



Future Worldcons Panel Questionnaire

For:

The Planned Tel Aviv in 2027 Bid

SMOFcon Lisbon, 2021

General

Name of Bid

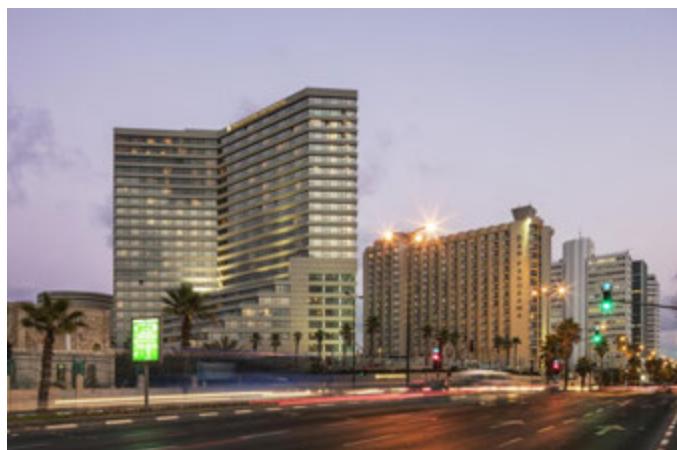
Tel Aviv in 2027

What dates are you bidding for?

Our preferred time is August 2027. If things don't work out with the facilities, we'll consider a bid for August 2028.

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?

We have several sites we're exploring in several Israeli cities, but the city that seems most likely to be chosen is Tel Aviv. It is a cultural and business center with endless entertainment and culinary options, around the clock. Known for its food and friendly people, Tel Aviv is a beach city, and nearly everyone is fluent in English.



The David InterContinental beachfront hotel on the left, with the Dan Panorama beside it.



The Dan Panorama Ballroom.

The site we're likely to choose is in central Tel Aviv: Neve Tzedek (neh-veh tseh-dek). A recently restored neighborhood famous for culinary excellence, a few minutes' drive from other central locations, and located next to the Tel Aviv beachfront.

When referring to the venue in this document we'll be discussing this location.



Neve Tzedek

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

Our preferred venue is The David InterContinental hotel and the adjacent Dan Panorama hotel, Tel Aviv. The convention centers are embedded in the hotels, with a bridge connecting them to each other. The location has many additional near-by facilities we could expand to, within easy reach of our main venue.

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

Gadi Evron (he/him, Bid Chair) - DH Events at DisCon III, DDH Events at CoNZealand, DDH Logistics at Dublin2019 (along with other Worldcon roles such as Masquerade Project Manager at Worldcon76, and Volunteers at Worldcon 75 in Helsinki). Experienced in organizing events (100 to 40,000 attendees) since 1996. First SMOFcon attended in 2007 (Boston).

Local fans on the bid committee:

- Guy Kovel (he/him) - DDH Operations at DisCon III, and staff at LonCon3, Worldcon76, and MidAmericon II, DH Logistics (OPS and Tech) at ICon, the annual Israeli convention.
- Einat Citron (she/her) - Head of Programming and Deputy Chair at ICon 2011-2017, and a board member of the Israeli Society for Science Fiction and Fantasy.
- Naama Friedman (she/her) - Staff at LonCon3, various DH/DDH positions in logistics/administration at ICon, and a former board member of the Israeli Society for Science Fiction and Fantasy.
- Tal Goldman (he/him) - DDH Operations at DisCon III, Deputy Chair at ICon since 2016.
- Dror Raif Nesher (she/her) - DH of Volunteers at ICon, and a board member of the Israeli Society for Science Fiction and Fantasy.

The above have years of experience running local conventions of up to 10,000 people.



Brandon Sanderson at ICon 2019.

Some of the global fans advising us on our bid, ordered by first name:

Ben Yallow, Bobbi Armbruster, Colette Fozard, David Gallaher, Deb Geisler, Helen Montgomery, Kevin Roche, James Bacon, Janice Gelb, Joyce Lloyd, Jukka Halme, Mike Willmoth, Randall Shepherd, Sharon Sbarsky, Steve Cooper, Tammy Coxen, and Vincent Docherty.

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

A chair has not yet been chosen.

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 be happy to participate. Any decision would have to be made later on in the bid process by the local society's committee.



Some of the Israeli fans at Dublin2019.

Travel

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

Prior to COVID-19, the prices ranged between \$150 and \$600 USD from Europe (€125 to €500), and \$700 to \$1800 USD from the US (all prices in economy class, round trip).

Flights from Japan and Australia start at \$700 USD.

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 Ben Gurion airport, located just outside of Tel Aviv, sees millions of travelers annually, and has direct flights from all these cities and many connection options from all of these cities and others.

EI Al, United, American Airlines, Delta, KLM, British Airways, Swiss, Lufthansa, Turkish, Norwegian, and many others fly to Ben Gurion Airport.

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?

About 24 kilometers (15 miles) drive from the airport to the hotel. The trip takes about 17 minutes by taxi (can be up to double during rush hour traffic). Other options include a train, costing \$5 USD (requiring a taxi to the hotel at around \$10-\$20 USD), a bus ride at \$1.5 USD, the average taxi fare within the city ranges between \$5 and \$25 USD, and rental cars. Rentals aren't recommended due to conditions such as traffic, availability of free parking, and the excellent public transportation offered in Tel Aviv.

* Facilities (section) follows.

Facilities

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

As mentioned above, while we're looking at multiple options, our preferred venues* are David InterContinental Tel Aviv (our main preferred venue), and the adjacent Dan Panorama Tel Aviv, which are connected by a bridge.



The David InterContinental hotel pool, with a view of the Tel Aviv beachfront.

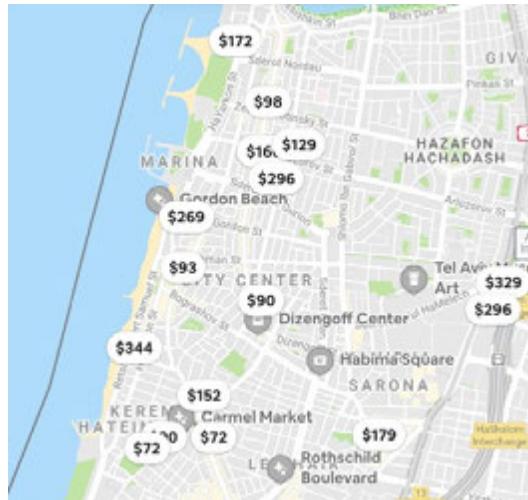
* Please see **Appendix** for more information about the venues (available spaces and diagrams).

- David InterContinental Tel Aviv
 - o <https://telaviv.intercontinental.com/>
 - o About 550 rooms, ranging from standard rooms to suites
 - o Accessibility information:
<https://telaviv.intercontinental.com/luxurytelavivhotel/community/>
- Dan Panorama Tel Aviv
 - o <https://www.danhoteles.com/TelAvivHotels/DanPanoramaTelAvivHotel>
 - o About 500 rooms, ranging from standard rooms to suites
 - o Accessibility* information:
<https://www.danhoteles.com/TelAvivHotels/DanPanoramaTelAvivHotel/Accessibility>

* Israel has strict **accessibility regulations**, which these hotels follow.
(https://www.justice.gov.il/En/Units/CommissionEqualRightsPersonsDisabilities/Accessibility/Accessibility_Legislation/Pages/Accessibility-Legislation-Default.aspx).

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 two convention hotels range in pricing between \$150 and \$350 USD, including VAT, breakfast, and all of the sand you can track in from the beach.
- We will be negotiating pricing, room blocks, and other discounts with the venues as well as with other area hotels as we progress with the bid.
- There are many additional hotel options a short walking distance or a short drive away.
- There are around 10,000 Airbnb options in Tel Aviv, with a wide range of pricing options.



Some of Tel Aviv's Airbnb options.

- Explore unique lodging options such as the art specialty hotel Dave Gordon - Son of a Brown, the magical The American Colony Hotel, and the Alma Boutique Hotel.



Dave Gordon - Son of a Brown (left), The American Colony Hotel (right), and the Alma Boutique Hotel (below).

What does parking cost at your main hotels?

There are multiple garages in the area ranging in price between \$4 and \$8 USD an hour, depending on the garage.

At Dan Panorama, parking is free for Handicap vehicles.

Tariff information:

- 1st hr – \$4, \$1 USD for every additional 15 minutes or part thereof
- For hotel guests (daily parking) – \$15 USD including exits and entrances for 24 hours
- For external guests – daily parking \$18 USD until 00:00
- Weekends (7:00am Friday until Saturday 00:00) – \$13 USD an hour
- \$1 USD for every additional 15 minutes, or part thereof

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 sites are a part of the hotels themselves, with a bridge connecting the two hotels.

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

Considering our site of choice, the David InterContinental convention center can support 2100 seats for the main stage and the Dan Panorama one 1600 (we also plan for overflow rooms, and can host events in up to two secondary stages that can seat up to 500). We also have other possibilities such as with the Israeli Conventions Center with various larger seating options, however, it is 15-30 minutes away by car, so not as attractive.

Please describe the restaurant scene near your site.

Neve Tzedek is a happening location of culinary delight, with multiple local and global cuisine options. Down the beach in both directions there are even more restaurants and bars of every variety. A few minutes drive away, hundreds more restaurants and bars can be found.

Also, Tel Aviv is considered to be one of the most vegan-friendly cities in the world with nearly every restaurant providing vegan options. At many restaurants they'd be happy to discuss their menus to varying degrees to help with nutritional requirements such as, vegetarianism, gluten-free, and allergens (none of them would take a liability risk, but

would do their best to provide you with information). There are many Kosher restaurants available.

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

We don't have an agreement with the facilities at this stage. That said, we fully acknowledge there is no Worldcon without alcohol. We absolutely don't intend to run out of bheer.

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

Tel Aviv (and Israel in general) is highly regulated on smoking. No smoking is allowed on public transportation, indoor bars, restaurants, or any other public area.

To smoke in hotels, you'd have to step out to the balconies (where available), or walk outside. Train and main bus stations have designated smoking areas.

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?

We hope we won't need to have such plans by 2027. If for some ungodly reason we do, we're certain a lot more experience will be available to pull on from the community and the hotels.

* Miscellaneous follows.

Miscellaneous

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

Summers at Tel Aviv are hot (averaging ±73-86 Fahrenheit / ±23-30 Celsius) with 65% humidity. Air conditioning is a standard in Israel everywhere (businesses, taxis, etc.)

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

Our venues' location, the Neve Tzedek neighborhood, is considered one of Tel Aviv's top attractions all on its own. Another is the beachfront the hotels are located at.

Tel Aviv has quite a few geeky attractions such as the award winning Comics and Vegetables, a comics shop, Potion Bar (a geeky watering hole friendly to dragons), and Cafe Tachtit (where you can play old computer games along-side your meal).



Comics and Vegetables (left), Cafe Tachtit (right), and Potion Bar (below).

For more of Tel Aviv's many geeky attraction, [check out this article](#) covering everything from virtual reality to The Comics Museum.

A couple of top restaurants in Tel Aviv our staff recommends are:

- Topolopombo (Upmarket Asian Fusion)



- Shila (Mediterranean)



Some “hole in the wall” top locations, for a unique local experience:

- The Little Prince (Cafe, library, and book shop)



- Cafe Xoho (Breakfast all day, with an international team full of ideas)



- Ali Karawan Hummus (arguably the best Hummus in Israel, and we will fight you over it. Also known as Abu Hassan to fans)



Tel Aviv also has a selection of fast food restaurants, ranging from the familiar (Domino's, McDonalds), to the authentic (Suduch sandwiches, and a Falafel place on every corner).



Here is a link which describes some of Tel Aviv's top Mundane attractions:

<https://www.planetware.com/tourist-attractions-/tel-aviv-jaffa-yafo-isr-ta-t.htm>

More Mundane activities from TripAdvisor:

https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attractions-g293984-Activities-Tel_Aviv_Tel_Aviv_District.html

Aside from Tel Aviv, in Israel you could go and visit many historical sights, Jerusalem, the Dead Sea, and other attractions.



Jerusalem (left) and floating in the Dead Sea (right).

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

Yes, but these plans are still being developed so we cannot provide specifics.

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

We want to host the first Worldcon in Israel, make it welcoming and create a supporting, inclusive, and fun environment where fandom can be celebrated. We wish to expose our local fans to the wider world, and the wider global community to local fans, artists, and writers. We also plan to facilitate tours in Israel for our members, as well as an active local entertainment schedule.

We're considering a theme for the convention, possibly around the overlap between technological innovation and society.

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

Israeli fans are similar to most fans around the world. We are passionate, geeky, and friendly. Three aspects of the local fandom which we'd like to incorporate are the close collaboration between the various local fandoms (be it literary geekdom, Star Trek, role playing, LARP, Tolkien, or even Buffy), our appreciation of translators as well as the authors, and the very active younger scene of teenage fans.

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

As we are just launching our bid, our Code of Conduct is still being developed. We are going to base it on our local conventions' CoC, as well as learn from what previous Worldcons (like Dublin2019) have done. The formulation of the CoC is a joint effort with the Israeli Society for Science Fiction and Fantasy, who have had a CoC in their conventions for the past several years.

We recognize how important a CoC is for any event, and especially one which wants to be as inclusive as possible with a welcoming and encouraging atmosphere.

What do diversity and inclusion mean to you?

It is impossible to describe the myriad and wonderful diversity of this Earth. In race, gender, and faith, and in the other endless possibilities of humanity. We will build our event to be as inclusive as possible for any type of unique being and experience, in the best of Israeli fan traditions.

Israeli fandom has a rich history of inclusivity, known for supporting LGBTQ+ youth. We strive for our conventions to be the safest space possible, including in the makeup of our staffing and programming consistently demonstrating a zero gender gap.



The Tel Aviv Pride Parade hosts 200,000 people from around the world. On the left is the Tel Aviv city hall during Pride Month.

Holding the convention in Israel, we must also pay serious attention to the political situation. We are aware that people from some Middle Eastern countries may not be able to enter Israel. We will try to provide whatever assistance we can with coming to Israel to all potential members, to the best of our ability, but our ability may be limited.

We have aspirations to find support and work with fans across the Middle East. Things are changing positively in the region, with normalization agreements established with the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain in 2020, joining Egypt and Jordan, and ongoing talks with Saudi Arabia and Sudan. But, there is no telling what 2027 will bring.

We are unsure how Israeli and non-Israeli Palestinians would feel about attending, and what the process for those who would want to enter Israel may look like. We can't speak for them, and need to do more research. We will provide the best answers we can as we progress with the bid planning. It's important for us to find a path that works for as many as possible, and we admit we don't know enough at this stage.

We recognize there are big issues here. We have problems, but think fandom can work to resolve them. We fully intend to try, and realize we may fail.

How are you working towards your goals in these areas?

We plan to lead with our programming, creating a diverse team from the offset to make sure our event is as inclusive as possible.

What would concrete achievements look like in these areas?

- Build a programming team from the many perspectives available to us in fandom
- Create a process led from an inclusivity perspective, exploring how we can direct our efforts with inclusivity at the top of our minds
- Build a support desk to assist members with their Visas, and navigate customs
- Continue to reach out to, and engage with, fandoms in the Middle East.

- Engage with local attorneys on the question of non-Israeli Palestinians entering Israel.

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

We expect no challenges from the current pandemic.

Have you planned for a virtual component to your convention?

We plan to hold a physical convention. While we have experience running virtual conventions in Israel, given the early stage of our bid we haven't yet held the discussion on the degree to which we should consider virtual aspects in a Worldcon.

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 will ensure that Hugo Finalists are included in our planning. Hugo Finalists will receive links to our Programming Surveys when notified about being a Finalist or soon after accepting.

* Appendix follows.

Appendix - Our Preferred Venues

Our preferred venues for Tel Aviv in 2027 are two large hotels with built-in convention centers - the David InterContinental and the Dan Panorama. The hotels are adjoined (connected by a bridge), both of them located on the Tel Aviv beachfront.

We further list some added function space in the area, and have several fallback options such as with the Israeli Convention Center (hotels being 5-30 minutes away, and with a different feel).

The David InterContinental (Our main venue preference)

More convention center details can be found [here](#), and an interactive floor plan, [here](#).

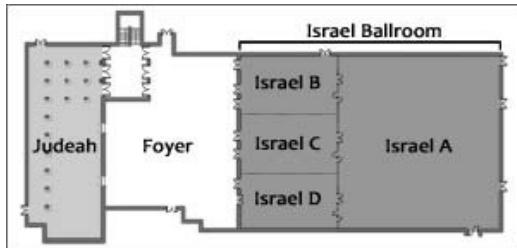
- Grand ballroom (2100 seats)
- Smaller ballroom (450 seats)
- Exhibit space (16x50 meters)
- Foyer (asked for details)
- 15 meeting rooms between the convention center and the hotel (10-50 seats)



Dan Panorama (Attached venue to the David Intercontinental)

More convention center details can be found [here](#), and information on the various halls, [here](#).

- Five modular event halls that can combine into a 1400 seats ballroom
- Seven modular smaller rooms (50-100 seats) which can also be combined
- Exhibit space (asked for details)
- Foyer (asked for details)
- Four meeting rooms (10-50 seats)



Some of the additional function space in the area:

- Royal Beach Hotel (2 small modular halls, and three meeting rooms. 600 meters / 1950 feet away. 8 minutes walk)
- Suzan Dalal Center of Arts (5 small halls, two of which are theatres. 950 meters / 3600 feet away. 10 minutes walk)
- The Old Train Station (allows for building an event space on demand. 1400 meters / 4600 feet away. 12 minutes walk)