-round on social networking sites. However, many members of these conventions attend only this one event per year. What are the technical and social options for building a more active membership throughout the year, taking into account that many SF convention attendees attend more than one event? Is the requirement to sometimes join many different services (Facebook, LinkedIn, the con's own website, Usenet...) a barrier?	AAA, Farah Mendlesohn (M), John Medany, Janice Gelb
29	Drupal as a Platform for Con Websites – Hyde Park 3 - 10:00 Sunday Over the last couple of years, James Shields has developed a number of convention websites. This session aims to show the benefits of using a content management system, such as Drupal with its wide range of plug-in modules, and to show some of the tricks and pitfalls of building a real world website.	James Shields

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32	Care and Welfare of Your Con Workforce – Hyde Park 5 - 15:00 Sunday This topic has many facets: How do you balance tasks so that volunteers and staff have the right amount of work? How can you ensure that they know what they are doing, who to get help from when required, and what their delegated authority is? How do you keep them motivated? How do you prevent burnout? How do you handle the language/culture barrier between different fan groups? Should large cons have a staff counsellor on hand? What duty of care does the con committee have to its staff?	Alice Lawson (M), Rita Medany, Carolina Gomez Lagerlof, TR
33	Getting the Right Programme Balance – Hyde Park 1/2 - 14:00 Sunday How do we find out what today's fans want from our conventions? What surveys have been conducted? Are panels still as popular as they once were? Which types of items are growing/waning in popularity? How does this vary from country to country? How do we get the right balance for a large con?	Terry Fong, Priscilla Olson (M), Ian Stockdale, Arwen Grune
34	The Legal Stuff – Hyde Park 3 - 15:00 Sat How do you ensure that your con and its publications comply with the law? Indeed, which country's law do you have to comply with? What laws do we need to be concerned about and how do these vary from one culture to another? What is the committee (or con staff member) actually responsible for and what, if anything, can they disclaim liability for? (For example, picture scenarios such as a staging collapse resulting in injury, a fan bringing dodgy cigarettes into the con, or a fan who unexpectedly runs amok in the art show.) To what extent, if at all, does the con committee have a duty to inform overseas members of the local laws? Which laws would it be sensible to warn people about? Have you ever been caught out by a law/practice which is different to your home convention? What can you insure against? What should you insure against? What must you insure against? How do you find a suitable insurer for a local con or a worldcon? What information will the insurer require to give you a quote?	Colin Harris (M), Ben Yalow, Mark Meenan, Ray Cyrus, Robert Macintosh
36	Designing a Con T-shirt – Hyde Park 3 - 11:00 Sat What does your t-shirt design say about your con? How do you get the right message across? What are the pros and cons of having a theme for all your t-shirts (bid, committee, staff, gopher, members). Where can you get help with the designs? What are the potential copyright issues?	Barbara van Tilburg, Eddie Cochrane (M)
38	Recruitment, Training and Career Progression of Con Staff - Hyde Park 5 - 15:00 Saturday How do you recruit suitably qualified and appropriately experienced staff for your con? What skills do committee and staff members need and how do they go about acquiring them? We now have taster memberships for attendees - can we do something similar to give people some experience of conrunning? For example, how about con runner-led docent tours of the convention? How can we provide a career path for con runners?	Helen Montgomery (M), Jeff Orth, Rita Medany, Patty Wells, Dave McCarty
41	Whither Fandom and Con Running? – Hyde Park 5 - 16:00 Sunday Where do we go from here? What does the future hold for fandom and conventions?	James Bacon, Stephen Boucher, Jesi Lipp, Mark Plummer (M), Catherine Crockett
42	Making It Large – Hyde Park 5 - 10:00 Sunday You've established a nice little event with a solid core of regular attendees. Now you want to expand. What are the major organisational differences? How do you determine the maximum size your convention can grow to without destroying itself? Is bigger always better?	MEG, Kees van Toorn (M), Gareth Toonagh, Priscilla Olson, Glenn Glazer

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46	Presentation skills workshop – Hyde Park 1/2 - 11:00 Sat 'The whole of the truth lies in the presentation' – Joseph Conrad The why, what, when and how of presentations to your fellow fans – as well as what not to do. Brush up on the basics and share your own tips, fears and bugbears. A workshop recommended for anyone still pondering their appearance before the Fannish Inquisition...	Claire Briailey (F), Deb Geisler
48	What Do New Fans Want to Learn and What Do Old/Experienced Fans Want to Teach? Hyde Park 1/2 - 15:00 Sunday How do the two lists match up? What does each group consider important and why? What do experienced/old and newer/young conrunners have to learn from each other? What were the no-brainers when they each started and what wasn't relevant at all? What are their expectations and prejudices? What can they learn from one another? And what do they agree about? The aim is to investigate whether newcomers are making the right choice of skills to learn and whether veterans and mentors are overlooking new trends in con running.	MEG, Liz Batty, Meg Totusek, Ben Yalow, Mark Olson (M), Judy Bemis
49	A Classification System for Cons – Hyde Park 1/2 - 11:00 Sunday Can we produce a classification system for cons? Humorous suggestions are encouraged in trying to come up with the real differentiations between media cons, comic cons, Dragoncon, and Worldcon. Consider the example of UK food labelling which enables those on sugar- and salt-restricted diets to find out that there is nothing you can buy from a motorway service station that is safe to eat even when your blood sugar is low. Hopefully this panel will be fun but will also help us think more clearly about what kind of cons we are running and how we should promote them.	Mike Pins (M), Marah Searle- Kovacevic, Seth Breibart, Eddie Cochrane
50	Masterclass – Hyde Park 1/2 - 13:00 to 16:00 Friday Vince Docherty leads a session looking at how we could better use marketing (and media) to promote our conventions and to attract the membership we want (both the 'right' numbers and those who will most enjoy/participate). Colin Harris, will take us through a case-study of this year's Worldcon Renovation's marketing and how they were able to achieve their target memberships despite a number of challenges including a recession and small prior Worldcons. The Masterclass will also include workshops where you can apply the learning from the Masterclass.	Vince Docherty (F), Colin Harris
51	Tech Rehearsal for Bidders – Hyde Park 5 - 15:00 Friday If you're presenting during the Fannish Inquisition, come along and make sure we have your presentation on our computer and/or that your kit works with our set up. (NB: This is NOT an opportunity for you to practice your whole presentation.)	Bidders
52	Renovation Debrief – Hyde Park 1/2 - 16:00 Friday Patty Wells tells us what went well and what should have worked better at Renovation. What are the key things Renovation would have done differently if they'd known at the outset what they know now? Did they meet their goals for the convention? What three key tips would they offer to future worldcon committees?	Patty Wells
53	Welcome and Mixer – Hyde Park 5 - 17:00 Friday Facilitated by Margaret and Martin	Vince Docherty and the committee, M&M (F)
53A	Open Space Programme – Hyde Park 5 - 21:00 Friday Discussion of suggested items and a vote to decide the ones to be incorporated into Sunday's programme.	M&M (F)
54	QI with Mike Scott – Hyde Park 1/2 – 22:00 Friday A light-hearted quiz hosted by Mike Scott, assisted by Flick	Mike Scott (F), Flick

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55	Finnish Fandom: Where Fans Do Things Differently – Hyde Park 5 - 11:00 Sat Finncon is the Finnish national SF/fantasy convention. Its distinguishing feature is there are no membership or other fees for attendees. Something like 5 000 - 10 000 people show up for the extended weekend. (This means that just over 0.1% of all Finns come to the con!) In this item, Jukka Halme and Eemeli Aro explain how they keep the expenses of a con this size below US\$100,000, how they raise that money from sources other than their members, and why you should come to Finncon to see the magic for yourself.	Eemeli Aro, Jukka Halme, Ian Stockdale (M), Carolina Gomez Lagerlof
56	Online Site Selection – Hyde Park 3 - 16:00 Sat Do we need it? What challenges would it present? What impact might it have on the results?	Dave McCarty, Jeff Orth, Mike Scott
57	Fannish Inquisition (Seated Worldcons and Eurocons) – Hyde Park 5 – 13:30 Sat Chicon 7 and Lonestarcon 3 together with upcoming Eurocons have an opportunity to make short presentations about their cons/bids, followed by Q&A. Strict timekeeping will be observed.	Stephen Boucher (F), Mike Scott and Flick (timekeepers)
58	Fannish Inquisition (Smofcon Bids) – Hyde Park 5 - 17:00 Sat Those bidding to hold future Smofcons have an opportunity to make short presentations about their cons/bids followed by Q&A. We'll then vote to determine the location for next year's Smofcon. Strict timekeeping will be observed.	Vince Docherty (F), Mike Scott and Flick as timekeepers
59	Fannish Inquisition (Worldcon bids) – Hyde Park 5 - 21:00 Sat Those bidding to hold future Worldcons (2014 and onwards) have an opportunity to make short presentations about their cons/bids followed by Q&A. Strict timekeeping will be observed.	Deb Geisler (F), TR timekeeping
60	When Fans Go Bad (at Your Convention) – Hyde Park 5 - 14:00 Sunday To what extent should the con committee intervene when inappropriate behaviour is reported at their con? How should the committee balance the safety of the convention's members, the reputation and stability of the convention, and the personal liability of the members of the convention committee? Although the answers depend a lot on local law, there should be plenty of generally applicable lore to share.	Patty Wells (M), Steve Davies, Helen Montgomery, Farah Mendlesohn, Mark Olson
61	Sintersmof – Hyde Park 5 - 18:00 Sunday We close the convention in traditional Dutch style.	Vince Docherty + ?
62	Feedback and Close – Hyde Park 5 - 17:00 Sunday Come and tell us what you liked about this year's Smofcon and what you hated, what worked well and what didn't, what you'd like to see done differently next time.	The committee, Vince Docherty (F)
63	The Art of Prioritisation – Hyde Park 5 – 10:00 Sat Figuring out what to do when you have inadequate resources is a surprisingly hard skill to learn. This workshop will explain and demonstrate a simple categorization technique to help you prioritise. This will be followed by an exercise where the audience works through a series of scenarios to establish what the tasks are and to categorize them.	Mark Olson (F)
64	Katcon & Katcon: The Game – Hyde Park 1/2 17:00 Sat An introduction to the next Benelux-convention, Katcon, and a old-fashioned game of 'Katwijk Invaded' to go with that. Pepernoten and speculaas included!	Heidi van der Vloet & Erwin van Ballegoij
65	Website "Bake-Off" – Hyde Park 5 – 14:00 Friday We interactively look at various past, present, and future con web sites, with a list of items to try to find (how to register for the masquerade, how to request a mobie, what activities are available for kids, etc.) and everyone sees how easy or difficult it is for attendees to find information.	Janice Gelb