

## So, You Want to Be a SAS Global Forum Conference Chair?

It's an exciting role! Serving as a SAS Global Forum Conference Chair means expanding your network, increasing your visibility in the SAS community, working with an amazing team of volunteers and SAS staff, and – A LOT OF WORK.

What should you think about before taking the leap and applying?

What are the qualities and competencies that the SAS Global User Group Executive Board looks for in their search for a Conference Chair?

What do you need to know about the Conference Team, their Roles, Responsibilities, and Structure? And, who do you contact with your questions?

This document will help you answer the above questions and better prepare you on your ***Path to Leadership with SAS Global Forum.***

## Background Reading: SAS Global Forum, Executive Board, Conference Team

To better understand the conference organization, leadership roles, and team responsibilities, review the articles at:

[http://www.sascommunity.org/wiki/Conference\\_Leadership](http://www.sascommunity.org/wiki/Conference_Leadership)

## What should you think about before applying?

What are some of the decisions that a conference chair has to make and what kind of planning are they involved in? To help you better understand the roles, there are some points you should consider.

- What would you most like to accomplish if selected as conference chair?
  - For the conference?
  - For you as the conference chair?
  - For the user community?
  - What would be your legacy?
  - What ideas do you have to change SAS Global Forum and why?
- As a SAS Global Forum Conference Chair you will often need to satisfy different constituencies (SAS, SAS Global Users Group Executive Board, Users at large) that may have conflicting objectives or individualized agenda.
  - How would you handle conflicting objectives?
  - Can you make the tough decisions, even if they are confrontational?
  - How would you handle personnel issues involving your team leads?
  - How would you leverage the role of the Executive Board in your planning for the conference?
- What makes you an effective team player
  - In your current/historic conference roles?
  - In your job, what are some of the team issues that you have had to deal with and how did you address/resolve them?
- How do you think people respond to you as a leader?
  - How do you get feedback?

- How would you describe your leadership style?
  - How do you lead debate?
  - How do you facilitate reaching consensus?
  - How do you motivate your teams?
  - How do you resolve personality/work style issues between team members?
- What is your biggest concern about accepting this responsibility?

## Qualities of Potential Conference Chairs

The Executive Board works closely with conference volunteers and leaders to encourage their continued participation and growth in conference leadership roles. What qualities and competencies are important for a potential conference chair?

### Experience/Vision

Typical SAS Global Forum Conference Chair **Profile**

- CURRENT SAS User or Manager of SAS users
- ACTIVE in professional organizations, with emphasis on SAS User organizations
- Recognized speaker, with emphasis on topics related to SAS
- Proven leadership experience
- Motivational leader
- Professional and tactful approach to problem solving
- Solid vision for conference evolution and growth.

### Core Behaviors

Leads Strategically

- Develops plans with alternative courses of action
- Seeks opportunities to achieve higher priority objectives
- Makes decisions aligned with group strategy
- Adjusts plans to improve execution. Builds Alignment
- Identifies key stakeholders within and across functions to enhance alignment of objectives
- Ensures that personal objectives are aligned with peer and group objectives
- Clarifies roles and responsibilities to maximize productivity.

Communicates Directly

- Actively shares experiences and perspectives and encourages others to do so
- Demonstrates the highest integrity through all communications
- Provides relevant facts and data to support position
- Seeks differing perspectives and probes to ensure mutual understanding.

Drives Performance

- Consistently exceeds expectations regarding commitments and objectives
- Demonstrates ownership of performance
- Anticipates obstacles. Collaborates
- Proactively shares key learnings
- Works with internal and external customers to develop shared solutions
- Builds networks
- Identifies opportunities to partner with others.

Energizes Others

- Encourages others to accomplish what may seem impossible
- Openly supports new ideas
- Prioritizes work
- Identifies and eliminates non-value added work. Develops People
- Recruits individuals who bring new skills and diverse perspectives
- Seeks development opportunities
- Seeks feedback
- Reacts positively to feedback
- Provides tactful honest and constructive feedback
- Recognizes the contributions of others

### **Core Competencies**

#### Critical Thinking

- Proactively asks the difficult questions to clarify and challenge assumptions
- Anticipates and addresses issues before they become major problems. Communications and Presentation Skills

#### Communicates clearly, both orally and in writing

- Respects conference schedule and timelines
- Reviews information to identify key issues and ensures that stakeholders have timely access to critical information.

#### Organizational Insight

- Applies knowledge of relationships and the centers of authority and influence within the organization to ensure successful projects and positive interactions.

#### Project Planning

- Identifies risks and works with the team to develop appropriate mitigation plans
- Is responsible for managing risks to schedules.

#### Engaging & Influencing Others

- Builds strong working relationship with co-workers, team members and key stakeholders to influence others and achieve results
- Seeks buy in from key functional areas
- motivates others to make the best decisions.

#### Team Building

- Establishes a well-functioning team that communicates effectively
- Ensures meetings are productive
- Promotes collaboration.

#### Creativity, Innovation & Technology

- Embraces change
- Takes initiative
- Applies innovative and leading edge ideas and processes
- Encourages others to try new things and take calculated risks.

### **Who to Contact with Questions or to Pursue Leadership Opportunities?**

If you would like to discuss leadership opportunities, or have questions, you can contact [Jennifer Waller](#), Leadership Development and Nominations Committee.