



Call for Proposals

Braking Point

AMM & AIM 2023 Joint Conference

Virtual July 19 + In-Person July 26-29 | Indianapolis, IN

ammconference.org

#MidwestMuseums #IndianaMuseums

Deadline: 11:59 p.m. ET on Friday, January 6, 2023

About the Conference

The Association of Midwest Museums and Association of Indiana Museums (AIM) welcome our members and colleagues to join us in Indianapolis, Indiana, for an interdisciplinary conference developed for museum professionals at any stage of their career. This year's conference program will have two parts—one day of all-virtual programming on Wednesday, July 19th, as well as a safe, welcoming in-person experience on July 26-29. Virtual and in-person programs will feature opportunities for peer-to-peer exchange and to see Indianapolis museums.

About the Theme - “Braking Point”

The Indianapolis 500 auto race isn't a sprint. It's a marathon. Navigation of the 2.5-mile oval track may seem fairly straightforward, but drivers face enormous pressure as they attempt to safely maneuver 800 turns at over 200 mph, adapting to variable external conditions. Safety and success requires trust among the team members as well as finely tuned skills and intuition during all parts of the race, but significantly during the turns.

This year, let's focus on the careful thinking and deliberate action required in the turns.

Each turn in the Indy 500 is an experiment. The margin for error in turns is very small, and the team's sense of urgency is countered by the need to keep the car steady and the driver safe. The goal is to find the perfect line around the curve and the perfect **Braking Point**. This is the moment when the driver slows their speed, braking *just enough* to maintain stability without losing forward momentum. Drivers and teams learn from every turn, adapting to constantly changing external and internal pressures on their cars throughout the race.

As Midwestern museums race toward necessary change—internally and externally—we wonder how they are navigating the turns. Where are their “braking points”?

We invite our members and colleagues across the Midwest to share stories and lessons learned from the twists and turns of their journeys during presentations at the conference.

- What variables have disrupted your museum's balance, and how are you shifting gears?
- Whose voices are needed at the table, and how are you slowing down to engage them?
- In what ways are leaders prioritizing the needs and wellbeing of staff or team members, while maintaining forward momentum?

Share with us lessons learned from your Braking Points, the crashes and flying wheels, the unnerving or exhilarating moments in the turns, and the victories celebrated along the way.

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by 11:59 p.m. ET on Friday, January 6, 2023.**

Virtual and In-Person Sessions

Keep in mind: We are seeking session proposals for the virtual and the in-person programs. All sessions should be no longer than 60 minutes total and should include time for questions.

We are seeking **session** proposals that address the following topics:

- **Collections:** What new practices have emerged? What steps have you taken to advance efforts to digitize, decolonize, accession and deaccession, preserve, and conserve?
- **Disaster Preparedness:** How have disaster plans changed? What steps should we take to prepare for disasters in the future?
- **Diversity, Equity, Access, Inclusion, Belonging, and Justice:** What are projects that moved the needle (internally or externally), and what did you learn from them? How are museums engaging in civics and social justice on a local level?
- **Environmental Sustainability:** In what ways are you addressing environmental sustainability at your organization? What role is your museum playing in climate justice, such as activist or educator, and what does that look like?
- **Evaluation:** How are museums measuring success for virtual and in-person offerings? How are audiences being engaged in front-end and formative planning?
- **Exhibitions:** What creative ways have museums created exhibits on limited budgets? How have museums re-interpreted controversial or problematic exhibits, objects or artworks, or engaged communities in dialog? How do staff members manage workloads? How are managers supporting staff on projects with difficult topics?
- **Fundraising and Revenue:** What new models and strategies have been employed—for programs, retail, events and rentals, and other sources of earned revenue? How are museums funding or monetizing programs? How are museums engaging donors, navigating generational shifts in philanthropy, and communicating their missions?
- **Leadership/Governance:** In what ways have leaders educated, reengaged, revitalized, and diversified museum boards/governance? How are institutions advocating at the local and federal levels for funding, historic preservation, and employee wellbeing? What does leadership look like at every level of an organization?
- **Marketing and Social Media:** How are museums driving attendance through marketing? What popular social media trends have museums tied into? What worked or didn't?
- **Programs:** Who are museums reaching through programs now and what do they find appealing? What participation trends are museums seeing? What new partnerships have museums forged, how did they begin, and how are they being sustained?
- **Workforce/Career Development:** What new methods are being used in recruitment, retention, training, mentoring, and development of museum staff and volunteer corps? How are museums addressing pay disparities and employee well-being? How are staff members advocating for their own needs? What are the challenges and opportunities of museum worker unionization?

NOTE: Virtual sessions will be hosted in Zoom Webinar on Wednesday, July 19th. In-person sessions will take place on Thursday-Friday, July 27-28 at our conference venue, Union Station.

Pre-Conference Workshops

We also welcome proposals for 90-120 minute, pre-conference hands-on, in-depth workshops.

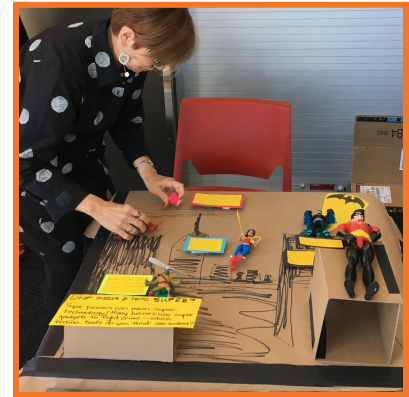
Pre-Conference Workshops extend beyond regular conference programming to provide skill-building or capacity-building training. They should help attendees identify action steps and provide takeaways, such as templates, resource lists, and data.

Suggested topics:

- Repatriation of human remains and/or cultural materials
- Volunteer management
- Intern recruitment and mentorship
- Fundraising
- Exhibit development and/or label writing
- Accessibility in programs and exhibits
- Career advising or job search coaching

Workshops require an additional registration fee for participation, and a portion of that fee will be offered to the workshop presenter(s) in the form of an honorarium. Presenters must supply any materials or handouts required to present.

NOTE: Workshops will take place on Wednesday, July 26, between 2:00-5:00 p.m. ET at a local museum or Union Station.



Posters and Conversation Stations

Poster Presentations and Conversation Stations are ideal for sharing research, new ideas, or outcomes from a single project. They are a great way to gather feedback and ideas in a less formal setting.

Poster Presentations are posters displayed on a backer board on an easel in a free flow space. AMM will provide easels and have foam board available for your use. Presenters must print their own posters. Posters will be set up on July 27 at 9:00 a.m. ET and remain on display until 5:00 p.m. ET on July 28. Presenters must be available to talk about their poster during the one-hour afternoon reception on July 27.



Conversation Stations are presentations that take place at a round table. Presenters will set up their table (displays, handouts, etc.) in a free flow space during the session break prior to the afternoon reception on July 27 and dismantle their station immediately following the reception.

Selection Criteria

Proposals are evaluated by museum professionals serving on the Program Committee. During an initial blind review process, they will score sessions based on the content of the proposals. Scores are based on criteria such as:

1. Relevance to professional development needs in the industry
2. Clarity of content and learning objectives
3. Diversity of perspectives and presenters
4. Practical and relevant examples and how to apply them in multiple settings or adapt or scale solutions for use in small museums or large museums
5. Relevance to the conference theme (ideal, but not required)

The Program Committee will make final selections based on scores and take into consideration the overall diversity of museum types and sizes, geographic locations, disciplines, and perspectives represented among the presenters.

NOTE: The Program Committee reserves the right to make suggestions for improvement. 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 lineup for attendees, and proposal acceptance may be contingent upon the changes proposed.

Tips for Success:

- Be clear about what you will be presenting, why it matters, and what attendees will learn. Great proposals clearly connect the session focus and content to the learning outcomes.
- Propose sessions that offer practical, scalable solutions and strategies.
- Consider providing tools, templates, and resources for attendees. We may ask you to supply a copy of slides or handouts to share with attendees after the conference.
- Give careful thought to the presenter lineup and case studies featured in your session. We like to see sessions that reflect the diversity of our network (museum types and sizes, geography, disciplines, race and ethnicity, etc.) and their models or approaches.
- Avoid having too many presenters. There is a time limit of 60 minutes for all sessions, and it is important to include time for questions.

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How to Submit a Proposal

Proposals must be submitted using the [online submission form](#) by 11:59pm ET on Friday, January 6, 2023. For proposals to be considered, all fields must be filled in completely.

Presenters must be confirmed at the time of submission. If your session is selected for the Virtual program, all presenters must be available on July 19th. If your session is selected for the In-Person program, all presenters must be available on July 27-28. If you proposed a Pre-Conference Workshop all presenters must be available on July 26th.

Here is an outline of the session proposal form to guide you:

Session Chair Information

Full name, organization, address, email, and phone information.
Session Chairs are responsible for organizing the session and relaying session information.
Communications will come from admin@midwestmuseums.org.

Presenter Information

List of presenters, including full name, organization, and email address of each presenter. In addition to the Session Chair, you may have a maximum of 3 additional presenters/panelists. Presenters may be a mix of museum professionals, students, and consultants. At least ONE museum representative must be on your panel.

Which type of session or workshop are you proposing?

- ☐ Select all options that apply. (Virtual or in-person? Session or workshop?)

Title

20 words maximum. Suggest a short, catchy, descriptive title of your session, workshop, etc.

Intended Audience

- ☐ Select your session's intended audience(s). (*Descriptions on page 7*)

Session Track

- ☐ Select a track most closely aligned with your session's focus. (*Descriptions on page 8*)

Proposal Narrative

500 words maximum. Share a detailed description of the focus of your session. Be clear and concise, and fully describe the point of your session and case studies featured. Connections to the conference theme are a plus. Be clear about the relevance of your content to a diverse range of audience members (different roles, disciplines, museum types, etc.).

Learning Outcomes

100 words maximum. This should be a short list that captures knowledge, skills, or resources that participants will gain as a result of your session.

Example: *Participants will better understand the skills required to be a project manager.*

Promotional Description

50 words maximum. Provide a short description of your session that can be used in conference promotions. Address what attendees will see, do, and learn.

Presenter Agreement

Session Chairs must agree to the following terms when submitting the proposal:

- ☐ It is my responsibility as session chair to communicate all logistical and other information to session presenters.
- ☐ Our presenters will not use the session as a platform for promoting products or services.
- ☐ Our presenters are confirmed and available to participate on the dates of the portion of the program they have proposed to present - Virtual Session (July 19), Pre-Conference Workshop (July 26), and/or In-Person Session (July 27-28).
- ☐ Our presenters understand that we may be asked to share session materials and resources and are open to the request.
- ☐ Our presenters agree to abide by the conference [Code of Conduct](#) and [Health Policy](#).

Intended Audience

We're asking that presenters identify their intended audience for sessions. You'll find the following descriptors in the online form. Select all that apply to your session or workshop.

- **Beginner** - professionals or students with little to no experience with the topic
- **Intermediate** - professionals with limited experience with the topic
- **Advanced** - professionals with extensive experience with the topic
- **Emerging Professionals** - students or professionals who have worked in museums or similar organizations for fewer than 10 years
- **Mid-Career Professionals** - individuals who have worked in the museum profession for approximately 11-30 years
- **Late-Career Professionals** - individuals who have worked in the museum profession for an extended period of time and may be approaching retirement in the next 10 years

Session Tracks

Below are examples of session topics that fall within each thematic session track. For your proposal, choose the track that most closely relates to the focus of your session.

- **Collections Stewardship:** accession and deaccession practices and policies, decolonization work, repatriation, NAGPRA, cataloging and collections management systems, care and conservation, digital/physical conservation and preservation, collections assessments; collections ethical and legal issues, and disaster preparedness
- **Fundraising & Revenue:** earned revenue strategies, strategic partnerships, collaborating with other organizations for grant-funded projects, financial sustainability, financial models, general accounting/budgeting, fundraising strategies, membership models, corporate philanthropy and partnerships, strategic financial planning, and advocacy
- **Education & Programs:** virtual or in-person programs for schools, children/families, adults; actor-interpretation or museum theater; educational technology; program accessibility and inclusion; program assessment; engaging communities/ audiences
- **Exhibitions:** virtual or in-gallery exhibits, content development, exhibit evaluation and prototyping, interactive media development, graphic design, project management, fabrication and production, label writing, and universal design and accessibility; projects that engage community organizations, audiences, or other stakeholders
- **Leadership & Operations:** management and administration processes, leadership techniques and philosophies, operations and infrastructure, organizational viability and sustainability, staff development and succession planning, salary transparency and pay equity, museum worker unionization, recruitment and retention, risk and crisis management, board development, strategic planning, building organizational culture, and internal-focused cultural competency and DEAI (IDEA) initiatives
- **Marketing & Social Media:** marketing and external relations, websites, social media, communications strategies, marketing and digital media evaluation and assessment, mobile guides/applications, analytics and evaluation strategies, innovative use of technology or media sources for marketing outreach, mobile applications, and collaborations with other organizations or engaging in local or national initiatives/efforts
- **NEW! Museums 101:** general “how to” sessions on the basics of museum operations, administration, programs or exhibition development, rather than a focus on case studies.

Submit proposals online by Friday, January 6, 2023.