

AMM 2024 Conference
July 31-August 3 | Columbus, OH



Call for Proposals

The Way Forward | AMM 2024 Conference

Virtual July 24 + In-Person July 31-August 3

Columbus, OH

ammconference.org

#MidwestMuseums #AMM_2024 #TheWayForward

Deadline: 11:59 p.m. ET on Friday, January 19, 2024

About the Conference

The Association of Midwest Museums welcomes members and colleagues to join us in Columbus, OH, for an interdisciplinary conference developed for professionals at any stage of their career. We'll kick off the event with a virtual day on Wednesday, July 24, hosted in collaboration with the Ohio Museums Association. Then, we'll gather in-person at the Hilton Columbus at Easton from July 31-August 3 for sessions, networking, and museum exploration.

About the Theme - "The Way Forward"

As the title suggests, the AMM 2024 Conference will investigate the ways in which Midwest museums are preparing for the future - seeking relevance, viability, and sustainability. For each organization, ***The Way Forward*** varies. Whether they are rebuilding or growing operations, forging new or fostering existing community partnerships, or crafting new strategic or master plans, museum leadership and staff are preparing to take on what is yet to come.

Let's come together in Columbus to exchange knowledge and ideas and work on building the skills that are essential for sustaining museums, expanding reach and impact, leading and supporting internal change, and navigating an ever-evolving landscape. What does that mean? Refocusing our attention on relationship-building.

Every goal we set hinges on the relationships we build with people - staff, volunteers, leadership, community members, and other internal or external stakeholders. Whether you work in a visitor facing role like the call center or admissions, coordinate cross-departmental exhibit teams, lead fundraising efforts, manage your museum's social media channels, or develop public programs, your capacity to build and sustain relationships is key to your success.

The relationships we nurture today and how we work together will pave *The Way Forward*.

We invite proposals for **sessions, workshops, posters, and conversation stations** that focus on approaches to relationship-building in new projects, programs, and initiatives. Proposals that touch on the theme, such as the following topics, are ideal but not required. All ideas welcomed!

- Access and inclusion
- Advocacy (personal and organizational)
- Collaboration and teamwork
- Communication, conflict resolution, and psychological safety
- Community outreach and engagement
- Emotional intelligence and cultural competence
- Evaluation, feedback, and reflection
- Partnerships and business development
- Risk assessment and risk-taking

**Submit proposals using our [online form](#)
by 11:59 p.m. ET on Friday, January 19, 2024.**

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.

Considering proposing sessions that address the following aspects of museum work:

- **Advocacy:** How are institutions advocating at the local and federal levels for funding, historic preservation, policies that have an impact on employee wellbeing?
- **Collections:** What steps have you taken to advance efforts to digitize, decolonize, accession and deaccession, preserve, and conserve? What is your approach to disaster planning and response today, and who is involved in the process?
- **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 ensuring their physical and virtual spaces are welcoming to all?
- **Environmental Sustainability:** In what ways are you addressing environmental sustainability at your organization or in new construction? 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 and impact, and sharing that data with stakeholders? In what ways are you embracing and acting on new insights or input?
- **Exhibitions:** How have museums engaged communities and ensured they have a voice in the exhibit process? What has changed about approaches to interpretation? How have you creatively solved challenges related to limited budgets or production delays?
- **Fundraising and Revenue:** What new models and strategies have been employed for memberships, retail, events, programs, and other earned revenue sources? How are museums engaging donors and navigating generational shifts in philanthropy? How can we effectively pitch our ideas and value to external stakeholders?
- **Leadership/Governance:** How are leaders leading with empathy, building trust, and creating a psychologically safe space for people to voice ideas, concerns, feedback? In what ways are leaders giving staff agency to lead at any level and supporting experimentation or innovation? In what ways are leaders assessing and taking risks?
- **Marketing and Social Media:** How has vulnerability and transparency in communications (or lack thereof) affected public trust? What successes/failures have museums had as they navigate social media platforms and algorithms? How are they conveying value?
- **Programs:** In what ways has school access or participation evolved? Who are museums engaging through public/family programs today and how? What new partnerships have been forged, how did they begin, and how are they being sustained? In what ways have digital platforms expanded access?
- **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?

NOTE: Virtual sessions will be hosted in Zoom on Wednesday, July 24. In-person sessions will take place Thursday-Friday, August 1-2, at our conference venue, the Hilton Columbus at Easton, and each session room will be equipped with projector, mic, screen and audio. Presenters will be required to bring a laptop and HDMI cable. Rooms will be set with rows of chairs (theater) or chairs with round or rectangular tables (classroom). Please note preferences in your narrative.

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 **workshop** topics:

- Program or exhibit evaluation
- Repatriation of human remains and/or cultural materials
- Volunteer or intern recruitment and mentorship
- Digital collections or interactive development
- Fundraising or grant writing
- Exhibit development and/or label writing
- Accessibility in programs and exhibits
- Career advising or job search coaching
- Collections care and management

Workshops require an additional registration fee which covers the facility provisions for the workshop. Presenters must supply any materials or handouts required to present.

NOTE: Workshops will take place on Wednesday, July 31, between 2:00-5:00 p.m. ET at a local museum or the hotel.

Posters and Conversation Stations

Poster Presentations and Conversation Stations are ideal for sharing research, new ideas, or outcomes from a single project. Conversation Stations are also great for sparking dialogue on a particular subject. Gather feedback 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 August 1 during the session break prior to the exhibitor reception. Presenters must be available to talk about their poster during the reception.

Conversation Stations are presentations that take place at a round table. Presenters will set up their table (conversation prompt, displays, handouts, etc.) in a free flow space during the session break prior to the exhibitor reception on August 1 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 subject matter and the 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.
- If there is a connection to the theme, highlight it! Sessions that address areas of need connected to the theme tend to score higher in review than those that do not.
- 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 19, 2024. 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 Wednesday, July 24. If your session is selected for the In-Person program, all presenters must be available on both Thursday and Friday, August 1-2. If you propose a Pre-Conference Workshop, all presenters must be available July 31.

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

Session Organizer Information

Full name, organization, address, email, and phone information.
Session Organizers 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 Organizer, you may have a maximum of 3 additional presenters. Presenters may be a mix of museum professionals, students, and consultants. At least ONE museum representative must be on your panel to qualify.

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 8*)

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. Clearly and concisely describe the point of your session and any case studies featured. Note any connections to the conference theme. 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 how to create and use work plans for projects.*

How will your session achieve the learning outcomes?

100 words maximum. Briefly list what you will have the participants see, do, or learn that will ensure that your learning outcomes are achieved.

Example: *Participants will listen to a short presentation on how to create a project work plan and receive a template to create their own. Then they will draft a work plan with our guidance.*

What experience or expertise do your presenter(s) have that make them a fit for this session?

500 words maximum. Briefly describe the experience or expertise of your presenter(s), relative to the session proposed. This could be in the form of a short bio or explanation of their role on a particular project featured.

Examples: *Charity Counts has 20 years of experience as a project manager, including the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Secrets of the Sewer exhibit used as a case study in this session.*

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 Organizers must agree to the following terms when submitting the proposal:

- ☐ It is my responsibility as session organizer 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 understand that registration is required to participate in the conference. Presenters will receive a discount on registration fees, but are required to pay to attend.
- ☐ Our presenters are confirmed and available to present on the dates noted for the portion of the program they wish to present - Virtual Session (July 24), Pre-Conference Workshop (July 31), and/or In-Person Session (August 1-2).
- ☐ 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, cataloging and collections management systems, care and conservation, assessments, ethical and legal issues, and disaster preparedness
- **Fundraising & Revenue:** earned revenue strategies, strategic partnerships, financial models and methods, 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, community co-curation, evaluation and prototyping, interactive media, graphic design, project management, production/fabrication, and universal design and accessibility
- **Leadership & Operations:** leadership techniques and philosophies, operations and infrastructure, staff development and succession planning, pay equity, unionization, recruitment and retention, risk and crisis management, board development, strategic planning, workplace culture, and cultural competency and DEAI initiatives
- **Marketing & Social Media:** websites, social media, communications, digital media, evaluation and success measures, mobile guides/applications, new technologies, and engaging in local or national initiatives/efforts
- **Museums 101:** general "how to" sessions that focus on general knowledge that would benefit museum staff and volunteers (operations, administration, accounting/budgeting, programs or exhibit development), rather than a focus on case studies.

Submit proposals online by Friday, January 19, 2024.