

2015 Annual Meeting Proposal Guidelines

**2015 Annual Meeting
San Jose, California
October 24-27, 2015**

Session Proposal Submission Deadline: November 21, 2014

The Western Museums Association (WMA) Board invites you to submit proposals for lively, thoughtful, and interactive sessions for the 2015 Annual Meeting. Examples of topics include:

- Instances of best practices in museums, reflections on successes and failures, explorations of professional courage, articulations of our core values as museums; how we cope with change and advances in technology, how we rejuvenate ourselves and our staff.
- Strategies for museums to build their potential to be effective, meaningful organizations and to sustain themselves, their communities, and their society.
- Examinations of who we are, whom we serve, and what it means to be authentic in our work.

Annual Meeting sessions may be structured in any one of the following ways, or by another means of delivery that is well thought out and described:

Single Session Panel: Single Sessions are 75 minutes in length with a maximum of three speakers and a minimum of 2 speakers and follow one of two formats.

1. A Standard Session generally features a moderator that briefly introduces the topic and presenters who then formally address it in some detail (the moderator can also serve as a presenter). The session concludes with a question and answer period.
2. A Dialogue Session also uses a moderator, but differs from the Standard Session in that presenters are limited to brief remarks; a responder then summarizes the topic, and the audience is engaged in an extended dialogue on the topic.

Ideally, sessions include speakers from a variety of museums and disciplines to provide a broad discussion of and different perspectives on the topic. You may frame your session as a case study, a demonstration, or project report, but your session must be relevant and of interest to delegates who are not in your specific area. For instance, a case study could include a discussant to provide an objective, outside perspective on the project you are presenting. You must also build time into your session to ensure that your presenters will engage with the audience and provide time for questions.

Double Session Panel: Double Sessions are 150 minutes in length with a minimum of 4-5 speakers. The Double Session panel addresses topics in the same manner as the Single Session panel format, but in greater depth.

Pre-Conference Workshop: Workshops are hands-on, participatory, practical sessions, presented on the day preceding the Annual Meeting, lasting generally full- or half-day. WMA generally cannot make exceptions to this scheduling; however, you may contact WMA staff to discuss any ideas you may have. Attendees pay the costs of the workshop in a separate registration fee.

Other Session Formats: The WMA is open to other formats, if these do not work for your proposal.

Proposers are asked to include a variety of individuals, institutions, and perspectives in their sessions. WMA is interested in broad and meaningful perspectives. Generally, sessions without broad representation are less likely to be accepted.

2015 Annual Meeting Proposal Guidelines

WRITING & SUBMITTING YOUR SESSION PROPOSAL

Proposals must be submitted to proposals@westmuse.org no later than 5:00 pm, November 21, 2014. Because proposals must be distributed to Program Committee members in a timely manner, late proposals will not be accepted. Please submit proposals using the standard session proposal form in order to help Committee members complete their reviews.

The proposal should ideally provide descriptions that clearly, enthusiastically, and efficiently describe the point of your session. The description should include the focus of the session and the goals to be achieved.

The Program Committee also asks that you include:

- A clear and concise session title (creative titles are OK but should be accurately descriptive; Section 1.A)
- A clear and concise (max. 75 words) description of the session (Section 1.B). This text will be included in the program
- A more extended (max. 250 words) description of the session's intended objectives, target audience, and desired outcomes for attendees (Section 1.C)
- Complete contact information for the proposer, moderator, and all presenters (Section 2)

NOTE: You must include an initial list of speakers for your panel. Please indicate any contact you have made with potential speakers in developing your session in order to give the Program Committee a clear idea of how fully formed your session is. Speakers must be confirmed by the second submission period deadline in February. Please communicate to speakers that sessions, including their participation, will not be confirmed until March 6, 2015.

VERY IMPORTANT: During the Program Committee's meeting in January, the Committee may suggest using different speakers than you have proposed in order to improve your session for the 2015 Annual Meeting. This may require changes to your proposal in order for it to be accepted. If the speakers are not acceptable to the Program Committee, it is your responsibility as proposer to communicate both the status of your proposal and of its presenters. WMA sends future communications only to confirmed panelists on accepted sessions.

The more fully developed and clear your proposal is, the better the Program Committee will be able to consider its value for the conference. Unclear or incomplete proposals are less likely to be accepted.

The individuals serving on the 2015 Program Committee have been chosen for their experience in the field, the respect of their peers, as well as their broad network of contacts, and they reserve the right to make changes to your session proposal or your speaker list if they feel it will strengthen the quality of your session. Your cooperation in working with the Committee on recommended changes is required to assure acceptance of your session for the final program.

POLICY ON FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR PARTICIPANTS IN THE CONFERENCE

The WMA is a non-profit professional service organization that welcomes participation from individuals interested in making professional contributions to their peers. The willingness of individuals to give their time and expertise to this effort ensures that the Annual Meeting continues to be affordable to the widest possible audience. Thus, WMA does not provide remuneration or travel reimbursement to any moderators or speakers participating in conference sessions. **In exchange for this service to the profession, a discount for the entire Annual Meeting registration fee is offered.** Presenters are welcome to apply to the [Wanda Chin Scholarship](#) if they are applicable.

POLICY ON CONSULTANTS AND FOR-PROFIT SERVICE PROVIDERS PROPOSING SESSIONS

WMA encourages session proposals from company representatives and private consultants. However, the following policies and counsel ensure that these sessions are effective:



2015 Annual Meeting Proposal Guidelines

- 1) Your session must address an issue or topic in an objective manner. During your session, it is OK to present your work, but it must be done in a manner that addresses a broad context and avoids specifically endorsing your business. If you are unsure of how to accomplish this, please feel free to contact the WMA with questions and concerns to help develop your proposal.
- 2) It is strongly preferred that a museum professional (preferably not a client) serve as the session moderator, while you serve as a speaker.
- 3) Your session panel should not consist only of yourself and your clients. This composition does not represent a truly objective session. If you have difficulty finding panelists outside of your client list, you are strongly encouraged to indicate this on your session form (Section 1.D), and the Program Committee can help suggest additional panelists that are knowledgeable about your topic.
- 4) No payment of professional fees will be paid to any consultant or for-profit service provider for facilitating or presenting in a session or workshop. It is expected that all Annual Meeting participants donate their time and expertise to the program.

WHEN WILL WE CONTACT YOU?

The Program Committee will review session proposals in early January 2015. You will be notified by January 31, 2015 if your session has received **preliminary approval**. The Program Committee member assigned to your session will contact you directly to follow up with any recommendations.

At that point you will be asked to:

- 1) Submit a final list of speakers (all speakers must be confirmed at this time)
- 2) Submit a clarification of details in your session description, including a rewrite of the description for final copy. This material will be due to the Program Committee by February 6, 2015.

The Program Committee will give a final vote on sessions in February 2015. While the majority of sessions considered at this time are generally accepted, others are not, due to unresolved issues, new concerns, or other reasons.

Proposers will be notified by March 6, 2015 if the session has received a **final approval** by the Program Committee. The proposer will be responsible for notifying your speakers of the final approval.

HOW DO WE SCHEDULE THE CONFIRMED SESSIONS?

The Program Committee will develop a preliminary session schedule in February 2015. Efforts are made to balance offerings throughout the Annual Meeting, avoid scheduling sessions with similar topics at the same time, and stack speakers presenting in multiple sessions. Because of the complexity of scheduling 40+ sessions and the need to ensure the ideal schedule to create an enticing and relevant conference program, **WMA is unable to accommodate individual speakers' requests to present on a certain day or time**. When the Program Committee asks you to confirm session speakers in late January for final submission, you must also confirm that they are able to present on any conference day, and a day earlier if it you propose a pre-conference workshop.

Proposers, moderators, and presenters will receive the final schedule by April 30, 2015 with your session confirmation notification.

**Thank you for participating in the professional development
of your colleagues!**