Submission Guidelines

Texas Association of Museums

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CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The Texas Association of Museums is seeking session and workshop proposals for the Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting is attended by museum professionals from across the state, representing museums and cultural organizations of all types and sizes. TAM Annual Meeting owes its success to the creativity, skill, and hard work of the TAM Program Committee and TAM staff. Working together, the committee develops an Annual Meeting program that is balanced, substantive, and designed to meet the professional development needs of the TAM membership. The Program Committee is responsible for harnessing the creative tension between different styles and levels of experience—beginner vs. advanced; technical vs. theoretical; hands on vs. lecture; programmatic vs. administrative—and reaching a balanced mix.

Content areas include: (A) Administration; (R) External Affairs; (EX) Exhibitions; (C) Collections Management; (E) Education/Outreach; (L) Leadership Management

WHAT IS THE PROGRAM COMMITTEE LOOKING FOR?

Each year, program committee receives more proposals than it can accept. A limited number of spaces are available, and proposals will be evaluated for learner outcomes, speaker expertise, and attendee value. Program committee is looking for proposals that include the following:

- Relevant topics that meet professional development needs of attendees.
- Practical and relevant examples and how to apply lessons learned in sessions.
- Include audience participation and discussion.
- Encourage different perspectives on current events, issues, and topics.
- Relevant to a diverse range of disciplines, cultural perspectives, geographic locations and/or museum size.

Proposals may NOT be accepted based on the following criteria:
- Narrow – Topic is too narrowly focused to have broad appeal.
- Underdeveloped – Topic did not offer new insights or innovation in the area.
- Unclear – Proposal description lacks clarity and/or specificity.
- Lacking Diversity – Proposal content lacks applicability to a diverse range of disciplines, cultural perspectives, geographic locations and/or museum size.

Features of a Good Session

· **Audience Participation** - Audience participation is highly valued.
· **Handouts** - Participants like handouts, printed copies of power points, and other resource materials.
· **Fresh perspectives** - Search out new members of the Texas museum community to participate on panels.
· **Different perspectives** - Include a broad range of perspectives. Ie., instead of including three collection managers on a panel, include a scholar, a collection manager, and an educator. Participants with different points of view that represent a variety of museum sizes and disciplines are important.
· **Controversy/Current issues** - If the session topic embraces a legitimate controversy, discuss it. Focused controversy enlivens the process.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

· **How do I submit my proposal?** Proposals are submitted through the TAM website portal.
· **Do I have to register for the conference if my proposal is accepted?** Yes, accepted speakers receive discounted registration for the conference. If the proposal is accepted, presenters will receive complimentary registration for the day they are scheduled to present. Additionally, presenters may select an option to receive $100 off the discounted rate to attend the full conference.
· **Can I submit more than one proposal?** Yes, you can submit multiple proposals. If possible, please fill out the proposal as much as possible. Check with your panelists to ensure they are available to participate in your proposed session.
· **When do I need to complete my submission?** Session proposals are due August 15.
· **When will I find out if my proposal has been accepted?** All submitters and speakers will be notified via email in Fall of 2025.

· **I can't attend in person, can I present virtually?** We are considering virtual presentations on a case-by-case basis
· **What will be in my session room?** Session rooms will come equipped with a projector, PC laptop, wireless slide advancer with laser pointer, and podium with microphone. Please indicate any additional needs for your presentation, including access to WiFi. Special A/V requests are not guaranteed, but an effort will be made dependent on availability and cost.

· **How will my proposal be evaluated?** During the first round of evaluation, your proposal will go through a blind peer- reviewed submission and review process. The review teams will evaluate each proposal and make selection recommendations through consensus.

- o Evaluations are based on:
  - Articulated, defined, and developed content.
  - Clear, relevant learning objectives that are audience appropriate.
  - Diverse perspectives – a range of disciplines (history, art, science, etc.), and diverse contexts (multicultural, international, museum size, etc.).
  - Engaging content and/or experiences – sessions that encourage audience engagement and meaningful experiences are highly valued.

During the second round of evaluation, proposals that receive the highest scores will be further evaluated by Program Committee for inclusion in the Annual Meeting program.

· **How should I deliver my presentation?** Submitters will be asked to select from one of the following session formats:

- o **Workshop** - Three-hour deep dive into a topic. Workshops teach special skills in a small group setting and may be held at the conference venue or suitable off-site location. Successful workshops are led by experts and focus on practical topics that are participatory or interactive. Based on the content of the workshop, limits for minimum or maximum enrollment may be put in place. Proposals should be specific about the skills the workshop will teach, as well as methods and techniques instructors will use. Workshops may include more than two presenters. Presenters are responsible for handouts.
- o **Lecture** - Sixty-minute presentation with one or more presenters. Q&A to follow.
- o **Panel** - The most common format, panels feature a chair and 1-3 speakers. Panels are 60 minute presentations with a moderator facilitating a discussion with 1-3 panelists. Q&A to follow. Moderators do not serve as panelists.
- o **Debate** - This format involves lively speakers with well-developed ideas who can present opposing views and then open the debate to everyone. Requires a skilled moderator.
- o **Burst** - Twenty-five minute fast-paced presentation that breaks down information into easily digestible and engaging content. Q&A to follow.
- o **Case Study** - Thirty-minute presentation focusing on a real or hypothetical situation or problem. Purpose of presentation is inviting participants to discuss potential solutions and outcomes. Two case studies will be combined into an unmoderated sixty-minute session.

o **Guest speaker** - Spotlights a current topic with a dynamic speaker. Q&A to follow.

o **Roundtable Discussion** - Roundtables give participants the ability to learn a variety of topics from a range of panelists. These sessions may include 3-5 panelists, who occupy a table and present content, and are led by a session moderator who instructs participants when to switch tables. Participants move from table to table every ten or fifteen minutes, based on the number of panelists.

o **Poster Sessions** - Students are encouraged to submit poster sessions. These sessions represent engaging ideas and content produced by students across the state.

Developing Your Proposal

Step 1: Go to:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdGsXyv7peuCRf52ICNPShgVDZKRhNUIvSM4KemLdAE1n8F-A/viewform

Step 2: You will be asked to provide some or all of the below information:

- Your Contact information
- At least three specific learning objectives for session participants. Well-developed learning outcomes are participant-oriented, observable, measurable, and achievable. Describe the skills, knowledge, and/or learning outcomes participants will be able to demonstrate because of this session. *See Appendix B – Writing Learning Objectives*
- Select up to two Pathways. Your submission will be reviewed according to the pathway you select. If your proposal is accepted, your proposal will only appear in the track that the program committee selected it for. *See Appendix C - Pathway Definitions*
- Select Level of Expertise. Is your session geared towards museum professionals at a stage in their career? The levels you select should be appropriate for your idea.
- Define your target audience.
- Session Abstract for program (500 characters maximum) - Please consider your session description carefully. Make sure it clearly states the topic, what knowledge you expect attendees to gain, and how they will be able to apply that knowledge after attending your session.
- Detailed Session Description. The full session description may be up to 2500 characters describing your proposed topic. Please describe the major themes, challenges, lessons learned, and practical applications for other organizations/entities. Include description of intended audience. Be as complete as possible to allow the review committee to fully understand the scope and goals of your session.
- Desired Session Format. *See Appendix A - Session Formats*

- Session Chair First Name, Last Name, Email, and Role.
- Confirmed Panelists First Name, Last Name, Email, and Role, if known.

Step 3: Submit Your Proposal by August 15, 2025 at 11:59 PM CST

Scoring System

All session proposals will be reviewed and scored during the first meeting of the TAM Program Committee using a 20-point scale. Those with the top scores will move on to a second round of review completed by the second face-to-face meeting of the TAM Program Committee. These rankings will be used by the Committee to select sessions for the final program. Reviewers will rate proposals using the following scoring system:

Max Value Criteria

4 - Speakers demonstrate knowledge and the ability to present material in an effective and meaningful way.

3 - Learning objectives are clear, relevant to the topic, and audience appropriate.

4 - Proposed session provides attendees with relevant, timely, and applicable content.

2 - Proposed session aligns with the specified format and length.

3 - Proposed session offers diverse perspectives to a range of disciplines (history, art, science, etc.), and diverse contexts (multicultural, international, museum size, etc).

4 - I would recommend this session to an attendee interested in the subject matter.

Speaker Policies

TAM requires that all session speakers register for the annual meeting in order to achieve an accurate count and obtain accurate contact information.

    a) Speakers who attend only their session or the day that their session is being presented do not pay registration fee but must register before the end of the early bird rate. Speakers are required to pay for other ticketed events for that day. If presenting on multiple days, they must pay at minimum the $100 day rate.

    b) Speakers who register for ticketed events, tours, workshops, or any other portions of the conference pay regular registration fees.

    c) Speakers who pay the complete registration fee will receive a $100 discount if registered before the end of the early bird rate.

    d) TAM does not offer speaker honoraria. Occasionally, a session might be underwritten by an affinity group or regional group.

    e) TAM does not cover travel expenses for session speakers.

    f)   TAM provides lunch and/or event tickets to speakers at the discretion of TAM staff.

    g) Vendors and Consultants. Museum vendors and consultants may serve as speakers. However, it is important that they share their expertise and not use their presentation as an overt way to promote their services.

h) Representatives of professional service organizations. TAM may waive registration fees on a case-by-case basis for individuals affiliated with organizations that support the museum field, such as AAM, AASLH, IMLS, TCA, Humanities Texas, THC, NEH, M-AAA, NSF, and other similar service organizations.

i) Keynote and General Session Speakers will be handled separately by TAM staff.

j) VIP comps and host community officials will be handled separately by TAM staff.

Review Process Timeline

· Presentation Submission Deadline - August 15, 2025
· TAM Program Committee Reviews and Rates Presentations (Virtual Meeting) - August - September
· TAM Program Committee Develops Final Program (Virtual Meeting) - September - October
· TAM Program Committee Submits Final Accepted Proposals to VP PC – October - November
· Submitters Receive Notification - October - November
· TAM Annual Meeting – April

APPENDIX A - SESSION FORMATS

Lecture: A 60-minute presentation with one or more presenters (includes Q&A).
Panel: The most common format, the panel features a chair and 1-3 speakers. A 60-minute presentation with a moderator facilitating a discussion (includes Q&A). Moderators cannot serve as panelists.

Debate: This format involves lively speakers with well-developed ideas who can present opposing views and then open the debate to everyone. Requires a skilled moderator.

Burst: A 25 minute fast-paced presentation that breaks down information into more digestible and engaging content (includes Q&A).

Case Study: A 30-minute presentation focusing on a real or hypothetical situation or problem that invites participants to discuss potential solutions and outcomes. Two case studies will be combined into an unmoderated hour-long session.

Roundtable Discussion: With tables set around the room, a discussion guide leads a conversation on a specific topic.

Poster Session: These sessions capture the best in big thinking from the TAM community. Learn about the latest projects through interactives, posters, and all kinds of formats that showcase innovation.

Lightning Talk: This is where each speaker has five minutes and 20 automatically-advancing slides. Submissions will be evaluated on the following: Brevity, fresh perspective, sense of performance, an understanding of the format.

Workshop: A 3-hour deep dive into a topic. Workshops teach special skills in a small group setting and may be held at the conference venue or suitable off-site location. Successful workshops are led by experts, are on practical topics, and are participatory or interactive. The workshop may set a limit for minimum or maximum enrollment. Proposals should be specific about the skills the workshop will teach, as well as methods and techniques instructors will use. Workshops may include more than two presenters. Presenters are responsible for handouts.

Guest speaker: Spotlights a timely topic with a dynamic speaker, leaving time for Q&A.

APPENDIX B - WRITING LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Basic
presents introductory concepts and general understanding of the topic; learners have minimal to no prerequisite knowledge and limited previous experience with course material.

Learning objectives might include the
words...
define; describe; examine; identify; label; list; match; name; read; recall; recognize; record; reproduce; select; state; tell; view; write

Intermediate
presents detailed, in-depth materials and instruction; learners have some prerequisite knowledge and the course provides the ability to apply information to practice.

Learning objectives might include the
words...
analyze; assess; associate; classify; cite; contrast; compare; describe; differentiate; discuss; distinguish; estimate; explain; generalize; give examples; interpret; paraphrase; estate; select; summarize

Advanced
presents sufficient material and opportunities to gain new knowledge, practice application, apply information, and complete a definitive action; learners have pre-existing knowledge and experience applying this information to practice.

Learning objectives might include the
words...
apply; articulate; assess; calculate; change; chart; classify; compute; construct; control; create; demonstrate; design; determine; develop; establish; illustrate; implement; instruct; interview; operationalize; participate; prepare; produce; project; provide; report; select; show; solve; teach; transfer; use; utilize

Expert
presents detailed training on specific topics with opportunities to be fully engaged with materials and activities, and to demonstrate a mastery of content through coursework; learners have extensive prior knowledge or experience with the topic.

Learning objectives might include the
words…
analyze; appraise; assess; break down; calculate; categorize; classify; compare; conclude; connect; construct; contrast; correlate; decide; design; develop; diagram; differentiate; discriminate; distinguish; evaluate; explain; focus; judge; justify; illustrate; infer; integrate; limit; measure; modify; outline; plan; point out; predict; prioritize; produce; rank; rate; rearrange; research; rewrite; select; separate; subdivide; substitute; validate

APPENDIX C - PATHWAY DEFINITIONS

(A) Administration;
Addresses issues related to the day-to-day management of people, projects, and money in museums including: analytics and assessment; digital systems and program strategy; digital readiness; disaster preparedness; earned revenue strategies; environmental sustainability and green teams; facilities management; financial sustainability; legal; management and administration; operations and infrastructure; philanthropy: development, membership and all aspects of fundraising; project management; recruiting, orienting and training staff, volunteers and interns; risk management and resilience planning; security; strategy and operations; succession planning; workforce/workplace issues.

(R) External Relations;
Addresses communications, marketing and external relations: audience development and engagement; climate action; community engagement/impact for small organizations; community programs; community relations; collaboration/partnership with community organizations; data analytics; digitization, access and sustainability; environmental sustainability; evaluation methods and practices; grant funded projects; marketing and communications; user-testing and prototyping; visitor services/studies; volunteer recruitment, training and management; websites, social media, apps, in-gallery media.

(EX) Exhibitions;
Addresses all aspects of planning and developing real and virtual exhibitions including: audience and community engagement; community engagement; cross-functional planning teams; content development; developing off-site and traveling exhibits; diversity and inclusion; exhibition evaluation methodology and practices; exhibition digital technology; exhibits in small organizations; environment, media, and graphic design; exhibition project management; experience and interactive design, user testing, and prototyping; fabrication/production materials, methods and budgets; global perspectives; interpretive planning and experience development; label writing and editing; managing the design process and client expectations; sustainable materials/design; universal design and accessibility.

(C) Collections Management;
Addresses collections issues including: accession and deaccession practices, cataloging, and collections management systems; care and conservation; collections strategies for small organizations; cultural property and repatriation/restitution copyright and reproduction; digital/physical conservation and preservation; digitization and access; diversity sensitivity training; environmental sustainability; international, ethical, legal and tax issues relating to collections; loans; planning, management and documentation; preservation standards and ethics; transportation/cargo screening issues; weather event and climate preparedness.

(E) Education/Outreach;
Addresses: data analytics; educational technology; equity, accessibility and inclusion; education and interpretation in small organizations; environmental sustainability; evaluation and assessment; interpretive planning; formal education connections; grant funded programs; live performances and demonstrations; programmatic design; tours, classes, workshops; visitor studies; volunteer recruitment, training and management.

(L) (Leadership Management);
Addresses issues pertaining to executive leadership including: board development and management; strategic thinking/vision/ planning; mission; institutional planning; strategic

financial resource allocation; building organizational culture; organizational/staff structure; ethics; advocacy; succession planning; leading and/or managing change; infrastructure vision/planning (expansion, new construction); risk assessment in decision-making; organizational communications; crisis management; strategic partnerships/outreach.