



# AISA-GISS Hosting Handbook

*Revised Spring 2023*

## Table of Contents

<b>What is AISA-GISS?</b> .....	5
<b>AISA-GISS Outcomes</b> .....	6
<b>AISA-GISS Ideals</b> .....	7
<b>AISA-GISS History</b> .....	8-10
<b>AISA-GISS Summit Theme</b> .....	10
<b>AISA-GISS Logo Design</b> .....	10-11
<b>AISA-GISS Hosts</b> .....	11-13
<b>AISA-GISS Summit Date Selection</b> .....	14

## Planning an On-site Conference

### **AISA-GISS:**

Program .....	15-16
Welcome and Orientation .....	17
Sustainability Teams .....	18
Opening Ceremony .....	19
Keynote Speakers .....	19-20
Student Workshops .....	20-21
Expert Panels .....	22
Lunch and Snack Breaks .....	22-23
All Summit Simulation/Challenge .....	23
Cultural Events/Evening Activities .....	23
Exhibition/Craft Fair .....	23
Service Day .....	24-25
Local Schools .....	25

Student Reflection Sessions .....	26
Closing Ceremony .....	26
Media Team .....	27
Professional Learning for Teachers/Advisors .....	27
Other Options .....	27

## **Logistics and Planning**

Registration .....	28
Registration Fees & Procedures .....	28
Finalizing Registration .....	29
Cancellations .....	29
Grade Level of Participation .....	30
Student Team Size .....	30
Housing & Transportation .....	30-31

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

AISA-GISS Coordinator .....	33
AISA-GISS Steering Committee .....	33
Student Leadership Team .....	34

## **Essential Framework Elements**

Sponsorship .....	35
Marketing .....	35
Budget .....	35

## **Preparing for the Conference**

Checklist for Advisors and Students .....	36-37
Sample Timeline for Planning: .....	38-39
Hosting Criteria for an on-site AISA-GISS event .....	40-41

Planning an Online/Virtual Conference..... 42-44

Planning a Hybrid Conference (on-site & Virtual streams) ..... 45-46



## What is the AISA-Global Issues Service Summit (AISA-GISS)?

The *AISA-Global Issues Service Summit* (AISA-GISS) is a unique conference that combines the ideals of the successful *Service Summit Africa 2009*, initiated and hosted by the International School of Uganda (Michael Lees, Service Summit founder & coordinator) and the Global Issues Network (GIN) conferences hosted around the world.

This unique conference builds both student and faculty partnerships across the African continent and beyond. It provides an opportunity for students and educators alike to share best practices and learn new ideas for sustainable solutions to global issues and strategies to promote personal and collective responses to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, active global citizenship, community engagement and service learning. Delegates are inspired to explore root causes of local and global issues as well as learn more about community assets and intercultural understanding. They are equipped to think deeply about what it means to act in sustainable, inclusive and reciprocal ways when engaging with community partners.

The conference is a 3-day event, with one day featuring local service experiences so conference delegates can learn about sustainable service projects in the area of the host school.

## AISA-GISS: Outcomes

1. Creates a collaborative group to identify possible areas for partnerships with community engagement, service learning action and sustainability initiatives
2. Provides an enriching and interactive experience during which students and service leaders discuss the root causes and sustainable solutions associated with pressing local and global issues
3. Promotes reflection at the individual, school and organizational level
4. Establishes and builds partnerships between international schools, local communities and volunteer organizations to promote sustainable action related to global issues and the Sustainable Development Goals
5. Fuels service opportunities for participating schools and provides students with tangible skills and resources to respond to local and global issues
6. Facilitates opportunities for educators to share best practices and model learning alongside students
7. Celebrates the collective service/community engagement successes of participating schools
8. Inspires and empowers young people to become change-seekers invested in contributing to positive and purposeful change in the world

## AISA-GISS: Ideals

1. Model sustainability: food, behaviour, carbon footprint, resource use, transportation, relationships, avoidance of single-use products
2. Model collaboration: sustainability teams, networking, sharing resources and ideas
3. Promote GIN and AISA-GISS ideals: J.F. Rischard's 20 Global Issues-*High Noon* with emphasis on service, sustainability and informed, purposeful action
4. Examine global issues that impact Africa: keynotes, panels, workshops, cultural activities, UN Sustainable Development Goals [special focus on host nation of the summit]
5. Build student leadership capacity (in both the host school and delegate schools)
6. Use summit theme as a lens for understanding local and global issues and provide cohesion to the summit program and learning outcomes
7. Use sustainability teams as a vehicle for exploring the summit theme collaboratively
8. Develop student skills & global competencies necessary for creating purposeful and positive change: facilitation, negotiation, communication, reciprocity, sustainability, active listening, consensus building, intercultural understanding
9. Create action plans for service experiences/community engagement after the summit (in delegate schools) that reflect learning from the summit

## AISA-GISS: History

- January 29-31, 2009 Service Summit Africa 2009  
Host School: International School of Uganda  
Coordinators: Michael Lees/Kim Burns  
Theme: *One Continent, One People*  
Keynote Speakers: Jane Goodall, Thom Henley
- February 25-27, 2010 Global Issues Service Summit (GISS) Africa 2010  
Host School: American International School of Lusaka  
Coordinator: Susan Lacy  
Theme: Seeking Sustainable Solutions Together  
Keynote Speakers: Kimmie Weeks, Austin Gutwein, Hammerskjoeld Simwinga
- May, 2010 GI-ANTS (Global Issues African Network of Teachers for Service) was formed to support teachers in networking [ning site] to build and support a professional network. <http://gi-ants.ning.com/>  
Co-founding Steering Committee: Chris McBride, Cathy Chromicz, Michael Lees, Susan Lacey, Alison Pagen
- April 7-9, 2011 AISA-Global Issues Service Summit Africa  
Host School: American International School of Mozambique  
Coordinator: Clare Diedrichs  
Theme: Creating Partnerships for Sustainable Solutions  
Keynote Speakers: Graca Machel, Natascha Yogachandra, Maria de Lurdes Mutola, Matthew Booth
- March 24-26, 2012 AISA-Global Issues Service Summit Africa 2012  
Host School: American International School of Johannesburg  
Coordinator: Desiree Quilty-Brown  
Theme: Ubuntu, Transforming the Global Community  
Keynote Speakers: Marc Kielburger from Me to We
- Feb. 21 – 23, 2013 AISA-Global Issues Service Summit Africa 2013  
Host School: International School of Kenya  
Coordinator: LeeAnne Lavender and Misha Houriez  
Theme: Amani: One World, One Harmony  
Keynote Speakers: Spencer West, Cassandra Lin, Justin Bedard, 3 Kenyan panel keynotes (John Kariuki from Slow Food, Vava Angweni from the fair trade movement and Samson Parashina, Maasai environmentalist)
- Feb. 13 – 15, 2014 AISA Global Issues Service Summit Africa 2014  
Host School: Lincoln Community School Ghana  
Coordinator: Rhona Polinzki  
Theme: Betumi



Keynote speakers: Adam Braun, Priscilla Takondwa Semphere, Mariatu Kamara, Fred Deegbe

- April 15-17, 2015      AISA- Global Issues Service Summit Africa 2015  
Host School: American International School Mozambique  
Coordinator: Gabriel Limaverde  
Theme: Lanzelela - Educating for Sustainability  
Keynote speakers: Amyr Klink, Sister Fa, Thato Kgatlhanye, Tom Osborne, Martha Chumo
- March 12-14, 2016      AISA Global Issues Service Summit Africa 2016  
Host School: International School Tanzania  
Coordinator: Rebecca Gilman  
Theme: Funguka: Are you Ready?  
Keynote Speakers: Ishmael Beah, Rik Peeperkorn, Kobi Little, Adam Nothem, Josephine Smit
- March 30- 3rd April, 2017      AISA Global Issues Service Summit Africa 2017  
Host School: American International School Johannesburg South Africa  
Coordinator: Tara Barton and Juan Sheblak  
Theme: Phambili: Moving Forward  
Keynote speakers: Adam Habib, Ahmed Mohamed Kathrada (Post - humorous members from foundation), Grizelda Grootboom, Theresa Frantz, Yolán Friedmann, Lebogang George, Margi Brockelhurst
- January 18-20, 2018      AISA Global Issues Service Summit Africa 2018  
Host School: International School Kenya  
Coordinator: Patricio Saenz Flores  
Theme: It Starts With Us!  
Keynote Speakers:
- January 17-19, 2019      AISA Global Issues Service Summit Africa 2019  
Host School: International School Tanzania  
Theme: Toa Mkono (Lend a Hand)  
Keynote Speakers: Miranda Naiman, Brittany Hilton, Matthew Hadden, Mejah Mbuya
- January 16-18, 2020      AISA Global Issues Service Summit Africa 2020  
Host School: International Community School of Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire  
Theme: N'zassa (together we are whole)  
Keynote Speakers: Kherann Yao, Jean Jacques Yao, Sarah Crawford, Andy Costa
- May 7-8, 2021      AISA Global Issues Service Summit Africa 2021 (online)  
Host School: American International School of Johannesburg  
Coordinator: Tiwana Merritt

Theme: Inguquko – Change Starts With Us

Keynote Speakers: Chris Mureithi, Cathryn Berger Kaye, Nazley Sharif, Anzio Jacobs, Alice Whitehead, Teliso Thipanyane,

February 3-4, 2022 AISA Global Issues Service Summit Africa 2022 (online)  
Host School: American International School of Capetown  
Coordinator: Jodi Lake  
Theme: Ukutsiba Phambili (Xhosa for “leaping forward”)  
Keynote Speakers: Ishmael Beah, Rachel Kolisi

January 19-21, 2023 AISA Global Issues Service Summit Africa 2023  
Host School: United World College East Africa (Arusha campus)  
Coordinator: Phil Bowen and Christy Willett  
Theme: The Future is Now  
Keynote Speakers: Aidan Eyakuze, Faraja Nyalandu, Jo Anderson, Samwel Shaba  
<https://www.aisagiss.org/2023/>

## Summit Theme

An AISA-GISS theme creates focus for the summit and can also direct the learning objectives for each day.

When possible, give the students a voice in the selection of the theme. Connect sustainability team challenges/tasks and other elements to the conference theme.

## Logo Design:

Each year, the host school designs a distinct logo for the annual conference. Marketing companies, art teachers and students have all been a part of the process in various cases. Each logo also reflects the summit theme. The fabrics, colors and symbols of Africa have all been integrated into past logos.

There is an overarching AISA-GISS logo that is used by AISA for marketing materials, and typically appears on each year’s AISA-GISS website (in conjunction with the distinct annual logo).

The opportunity to create an individualized logo that reflects the host nation is part of the fun of hosting. The logo creates a focus for the summit and may be used on materials and merchandise for the summit.



## AISA-GISS: Hosts

### Historically:

- 2009      Uganda (ISU) - Off Campus  
Rustic, peer education center located near campus
- 2010      Lusaka (AISL) - On Campus  
Schedule and facility use coordinated to avoid interruptions to academic day; the summit was also used to enhance academics – keynote speaker Austin Gutwein spoke to the middle school and upper elementary.
- 2011      Mozambique (AISM) - Off Campus  
Conference Center Joaquim Chissano  
(While expensive, it also provided a professional setting for student summit. Students were able to listen to student Portuguese translators with headphones in plenary sessions.)
- 2012      Johannesburg (AISJ) - On Campus  
Summit was scheduled for Saturday - Monday in order to use the school facility for Days 1 & 2 and then have the Day of Service on Monday.
- 2013      Nairobi (ISK) - On Campus  
Summit ran Thursday - Saturday so service opportunities on Saturday could be maximized. Campus was open on Thursday with all classes running so the ISK community could benefit from the “buzz”; some classes participated in keynote sessions.
- 2014      Accra (LCS) - On Campus  
Summit ran Thursday - Saturday. Secondary school was shut down on Friday to allow more participation of students and to allow the summit to spread through several classrooms on the campus.
- 2015      Mozambique (AISM) - Off Campus  
Summit ran Thursday - Saturday, with service day on Saturday. Again the conference happened at Joaquim Chissano Conference Center, since the AISM campus was under construction during the

summit. All secondary school students participated as day delegates on Thursday and Friday. Sessions for teacher advisors were held when sustainability teams were convening.

- 2016 Dar es Salaam (IST) - On Secondary Campus  
Summit ran Saturday - Monday in order to use school facilities. The AISA Service Learning Working Group (SLWG) ran a Service Learning 101 Professional Learning Institute simultaneously at Sea Cliff Hotel.
- 2017 Johannesburg (AISJ) - On Campus  
Summit ran Friday - Sunday to use the school facility. Service day was held on Saturday because of limitation for service partners, to utilize facilities more efficiently and to avoid traffic.
- 2018 Nairobi (ISK) - On Campus  
Summit ran Friday - Sunday.
- 2019 Dar es Salaam (IST) – On Campus  
Summit ran Thursday – Saturday.
- 2020 ICS Abidjan, Cote d’Ivoire - On Campus  
Summit ran Thursday – Saturday.
- 2021 Johannesburg (AISJ) – Virtual  
Summit ran Friday-Saturday online.
- 2022 Capetown (AISCT) - Virtual  
Summit ran Thursday-Friday online.
- 2023 Arusha (UWCEA Arusha campus) – On Campus  
Summit ran Thursday-Saturday.

Whether or not the summit takes place on or off campus, or virtually, the AISA host school provides the summit with the human and physical resources to create a successful experience for all participants.

Hosting the summit bonds a school community, inspires service and sustainability programs and promotes well-deserved pride among students and faculty. AISA-GISS is a celebration for the host school community and an opportunity that should be shared across the region.



For on-site conferences, hosting the summit on campus is very cost effective for the hosting school; however, campus facilities are not always adequate. Innovative off-campus facilities can also work well.

## Summit Date Selection

The Summit has occurred at the end of January, the end of February, the end of March or in mid-April. The goal has been to avoid conflicts with the host school's program and meet the needs of the greater AISA-GISS community. Too early in the year and it is challenging to plan the entire event. Too late in the year, and there are conflicts with IB mock exams. Additionally, dates for ISSEA sporting events need to be considered.

**The end of January or beginning of February tends to be the most successful time to host the event.** Below is a suggested schedule for rotating AISA-GISS in an equitable way in different locations:

East Africa  
West Africa  
Southern Africa

For virtual/online AISA-GISS events, a two-day schedule (typically Thursday-Friday) has been successful. On-site events typically feature a three-day schedule.

## Hosting an ON-SITE SUMMIT AISA-GISS Program - Key Components

### Typical Program Components

#### Arrival and Registration Day

International day of travel

Orientation/Campus tours for arriving schools

#### Day 1:

Welcome

Keynote Speaker

Sustainability team meetings

Student Workshops

Panel(s) of Experts

Lunch

Keynote

Student Workshops

All Summit Simulation or Challenge Activity

*NOTE: The student media team is engaged throughout the summit*

#### Day 2:

Cultural Performance/Keynote Speaker

Sustainability team meetings

Student Workshops

Panel(s) of Experts

Lunch

Student Workshops

Exhibition/Craft Fair

Evening Cultural Event and Dance

#### Day 3:

Service Day [Bag Lunch]

Individual School Meetings (Action Plans & Reflection)

Sustainability team meetings and/or presentations

Student workshops

Closing Ceremony

Farewell Dinner

## Departure Day

### International day of travel

Possible Shoulder Activities for Activities and Excursions (working with a local travel agent is very helpful here; advertise options ahead of time and let visiting teams make their own arrangements)

Schools have experimented with the order of these days. Most schools have planned for the service day to occur on the last day of the summit; in 2023, service day occurred on the first day of the summit and there were pros and cons to this. On the plus side, students had lots of energy for service day and then were able to reflect on service day experiences throughout the summit. The challenge was maintaining student energy for days 2 and 3. This is ultimately up to the host school based on access to facilities and when partners are available.

Evening activities have been scheduled for weekend nights of the summit so students are engaged in productive evening activities. Curfew agreements are strictly maintained with host families so the summit is not compromised. One year a welcome barbeque was scheduled on the first night. A social with dinner and music often takes place for students on day 2.

Advisor feedback recommends social events be reserved for weekend nights and, allowing students to eat dinner with host families on week nights. Additionally, it is important to consider travel times and traffic when deciding daily start and end times.

Expert panels can be whole-delegate experiences, or schools can organize 2-4 expert panels that run at the same time based on themes, allowing smaller groups of students to access various panels.



## Key Program Components

### Welcome & Orientation

Student ambassadors are assigned to each school. Ambassadors welcome schools at the airport (w/ signs) and assist with money changing and other logistics. The ambassadors are typically from the Student Leadership Team, allowing student leaders to meet incoming teams and begin to build relationships right away. It's important that the student leaders are trained in how to greet visiting students and teachers, clearly communicate important announcements, and put visitors at ease, making them feel comfortable and welcome. For safety purposes, student ambassadors may be assigned in pairs for airport pick-ups.

Student ambassadors welcome schools, review the summit program and conference materials, and connect students with host families.

Members of the Student Leadership Team lead the small group sustainability teams during the conference. They typically facilitate 'icebreaker' activities on day 1 and aim to foster camaraderie and a sense of belonging throughout the summit.

School advisors should receive an advisor packet upon arrival that includes the telephone numbers of all host families and emergency contact numbers, as well as other necessary advisor information. This could include a Sim card with all relevant telephone numbers pre-loaded for each advisor.

It is important to have a very clear structure in place to match visiting students with their host families, and that host families are thoroughly briefed in advance about the expectations for hosting students and how they can ensure the students have a positive experience.

When teams arrive, transfer them from the airport to the school campus. Have welcome drinks and snacks available, and have teams complete a registration process. Practice the welcome routines with student leaders in advance so this runs smoothly.

Create a safe place for luggage so that it is not blocking the walkways. Be sure that visiting schools are clear on arrival and departure expectations (arrival and departure times for flights), as well as when host families will be available to pick up participants. Ensure that all visiting students are connected with host families and that everyone is safe and secure. It is recommended that visiting students are billeted to host families in groups of 2-4. Have a contingency plan in place

for late arrivals or back up housing should a host family fall through at the last moment.

## **Sustainability Teams**

Sustainability Teams were created for the first Global Issues Service Summit in order to better connect students from different schools. These teams provide another vehicle for student empowerment, team building and skill development. A summit task or challenge may be introduced to the team on the first day and teams may share their solutions/projects on the last day.

Advisors typically do not attend the student Sustainability Team meetings, allowing for host school student leaders to lead the sessions and create a peer-to-peer dynamic in the groups. For safety purposes, it is recommended that Sustainability Teams meet in rooms that are in one area of the school, and that host school educators or educational assistants maintain a presence in the hallways during the Sustainability Team sessions in case adults are needed.

Teacher advisors should meet in a nearby classroom for their own sessions. These sessions typically focus on networking and sharing news of service learning in the region. Formal professional learning sessions about service learning and global citizenship also take place during these windows of opportunity. The AISA Service Learning Advisor and Service Learning Design Team typically organize and lead these sessions for advisors. Visiting educators may be involved in leading/organizing advisor sessions, as well.

Sustainability Teams are an effective way of helping students get to know each other and create a sense of camaraderie between schools; they also allow for deep learning experiences related to specific SDGs or local/global issues. Sustainability Teams can also be a source of project ideas, especially for schools who have a young service learning program. Creating a time for the advisors to meet is also important to fulfill AISA-GISS outcomes, and running advisor sessions during the Sustainability Team sessions has been successful.

Student leaders need a lot of training in appropriate facilitation skills. They do not 'direct' or 'boss' the team, but empower the team through a collaborative model. A student retreat before hosting the Summit is strongly recommended. Students need to practice facilitating activities. It is helpful to consider having a student leadership organization (such as the Jump! Foundation) come to the host school early in the academic year of the summit to run a 2-day leadership training retreat. This not only bonds the student leadership team but sets the tone and



inspires the students in terms of their leadership responsibilities. Student leaders can help ideate and plan tasks for Sustainability Teams.

In creating the Sustainability Teams, it is helpful to ask teacher advisors to identify their strongest leaders and then spread that leadership across the Sustainability Teams. Make sure Sustainability Teams start with icebreakers and team building activities each day. Divide students from school teams across the Sustainability Teams so students have a chance to get to know each other.

## **Opening Ceremony**

The opening ceremony usually includes welcome speeches from the school director, AISA executive director (or representative), chair of the student leadership team, and cultural presentations (dance, drama, choir, etc.).

Just like the lighting of the Olympic flame, the opening ceremony of AISA-GISS is a magical moment for all, particularly the hosting school. It is the culmination of months of hard work and commitment.

The opening ceremony should build anticipation, enthusiasm and a vision for the Summit. It should not be too lengthy as a strong keynote speaker follows. Student leaders need to practice speeches in advance and be coached on how to deliver a speech.

Visiting delegates are often given a gift for attending the summit and these can be distributed during the welcome prior to the opening ceremony. Involving local artists and offering delegates a choice of gift is a lovely way of highlighting some of the talented artisans in your community.

## **Keynote Speakers**

Keynote speakers provide a focus for the summit, educate delegates about issues and inspire them to action. Most keynotes have a focus on Africa. Typically student leaders introduce each keynote speaker; these introductions should be scripted and practiced in advance so they are excellent and polished.

You may consider:

- holding a keynote session at a time when members from the host school community can attend to broaden the reach of a the keynote message and allow members of the host community school to be exposed to an important/influential speaker.

- asking keynote speakers to lead a break-out session or workshop with AISA-GISS delegates during the summit. You might provide 1-2 tickets for each school to select attending delegates.
- contracting keynote speakers to lead workshops at the host school before or after AISA-GISS. If keynote speakers are authors, they may lead writing workshops with students. It can be a rich experience for the host school to host a keynote speaker for learning experiences on campus before or after AISA-GISS.
- providing meaningful and thoughtful gifts to keynote speakers (presented at the end of their keynote address). Gifts may reflect cultural or artistic aspects of the host country; they may reflect themes of sustainability and/or connect to social entrepreneurship initiatives related to the host school or its community partners. Be thoughtful about the size of gifts as most keynote speakers are traveling. Another option is to make a cash donation to the keynote's organization of choice. This is an excellent way to honour the spirit of AISA-GISS in taking informed and purposeful action.
- assigning student leaders to be keynote aids (making sure the keynote speakers have everything they need, walking with the speaker to and from the keynote session, etc.

It's best to avoid politicians for keynotes, unless they are exceptional. There is far too much protocol surrounding such keynote speakers. Speakers who are wise and experienced and/or young and inspiring are recommended. Aim for a balance of voices with your keynote speakers, and consider the gender representation of speakers, as well. It's a good idea to have one youth speaker (minimum) at each summit. It is also good to have keynote speakers who highlight the host nation or service endeavours of the host school. If you can, provide opportunities for visiting school teams to have photographs taken with keynote speakers. Run tech rehearsals with keynote speakers some time before their actual presentation, if technology is being used.

## **Student Workshops**

Each school is asked to present at least one workshop about a successful service project or global issue/Sustainable Development Goal. This element creates great confidence in student presenters and is central to the positive energy created during the summit. In the past, there has been some inconsistency in the quality of student workshops, and sometimes there have been more options than attendees.

Try to offer just enough workshops in each session to ensure optimal attendance in each workshop, and publish clear expectations for how to run a successful student workshop in advance of AISA-GISS. Your student leaders may choose to put together a training video for visiting teams so they create workshops that are engaging, participatory, and lead to effective learning. Advisors should commit to helping students practice workshop delivery before attending the Summit.

Presenting a workshop empowers and involves every student. Structuring workshops around an essential question and then answering that question at the end teaches for understanding.

Workshop content and methods need to be screened closely. Suggestions for enhancing interactive components may be needed. Advisor support in this endeavor is important. Try and balance topics and options so there is something for everyone. You will need 'runners' assigned to each workshop room to help with setup and tech support. Student leadership team members can also be trained to do this; they can be assigned to specific sessions to ensure tech runs smoothly. Also, stagger teas and other aspects of the schedule so there is at least 15 minutes for workshop set up.

Some sample workshop guidelines for visiting schools could be:

- \* Focus should be on a global issue OR a school project/campaign OR something related to sustainable development.
- \* Workshops should include an interactive component: simulation, game, activity (something active where people are moving). Ex: Make a game with blocks on the ground to create an interactive and kinesthetic experience; Ex: create a water walk with big jugs, rope and water if you're educating participants about access to clean water.
- \* Workshops should be informative: students should learn something valuable.
- \* Workshops should pass on important tips and info: if your school project is awesome, teach others how to replicate it.
- \* Workshops should be fun.
- \* Workshops should allow everyone, in some way, to speak and be heard.

- \* Workshops could include a handout or resource link (some sort of take-away so people can reflect or capture their learning).
- \* Workshops could include digital resources that students can use later.
- \* Workshops should be led, ideally, by your whole team or by specific students allocated to this task. You decide, based on the make-up of your team.

## **Expert Panels**

Host schools have determined how many expert panel sessions to run throughout the summit. See past summit programs for ideas. Expert panels should have 3-4 participants. Each participant should present their ideas for 5 minutes, leaving time for discussion and questions from the floor. Running 2-4 expert panel sessions at the same time gives choice in terms of attendance and allows for participants to spread out around campus.

Creating a multi-perspective panel, with an opportunity for student questions, makes students aware of the complexity involved in local and global issues. Panels are supposed to be driven more by student questions than panelist presentations.

Prep guest panelists clearly about expectations. Make sure they know they may only speak formally for five minutes (maximum). Student leaders need training in facilitating panels. It is very important that panelists do not speak beyond five minutes. The focus of the panel format is student questions. Another option is to have student leaders research and introduce each panelist and then immediately open up for questions. Student leaders should prep some questions in advance and start with those, gradually opening to questions from the floor. Choose topics that interest students and relate to the conference theme, the Sustainable Development Goals, or any aspect of sustainability and inclusivity.

## **Lunch & Snack Breaks**

Lunches and some dinners have been catered in various ways. Typically, there has also been a morning and afternoon snack breaks. Your PTA may donate baked goods for morning and afternoon snacks; catering is also an option. At one summit, local organic coffee was donated. Think about your community partners and if there is an opportunity to secure donations of quality items for snack breaks if possible.

For meals, consider AISA-GISS ideals and plan accordingly. Consider themes such as a 100 Mile Radius lunch, traditional cultural lunch, and vegetarian/vegan meals that model a low impact on the planet. Students could research 'Diets for Global Sustainability' and create posters for eating areas. No disposable plates or cutlery should be used and host schools should attempt to be as waste-free as possible with meals; eliminate food waste as much as possible. It is important to examine sustainability issues when planning meals. Students should be encouraged to bring their own water bottles to the summit to model sustainability and personal responsibility. If you are clear about this expectation in advance of the summit, it is easy for visiting students to bring their own water bottle for the event.

Food allergies, sensitivities and preferences should be part of the registration process. Meals must provide a viable option for students with special dietary needs.

Consider setting aside a specific room for advisor snacks and beverages (tea, coffee, juice, water). Teachers appreciate having a quiet room to network and grab a snack throughout the day.

Seeking sponsorship for food is an option if this aspect of the budget needs support. Continuing to teach sustainability through food content and serving methods is advisable. <http://www.smallplanet.org> is a great resource.

### **All Summit Simulation/Challenge**

Every summit has typically featured one or two all-delegate simulation/challenge activities (roughly 45-60 minutes in duration). These can include statistical simulations to highlight a variety of global issues or experiential simulations.

These activities create a bonding opportunity for summit delegates, highlight key ideas and themes, and are fun. Be sure to schedule time for debriefing these activities so students have the opportunity to process the experience and what they have learned. It's possible to partner with an NGO or community partner in leading a simulation; at some summits a group of students from the next host school have led a simulation to promote student leadership in advance of planning and preparing a full summit.

### **Cultural Events/Evening Activities:**

African cultural events are integrated into the program to celebrate the host nation and the greater continent. Some summits include a dance or student



social chaperoned by teachers from the host school; this allows AISA-GISS advisors a chance to have a social evening together at the same time. Typically, advisor socials have taken place off campus with a focus on socializing and networking. Some summits have featured dinners on campus for students and teachers, with time/space for students to play sports and games.

### **Exhibition/Craft Fair**

Every on-site summit has offered an exhibition or craft fair to highlight local artisans, arts and crafts produced by community partners, and sustainable and/or fair trade products. This is a nice way to support community partners while showcasing host country products.

### **Service Day**

Service day is a significant element preserved from the Service Summit 2009. Each year, students engage in purposeful service around the host city/area. Some experiences also provide learning about sustainable solutions to local or global issues. For example, students have visited sustainable agricultural projects and learned how to implement growing methods.

The most successful projects have been small in nature (10-20 students), or have involved a larger number of students divided into rotating stations. Service experiences work well when there are enough materials or supplies for all of the participating students, the activity is well structured and supported by site personnel and host school students/ teachers/parents. Also, it is best if the drive time to the site is not too long. If possible, identify service sites within walking distance of the school.

Most host schools have used existing community partners for the bulk of their service experiences. This is a good idea because you don't want visiting students entering situations or locations unfamiliar to host school leaders. When you use existing, long-term community partners, you can ensure a quality experience for participants alongside learning that is meaningful and purposeful. It's important for our service learning programs to continue moving from traditional to critical models (where we advance equity, make room for community partners to express leadership and voice, and consider issues of diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging). As such, the AISA-GISS service day should showcase the best service principles and opportunities related to the host school's service learning program.





If a service experience is challenging in terms of context or root causes/issues, some purposeful framing and debriefing is recommended.

It's good to offer a range of service options on the service day, with options for students to engage with people, the environment, animals and infrastructure in the community. An emphasis on community assets is recommended.

Service day should be framed in such a way that students realize they are guests for a brief time at the service site. As such, their role is to learn from and with community partners, engage in deep listening, and to learn about successful community engagement. Students should come away with ideas that will help them plan/implement service or community engagement in their own communities.

The school's CAS or Service Learning Coordinator may serve as the lead for organizing the service day.

If possible, provide a list of service day options before the summit and invite students to identify their top 3 choices. Organize groups so there is diversity across the schools. Create signs for organizing each group clearly on the service day. If host families are providing bagged lunches for students, have lunches made for advisors (catering is an option for this). Make sure everyone has adequate water for the day, along with hats and sunscreen if service will take place outside. Each team should have two student leaders and one teacher leader (from the host school or from the AISA-GISS advisor group). Leaders should have cell phones pre-loaded with emergency numbers. It's important for the service experiences to be thoroughly planned in advance, and for student leaders to tour the site in advance (with a host school teacher) to practice the plan, clarify expectations and be prepared for service day.

## **Local Schools**

In its early years, AISA-GISS had a program called the "Golden Hearts" that offered scholarships to local student leaders to attend AISA-GISS. The spirit behind this was to build leadership capacity beyond the international school community, and to engage with local schools and students. In more recent years, this has taken shape in a different way, with host schools reserving spaces for a set number of local schools to send teams to AISA-GISS. These participants could be charged a small fee to cover some logistical costs; this would be determined by the host



school. These participants would not need to stay at host families if they live nearby; bussing could be provided as an alternative.

The spirit of AISA-GISS is to honour host country communities, and ensuring local school participation is an excellent way to do that.

### **School Reflection Sessions:**

It's a good idea to schedule time at the end of each day for school teams to meet and reflect on what students have learned and experienced throughout the day. Teacher advisors should be encouraged to facilitate these reflection sessions in a meaningful way. Prompts can be provided to help with this (created by the AISA-GISS host team), or reflection sessions can be more open-ended. The key here is to provide time and space for delegates to debrief and process the day, and to make connections between what they have learned/experienced and service learning/global citizenship at their own school.

### **Feedback**

Various methods for feedback have been used including brainstorming activities, charts and forms, and post-summit Google Forms surveys. Advisors also provide feedback in the final advisor meeting. This feedback is valuable for the host team, and also for planning for future summits. The AISA Service Learning Program Coordinator can help with setting up feedback forms and processes.

### **Closing Ceremony**

The closing ceremony has included: presentations of sustainability challenges, sharing reflections and action plans, opportunities for coordinators to thank sponsors, the steering committee, volunteers, school staff, student leadership team, visiting schools, etc. This ceremony is a final celebration of the summit and may involve a last cultural dance/activity. The AISA Service Awards are highlighted during the closing ceremony (or before a keynote session), with a short video from the winning school and a presentation by the AISA Director (or representative) to that school's team.

Please ensure you make all final announcements in the window of the closing ceremony, also (particularly important for departures and other logistical details).

The closing ceremony may coincide with a final celebratory dinner or BBQ. This can be a time to relax and for delegates to continue building and celebrating friendships made during the summit.

## **Media Team**

Media team responsibilities have varied depending on host school. Main tasks have included:

- photographing all aspects of the summit and creating a slideshow each day (or curating photos on the summit website and in Google folders)
- creating short summit highlight videos posted on the AISA-GISS website and/or on Youtube for visiting schools to use in assemblies upon their return
- recording keynote sessions and posting on the AISA-GISS website (or live streaming)
- writing articles about highlights each day and posting these online
- writing articles in advance of the Summit to post on [www.aisa-giss.org](http://www.aisa-giss.org) (to raise awareness and build excitement for the event)
- managing social media for the summit

Consider the strong writers, photographers, film makers and technology experts in your student body as you develop your media team. Develop the team well in advance of the summit and make a clear plan, as well as determine roles, duties, schedule, etc. The teacher advisor needs to be experienced in working with media and helping students work under pressure and with deadlines. Be prepared for potential tech challenges and plan back-up ideas. It's a good idea to have a home base (such as a designated classroom) available for the media team throughout the summit.

## **Professional Learning opportunities for teachers/advisors**

There has been time in the annual AISA-GISS schedule for teacher advisors to collaborate and discuss what is happening in the region, or to engage in formal professional learning workshops. The AISA Service Learning Program Coordinator and the AISA Service Learning Design Team may coordinate and plan this aspect of the summit; partner with the Service Learning Program Coordinator in advance to establish host school responsibilities in this realm.

## **Other Options: GIN Film Festival, Virtual Presentations, Global Issues-Service Project Fair**

GIN conferences worldwide have sometimes incorporated film festivals to showcase student service experiences and/or amplify messages related to local and global issues/Sustainable Development Goals. Videos For Change is an organization that offers online advice for planning and hosting a film festival.

Global Issues Service Project Fairs: Students and NGOs could create displays and share information with delegates. This has sometimes taken place during lunch on day 2 of the summit, allowing students to learn about a variety of service initiatives and interact with students from numerous schools.

When you are creating your summit program, consider which of these additional options might align with your summit theme and goals while, at the same time, generate student engagement and learning.

### **Logistics and Planning**

#### **Registration**

##### **Number of Participants:**

The number of participants for on-site AISA-GISS events has varied from 150 to 400. These numbers, if on the higher end, could include day delegates from the host school community. In general, 200-250 AISA-GISS delegates is a good number. This allows for students to network and get to know each other and is a manageable group for aspects like the service day.

#### **Registration Fees & Procedures**

There is typically a regular and early bird registration fee per participant, with the regular fee being \$20-\$30 more than the early bird price. Each year the fees have increased slightly to reflect inflation and other rising costs. Check with AISA for updated registration fees.

Early bird pricing was originally set up to encourage early registration and generate revenue for hosting. As summit participation numbers grew, the early bird date developed a second purpose: encouraging diverse representation of schools from across the AISA region. To encourage a variety of schools to attend, each team is usually capped at 6-10 participants for initial registration. If a school wishes to



send more delegates, they should email the host school and let them know. After a baseline of registered schools is established, registration can be reopened to let schools register additional team members based on available spaces.

Registration typically includes all summit lunches and snacks, some dinners, activities, conference materials and program costs, and airport transport to and from the airport. All host school participants and student leaders also pay registration fees for AISA-GISS. Visiting teachers also pay registration fees (which may be covered by their own school).

Typically, an early bird registration date is set approximately 2 months ahead of the conference, and a final registration deadline is set approximately 1 month in advance of the summit.

Once teams are registered, host schools should collect specific information from all delegates necessary for travel and organizational purposes (passport information, gender, age, name for conference name tags, and food preferences/allergies), along with school workshop information. As well, invoices should be generated and sent electronically to all registered schools in a timely manner so registration fees can be collected in advance of the conference.

Teams are not officially registered until payment of registration is received.

AISA contributes 10,000USD as sponsorship to help the host school. Accurate financial records are essential and are shared with AISA by the host school. It is recommended that each school create a detailed budget spreadsheet to track costs involved in hosting the conference. An estimate should be sent to AISA in December (before the conference), and a final budget and report should be sent to AISA a month after the conference.

Registration fees plus the AISA contribution will fund a large part of the summit. Additional costs may be covered by the host school or by sponsors.

### **Finalizing Registration of Participants:**

Team members sometimes change from the original registration. This does create some challenges for organizing. It's a good idea to create deadlines and guidelines for finalizing participant lists before the launch of the summit.

### **Cancellations:**



Teams have been allowed to cancel and/or add members within a few weeks of the summit with no penalty. After a certain point (when catering numbers, etc. are confirmed and booked), schools have not been refunded registration for participants who cancel. Rather, they have replaced one participant with another to maintain planning and revenue. The host school should determine if refunds will be issued, along with deadlines for final confirmations of registration.

## **Grade Level of Participants**

The summit is for students in grades 9-12, as well as grade 8 students who demonstrate initiative in global issues, service and/or leadership.

At some point, there may be an opportunity to create a distinctly middle level summit.

## **Student Team Size**

Team sizes have ranged from 1 to 16. The host school must know how many students they can house. Teams of 6-10 students are ideal. Some schools have asked to bring more than 10 participants to AISA-GISS events in the past; pending housing availability at the host school and other logistical constraints, permission may be granted by the host school for larger teams.

The host school typically has a larger team which includes the student leaders.

Two teacher advisors should accompany each visiting team. This ensures that, in the case of an emergency where one teacher needs to accompany a student to a hospital or other location, there is a second teacher to supervise students from that school team.

## **Housing/Transportation**

### **i.) Host Housing for Visiting Students and Advisors**

Visiting students and some advisors have stayed with host families for most summits. Any family in the host school community can host AISA-GISS delegates as long as they have adequate space for students to sleep. Host families have provided wonderful opportunities for visiting students and should be encouraged to get to know visiting students, take them out for dinner, share cultural traditions and make the students feel welcome and valued.



There are clear guidelines for hosting that follow the ISSEA curfew guidelines. All hosting families, advisors and visiting students must review and respect these guidelines.

The person who coordinates AISA-GISS housing should send advisors a list of where their students will be staying with contact information sometime in the week before arrival for the summit. Advisors are asked to call each student each night of the summit to ensure they are at the host family's home and have met the curfew requirements.

Students should always be housed with other members of their team. Under no circumstances should a visiting student stay alone with a host family. It's also recommended that students should not be housed with students from other schools. This will help keep our students safe and secure during their summit experience.

Please ensure your host families are clear about safeguarding policies and about the importance of providing a clean, warm and welcoming space for visiting students.

Select someone who is very organized to facilitate accommodation for visiting delegates. Make sure each visiting school has all contact information before they arrive for the summit. Providing SIM cards to advisors, upon arrival, with pre-loaded host family numbers is also very helpful. Send a copy of behaviour guidelines to advisors and have students sign contracts in advance of the trip. When possible, avoid placing students in families that are far away from the summit venue.

Teachers have enjoyed hosting fellow teachers for the summit. Advisors often opt to stay at a local guest house (recommended by the host school); the host school should provide daily transportation back and forth to recommended guest houses.

As an alternative to staying with host families, advisors could stay with their students at a local hotel or guest house. In 2023, UWCEA piloted a new option of camping on campus in safari tents arranged with an outside vendor (with access to showers and bathroom facilities on campus and with breakfast arranged for campers). Because the UWCEA campus has lots of natural, quiet space, this was a viable and creative option that some schools may want to consider in the future.

## ii.) Hotels for Advisors & Keynote Speakers

Hotel options for advisors are promoted on the school's AISA-GISS website in advance and may arrange summit discounts for visiting teachers. Advisors book their own accommodation. Choices have included simple guest houses to full range hotels.

Visit each hotel and examine rooms before placing links on the website. Be very clear in describing each hotel venue. Be prepared for occasional challenges along the way. Avoid dealing with direct bookings, unless necessary. Make sure advisors clearly communicate where they are staying during registration.

## iii.) Transportation

The school has provided transportation to and from the airport during windows of time articulated by the host school. Expectations of arrival and departure dates should be clearly communicated by the host school before the summit and during the registration process. Typically school teams are picked up at the airport the day before AISA-GISS and returned to the airport in the day or two following the closing ceremony. If a visiting team requires transportation in the local area after they are picked up at the airport, this should be arranged by the visiting school's teacher advisor(s). If visiting schools (students and advisors) miss busses provided by the host school, visiting schools may be billed for additional bussing fees.

Host families are responsible for collecting and returning students to the school (where busses are not used). Usually the host families transport AISA-GISS delegates to and from the summit venue for the three days of an on-site summit. Busses typically transport teacher advisors to and from the conference venue from local hotels.

Sometimes extra busses are needed for service day. It is recommended that the host school consider the costs of transportation for all aspects of the summit and work this into the event budget. For service day (and airport transportation days), it is a nice touch to pay for extra credit on bus drivers' phones. As well, provide lunches for bus drivers (if applicable) on service day.

## iv.) Shoulder activities/extended stays

Host schools have typically offered ideas for extended stays, often working with a local travel agent for planning and logistics. The host school has usually





provided some suggestions for half or full day trips for schools that arrive a bit early or stay a bit later.

**NOTE:** If teams arrive earlier than the scheduled dates for the summit, they must arrange their own accommodation/transport/food at their own cost for the dates that fall outside of one day before or after the summit. Host schools cannot be responsible for this.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### AISA-GISS Coordinator(s)

The Coordinator(s) is the primary email contact with the outside community and directs the steering committee. The Coordinator may or may not be directly in charge of the Student Leadership Team. The Coordinator must send frequent communication to schools to fuel enthusiasm and keep the lines of communication open.

The Coordinator should have attended a summit within the past few years so they are familiar with how an AISA-GISS event runs. Coordinators need to juggle big picture vision with the small details necessary for the success of the summit. One must embrace the opportunity with joy and energy. Establishing a strong relationship with school administration and support staff is also crucial for a successful Summit.

Coordinators create and maintain a clear calendar for planning the summit, meet regularly with the Summit Steering Committee and the Student Leadership Team, communicate openly and frequently with the greater school community and the AISA-GISS community as plans move forward. Use the support of the AISA Service Learning Design Team, the AISA-GISS Handbook, and any other resources available.

### AISA-GISS Steering Committee & Key Committees

The Steering Committee is usually composed of committee chairs from the following major committees. Committees can be chaired by teachers or co-chaired by a teacher and a student from the Student Leadership Team. This is a nice model to grow capacity for student leadership and to help students have more agency with summit planning. ***Key committees often include the following:***



Marketing & Sponsorships, Catering/Food, Service Day, Student Leadership Team, Budget, Welcome Committee, Transportation, Accommodation (Host Housing & Hotels), Keynotes & Panelists, Website & Tech Support, Registration, Student Workshops, Craft Fair, Cultural Events, Curriculum & Program, Media Team, Whatever is Needed, etc.

Host schools should decide how frequently the Steering Committee should meet in order to plan and execute a successful summit. As the summit gets closer, it is important to have regular weekly meetings. The Coordinator sets agendas and chairs the meetings. Someone should take minutes. To do lists are created at each meeting. Minutes are sent to all parties and expectations to follow up on 'to do' lists by the next meeting should be clear. This needs to be a "Can DO!" team.

### **Student Leadership Team**

The host school chooses students who have been exemplary in leading service within the school and the community. One-two students usually co-chair the student leadership team. They can play a role in selecting the rest of the leadership team. Students from the leadership team often co-chair major AISA-GISS planning committees alongside an adult/teacher chair, and fulfill all major roles leading up and during the conference (emcees of keynote sessions, ambassadors, service day leaders, etc.).

Student leaders should be passionate about service and changemaking. They should be organized, reliable and committed to the task. They should not be overcommitted to too many other things so they have the time to focus on planning and executing a successful summit. Your leadership team should have a mix of genders, backgrounds and personality types to ensure diversity and inclusion, both for the host school in its approach to building the team and for visiting schools in terms of visibility of diversity.

The host school should establish an application process for student leaders, and should consider accepting some younger leaders (grade 9 and 10) with excellent leadership potential. Student leaders should be organized, articulate, passionate about creating positive and purposeful change, and have the time and availability to commit to this role.

An application process could involve:

- 1) digital applications (through Google Forms or equivalent) where students apply to be part of the team
- 2) interviews with faculty advisors and AISA-GISS co-ordinator(s)



- 3) signing an agreement that acknowledges the time and commitment of accepting a place on the student leadership team

## Essential Framework Elements

### **Sponsorship:**

Sponsorship for AISA-GISS has been sought locally and globally. News coverage has also been arranged and sponsorship has been highly visible (often the logos of sponsoring businesses or organizations have been featured on AISA-GISS site banners and conference merchandise).

AISA is a major sponsor and co-host of AISA-GISS. They support the summit with a website platform and tech support for online summit strands. AISA contributes \$10,000 USD to host AISA-GISS. AISA also supports bringing the AISA Service Learning Program Coordinator to the summit each year. The host school should also allocate a set amount in their budget for the hosting year.

If you seek corporate sponsorship for an AISA-GISS event, create a professional marketing/sponsorship package. Use AISA support and advice. Use the connections of your parents and school. Have students and a steering committee member or team focus on soliciting and screening potential sponsorships. Sponsorship can be invaluable to maintaining low registration fees.

### **Marketing**

#### **i.) October AISA Educators' Conference**

The summit is typically marketed during the annual October AISA Educators' Conference through publicizing the website and making announcements to all conference attendees. In the past materials such as an AISA-GISS brochure or postcard have been created and shared but in more recent years promotion has been digital in nature.

The Summit website is a very important marketing tool. AISA provides the template for the site each year.

Websites from previous years [2015](#), [2016](#), [2017](#), [2018](#)

Websites from online conferences [2021](#), [2022](#), [2023](#)



Work closely with AISA's Service Learning Program Coordinator and Executive Director) to ensure you can promote your summit at the October Educators' Conference. Your website should be ready to share at this time, even if some details for the schedule and keynote speakers are yet to be determined.

## **Budget**

Schools must shoulder the initial costs of hosting the summit. Sponsorships and registration fees can cover all expenses but they are not always available until later in the planning process. Budgeting must be carefully planned and tracked.

Consider any overtime fees you may need to pay local staff to support the Summit on site during evenings and weekends.

## **Preparing for the Conference: Checklist for Advisors**

It is important to place the checklist on the website for visiting advisors. Be sure to include actual deadlines for tasks on the checklist.

### **First Steps**

- Administrative approval
- Budget for advisors (flight, registration, visas, vaccinations, airport transfers on the visiting school's end)
- Communication with school community (What is AISA-GISS and why we are attending?)
- Fundraising if necessary to cover registration and travel costs

### **Team Selection**

- Grade level of students (9-12 or 8<sup>th</sup> grade leaders)
- Consideration of CAS & GIN leaders
- Student Participant Application Form
- Parent letter of intent/permission
- Payment schedule for registration and flight

### **Team Preparation**

- Select a topic/theme for a student workshop
- Plan and practice the student workshop



- Perform team building activities to bond team members before traveling to AISA-GISS
- Hone presentation skills (set-up, interactive/lecture/activity, voice, presence, equipment, media, knowing your audience)
- Complete Summit Workshop Form and submit
- Begin to communicate and network with delegates
- Purchase gifts for host families and ensure these are packed for transport to AISA-GISS

## **Logistics**

- Inform teachers of absences - IB students, exams, assignments, etc.
- Complete conference registration (early bird or regular)
- Book airline tickets (visa, yellow fever card, other vaccine requirements)
- Confirm airport transfer at your end
- Act upon reflection & action plan post-conference
- Host an all-school assembly post-conference
- Compose articles for school newspaper and local media post-conference
- Continue networking with advisors and students post-conference

## **Preparing for the Conference: Checklist for Students**

- Regular AISA-GISS group planning and meeting time
- Have sustainable service projects up and running
- Prepare an interactive workshop using a carefully selected essential question as a focus and practice the workshop
- Fundraise if necessary, to pay for registration & airfare
- Find a way to reduce the carbon footprint of airfare (carbon offsets, etc.)
- Start networking with other summiteers before the Summit
- Consider if any strong leaders will help facilitate panels
- Design a plan for what your team may learn from the Summit and how you will present to your school upon return
- Confirm visa needs
- Purchase gifts for host families/thank you notes
- Keep up to date on all requirements from the host school
- Pack your reuseable water bottle, sunscreen and a hat for the Summit
- Attend the summit, have a great time and learn a lot!
- Complete surveys after the Summit
- Present to school about the Summit
- Fulfill the Action Plan created at the Summit
- Keep working to improve our world and inspire others

## Sample Timeline for Planning AISA-GISS

The following provides a rough guideline for major AISA-GISS planning tasks.

### Timeline:

#### *1 year ahead:*

- begin contacting potential keynote speakers; choose conference theme and design logo

#### *8 months ahead:*

- launch major committees and ensure each committee has a clear list of tasks and a timeline for completing those tasks. Have a teacher and a student co-chair these major committees.
- Launch website
- Begin recruiting panelists for panel discussions
- Begin communicating with local organizations/NGOs for participation in the NGO fair
- Begin looking for local entertainers to perform in advance of keynote speakers

#### *3 months ahead:*

- host a student leadership training weekend and follow up with regular meetings of the student leadership team to practice icebreakers, complete tasks and build camaraderie

#### *1 month ahead:*

- finalize registration and print conference name tags (consider listing delegate names, school & small group name on the front of the tag; the back of the tag could feature a small conference program)
- design and print programs
- finalize media plan for promoting the event to the local community and beyond
- launch social media plan
- prepare room signage & do a tech trial of each room with the student who will be in that room on that day

- prepare art displays and bulletin boards around school that feature information about local & global issues/Sustainable Development Goals
- prepare registration packages for all visiting teams
- finalize food plan
- finalize operations and tech plan
- finalize accounts receivable and make sure all teams have paid registration fees
- finalize transport plan for airport pick-ups and assigned student ambassadors
- prepare thank you gifts and cards for keynote speakers and panelists
- communicate with panelists about arrival procedures and locations for panels
- assign rooms for student workshops and small group meetings and school meetings (create a site plan)
- meet with school leadership to communicate what is happening and to invite school leaders to attend events throughout the conference
- finalize budget
- prepare prompts for teacher advisors to use in school reflection/debrief meetings

## **Criteria to Host an on-site AISA-GISS Event:**

*In order to host a successful on-site AISA-GISS event, your school should be able to meet the following criteria. If this is the case, and you are keen to host a Summit, communicate with the AISA Director about hosting a future AISA-GISS event.*

1. Provide appropriate facilities for keynote addresses, workshops, service day experiences, and space for all-group simulations. Provide a safe and secure environment.
2. Establish affordable registration fees that include:
  - housing
  - airport transfers
  - local transportation (including service day transportation)
  - carbon offset related to the summit
  - additional support staff (cleaning, catering, maintenance, etc.)
  - meals
  - keynote speakers and any other speakers/facilitators
  - student leadership training (if you use an organization like the Jump! Foundation)
3. Identify a strong and enthusiastic Coordinator who facilitates student leadership and steering committee for AISA-GISS. (Ideally, the coordinator has attended a summit within the past three years.)
4. Have strong administrative, staff and community support.
5. Establish hosting dates. Check with activities department and ISSEA + WAISAL; consider IB tests and mocks along with any national/international holidays that could impact attendance.
6. Manage and update an informative AISA-GISS website during the hosting year.



7. Organize a three-day conference for students from grades 9-12 (and mature and exemplary 8<sup>th</sup> grade students), maintaining an African focus highlighting local community that follows the guidelines of the AISA-GISS hosting handbook.
8. Be a full AISA member school.
9. Develop a logo and theme which addresses a global issues & service/action.
10. Offer host housing as an option for all participating students and chaperones (or equivalent).
11. When possible, select your sponsors/partners/local suppliers with environmental/social/economic well-being and sustainability in mind. Seek to model sustainable practices throughout conference
12. Create a thorough budget for the event and coordinate sponsorships.
13. Secure inspiring and varied keynote speakers (ideally with a focus on African and host country issues).
14. Provide opportunities for students to network and interact socially.
15. Establish a productive working relationship with the AISA Service Learning Design Team and AISA Service Learning Advisor.
16. *Submit documentation proving that your school meets the 15 criteria (above) to the AISA Director at least 18 months before the first day of the conference.*

## Planning an Online/Virtual Conference

The 2021 and 2022 AISA-GISS summits were held online because of travel restrictions related to Covid-19. There are specific things to consider and plan when preparing for an online summit. While many logistics of an on-site event are not required for a virtual summit (food, transportation, host families for accommodation, etc.), it is paramount that attention to detail is given to creating an interactive and engaging online experience.

### Considerations:

#### A) Technology:

- AISA uses Aventri, a flexible and successful online platform for virtual conferences. Your tech team will work with AISA to coordinate the set-up and use of Aventri for an online AISA-GISS event. AISA will need to create the online conference program in advance of the summit to ensure a smooth and stress-free experience. Ensure you work with AISA to set up the Aventri platform and provide all necessary information (program with session descriptors, keynote speaker bios and photos, etc.). AISA will also assist with registration for your online summit. Ensure you work with the AISA team to set this up well in advance of the summit.
- You will need a capable and committed tech team on the ground at your school during AISA-GISS. This can involve your school's tech experts and/or educators and students who can assist with running sessions during the virtual event.
- Download, in advance, all videos needed for keynote presentations and workshops.
- For workshops, assign a designated laptop to a classroom on campus where student leaders will facilitate the online session (assuming your host team can gather together on campus; if this is not possible, create organized Google folders for workshops). Download, to that laptop or folder, all videos and resources needed for that particular workshop. It is recommended there is a desktop folder clearly labeled with workshop titles. Have student leaders practice hosting, accessing files and running all tech in advance to ensure success. Students should practice facilitation skills, as well; in the event that a host/presenter has connectivity issues, it's important that the student facilitators can step in to continue leading the session or a related conversation.

- Create a WhatsApp (or equivalent) group for instant communication about technology needs during the virtual summit. Include the AISA tech lead in this group.

### **Deadlines & working with schools:**

- For a successful virtual event, it is important to communicate early with participating schools to secure resources and videos for student workshops. Set early deadlines for this to ensure optimal organization of files and the ability for practice with the student leaders/facilitators.

### **Schedule/Program:**

- continue to include students as stakeholders and leaders in the planning process of a virtual event. In establishing the summit theme, logo and program, ensure students take as much leadership as possible.
- organize the schedule for 2 days of engagement and ensure the program is shorter than that of an on-site summit to avoid screen fatigue. Consult the [2022 schedule](#) for reference.
- Sustainability teams/affinity groups: for the 2021 and 2022 virtual summits, Sustainability Teams were replaced with affinity groups and students could sign up for an affinity group. Themes for affinity groups in 2022 included:
  - Social Justice
  - Gender Equality
  - LGBTQ+
  - BBSA (Black Brown Student Association)
- Facilitation Skills: training the student leaders to facilitate the affinity group discussions and to provide support for teacher and student workshops is essential.
- 45-minute sessions for workshops, panels and affinity group discussions are sufficient; avoid planning longer sessions; if a group finishes early, let them take a break to stretch, move and have some time away from the screen. Student leaders from the host school can prepare materials in advance (just as they would with an on-site summit) to coach visiting schools about how to lead a successful workshop.
- Back-up plans: Create back-up plans for tech issues for the host school and visiting schools. Think about things like power outages and loss of connectivity and plan in advance so teachers and students can pivot to a back-up plan if needed. Make sure these back-up plans are clear, in advance, with all participants.

- Ensure there are adequate and meaningful windows for team-building and reflection throughout the virtual event. Be purposeful in planning sessions that will achieve these ends.

**Timeline:**

- A virtual event can be planned in less time than an on-site event but still requires a substantial amount of lead time to secure keynote speakers, plan a successful program, train student leaders, complete registrations and gather all necessary resources for school and teacher workshops. Begin planning your virtual AISA-GISS summit at least four months in advance, allowing time for everything to be accomplished. Look at the sample timeline for an on-site conference (pgs 41-42) and adapt for an online event using the information on pages 45-47 for guidance. Consult with the AISA Service Learning Advisor along the way.

## Planning a Hybrid Summit (with on-site and virtual components)

Given potential issues with travel restrictions that could impact future summits, it is practical to consider adding virtual components to an on-site AISA-GISS event.

*Creating a hybrid event ensures:*

- more inclusivity and equity (smaller AISA schools may find it difficult to finance travel to an on-site AISA-GISS gathering; schools impacted by health or safety concerns may also experience difficulty traveling)
- more flexibility for both the host school and visiting schools in the event of issues that impact travel
- maximizing the power of digital spaces and digital storytelling to create impact for students and educators in the AISA region

*Aspects of AISA-GISS that could be offered virtually alongside an on-site summit program:*

- keynote presentations & panel discussions (these could be offered to a virtual audience via live streaming or recordings offered after each session)
- student and teacher workshops (using AISA's Aventri platform, offerings could be planned and presented virtually for online participants during the same sessions offered face-to-face for on-site participants)
  - Example: during student Sustainability Team sessions, two student leaders could be assigned to lead the virtual Sustainability Team while other student leaders facilitate the face-to-face groups
- reflection sessions (these could be facilitated/moderated by student leaders and/or educators)
- service (while face-to-face participants engage in the Day of Service, online participants could share information about service learning partnerships and experiences, or they could engage in workshops about how to engage in meaningful online service)

*Some considerations for planning a hybrid summit:*

- 1) Scope: the host school planning team should decide, well in advance, what virtual elements they want to include in the summit, and what tech needs/issues should be considered to make those elements successful.
- 2) Planning: a separate planning committee could be established to prepare for virtual components of AISA-GISS, or specific leaders on the

steering committee and core committees could be tasked with organizing these elements.

- 3) Tech: having identified tech support for virtual components of AISA-GISS is crucial. Consult pages 45-47 for advice on hosting a virtual conference and ensure you have tech support (from the host school and in partnership with AISA) to ensure success with virtual elements.
- 4) Live/Pre-recorded content: consider how to maximize both live and pre-recorded content for online AISA-GISS sessions. Using pre-recorded content in purposeful ways may eliminate some concerns about bandwidth and connectivity.
- 5) Engagement: use of interactive tools like polls, chats, breakout rooms and social media will enhance the experience for students and teachers attending virtually. Allow the online cohort to network and bond, just as the on-site cohort will do. If a school registers a team to participate online, consider how to offer that team time to meet as a group (face-to-face in their host country or virtually) so they have time for reflection and connection.
- 6) Follow-up: just as you would follow-up with on-site participants to thank them for participating and for securing feedback about their experience, do the same for online participants. Consider where you will store/offer recordings and respond to follow-up questions.

Given the ways in which we now live and work (post-Covid), and to harness the power of how technology to fulfill the vision of AISA-GISS, it is important for host schools to consider how to successfully offer an AISA-GISS experience that extends the reach and impact of the event beyond the on-site experience.