



Education Resources

— GUITAR FOUNDATION OF AMERICA —

CONVENTION JUSTIFICATION PACKET

*Make your case to attend the
2020 GFA International Convention & Competitions*

GUITAR FOUNDATION OF AMERICA
**INTERNATIONAL
CONVENTION & COMPETITIONS**

University of Indianapolis
**INDIANAPOLIS, IN
JUNE 22-27, 2020**

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I N D I A N A P O L I S

What is the 2020 GFA International Convention?

The Guitar Foundation of America (GFA) is the world's leading classical guitar organization, promoting excellence in performance, literature, research, and education of the classical guitar. The organization publishes a quarterly magazine, *Soundboard*, along with its peer-reviewed counterpart, *Soundboard Scholar*, and *Prodigies*, a children's magazine. The GFA also organizes Regional Symposia in cities across the country, promotes education and research in the field, and hosts an annual Convention and Competition each summer.

This annual event brings together approximately 600 classical guitar masters and enthusiasts from all over the world, including some of the most elite performers of classical guitar. The six-day convention includes three concerts per day, a wide array of lectures, hands-on workshops, masterclasses and private lessons, a comprehensive vendor exposition and luthier showcase, Hall of Fame awards ceremony, and two guitar orchestras, open to all attendees. The GFA Convention is also home to three divisions of prestigious classical guitar competitions. The winner of the GFA International Concert Artist Competition is awarded an extensive international tour, along with a cash prize, recording contract, and publishing contract. The International Youth Competition (IYC) has both senior and junior divisions that offer young players the opportunity to perform for an elite panel of judges as well as the large GFA audience. Winners of the IYC receive cash awards and generous prizes from our sponsors.



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Why Attend?

Along with lectures in pedagogy, research, and community engagement, this year's conference includes an entire day devoted to education that will include lectures, observations, presentations, and a social event to connect with your colleagues from across the nation. All of these professional development activities are intended to inform, develop, and inspire you as an educator, and provide ideas and tools to meaningfully bring back to your students.

How to Ask Your Administrator (and other stakeholders)

When proposing your attendance to the 2020 GFA International Convention to an administrator, focus on the value that your participation will bring back to your school, program, and students. Here are some steps to follow and tips for approaching your administrator about attending the 2020 GFA International Convention.

1. **Know who to ask.** Every school/district operates a little differently. At larger secondary schools there may be an administrative chain of command wherein your direct supervisor may need to initially approve professional development requests. Likewise, dependent on your principal's leadership style, you may find that a direct ask is more appropriate. If you are in a school district with an Arts or Music Coordinator, they may have budget for professional development. Ask colleagues, your department chair, or even informally query your direct supervisor about the appropriate procedure at your school.
2. **Know which funds you are requesting.** Be sure you understand the sources of the funds that you are requesting. Are you requesting funds from the general school budget and/or PD budget? Are you asking permission to use funds from your specific program's allocated budget? Are you asking for funds from fundraised monies? Each of these requests has unique procedures. For instance, if you are requesting fundraised monies you may need approval from a student and/or parent committee.
3. **Know the amount you are requesting.** Prepare an estimate of the entirety of the cost for sending you to the conference as well as a breakdown of the expenses. This should include convention registration, travel expenses, lodging (see the GFA website guitarfoundation.org for lodging options including very affordable dorm options), and an estimate of meal costs (your school/district may have set per diem rates).
4. **Inform your administrator (and other stakeholders).** Be able to verbalize an overview of the event and what you (your teaching and your students) expect to gain. Share why you want to attend. Share what you believe is valuable about this experience.



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Here are some key points to discuss with administrators and stakeholders:

- You will return with teaching strategies, methods, and concepts to use in your classroom teaching and to share with other teachers
 - The Education Day provides 10 contact hours* of targeted professional development in lecture/presentation, observation, and immersive workshop formats.
 - The entire convention can provide up to 40 contact hours* (depending on what your school/district accepts, you may need to research your specific requirements)
 - You will meet with fellow guitar educators, and have dedicated time to network and discuss education in a social event setting.
 - You will have access to the Vendors' Expo where instruments, materials, and equipment will be available for purchase (including music and methods).
 - One great thing about the GFA Convention is the summer scheduling. You will not miss school, no sub plans are necessary nor funds to cover substitute expenses, and there is no missed instruction time.
5. **Prepare an action plan.** How will you share your newfound information with your colleagues? Prepare a written action plan outlining the steps you will take upon return from the convention. Ideas for this action plan could include forming a PLC (Professional Learning Community) or designing a PD workshop to share this information. Your action plan could also include a “curriculum overhaul” wherein you incorporate concepts from learned from the convention into your teaching documents (both planning documents such as lesson plans as well as instructional documents for students). Having an action plan further provides a vision of how your school, district, and students will receive value in sending you to the convention.
6. **Follow through.** After the convention be sure to note in your lesson plans or other curricular documents when you incorporate something that you learned at the convention. Keep notes on when and how you shared information to your colleagues (PLC minutes, saved emails, PD workshop outline, etc.). This way your administrator has yet another reason to see that the convention is a valuable experience and would fund your future convention attendance.



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Sample Request Letter

Dear [ADMINISTRATOR NAME]

I am requesting your permission to attend the Guitar Foundation of America International Convention, held this year in Indianapolis, Indiana, June 22-27, 2020. This annual event brings together approximately 600 classical guitar masters and enthusiasts from all over the world, including some of the most elite performers of classical guitar. The six-day convention includes three concerts per day, a wide array of lectures, hands-on workshops, masterclasses and private lessons, a comprehensive vendor exposition and luthier showcase, Hall of Fame awards ceremony, and two guitar orchestras, open to all attendees. The GFA Convention is also home to three divisions of prestigious classical guitar competitions.

The convention offers an array professional opportunities intended to help expand my teaching techniques and pedagogical knowledge to better educate the students at our school. I will have the opportunity to attend up to 40 contact hours of activities as well as a specific education-focused track of events specific to classroom guitar education.

This conference will include presentations by guitar curriculum creators, where I will be informed of the various approaches to guitar instruction available as well as have access to a Vendor's Expo that where I can peruse and purchase materials for my classroom.

I have included a detailed cost breakdown of the conference. I estimate the total cost of the conference will be \$_____.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my request. I look forward to hearing from you and to representing [SCHOOL/DISTRICT NAME] at the 2020 Guitar Foundation of America International Convention.

Sincerely,



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