

A surprise bid

Every great book begins with something unexpected. Every great new world contains something entirely new. So yes, we know this comes as a surprise. And yes, we know it's quite late — but we are convinced that what we offer has the potential to grow into a great story and a remarkable world-building project.

We first considered a Nuremberg bid back at Worldcon Helsinki, but life happened. So we waited. Then suddenly the question of “where” became more political, the world changed drastically, and it began to feel as if this story needed to be told precisely now.

So here we are at SMOFcon to get feedback — to build a team for culture, community, and programming.

We are also here to show that this could become a great story, a new chapter, and that we have the support system, the partners, and the experience to actually make it happen.

There are other great bids as well, and as members of this community we are eager to hear about all the other stories that need to be told.

See you in Stockholm!





Worldcon Bid Nuremberg 2028

Right place - Right timeline

Key Facts

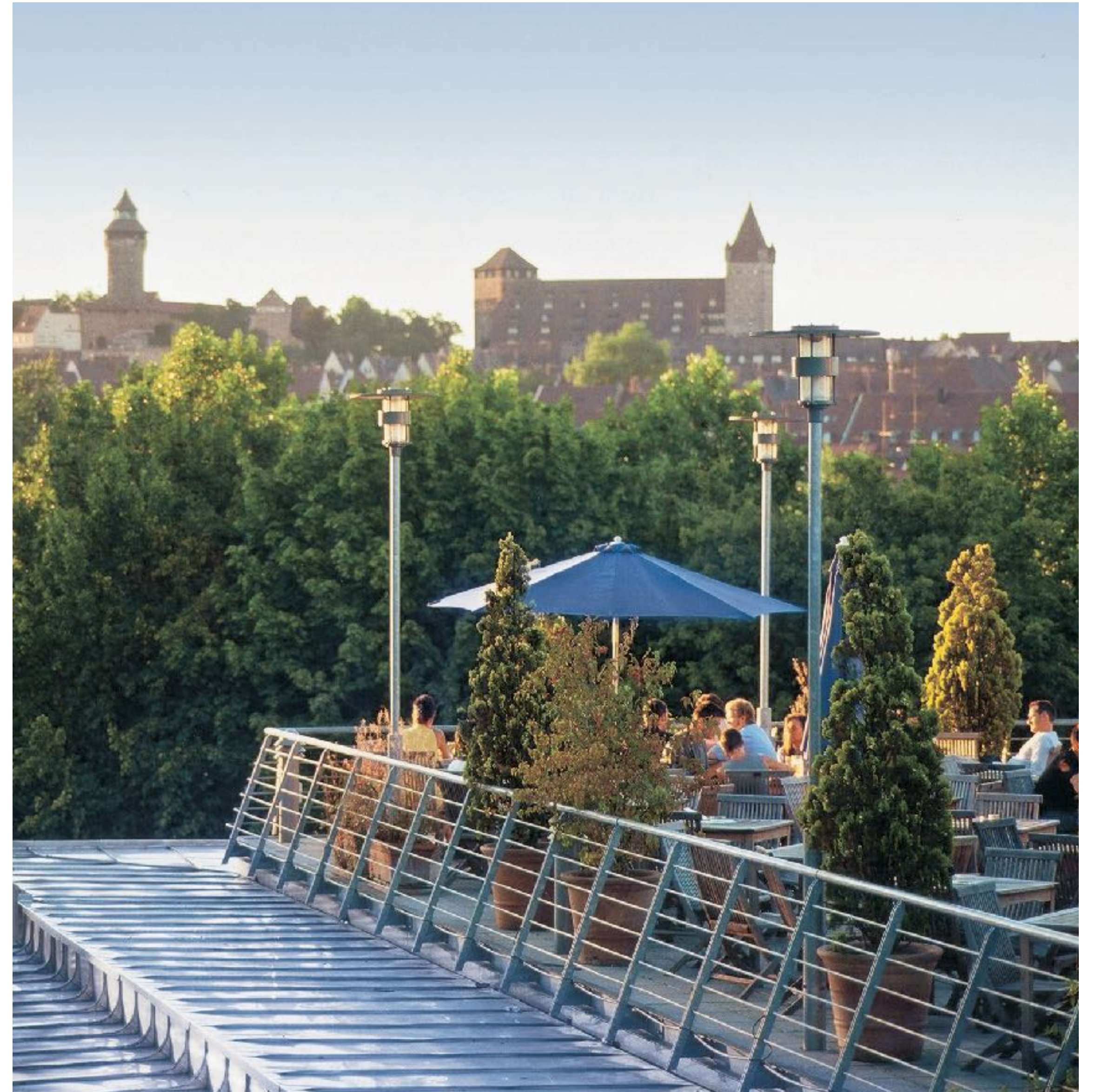
- Bid for Worldcon 2028 Nuremberg
- July 2028 (August is rainy)
- Worldclass Venue reserved: NürnbergMesse NCC Ost + Halls 3, 3A, 3C, 4A
- A „Worldcon Village“ with green spaces, beer gardens and themed areas
- Capacity: planned 6,000–8,000 attendees, much more is possible at venue
- Hotels: more than 24,000 beds in Nuremberg, we will prebook a relevant number of rooms
- Unique historical context, unique integration into the city life
- Legal entity: nonprofit gGmbH in formation
- Experienced Team with a strong support system

Our Vision

Worldcon Nuremberg 2028 will bring the global science fiction community together in a modern, connected venue. It's an inspiring city for reflecting on both utopias and dystopias.

Nuremberg combines rich history with the vibrant energy of a Bavarian summer, offering a unique setting for exploring positive, possible futures together.

Our goal is to create a welcoming, seamless, and inspiring Worldcon experience that feels both professional and community-driven. The event will be deeply integrated with the city's cultural life, featuring a wide range of side events and a "One Night in the City" evening. We will also focus on fostering connections between the German-speaking and Eastern European communities.



View of the Imperial Castle.

Overview

1. Venue
2. Venue Location
3. Facilities
4. Travel
5. Location
6. Worldcon with Friends
7. Worldcon in the City
8. Chairs and Org & Other
9. Contact & Credits



Venue



Convention Center

Venue Key Facts

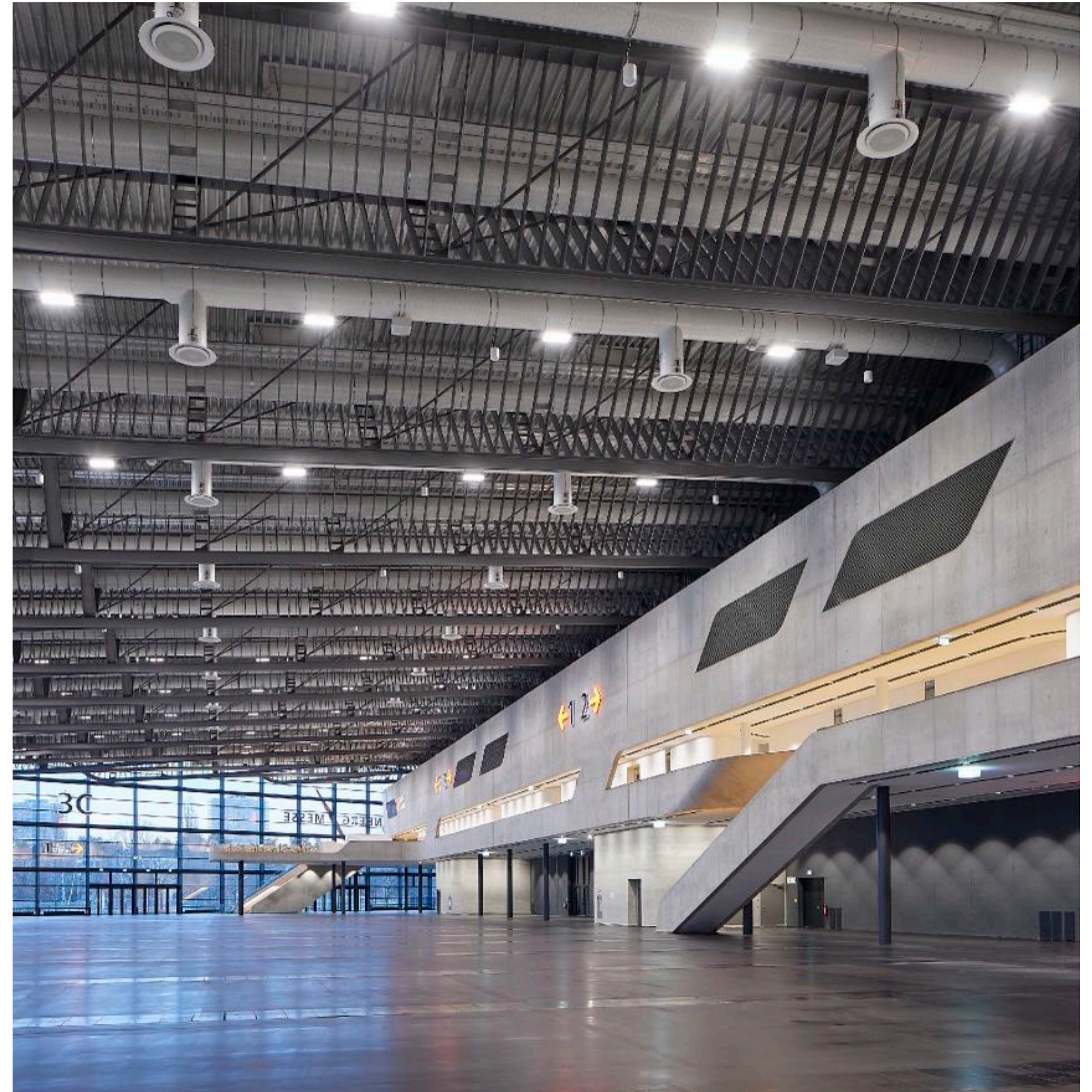
- NürnbergMesse Conference Center + Halls 3, 3A, 3C, 4A reserved
- 37,000+ m² contiguous indoor space: no crowding
- Fully interconnected campus, step-free access
- Halls: Ceremony Hall (Zaha Hadid design), Dealers Room + Art Show + Exhibits, Maker & Robotics area (invitation to local maker faire), Gaming & Workshops, big stages
- Conference Center: Program tracks, WSFS, volunteer areas
- All room sizes possible 50-5000 attendees
- Outdoor areas for popup beer garden & social spaces
- Brochure <https://broschuere.nuernberg-convention.de/en/>

Venue: A Worldcon Village

NürnbergMesse provides a **modern, fully connected and accessible convention environment** where the entire Worldcon can exist as one cohesive experience.

Its large halls allow us to create **distinct themed areas** while keeping movement easy. Its conference center allows for focused panels and meetups. Micro Parks, lounges and wide spaces allow for serendipity and quiet spaces for all introverts.

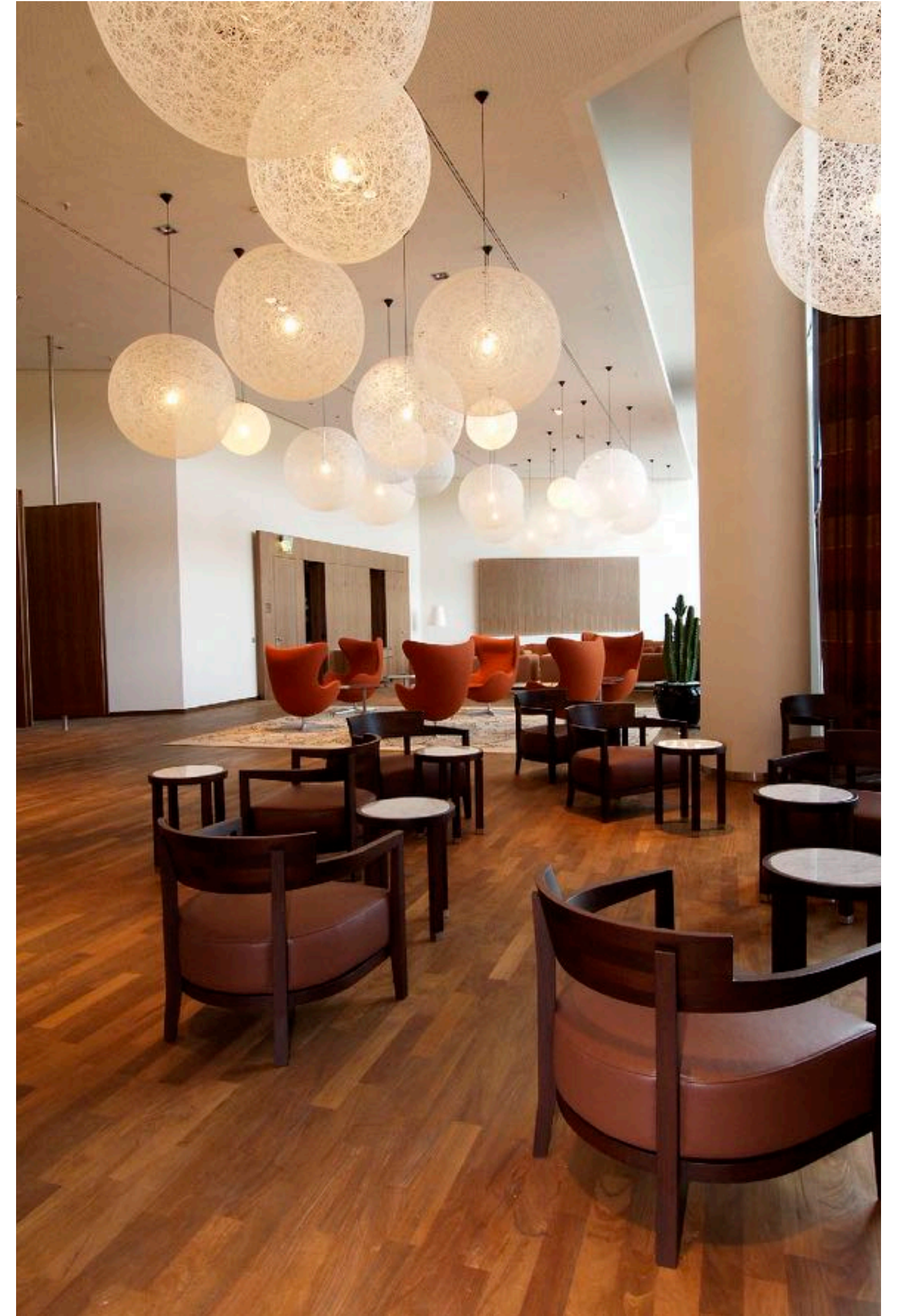
The venue combines **professional infrastructure**, with the **flexibility** that Worldcon needs to feel vibrant, creative, and community-focused.



„spaceship hangar“ Hall 3c Zaha Hadid - Hugo Awards



Convention Center



Lounge

Venue Q & A

1. **Are you in more than one building? Are the buildings connected or adjacent? If not, what transportation is available between sites for members with mobility issues?**

All main events are in the convention center, which are connected to each other. Furthermore, events are planned in the city center during the evening; those events will all be close to each other (between 50-300 meters).

2. **Where will your main events (Hugo Awards, Masquerade, etc.) be held?**

Hugo Awards will be in the convention center, Masquerade and some other night events might be moved into the “*Worldcon in the City*” locations. These locations are all close to each other and offer several beer gardens near the medieval sandstone fortifications of Nuremberg. All are a very short walking distance to most hotels and the main train station.

3. **What is the seating capacity there?**

The larger convention rooms will be able to easily fit all attendees into the HUGO Awards. Hall 3c is designed by Zaha Hadid and is one of the most sustainable convention venues worldwide.

4. **Where can on-site socializing happen? Are arrangements required to permit serving food or alcohol?**

There are various on site lounges. The convention center offers great socializing possibilities with a cafeteria, sofa corners and such. We also plan to place Food Trucks outside the center and are thinking about a *Pop-Up beer garden!* We are still checking the requirements to serve food or alcohol inside.

5. **What are the rules and laws regarding smoking? Where is smoking permitted on site (and what can be smoked)?**

Smoking is permitted only outside the building. Cannabis smoking is permitted in Germany, but

not near playgrounds or schools.

6. **What will your policies be regarding public health and disease transmission?**

In case of a disease outbreak, German public health authorities have proven reliable to give quick and clear directions.

7. **What are the parking rates for your convention center and hotel(s)?**

Pretty cheap compared to international standards.

Venue Location





The convention centre is located on the former Reichsparteitagsgelände of the Third Reich. The Reichsparteitagsgelände has shaped history and influenced the aesthetics of many dystopias. Today, grass grows between the stones, artist studios occupy the ruins of the main hall, ducks swim between boats, and traveling circuses make use of the vast open spaces. There is a museum that explains the site's horrific history and serves as a warning for the future. It is the source of many visions of dystopia.

But today, it can also be a source of utopia, keeping the warnings of history in mind and offering room for reflection on both. Nuremberg also has the Documentation Centre for the Nuremberg Trials, where the principal Nazi leaders were brought to justice.



Dystopia and Utopia: Left: Zeppelintribühne Reichsparteitagsgelände Top right: Alley of human rights

Main Hall Reichsparteitagsgelände

Facilities



Cloud One Bar - Cloud One Hotel - 50m near Main Station - 464 rooms
H: Hostel in the Imperial Castle - 90 group rooms

H

Facilities Key Facts

- No hotel directly at venue!
- 4 minutes 100% accessible subway connection to Nuremberg Central Station. The convention center has its own subway station.
- One of the largest inner-city hotel clusters in Germany, located within easy walking distance of Nuremberg Central Station.
- Around 5,000 rooms in a 600 meter radius.
- Nuremberg offers around 24,000 hotel beds.
- Average occupancy around 50% during July (off-season)
- A wide range of options from hostels to luxury resorts, from medieval-style to state-of-the-art modern hotels, at low to high rates
- A campsite in front of the convention center might be possible (tbd)

Facilities Q & A

1. What hotel(s) are being used for the convention?

The convention will take place in the Nuremberg Messe Convention Center (NCC), easily accessible from many hotel locations and the main station via a direct subway line connection.

2. How many rooms, what type, accessibility issues, etc?

Nuremberg has around 24,000 hotel beds. Average occupancy rates are around 50% during July. All type of accessibility rooms are available, there will a set of these reserved in the main hotels (directly at subway station) There is also a broad range of alternative accommodations. We are also planning a Worldcon Camp campsite in front of the convention center, in the woods area.

3. What are the room rates?

Between 55-300€.

4. Do these rates include breakfast and internet access?

Depending on the hotel.

5. How firm are these rates?

We will have a set of fixed price rooms available in 2028. Prices have been pretty constant in the recent past. Nuremberg is now at a slight overcapacity of hotel rooms.

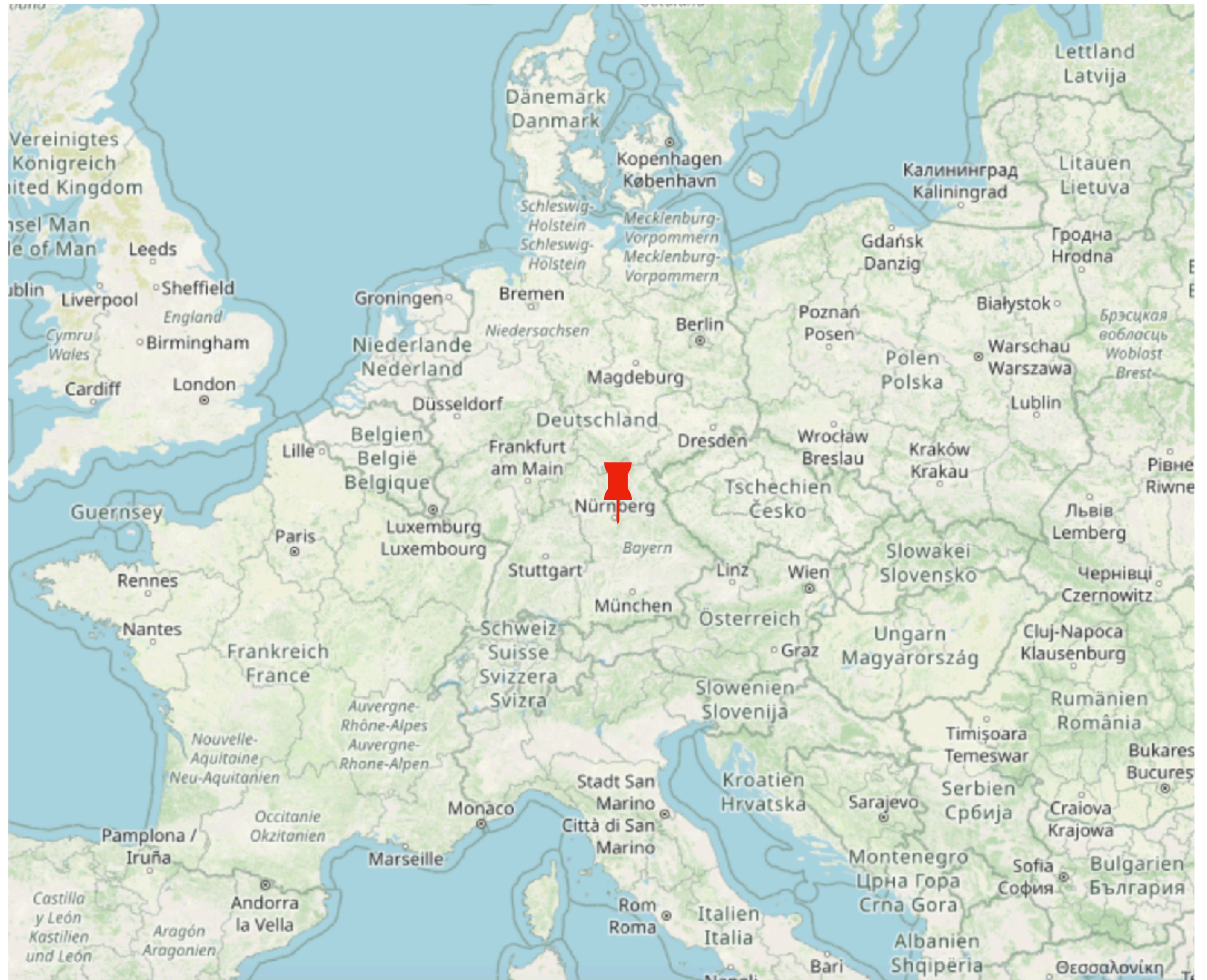
6. What additional taxes and fees are there?

None.

7. What is the distance between the main hotel and the main program or exhibits site, if any.

The Nuremberg Convention Center is connected by subway to the main hotel area, travel time station to station is 4 minutes. Closer hotels are also available, but we will recommend hotels close to our “*Worldcon in the City*” night. This will be around the main hotel cluster.

Travel



It's really in the center of Europe.

Travel Key Facts

- 4 global airport hubs with good connections to Nuremberg (AMS, CDG, FRA, MUC)
- 7-11 hours flight time from the US, 11 hours from China
- Nuremberg Airport offers European connections
- 3 hours by train to Berlin, 1 hour to Munich
- Visa free for over 60 countries up to 90 days
- In the center of Europe, good connections to Eastern Europe
- 20 minutes subway ride from/to the airport, 2 hours direct train connection from/to Munich Airport or Frankfurt Airport
- Wide range of travel options, budget or fast option possible

Travel Q & A

1. What is your main local airport?

Nuremberg Airport is the best option for European connections. For international connections the best options are Munich (direct ICE fast train or bus connection 2:10h) Frankfurt Airport (train 2:10h) or connecting Flights to Nuremberg from Paris or Amsterdam.

International Worldcon Visitors will be able to prioritize travel time or prices by picking one of the 4 European Hubs with good connections to Nuremberg (FRA, MUC, CDG, AMS). Connections from Europe are fast and easy.

Connection time examples:

- JFK - FRA: 7:20h
- LAX - FRA: 11h
- Beijing - FRA: 11h

Traveling times (est.):

Nuremberg Airport to city center:	20 minutes
Munich Airport to city center:	2:10h
Frankfurt Airport to city center:	2:10h

2. What is the most practical and convenient way on public transit from your airport(s) to your main hotel?

Since many hotels are very close to the main train station, the train is the best option. Nuremberg offers excellent public transport, both subway, tram and bus, as well as e-bikes for rent.

Travel

You'll have an easy time getting to Nuremberg. There are **three airports (MUC, FRA, NUE) with fast train connections**. One of the airports is even located in Nuremberg! Airplane travel times are between 7-11 hours, whether from China or the Americas.

Take the **subway, the bus or even rent e-bikes** to get to the convention and back to the pulsating life inside the medieval city walls. Pay with your smartphone or in cash (Euro).



Location



Location Facts: Nuremberg

- Historic city with medieval Old Town and Imperial Castle
- Top cultural attractions: Albrecht Dürer House, Germanisches Nationalmuseum
- Renowned museum landscape (Toy Museum, Documentation Center)
- Vibrant summer cafés, beer gardens, outdoor dining
- Riverfront promenades and parks (Pegnitz)
- Major festival city in July (music, culture, open-air events)
- Safe, walkable, compact city center
- Excellent food culture: Franconian cuisine & beer & wine

Location Facts: Bavaria

- Germany's most visited tourism region
- Franconian wine region 30 min away
- Bamberg & Rothenburg medieval towns nearby
- Neuschwanstein Castle & the Alps accessible via day trip
- Lakes, rivers & forests for summer recreation
- Easy onward travel to Munich, Prague, Vienna



Worldcon with friends



All kinds of friends

Friends facts:

- The Nuremberg Digital Festival runs in the 10 days before Worldcon
- 500 different event partners and up to 200 locations, up to 20.000 attendees
- The Nuremberg Digital Festival is the only truly open format in Europe. There will be no central control
- 2027: the Robocup World Cup comes to Nuremberg during the festival (Non-Profit, several thousand students)
- The Nuremberg Digital Festival changes it's theme every year. In 2027: robots. In 2028: utopia and dystopia?
- Unique integration of the Worldcon theme into city life, along with side events
- Support backbone in the Nuremberg Digital Festival team. They are happy to help, add stability and local experience
- Worldcon stays Worldcon, but suddenly has friends

A worldcon with friends

We invite you to a bubbling cauldron of **rich fan culture** in science fiction, cosplay and roleplaying!

Through cooperation with a multitude of institutions, the Nuremberg Digital Festival and its 500 partners (museums, NGOs, schools, companies) we will have a **Science Fiction Week** with readings, exhibitions and other events in the week before and after.

We are also planning a think tank with writers before the con.

This will not change the main events or have any negative impact, it will widen the impact and invite more fans.

Coming into the city will feel like coming into a Worldcon themed city.



Nuremberg Digital Festival - Future Museum

Worldcon in the City



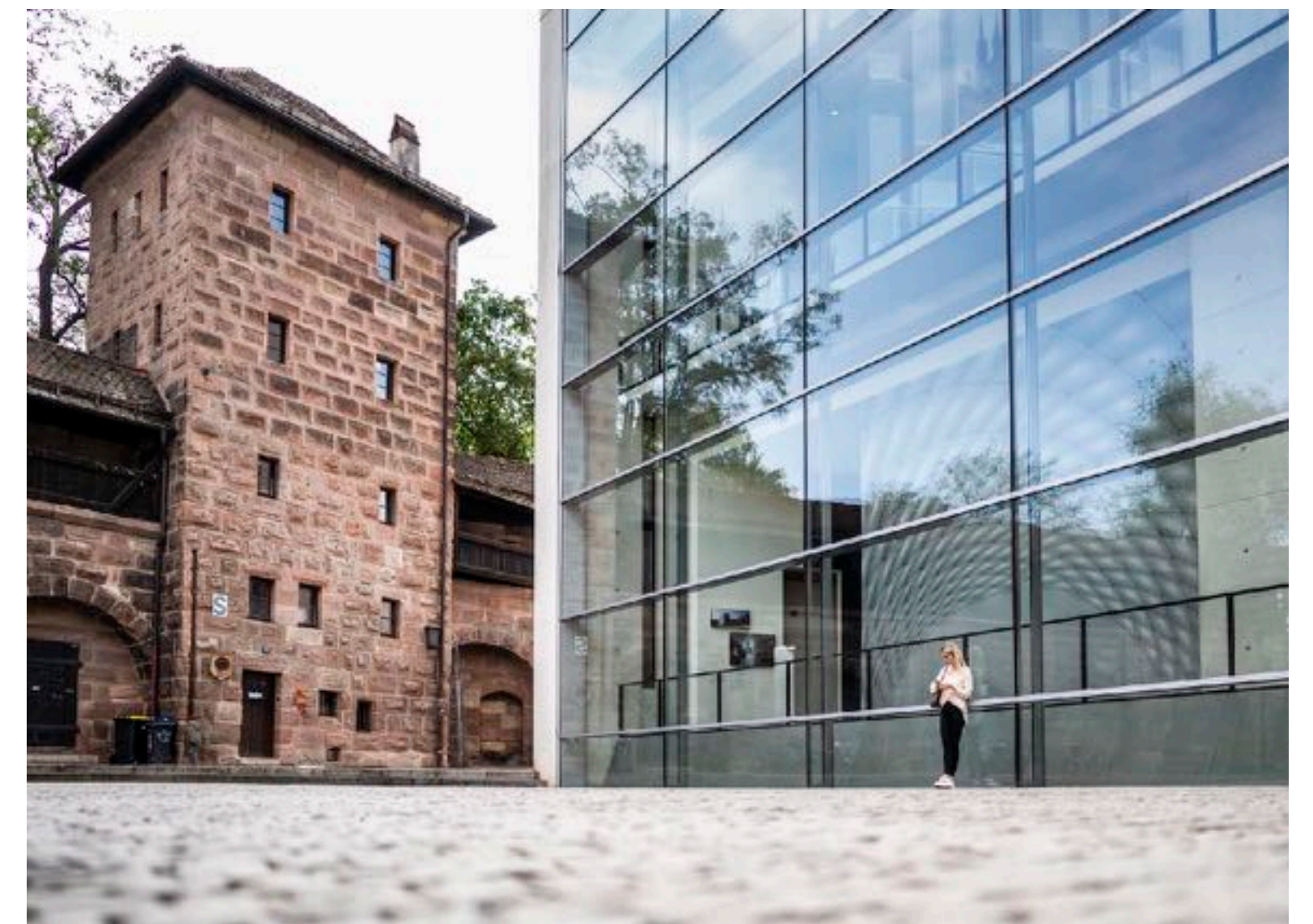
In the city - Cloud One Hotel in the background

In the City facts:

- At one night, we want to move into the city for a great event party
- It will be held in various locations indoors and outdoors, close to the central station and the hotels
- Accessible, no more than 350 meters between locations, mix of modern and medieval elements
- The city becomes a Worldcon beergarden
- Multitude of food options
- Central info points for easy navigation, safety and support



Neues Museum Nürnberg - Florian talking about inclusion in digital spaces



Two spots for „Worldcon in the city“

Chairs & Org



Beergarden - in the hotel cluster

Chairs & Org Keyfacts:

- Two chairs with strong 20 years open event experience and Worldcon visitor experience
- No Worldcon convention chair experience
- Strong local support from volunteers, partners, friend orgs
- Track record on local experience, logistics, tech, communication, finance and volunteer org
- We need support with other departments like culture and programming
- Our goal is a completely open and transparent organization

Milestones:

12/25 Feedback SMOFcon

**01/26 Launch Real Bid, Finance Chairs,
Budget Planning, Website,
additional department heads, swag**

02/26 Local Bid Launch Partner Meetup

02/26 Fundraising for commitments at state
and local level for bid, worldcon and
think tank

07/26 Local Pre-Events Nuremberg at
Nuremberg Digital Festival

06/26 Eurocon-Metropolcon

08/26 LA Worldcon planned with 20
supporters, bavarian party, voting
ticket support for students

09/26 Change into planning and con event
structure, technical setup, onboarding
global and local teams, monthly
update meetings

07/27 dry run volunteer and department head
and all partners meetup Nuremberg

01/27 marketing campaign starts

09/27 Montreal planned with 50 supporting
attendees

Chair Experience

Florian Bailey:

I initiated and started Germany's *largest, completely open and free tech and future Festival* in Nuremberg. We get the inspiration for our organisational model from a mix of barcamps, worldcons and a set of other community oriented events (like *burning man*). We think that the future should both be equally distributed, as well as accessible. To achieve our goals, we have built a platform with several hundred volunteers.

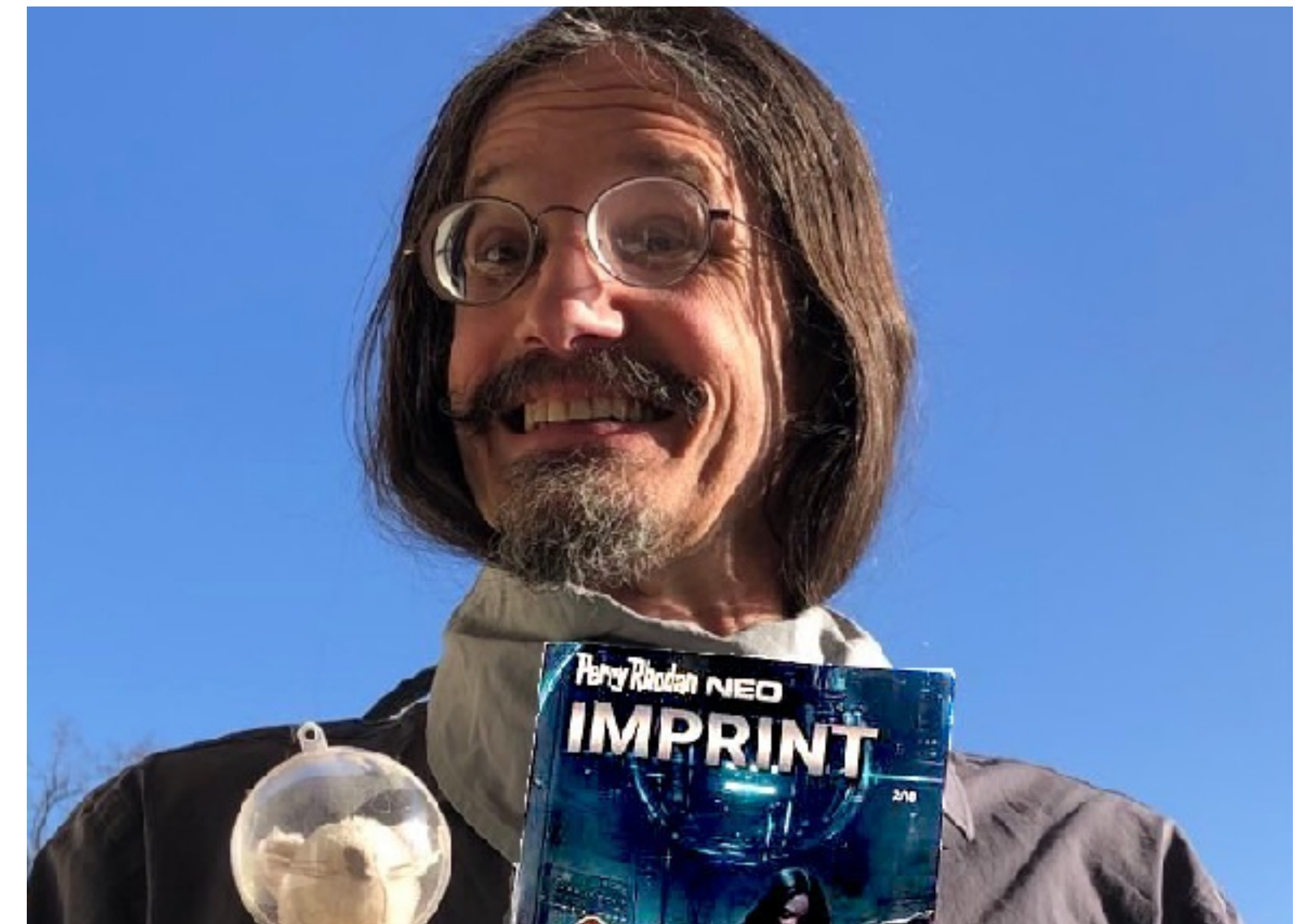
Our efforts have been successful: For 15 years, the festival has run annually in Nuremberg. We now have more than *200 events from 200 different organisations* and teams in 200 different locations. Up to 16,000 attendees participate in the event every year. In 2027 the global *robocup world championship* will be held in Nuremberg during the festival. One of the key reasons for this is the fact that the festival opens the championship to a huge local audience. We also have organised clearly defined volunteer teams for all areas, with regular meetups and digital documentation. Sci-Fi guests have been Charlie Stross, Bruce Sterling, Theresa Hannig, among others.

Ruben Wickenhäuser:

In 2002, together with my colleague and fellow writer Titus Müller, I founded the Autorenkreis Historischer Roman Quo vadis. This non-profit organisation of professional writers of historical novels held annual festivals, Historica, at historical locations throughout Germany, such as the castle in Landshut and others. The Reading Night, which was an integral part of the festivals, was well attended by the local public and received a great deal of positive feedback. We also established an annual award for the best historical novels, with the prize paid in real gold coins.

Later, after moving to Sweden, I introduced the emerging sport of Jugger to the country. Thanks to my involvement, Studieförbundet launched a three-year project with three fully funded positions to establish Jugger in schools and youth clubs. For five years, I organised an annual international tournament in our small Swedish village, which attracted teams from around the world – we had participants from Ireland, Germany, Australia, Lithuania, Russia, and other countries. To launch the international event, I collaborated with the major annual heavy metal festival Metallsvenskan in Örebro.

After returning to Germany, I continued working as a youth team coach and integrated our team into one of the largest sports clubs in our town, with more than 3,000 members in total. I also organised Jugger “boot camps” with participants from across Germany. In addition, I am an experienced YouTube creator, focusing mainly on Jugger and science fiction.



Org/Con/others Q & A. Part 1

1. If applicable, have you agreed to participate in Pass-Along-Funds?

Yes, we will participate in Pass-Along-Funds.

2. What is the sponsoring organization?

In preparation, it is *gGmbH*, a Non-Profit Entity.

3. Is the sponsoring organization a non-profit (example US 501(c)(3)) under the laws of your country?

Yes, it's a non-profit organization.

4. Is the sponsoring organization tax-exempt for local taxes, especially sales tax?

Yes, gGmbH are tax-exempt from sales tax, the specific ticket sales tax circumstances are still under discussion with our tax attorneys.

5. What is your website and/other social media presence?

Nuremberg2028.de, the social media accounts and our podcast will be launching in December.

6. Who is on your committee?

We are in an active recruiting phase and hope to have a complete overview by February.

7. Senior Committee Experience: Briefly, summarize the convention background of the vice-chair(s), executive committee, and/or major division heads.

That's why we are at SMOFcon, to start building a global team. We can take care of all the local stuff, now we would love to build a team for all other areas

8. What is your vision for your convention?

The convention centre is located on the former Reichsparteitagsgelände of the Third Reich. The Reichsparteitagsgelände has shaped history and influenced the aesthetics of many dystopias. Today, grass grows between the stones, artist studios occupy the ruins of the main hall, ducks swim

between boats, and traveling circuses make use of the vast open spaces. There is a museum that explains the site's horrific history and serves as a warning for the future. It is the source of many visions of dystopia.

But today, it can also be a source of utopia, keeping the warnings of history in mind and offering room for reflection on both. Nuremberg also has the Documentation Centre for the Nuremberg Trials, where the principal Nazi leaders were brought to justice.

We want to use the days before Worldcon to bring together a group of authors in this setting for a think tank on new utopias. For us, it is the right place at the right moment.

In addition, we will open the city for Worldcon. Worldcon should be visible throughout the city: in the days before and after the convention, cultural institutions, schools and universities will be invited to take part in the program.

This is made possible through our unique connection to the open Nuremberg Digital Festival, which already collaborates with all major institutions each year. We are also planning a Worldcon "Night in the City", during which we will take over cultural venues and beer gardens in one district of Nuremberg. Close to your hotels, you will be able to enjoy a great deal of Bavarian summer atmosphere and charm.

We also aim to connect the German-speaking, global and Eastern European science fiction fan communities. To achieve this, we are planning extensive outreach with key ambassadors to help build new networks.

Worldcon should not be a one-off event. Instead, it should create something lasting: we will ask attendees to bring a book they love, along with a personal message, and together we will build a commemorative Worldcon Nuremberg library. And yes, we will of course set up a system to avoid receiving 8,000 copies of the same title.

9. How do you plan to make your vision happen?

Co-operation with cultural institutions is already ongoing, as well as support by official institutions. We have all the local connections, we just need the global feedback.

Org/Con/others Q & A. Part 2

- 2. What is a notable aspect of your local fan culture and how do you plan to incorporate it into your convention?**

Both Germany and the Eastern European countries are a hot spot for Science Fiction literature, both historically and recent. We do have a rich scene of fanclubs for Roleplaying, Science Fiction and Cosplay

- 3. Are you planning to have any membership discounts for certain demographic groups, such as young adults, unemployed, or seniors?**

Yes, we are planning to have a wide range of trust based prices and discounts, our goal is to be a Worldcon that is open to attendees in every life situation.

- 4. Do you have a Code of Conduct? Please link to your Code of Conduct and any other relevant policies.**

Yes, we are currently working on a code of conduct. We hope to have a first draft after SMOFcon. We would love to integrate your input and feedback first. We will include a section "How to talk to older convention visitors". We will also have a strict safety policy and there will be several quickly accessible safe spots with volunteers.

- 5. What are your plans and policies about diversity, equity, and inclusion regarding members, staff, and volunteers?**

Our goal at SMOFcon and all upcoming events is to build a global and diverse team. We will take care of all the tough local stuff, so a global and diverse team can focus on community, culture and programming.

- 6. Do you have plans for remote virtual participation by members and/or program participants?**

Yes, and we have extensive experience in offering digital solutions in this space.

- 7. What is the human rights situation in your country or region? Specifically, can members who are LGBTQ+ or members of religious, ethnic, or racial minorities travel in safety to your convention?'**

Germany is a very progressive country, and especially the Nuremberg region is known for its tolerance. Everyone can feel safe. Nuremberg is one of the most ethnically diverse cities of Germany, more than 51% of the population have an immigration history in their direct family.

- 8. Are you able to accept direct payment from outside your country for memberships or other purchases via credit card or other electronic payments?**

Yes, we will accept all globally relevant card or payment systems.

Contact & Credits

Worldcon Bid Nuremberg

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Thanks to our Partners:

CTZ Nuremberg (tourism board)
Nürnbergmesse (convention center)
Nuremberg Digital Festival

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Just another Nuremberg photo