



**AMM 2025**  
**“Crosscurrents”**  
July 30-August 2 | Quad Cities

Photo courtesy of Visit Quad Cities



## **Call for Proposals**

**Crosscurrents | AMM 2025 Conference**

Virtual July 23 + In-Person July 30-August 2

Quad Cities

**[ammconference.org](http://ammconference.org)**

**#MidwestMuseums #AMM\_2025 #Crosscurrents**

**Deadline: 11:59 p.m. ET on Friday, January 24, 2025**

## About the Conference

The Association of Midwest Museums (AMM) invites you to join us in the Quad Cities—a bi-state region along the Mississippi River on the Illinois and Iowa border—for an interdisciplinary conference developed for professionals at any stage of their career. We'll kick off the event with a robust virtual day on July 23, and gather in-person at the RiverCenter in Davenport, IA, from July 30-August 2 for sessions, networking, and museum exploration.

## About the Theme - “Crosscurrents”

As the title suggests, the AMM 2025 Conference theme is a nod to how museums continue to navigate change in our broader culture and society. “Crosscurrents” are stretches of turbulent water created when one current flows into or across another. Our theme also acknowledges how waterways serve to connect and divide—not unlike how the mighty Mississippi River defines and shapes life in the Quad Cities.

**These are turbulent times. Let's strategize ways to navigate those crosscurrents together!**

Join us in the Quad Cities to engage in discussion and debate around the intersecting and sometimes conflicting viewpoints that are shaping our landscape, informing our practices, and influencing our policies (whether we like it or not). Let's unpack what it means for museums to be trusted spaces now and moving forward, and discuss strategies we are employing that center our missions and values in service to our communities to earn that trust.

We'll draw inspiration from the amazing cultural organizations in the Quad Cities, whose efforts to build bridges across a geographical and political divide have been a success. We'll learn about how museums, local nonprofits, and businesses are working collaboratively and creatively to address a variety of community needs—including food scarcity and a growing immigrant population—while also driving tourism to the region. Furthermore, we'll discover that these collaborations were baked into each museum's practices before it was cool, out of necessity.

**Quad Cities museums and other cultural organizations are central to this thriving bi-state region, and together they are navigating the crosscurrents of their geopolitical dividing line.**

Bring your perspective and experience to the conversation! We welcome proposals for sessions, workshops, posters, and conversation stations that focus on navigating the “crosscurrents” that are shaping the landscape for every aspect of museum operations, programs, and community initiatives. Proposals that touch on the theme are ideal but not required. All ideas are welcomed!

**Submit proposals using our [online form](#)  
by 11:59 p.m. ET on Friday, January 24, 2025.**

## 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.

**Consider proposing sessions that address the following aspects of museum work:**

- **Advocacy:** How are institutions advocating at the local, state and federal levels for funding and the agencies that support museums and historic preservation, along with policies that have an impact on employee wellbeing?
- **Collections:** What obstacles have you encountered in digitization, decolonization, deaccession, and other stewardship efforts, and how have you overcome them?
- **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? How are local or national politics affecting your policies and practices?
- **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 audience insights or input? How does data inform your programs, exhibits, or development efforts?
- **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 modeling 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 innovation?
- **Marketing and Social Media:** Which audiences are you engaging online and in what way? How are you managing divisive comments or navigating a growing landscape of misinformation? How are you using your platform(s) to educate and illuminate?
- **Programs:** What are the creative ways you are engaging or attracting schools today? 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 23. In-person sessions will take place Thursday-Friday, July 31-August 1, at RiverCenter Davenport, 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 proposal, if applicable.

## 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:

- Management or leadership skills
- 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.

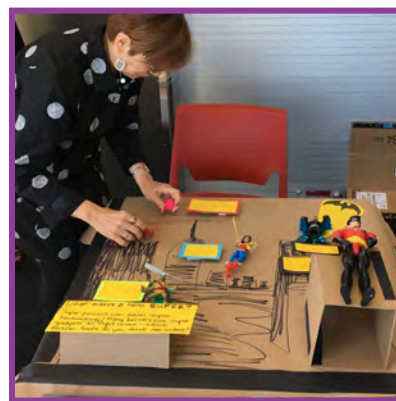
**NOTE:** Workshops will take place on Wednesday, July 30, between 2:00-5:00 p.m. CT at a local museum or the hotel.

## 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 July 31 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 July 31 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 11:59 p.m. ET on Friday, January 24, 2025. 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, presenters must be available Wednesday, July 23. If your session is selected for the In-Person program, presenters must be available on both Thursday, July 31, and Friday, August 1. If you propose a Pre-Conference Workshop, presenters must be available July 30.

**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](mailto: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 any dates noted for the portion of the program they wish to present. (These dates are Virtual Session, July 23; Pre-Conference Workshop July 30; and/or In-Person Session, July 31 - August 1.)
- 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.

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