2023 Affiliations Virtual Conference Proposal Guidelines
October 31 – November 2, 2023
PROPOSALS DUE JULY 3, 2023

Email affiliates@si.edu with any questions relating to the 2023 Affiliations Virtual Conference.

2023 Conference Theme: *Fostering Conversations on Questions that Matter*

Core to the work of Smithsonian Affiliations is catalyzing public engagement, sparking curiosity and learning, and ultimately inspiring a deeper understanding of our world and how it can be changed for the better. We know that to make this kind of change, we have to start—and continue—to have conversations with our audiences, our stakeholders, our colleagues, and ourselves. We have to commit to looking deep within our organizations to amplify untold or neglected perspectives, experiences, and stories of people and communities, and be sure they are represented in all that we do. This is ongoing work, and at the 2023 Smithsonian Affiliations Virtual Conference, we will come together to hear from different and diverse perspectives sharing the ways we are all fostering conversations around questions that matter.

Smithsonian Affiliates and Smithsonian colleagues are invited to join us over three, half-days of sessions and workshops that can lead to new ideas and rich collaborations. The relationships we build when our Affiliate and Smithsonian colleagues share their work often results in projects that reach new and greater audiences and provide a platform for initiating important and often crucial conversations.

**Proposal Overview:**
The Program Committee seeks proposals that share successes and challenges, opportunities for collaboration, resource sharing, and brainstorming about your work with programs, education, exhibitions, research, collections, administration, policy, fundraising, communications, and more. Questions to ask yourself as you develop your session and/or workshop idea:

- What are the conversations you are having, or should be having—internally and externally—to be more intentional in your work?

- Who is driving the conversation?

- How are you having these conversations?

- How are conversations with your stakeholders informing your work?

We especially encourage proposals that incorporate issues of **diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion (DEAI)** and illustrate ways in which Affiliates and the Smithsonian are leveraging the American Alliance of Museums’ [Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#).
Only current Smithsonian Affiliates and Smithsonian staff may submit proposals. Each session must have an organizer responsible for identifying and confirming speakers and coordinating logistics with the Smithsonian Affiliations conference planner. All presenters must be available to present on any conference day or time until final session agenda is confirmed. Sessions may be pre-recorded, but speakers must be available for Q&A on the date the session is scheduled. All sessions and workshops will take place within a Zoom meeting.

Session types:

60 Minute session
Sessions should include one chair or moderator (who can also serve as a speaker) and up to three other speakers. Panelists should tackle a common theme, topic, or question, but provide contrasting perspectives and represent varied institutions. Presenters should allow time for Q&A. Successful panels will offer key takeaways or lessons learned for participants. Pre-recorded sessions are allowed, presenters are responsible for recording and submitting presentations. Presenters must be available for live Q &A if choosing to pre-record.

Session with Breakout Room: If using breakout rooms, there must be an assigned facilitator from the speaking panel in each room to lead conversation. Breakout rooms will not be allowed without facilitation by speakers. The session will be produced like a regular zoom meeting with the ability to see the audience and use the zoom chat and polls functions.

Session without Breakout Room: If no breakout rooms will be used, the session will be set up as a normal Zoom meeting.

Workshop (90 minutes)
A limited number of workshop spots will be available in 2023. Please consider if your proposal can also be effective as a 60-minute session. Presenters demonstrate tools and resources to help participants perform their jobs more effectively. Presenters immerse the audience in their work. These sessions are highly interactive and demonstrate specific ideas, applications, and/or outcomes. These sessions provide a hands-on experience that involves the conference participants in in-depth and active learning. Because they are longer than other session types, there will be fewer workshops than other sessions. Breakout rooms may be used in this session structure; however, presenters must have staff in each room to help facilitate discussion. The session description must indicate breakout rooms will be used and what will happen in each.

Writing and submitting your session proposal
Please submit fully developed and clear proposals; unclear or incomplete proposals are less likely to be accepted. The Program Committee reserves the right to make changes to any session proposal or speaker list if they feel it will strengthen the quality of your session.
Proposals must be submitted online through the Smithsonian Affiliations website. Please note: You cannot save and return to the form once you have started your session proposal. Session proposals are due by CLOSE OF BUSINESS (5 pm ET) on MONDAY, JULY 3, 2023.

Additional Information:
Registration Fees & Cost—Registration will be waived for Speakers if they are ONLY attending the session they are leading. If the individual would like to attend any additional sessions, the speaker must register for at least one day of the Conference. You are encouraged to take advantage of the opportunities available and register for the full Conference. A reduced rate will be offered for speakers from Affiliate organizations. Presenters are welcome to apply for Smithsonian Affiliations Conference Scholarships if they are applicable. Smithsonian staff may attend the conference at no cost.

Scheduling Sessions—Smithsonian Affiliations conference planning staff will assign all session times and dates. Submission of a proposal indicates your willingness to accept the schedule as assigned during any day of the Conference (October 31 - November 2). You may request a specific date or time; however, we cannot guarantee that we can honor all requests.

When will you be contacted after submitting a proposal?
The Program Committee will review session proposals in July 2023. You will be notified on or around August 11 if your session has been accepted. At this point you may be asked to:

- Confirm your participation
- Submit a final list of speakers
- Clarify any details in your session description or provide more information for the session description.
- Combine your session with another if the Review Committee feels a session would be stronger with combined content

How will sessions be scheduled?
The Smithsonian Affiliations conference planning team will develop a tentative schedule which balances offerings throughout the Conference. When you confirm your session, you must also confirm that you and all of your speakers are able to present on any conference day or time.

Information Required for the Conference Proposal

Gather the following information before beginning the online form. You cannot save and return to the form once you have started your session proposal.

Proposer Information
- Name
- Title
- Organization Name
- Mobile Phone number
- Email
Session Information

- Clear Session Title
- Session Description (Maximum of 200 words)
- Additional Speakers/Discussion Leaders

Format (You'll need to choose one format. See descriptions above).
- 60 minute Session
- Workshop (90 minutes)
- Informal pre- or post- Conference gathering

Intended Audience (Select all that apply. If we have missed anything, please use the “other” option as well.)
- All staff at an organization
- Directors/CEOs
- Marketing, Membership, and Development
- Educators
- Curators and Collections managers
- Exhibit Developers/Designers
- Intern/Volunteer Managers
- Operations/security

Session Detail
Describe your session idea in more detail. What will happen during your session? Use the prompt questions below to guide your description. (Be sure to include your strategies for audience engagement and participation. If using breakout rooms, be specific about how those will be facilitated. If applicable, please also detail how you will highlight opportunities for collaboration—between your organization and Affiliates and/or the Smithsonian)

- How does this foster conversations?
- What are the conversations you are having, or should be having—internally and externally—to be more intentional in your work?
- Who is driving the conversation? Who is missing from the conversation?
- How are you having these conversations?
- How are conversations with your stakeholders informing your work?
- What are the lessons that can be learned?
- Is this scalable? How can this be applied to an attendee’s work? What tools are you using?
- How has this project/idea sparked change (meaning, how has it helped you/your team rethink how you work)?

Additional Information
- Use this space to include any additional information such as a particular date preference for your session or any other information that you feel may help clarify any details.
Consent to Record

When submitting your proposal, you will be asked to agree to having your session recorded. Below is a copy of the terms. If you have any questions with regard to them, please email affiliates@si.edu.

If my proposal is accepted, I understand the Smithsonian intends to record the Affiliations Conference sessions (“Event”) and webcast and publicly share the recording, for example on its websites following the conference. In consideration of the opportunity to speak at the Event, I agree to the following terms and conditions:

1. I hereby give permission to the Smithsonian, and those authorized by the Smithsonian, to film, photograph, and otherwise record me, my name, likeness, voice, image, and any statements I make during the Event and any audiovisual materials (e.g., video, audio, music, photography, etc.) that I provide in advance of or present at the Event (the “Recordings”), and to use, edit, cut, duplicate, publish, distribute, publicly display or publicly perform the Recordings, in whole or in part, in any media now known or later developed (including but not limited to exhibitions, education, online, public programs, publications or promotions), in perpetuity and worldwide, without further notification or approval. I give these rights without any expectation of compensation and on an irrevocable basis.

2. I represent that the content that I contribute to the Recordings, or in advance of the Recordings (e.g., head shot or bio) is original and either that: (a) I am the owner of all rights, including but not limited to copyright, in all the audiovisual materials provided or presented; or (b) if a third party owns rights in some of the audiovisual materials incorporated in my presentation or materials provided, I have a license from the rights owner(s) to use such audiovisual materials as described in paragraph 1 and I have provided a copy of such license to the Smithsonian, if requested; or (c) my use of third party materials qualifies as a fair use within the meaning of U.S. copyright law and I have provided relevant information to the Smithsonian about such third party content (please see www.copyright.gov/fls/fl102.html for considerations and limitations on claiming fair use).

3. I release and hold harmless the Smithsonian from any claim, action, or demand arising out of the Smithsonian’s use of the Recordings, my name, likeness, voice, statements, image, biographic or other information, and/or my audiovisual materials, as permitted under this Agreement.

4. I will notify the Smithsonian promptly if, due to an emergency, I am unable to participate in the Event. I understand also that the Smithsonian will notify me if circumstances prompt a change to or cancellation of the Event at any time, and such will not give rise to any claims.