



Photo by Anna Rabczuk, 2026



SEMIOFEST[®] CALL FOR BIDS 2028



It is hard to believe, but we have just celebrated our 10th edition of Semiofest in Warsaw. I guess time flies when you are having fun! From humble beginnings at the inaugural London 2012, we have successfully organised Semiofests across the world in Barcelona 2013, Shanghai 2014, Paris 2015, Tallinn 2016, Toronto 2017, Mumbai 2018, Mexico City 2022, and Porto 2024. In that time, we have gathered fans, advocates and colleagues and supported hundreds of semioticians in their craft, vocation and passion. We know how precious Semiofest is to the community we support. Many of our attendees and subscribers are solo practitioners who benefit from the platform for sharing, encouragement and mutual support that the brand facilitates, and we must never forget that. We are committed to serving our community, and one way we do that is through organising not only monthly Semiofest Sessions but also a biennial face-to-face meet-up event around the world

But we cannot do it alone; what enables Semiofest to keep going year after year is the enthusiasm and commitment of Semiofest community members stepping up and putting their hat in the ring to volunteer to organise a Semiofest. Having just finished Warsaw 2026 organised by Maciej, Ania, Paulina, Marcia & Anna at the Teatra Komuna, we're buzzing off the positive feedback and looking forward to the future with excitement. It's now the time to start planning the next event!



Photo by Miłosz Kasiura, 2026

About Semiofest

Semiofest is unique; it is an annual event set up to celebrate (applied) semiotic thinking. We set it up to provide a forum for ideas exchange, learning and networking about semiotics. Every year we invite all those interested in semiotics: practitioners, researchers, academics, and students to come and participate in celebrating semiotic thinking through short presentations, creative inspiration sessions and interactive group activities. Our mission at Semiofest is to provide an inclusive platform for all practising professionals of semiotics – to exchange knowledge, ideas & experiences and learn from one another in a relaxed and collaborative atmosphere, while maintaining standards of quality content. We are all passionate about semiotics and believe in its value as insight tool and we're dedicated to propagating top class, applied semiotic thinking.

Our Brand Values

At Semiofest we believe in striving towards:

- Creativity
- Excellence
- Collaboration
- Inclusivity
- Fun
- Soulfulness

We seek to live those values and to find stewards of Semiofest who will foster these values too.





How to bid for Semiofest

The Board of Semiofest is the guardian of the Semiofest brand. Every year after the event, we turn our thoughts to the following year and where to take Semiofest next. We generally use a bid process (similar, but less grand, than that of the International Olympic Committee, IOC) in order to select the next Semiofest venue, globally, among interested parties. We have come to that time again when we need to pass the Semiofest torch onto a fresh organising team.

The rationale for the bid process is simple: for us to find out a bit about you, your team, why you want to organize Semiofest as well as your plans for the event, how you will work with us and how you propose to make it happen. In our experience, hosting a Semiofest is extremely rewarding, and we commit 100% to supporting you in planning and organising the event; ultimately, it will be your event, so we're curious to hear what new ideas you have.

Of course, there are some ingredients that have become part of a successful recipe for Semiofest and regular attendees have come to expect; things we'd strongly suggest you include – i.e. training, a party, some interactive exercises and a client Boot Camp – and other elements that are core to the brand: our visual identity guidelines, a funky venue and an informal atmosphere. But as we look ahead to the 11th edition of Semiofest, we are open to co-creating with you. We are looking for organisers who want to try new things within the Semiofest spirit, while retaining our unique brand DNA. At every event we learn from local organisers and then incorporate that knowledge into our *modus operandi* to improve subsequent events. This is your chance to show us why you and your team should be awarded brand stewardship as Semiofest 2028 organisers.

Since we moved to a biennial model, organising teams have a longer time frame for event planning and organisation. Assuming the event is scheduled in late Spring 2028, we have a full 1.5 years for putting the event together once the event team is chosen and appointed in December 2026.

The bid application process

Over time, we have learned that there are some key areas we feel (aside from your team's commitment to see the process through to fulfilment) are most important to a Semiofest event. We have boiled these down to the following criteria/questions.

We will assess all bids on these 13 areas. We encourage you to take the time to describe your thoughts and ideas in as much detail as you need so that we can get a good understanding of what you have in mind. In case of any questions, etc., please do email us at info@semiofest.com (which we all access) for any clarifications before finalising your bid. And thanks in advance for your interest in Semiofest.

1. Could you state your reasons for wanting to host Semiofest? (include impact on attendees)
2. What would the theme be for your proposed Semiofest? (e.g. in Warsaw it was viscosity)
3. Where would you hold the event? What would be the nature and capacity of the venue?
4. Could you name the organizing team? What is the background and experience of members?
5. What innovations would you propose to the programme from previous Semiofests?
6. Will there be a social program? If so, could you suggest some items from that programme?
7. What ideas do you have for the format; i.e. training / education and interactive exercises?
8. How many people do you estimate would attend from your home market? From outside?
9. Marketing is critical to create awareness and make people wanting to attend. How do you plan to promote the event & to what audiences?
10. How do you propose to handle the ticketing and logistics of the event? Administrative help?
11. What funding would you be able to source for the event? Would there be any sponsorship?
12. How will your event design incorporate Semiofest brand values? (Creativity, Excellence etc)
13. What unique qualities do you think your location/city will bring to Semiofest's 2028 event? (we place importance on retaining the Semiofest spirit so do consider this in your answers)

The bid application process

Once we have all the forms in, we will collate and evaluate responses to all the questions and assess each bid on its merits. When we say 'we', we mean the Semiofest Board and our 12 previous Semiofest organisers, who know what it takes to organise an excellent event. We will follow a two-stage selection process. The first is a formal scoring of bids based on your answers to these questions. The second will be a brief Zoom interview we schedule with shortlisted teams.

The call for bids officially opens on 2nd October 2026 and will close on 22nd November 2026.

We very much look forward to receiving your bids

Chris, Hamsini, Lucia (The Semiofest Board)