

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

for the

2018 SERVAS INTERNATIONAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Prepare yourself now to make sure your participation is effective. To help you prepare we have created a list of frequently asked questions, with the answers you need to get informed.

To learn about the SICOGA 2018 General Assembly, go to the web site:

<https://servas.org/sicoga2018/general-assembly.php>

Questions

- 1) What is a General Assembly? (GA)
- 2) Who is invited to the General Assembly?
- 3) What is a Delegate?
- 4) Who can be an Observer?
- 5) What is a Servas Member Group / Member Country?
- 6) What is the cost to attend the General Assembly?
- 7) Can I still register?
- 8) Where and when is the 2018 General Assembly?
- 9) What will happen at the General Assembly?
- 10) What are the main subject areas to be discussed at the General Assembly?
- 11) What is a "motion"?
- 12) What is a Subject Working Group? (SWG)
- 13) How can Servas Member Group Delegates prepare for the General Assembly?
- 14) How can non-delegates prepare for the General Assembly?
- 15) Can I participate in the General Assembly even if I do not attend?
- 16) Where do I find the agenda items submitted by my Servas Member Group or myself? Where can I find other agenda items and proposals submitted to the General Assembly?
- 17) What is the theme of the General Assembly?
- 18) What is a Formal Voting Session?
- 19) How does voting work?
- 20) What happens at a Formal Voting Session?
- 21) Can I run for a Servas International (SI) elected position? How do I run for an elected position?
- 22) Who votes in SI elections and what is Proxy Voting?
- 23) What else will happen at the conference?
- 24) Will the conference be fun?
- 25) What happens after the General Assembly is over?
- 26) When is the next General Assembly?
- 27) Where will the next General Assembly take place?
- 28) Where will I be able to find documentation and minutes of the GA, after it is finished?
- 29) Where can I find more information about the hosting country in general and the conference logistic issues?

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Answers

1) What is a Servas International Conference and General Assembly (SICOGA)?

Servas members from all over the world meet during a Servas International Conference and General Assembly (SICOGA). The Servas International General Assembly (SI GA) is the business part of the conference, and it is held every three years. One delegate from each country participates in decision making for Servas International. The SI GA is the highest decision-making body in Servas. The working language at the SI GA is English. The SI GA meeting is the place where all attendees can communicate, report, and make decisions on the future of Servas.

2) Who is invited to the General Assembly?

All Servas members at the SICOGA 2018 conference are invited to attend. It is an open meeting.

However, only delegates can vote. SI Exco and SI Officers may speak but do not vote. All other attendees can participate as observers, but cannot vote and they cannot speak without permission from the delegates in formal voting sessions.

3) What is a Delegate?

The one person who represents a Servas Member Group (Member Country) at the General Assembly, and can speak and vote at the Formal Voting Sessions. The Delegate is normally the National Secretary, but may be another person chosen by the Servas Member Group to represent them at the General Assembly.

4) Who can be an Observer?

Any Servas member who registers to attend the SICOGA 2018 conference and is not a delegate is an Observer. Observers participate in Workshops, discussion groups and all leisure activities. They may attend the Formal Voting Sessions, but they may not speak or vote.

5) What is a Servas Member Group / Member Country?

A group that meets the membership requirements described in Section II of the SI Statutes (SI Statutes can be found on this web link <https://servas.org/sicoga2018/general-assembly-material.php>). Member Group status is reviewed by the Membership Committee before each General Assembly.

Only a vote by the current member groups can add or remove Member Groups.

6) Is there a cost to attend the SICOGA?

There's a SICOGA registration fee which includes food and accommodation.

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7) Can I still register?

Registration for SICOGA 2018 closed in June 2018.

8) Where and when is SICOGA 2018?

SICOGA 2018 will be held October 13-20, 2018 in Seoul, Korea.

9) What will happen at the General Assembly (GA)?

The Agenda for the business of SI GA was sent to all Servas Member Groups on July 13, 2018, three months before the start of the GA, as stipulated by the SI statutes. The agenda and the day by day Timetable are published on the SICOGA 2018 website <https://servas.org/sicoga2018/general-assembly-material.php>

10) What are the main subject areas to be discussed at the General Assembly?

The main subject areas are decisions related to the future of Servas international. A large part of the discussion relates priorities for the next three years, and the budget for the next 3 years. There is also discussion of membership, the Statutes, and Servas International procedures.

Motions had to be submitted 6 months before the start of the General Assembly as stipulated by the SI statutes. They were submitted by a National Secretary or Exco member by April 14, 2018. The motions were sorted into the following five subject areas:

- Vision and Governance
- ServasOnline
- SI Management
- Financial
- Procedural motions (no discussion required)

The Subject Working Groups (SWG) discuss the motions before and during the conference.

11) What is a “motion”?

A formal proposal put before the GA and to be voted on by the GA.

12) What is a Subject Working Group? (SWG)

SWGs are in operation before the GA. Their objective is to review the motions in their group and prepare them for the General Assembly. SWGs also meet during the GA, and continue on after the GA.

The objective of the SWG sessions at the General Assembly is to finalize motions to be voted on at the Formal Voting Sessions. All conference attendees have the right to speak and participate in the SWG sessions.

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13) How can Servas Member Group Delegates prepare for the General Assembly?

Before the General Assembly, the Delegate should carefully review the motions and agenda, and meet with their country members and officers to discuss them so that the Delegate accurately represents his/her country's position. In particular, he/she should discuss any motions and/or proposals that his/her country submitted to the agenda.

Each Delegate should also choose a Subject Working Group(s) to join and participate in (see question #12).

Delegates should also read all of the material posted on the SICOGA 218 website.

A new delegate can also ask to be coached by an experienced current or former delegate.

14) How can non-delegates prepare for the General Assembly?

Non-delegates who are attending the **SICOGA 2018 meetings** are encouraged to work with their country's Delegate, consider how they would like to help with the conference, carefully review the agenda and choose which Subject Working Group(s) and Workshop Sessions they wish to attend (see question #12).

15) Can I participate in the General Assembly even if I do not attend?

Servas members who are interested in the General Assembly but who cannot attend are still welcome to get involved. Review the motions and agenda, talk to your country's delegates, officers, or anyone attending the conference, and join a Subject Working Group (see question #12).

If there is no Delegate at the GA for a Member Group, then their National Secretary can assign their vote for elections to another Delegate who is at the GA (Proxy Voting, see question #22).

16) Where do I find the agenda items submitted by my Servas Member Group or myself? Where can I find other agenda items and proposals submitted to the General Assembly?

The full text of agenda items submitted to the 2015 SI GA can be read and downloaded from the Servas website [servas.org](https://servas.org/sicoga2018/general-assembly-motions.php) at <https://servas.org/sicoga2018/general-assembly-motions.php>.

17) What is the theme of SICOGA 2018?

The theme of the SICOGA 2018 is ***Connecting people and cultures for Peace.***

18) What is a Formal Voting Session?

Formal Voting Sessions are where decisions are made. Only General Assembly delegates and SI officers have speaking rights in formal voting sessions, and only

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delegates have voting rights.

Non-delegates are welcome to attend the Formal Voting Sessions. Or they might join (or arrange) Servas discussion groups during that time.

19) How does voting work?

Voting is done with paddles. Each delegate will have a paddle with the name of their country on it. The back of the Paddle has a symbol '?' that means "I do not understand". If a delegate does not understand the discussion, or what another delegate has said, then they can raise their paddle to ask the moderator to stop and get the explanation.

If you are a first-time delegate and are unsure how to vote, find an experienced delegate and sit with them. Even better, arrange for coaching about the General Assembly, which is available from experienced participants **before you come to the conference.**

If you are not a delegate, speak to your delegate about the decisions he or she will make on the motions you are interested in.

20) What happens at a Formal Voting Session?

The delegates attend all Formal Voting Sessions to discuss and vote on motions. If a delegate cannot attend a Formal Voting Session they may pass that responsibility to another Servas member from their country.

There is a Neutral Moderator who manages the discussion and there is English – Spanish translation. A set of rules for the meeting are approved at the first session.

Servas International elections are also held during the Formal Voting Sessions. Only delegates are allowed to vote in the elections. (See Question #22)

21) Can I run for a Servas International (SI) elected position? How do I run for an elected position?

Yes, any Servas member can run for election. **You do not need to be present at the GA to run for an SI position.** Nominations are open until the voting begins.

For information on running for an SI position, please see <https://servas.org/sicoga2018/general-assembly-elections.php>

22) Who votes in SI elections and what is Proxy Voting?

Only delegates vote in SI elections.

Election voting is secret and voting is done using paper ballots. The votes are counted by two authorized and independent members.

If a member group does not send a delegate to the GA, then they can assign their vote to

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another delegate. This is called Proxy Voting. For full information about Proxy Voting, go to <https://servas.org/sicoga2018/general-assembly-elections.php>

23) What else will happen at the conference?

In addition to the Formal Voting Sessions and Subject Working Group Sessions, there will be:

Discussion of the future of Servas

Workshops (educational and discussion sessions)

Subject Working Group sessions

Evening activities, including speakers from other organizations, film, artistic presentations, country presentations, singing, dancing, visiting with new and old friends, and more

A one day excursion

Some other organized leisure activities

24) Will the conference be fun?

Every participant will contribute to the success of SICOGA 2018. How much fun you have will be a personal measure. We expect that the conference will make some positive decisions, and that will be rewarding for everyone.

25) What happens after the General Assembly is over?

Many decisions at the General Assembly will result in work plans for the next few years. You can get involved in these Working Groups or get more actively involved in your own country's Servas activities. You will also have many new friends with whom you can exchange ideas.

26) When is the next General Assembly?

This will be decided by the delegates at the 2018 SI GA. **In the past, General Assemblies have normally been held every 3 years.**

27) Where will the next General Assembly take place?

This will be decided after the 2018 SI GA. Any country that is interested in hosting the next GA should talk to the newly elected SI Exco.

28) Where will I be able to find documentation and minutes of the GA, after it is finished?

There will be notes taken during the Formal Voting Sessions. The formal minutes will be produced by the SI General Secretary, and will be posted on the conference website at <https://servas.org/sicoga2018/general-assembly-post-ga.php>.

Normally a daily newsletter is produced by volunteers, which tells of the activities of the day. There is no formal process to document any of the workshops or leisure activities.

29) Where can I find more information about the hosting country in general and the

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conference logistic issues?

This is found in the 'About the Conference' area, under "Conference Information at <https://servas.org/sicoga2018/conference-conference-information.php> .