



# SEMIOFEST

A CELEBRATION OF SEMIOTIC THINKING

[www.semiofest.com](http://www.semiofest.com)

It is hard to believe, but we are well into our second decade with Semiofest. I guess time flies when you are having fun! From humble beginnings at the inaugural London 2012 we have successfully organized 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 the brand facilitates and we must never forget that.

We are committed to serving our community and one way we do that is through organizing 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 organize a Semiofest. Having just finished Porto 2024 co-organised by Sonia and Susanna at the amazing Casa da Musica, we're buzzing off the positive feedback and looking forward to the future with of excitement. We have reached that time to organize the next event!

## **About Semiofest**

Semiofest is unique; it is an annual event set up to celebrate (applied) semiotic thinking. We set 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, students to come and participate in a celebrating semiotic thinking through short presentations, creative inspiration sessions and interactive group activities. Our mission at Semiofest is to provide an inclusive platform to 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 has finished, our thoughts turn 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 again come to that time again where we need to pass the Semiofest torch onto a fresh organizing 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 an extremely rewarding experience and we commit 100% to supporting you in the planning, and organization of the event but ultimately it will be your event so we're curious to see 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 10<sup>th</sup> edition of Semiofest, we are open to co-creating with you. We are looking for organizers who will innovate the Semiofest experience, while retaining the vibrant brand DNA. At every event we have learned from local organisers and then incorporated that knowledge to improve subsequent events. So, this is your chance to show us why you and your team should organize Semiofest 2026 in your proposed city or geographical location.

As we move to a bi-annual event, the organizing teams also have a longer time frame to complete the organization. Assuming the event is planned for Spring 2026, we will have a full 18 months for putting the event together once the event team is chosen and appointed in Autumn 2024.

### **The bid application process**

Over time, we have learned that there are some key areas we feel (aside from your team commitment to see the process through to fulfillment) are most important to a Semiofest event.

We have boiled these down to the following criteria/questions. We will assess all bids on these 12 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 mail us on [info@semiofest.com](mailto:info@semiofest.com) (which we all access) for any clarifications before finalizing 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. Where would you hold the event? What would be the nature and capacity of the venue?
3. Could you name the organizing team? What is the background and experience of members?
4. What innovations would you propose to the program from previous Semiofests?
5. Will there be a social program? If so, could you suggest some items from that program?
6. What ideas do you have for the format; i.e. training / education and interactive exercises?
7. How many people do you estimate would attend from your home market? From outside?
8. What plans do you have for promoting and marketing the event? To which key audiences?
9. How do you propose to handle the ticketing and logistics of the event? Administrative help?
10. What funding would you be able to source for the event? Would there be any sponsorship?
11. How will your event design incorporate Semiofest brand values? (Creativity, Excellence etc)
12. What unique qualities do you think your location/city will bring to Semiofest's 2026 event?

Once we have all the forms in, we will collate and evaluate responses to all the questions and evaluate each bid on its merits. When we say 'we', we mean the Semiofest Board and our 12 previous Semiofest organisers, since they know what it takes to organize an excellent event.

**We will follow a two-stage process of selection. The first is a formal scoring of bids on the answers to these questions. The second will be a brief Zoom interview with the shortlisted teams.**

The call for bids officially opens on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2024 and will close on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2024.

We very much look forward to receiving your bids.

Chris, Lucia, Hamsini

The Semiofest Board