



## INSTITUTE FOR CRITICAL ANIMAL STUDIES OFFICIAL CONFERENCE ORGANIZING GUIDELINES

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### General Conference Information

1. No speaker or organizer is paid. We do not praise or give special attention to one individual over another; this means no use of keynote speakers and plenary sessions.
2. No presenter is invited if that person has made negative comments about ICAS or CAS.
3. We give scholarships (i.e. travel money) if we have funding and waive registration fees to those who are economically disadvantaged. This is done on a very limited basis due to ICAS's limited funds. Attendees, again in a limited capacity, may substitute volunteering at the conference for the cost of admission.
4. We have welcoming and closing addresses by ICAS staff and/or conference organizers/sponsors/hosts.
5. Along with traditional panel presentations, we encourage workshops, roundtables, poster presentations, trainings, debates, dialogues, art performances, and documentaries.
6. All conferences challenge animal exploitation, animal research, animal welfare, animal studies, human-animal studies, and the single-issue vegan abolition perspective.
7. We welcome opposition only in debate and dialogue, not in terms of presentations; in sum, one must be a proponent of critical animal studies to participate in the conference.
8. As much as is possible, sponsors and exhibitors should not be limited only to animal rights/liberation groups; seek solidarity with other social justice causes.
9. When approaching sponsors, offer them the opportunity to be a sponsor in name only or a financial sponsor. The committee can decide how much to request of sponsors and if there should be different financial levels of sponsorship.
10. Document each session via video, photographs, and livestreams, being sure to ask all presenters and audience members if they are comfortable being recorded. If someone refuses, they must not be recorded in any way.
11. All conferences, presenters, and organizers must hold to the Ten Principles of ICAS.
12. Each conference begins with a day or half of a day dedicated to the foundation of CAS from ICAS affiliated scholars. This section in the conference should be noted as "CAS Foundations Session." This is important because many people do not know what CAS is because of the lack of CAS courses and programs. The presentations can be selected from the general abstracts that were sent into the conference committee for the conference.

### Preparing for the Conference

1. Conference preparation will ideally begin one year before the determined conference date.
2. Develop a marketing strategy, which includes flyering, co-sponsors, advertising on the radio, television, magazines, newspaper, blogs, stores, and local schools/colleges/universities. This strategy should include interviews as well as a press release.
3. While working as a unit, the conference committee should have one or more individuals taking care of the following items: Web site/Facebook management/advertising; call for presentations/collecting abstracts/responding to those who submit proposals and questions; technology; catering; travel, including lodging, finding locals who will let people stay in their homes, creating a list of local restaurants and tourist sites; and registration, which includes keeping registration forms and handling money as it comes

in (ideally, registration will be done through PayPal or other online payment system, but give people the option of registering via mail).

4. Consider selecting a broad conference theme, but make it clear in the call for presentations that any submission that addresses critical animal studies will be considered for acceptance.
5. In keeping with ICAS's mission, emphasize that presentations must be intersectional and focused on a theory-to-practice perspective.
6. Early in the conference planning process, determine timelines for accepting proposals and responding to interested presenters; be sure to use all relevant listservs, social networking sites, and other venues to advertise the call for presentations as widely as possible.
7. The call for presentations should enforce that abstracts be no longer than 500 words and each proposal be accompanied by an 80 to 100 word biography and a statement of any technological needs the presenter foresees.
8. Be clear in the call for presentations that people who wish to Skype into the conference as presenters must pay, but they can do so at a discounted rate to be determined by the conference committee.
9. Consider using an online software program such as Dropbox in which proposals and registration documents are kept for all to access.
10. For the conference website, supply names, biographies, e-mail addresses (and possibly phone numbers and pictures) of conference committee members.
11. The conference website should include a detailed call for presentations, a schedule as soon as one is established, registration information, lodging options, and travel directions; also include information on sponsors, exhibitors, vegan/vegan-friendly restaurants in the area, and links to the conference's Facebook page and message board, if applicable.
12. Once the schedule is determined, presenter bios should be posted on the Web site.
13. Develop a Facebook page for the conference that links to the Web site.
14. Set up one email account (either an individual's or a special gmail account) to which all correspondence will go; a general account is preferred so that all committee members can access it, especially in the rare case of a member leaving the organizing committee.
15. Try to set up a special conference rate at a nearby hotel.
16. Make sure the conference registration cost is clearly stated on the CFP and be sure to explain that ICAS is a fully-volunteer organization and no one gets paid.
17. Conference events should include a protest/demonstration organized in conjunction with a local social justice group; a nonhuman animal focus is not required.
18. All conference materials (i.e. Web site, schedule) must include mention of the policies noted in the text box below.
19. Up-to-date copies of the ICAS pamphlet should be made available to attendees, as should a signup sheet encouraging membership.
20. During the conference, be sure each session has a fully-prepared chair (*not* a presenter) who will hold speakers to their time limits and make sure each session starts and ends on time.
21. At least one, if not all nights of the conference, organizers should note a meeting place where interested parties can congregate to socialize as well as network.

### **Conference Site**

1. Conferences should always be on college/university campuses and be free to all students of that college/university.
2. Local community organizations, student clubs, and academic departments and programs from the university/college hosting the conference should co-sponsor the conference to gain support and credibility.
3. Conferences should include local community members and university/college students, staff, and professors as part of the planning committee and as presenters and panel chairs.

4. Conferences should strive to be held in large metropolitan areas with international airports, public transportation, taxis, and hotels near the college/university hosting the conference.
5. Invite and encourage professors to both engage in the conference and have their students attend sessions.
6. We strongly request gender-nonconformist bathroom options at the conference facility.
7. We require all rooms and buildings to be accessible for those with physical disabilities.
8. We strongly suggest having note takers and sign language interpreters if funding allows.
9. All conferences must serve fair-trade and vegan food; plates, utensils, and napkins should be recycled and compostable.
10. All conferences must strive to go as paperless as possible and offer recycling and composting receptacles.
11. If possible, offer free childcare services during conference hours.
12. Consider all technology-related issues or problems that might arise and have them covered by site staff; perform a dry run of all technological requirements a week before and the day before the actual conference.
13. Make sure someone is at the registration table with money and merchandise at all times.
14. Make sure to have confirmed and announce the location for the next year's conference.
15. Make sure to be open to improving the conference in a constructive manner.
16. Make sure to thank everyone for presenting, hosting, sponsoring, organizing, and attending regularly and at each panel.
17. Make sure to post, cross post, and e-mail on all social networks regularly during the conference about the conference happenings, and post pictures and videos.

#### **After the Conference**

1. Meet as a group to debrief on what worked and what didn't. Take note of these findings and give them to the next group of conference organizers.
2. Videos should be made available on the ICAS YouTube page soon after the conference.
3. Soon after the conference, send an email to all presenters, sponsors, hosts, and attendees to get their feedback on the proceedings.
4. Write a short report for blogs, newspapers, e-mails, Facebook, Twitter, ICAS website, and other news and social media sources.

#### **Sample text for policy statements:**

**Safer Space Policy:** The Conference for Critical Animal Studies promotes a safer space in which all must feel welcome, supported, and secure. No one should endorse or tolerate racism, sexism, anti-LGBTQIA sentiments, ableism, speciesism, or any other kind of oppressive behavior. In kind, this conference is a vegan space, and all should refrain from consuming or wearing animal products while taking part.

**Sober Space Policy:** We encourage a sober space as well, so please do not drink, shoot, or inhale intoxicants into your body closely before or while in attendance at the conference.

**Inclusive Space Policy:** All rooms and bathrooms are accessible. Please avoid wearing fragrances or strong scents, as the odors may cause allergic reactions. If you have any requests for assistance such as a translator, note taker, medication, childcare, or physical accessibility, please let us know by e-mailing [icasnorthamerica@gmail.com](mailto:icasnorthamerica@gmail.com). (We understand this conference is not fully inclusive because of cost, but we do want to address these issues as they are needed to confront ableism).