

**Association of Midwest Museums and  
Michigan Museums Association**

# **2019 Joint Conference Call for Proposals**



*Changing Expectations*  
October 2-5, 2019  
Grand Rapids, MI



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# About the Theme

People everywhere are calling for changes to societal thinking, institutions and practices on a range of issues and for a variety of causes. The transformations taking place have inspired us to consider the reciprocal nature of relationships between museums and society, and the changes that result from those relationships.

For example, visitor expectations for and perceptions of engagement, experience, transparency and authority are changing and have an impact on museum practices. Recent studies suggest that values and priorities have changed across generations of visitors<sup>1</sup> and similarly, as U.S. households change, so do their visitation patterns.<sup>2</sup>

Museums and other organizations are grappling with how to address the changing expectations of their audiences, and have begun to seek solutions and ideas from their peers. Networks such as [OF BY FOR ALL](#), [#TakingRisks](#) and [The Inclusive Museum](#) and programs like the [Cultural Competency Learning Institute \(CCLI\)](#) have formed in recent years to encourage and support professionals as they embrace the sort of change and experimentation required to succeed.

Likewise, expectations are changing among members of the museum community. Professionals everywhere are challenging internal practices that have limited the development of a diverse workforce or hindered the ability of museums to build sustainable futures. One example of change prompted from within the field is a recent [call to action from the National EMP Network](#) for professional organizations to change job listing policies in an effort to encourage transparent hiring practices field-wide. At least 5 national, regional, and state organizations have already updated their policies as a result.

***How are “changing expectations” within our profession, our organizations, and our communities influencing the work we do? How are members of the museum community leading change by proactively engaging others around their own initiatives?***

We invite museum professionals to explore and evaluate the many ways in which museums are proactively and reactively navigating the changing world around them, as well as to offer tools and resources needed to lead and adapt to those changes.

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<sup>1</sup> [Generationally Speaking: How Cultural Shifts Impact Your Destination](#). PGAV Destinations Destinology, Volume 14, Issue 3, December

<sup>2</sup> Dilenschneider, Colleen. [Finding: Fewer People are Visiting Cultural Organizations with Families](#). IMPACTS Research & Development. Published November 28, 2018.

# Propose a Session, Poster, or Workshop

We invite individuals from our museum communities to [propose sessions and workshops](#) that address the a range of topics related to the conference theme, *Changing Expectations*. Consider these questions as you develop session and workshop proposals:

- ❖ How are museums uniquely positioned to lead by example as they respond to changing environmental factors, address current events, and tackle difficult subject matter?
- ❖ How is the role and definition of a museum changing as the needs, priorities, and perspectives of local communities shift?
- ❖ What strategies have museums developed for becoming more inclusive, accessible, and relevant to audiences they currently serve and those they wish to serve?
- ❖ How are the leaders, managers, and staff inside of institutions creatively and effectively implementing or addressing institutional changes?
- ❖ In what ways have leaders empowered and developed employees to be nimble in response to external factors? How have they encouraged employees to also proactively seek solutions for challenges and opportunities yet to come?

## **Thematic session and workshop topics might include:**

- ❖ Changes to collections practices and policies as a result of shifting priorities and expectations of stakeholders
- ❖ Influence of visitor expectations on exhibition development, design, and technology
- ❖ Changes in human resources policies and procedures
- ❖ Increasing access for non-native English speaking audience members
- ❖ Improvements in the accessibility of facilities, exhibits and other visitor touchpoints
- ❖ Increasing inclusivity and access for programming and interpretation
- ❖ Marketing strategies that meet people where they are
- ❖ New partnerships and business models for long-term sustainability
- ❖ Changes to corporate sponsorship models
- ❖ New audience insights that support short-term and long-term planning
- ❖ How to speak up for your cause (museums, mission, programs, etc.) and be heard

## **We also encourage you to consider preparing sessions that address the following professional development areas of interest:**

- ❖ Leadership challenges
- ❖ Project management
- ❖ Strategic plan development
- ❖ Development and fundraising solutions
- ❖ Collections care and management practices
- ❖ Exhibit development and design methodology
- ❖ Human resources solutions and best practices

# How to Submit a Proposal

**Proposals must be submitted using the [online submission form](#) by Monday, Feb. 25, 2019.**

Please be prepared with the following information before completing the online form. The form does not allow you to save draft proposals.

- ❖ Session Chair Information - name, company, address, email, and phone information
- ❖ Presenter Information - list of presenters, including name, company, and email address
- ❖ Title - descriptive title in 20 words or less
- ❖ Format - select from a list of options (described below)
- ❖ Session Track - see track descriptions on page 7
- ❖ Proposal Narrative - detailed description of the focus of your session
- ❖ Learning Outcomes - a few statements that capture what participants will know or be able to do as a result of your session; Limit 100 words
- ❖ Brief Description - Provide a short, punchy description of your session that can be used in conference promotions.

**Note:** Session tracks are used as a tool to aid attendees in planning their conference experience. We encourage you to use the tracks as a guide for your session proposal, but please note that content should be designed to appeal to museum professionals across disciplines. For track descriptions, see page 11.

## Session Chairs and Presenters

Sessions are scheduled to provide an enticing and balanced conference program. Presenters may be a mix of museum professionals, students, and service providers. At least ONE museum representative must be on your panel.

Session Chairs are responsible for organizing the session and relaying session information. AMM maintains contact ONLY with the Session Chair. Session Chairs will receive relevant schedule and setup information as it is available. Communications will come from [admin@midwestmuseums.org](mailto:admin@midwestmuseums.org) and [info@midwestmuseums.org](mailto:info@midwestmuseums.org).

Presenters must be confirmed at the time of submission. If your session is selected for the program, your presenters must be able to confirm their availability to present any day of the conference from October 2-5, 2019.

**PLEASE NOTE: Presenters are required to register and pay the conference registration fee at the early bird rate.**

# Session Formats and Setup

Sessions are between 75 minutes and 2 hours long. Conference sessions may be structured in any of the following ways, or by another means of delivery that is well thought out and described:

- ❖ **Panel Presentation:** Choose this more traditional lecture format if you have multiple presenters who plan to share information using slideshow presentations but do not need attendees to divide into groups or have hands-on work space. (75 minutes)
- ❖ **Roundtable Presentation:** Choose this participatory format if you have slideshow presentations, but also require that attendees break into small groups for discussion or require table space for attendees to work on hands-on activities. (75 minutes)
- ❖ **Debate:** Choose this session if you wish to encourage and demonstrate dialogue. Seek lively, knowledgeable speakers to present opposing views. Ensure that you have a strong debate moderator to serve as your Session Chair. (75 minutes)
- ❖ **Conversation Station:** Choose this option if you would like to share research, case studies, and projects in a “free flow” space where attendees can engage one-on-one with presenters. AMM will provide tables. (2 hours)
- ❖ **Poster:** Choose this option if you would like to use a poster-board sized display to share research, case studies, and student projects. Posters will be located in a “free flow” space where attendees can engage one-on-one with presenters. AMM will provide easels or tables for displays. Presenters are responsible for printing, assembling and transportation of their poster displays. (2 hours)
- ❖ **Pre-Conference Workshop:** Consider proposing skill-building, hands-on workshops. Workshops are an intensive, half day experience that take place offsite at local museums. AMM will secure venues for workshops and reimburse presenters for consumables such as paper. (4 hours)
- ❖ **(NEW) Focus! Mini- Workshop:** Consider this option if you are interested in presenting a hands-on session that requires more time than standard session formats. Mini-Workshops will likely take place Saturday morning following the Closing Plenary Session. (2 hours)

Presentations should be limited to no more than 4 speakers including the Session Chair to ensure adequate time for presentations. All rooms will include a projector, microphone, audio hookup, and lectern or head table. Presenters are expected to bring their own laptops and projector adapter/connector cables.

# Session Tracks

**Audience Development and Community Engagement:** any topic that involves reaching out to and working with an institution's community would fall under this track. This might include topics such as marketing and external relations, community programs, collaboration/partnership with community organizations, access, visitor services, volunteer recruitment, training and management, and websites/social media.

**Collections Care and Management:** this track addresses all collections issues, such as accession and deaccession practices, cataloging and collections management systems, care and conservation, digital/physical conservation and preservation, ethical and legal issues relating to collections, and disaster preparedness.

**Development and Finance:** this track covers all things money, including earned revenue strategies, financial sustainability, development, membership and all aspects of fundraising, philanthropy, and strategic financial planning.

**Exhibit Planning and Innovation:** topics related to planning and developing exhibitions would fall under this track. This might include audience and community engagement, content development, diversity and inclusion, exhibition evaluation, media and graphic design, project management, prototyping, fabrication/production, label writing and editing, and universal design and accessibility.

**Interpretation and Programs:** this track covers anything to do with education and interpretation including educational technology, accessibility and inclusion, evaluation and assessment, interpretive planning and design.

**Leadership and Organizational Development:** any topic related to the management of the institution, people, and projects would fall under this track. This might include legal issues, management and administration, operations and infrastructure, recruiting and training a diverse staff, risk and crisis management, board development and management, strategic planning, building organizational culture, and advocacy.

# Selection Criteria and Schedule

Proposals will be reviewed for:

- Relevance to the conference theme
- Relevance to professional development needs in the industry
- Clarity of content and learning objectives
- Diversity of perspectives and presenters
- Practical and relevant examples and how to apply them in multiple settings

The program committee reserves the right to make suggestions to improve proposals. This might include adding or changing speakers, expanding your topic to include other examples, or merging your session with one that is similar. This is done in an effort to provide the best overall line-up for conference attendees.

[Session proposals are due by end of day Monday, February 25, 2019.](#)

<b>Session Review Timeline</b>	
<b>Submission Open</b>	<b>December 13, 2018</b>
<b>Submission Deadline</b>	<b>Monday, February 25, 2019</b>
<b>Final Decision Notification</b>	<b>by April 5, 2019</b>
<b>Early Bird Registration Open</b>	<b>April 1, 2019</b>

# Questions to Consider for Your Proposal

- ❖ Proposals must be clear, concise and fully describe the point of your session. *What is the focus or big idea?*
- ❖ Specify educational outcomes. *What will attendees learn or accomplish during the session or workshop? What practical knowledge, industry advances, tools, or tips are presented?*
- ❖ Ideal presentations connect to the conference theme. *Does your project, research, or lesson relate to topics such as audience development and community engagement?*
- ❖ Think creatively about your presentation format. *What format will best support your content? Will your presentation prompt dialogue?*
- ❖ Be clear about the relevance of your content to a variety of audiences. *Are key issues or trends addressed? Do you have innovative ideas, practices, or partnerships? Is your topic universally relevant, across disciplines and even roles?*
- ❖ Case studies should exemplify best practices, lessons-learned, or impact on community. *What happened? How was it evaluated? What were key internal or external factors at play?*
- ❖ Proposals should address the intended audiences for the session. Attendees will include leaders and other professionals from various types of museums - from historic houses to science centers - as well as a host of other organizations and companies.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## ***How do I submit my proposal?***

All proposals must be submitted via our online [form](#). The online submission form does not allow you to save, so be prepared with all of your information beforehand.

## ***Do I have to register for the conference if my proposal is accepted?***

Yes, all session chairs and presenters must register. As a courtesy, we will honor the early bird registration rate for speakers for the duration of online registration. We will distribute instructions for registration after the early bird deadline to session chairs.

## ***Can I submit more than one proposal?***

Yes, you are welcome to submit multiple proposals.

## ***When do I need to complete my submission?***

We must receive your submission by midnight (11:59 p.m. ET) **February 25, 2019**.

## ***When will I find out if my proposal has been accepted?***

All Session Chairs will be notified of final decisions via email by the 2nd week of April, 2019.

## ***How will my proposal be evaluated?***

During the first round of evaluation, your proposal will go through a blind peer-reviewed process. The review teams will evaluate each proposal against a rubric and make selection recommendations through consensus.

## ***How should I format my presentation?***

We do not have a specific requirement for how you structure your presentation within your chosen format. Nor do we have a required presentation template. This is your presentation, and we want you to have the freedom to share your knowledge and experience in whatever way best fits your objectives.

## ***What will be in my session room?***

All breakout session rooms will be equipped with projector, screen, microphone, audio hookup, and lectern or head table. Presenters are expected to bring their own laptops and adapter/connector cables.

## ***When and where will my session be during the conference?***

When we have finalized the program, your session chair will receive a communication with the day/time/room number of your session. We will also publish this info for your reference at [ammconference.org](http://ammconference.org)

**More questions?** Contact us at [info@midwestmuseums.org](mailto:info@midwestmuseums.org)