



This Session Matters: A Guide to Education Session Proposals

Do you have a cutting-edge idea or concept? Are you involved with a first-rate project? Are you making advances in fields related to preservation? If so, then we want you to submit a proposal for an education session for the 2012 National Preservation Conference in Spokane, Washington.

We seek challenging session content that addresses critical preservation issues; offers cutting-edge strategies and models; raises provocative questions about preservation practice and values; and identifies new and unexplored preservation trends. Our audience is made up of diverse experienced and emerging preservation leaders who appreciate lively, interactive sessions, with strong take-aways. They come to the National Preservation Conference to hone and refresh existing competencies, learn new skills, and be exposed to new ideas and networks. Sessions that present multiple case studies, meaningful audience participation or exercises, opportunities for role playing, and access to particular kinds of expertise are most welcome.

Preservation Priorities

This year we are asking that sessions be developed with the following preservation priorities in mind: Building Sustainable Communities, Reimagining Historic Sites, Promoting Diversity and Place, and Protecting Historic Places on Public Lands. Below you will find a brief description of each theme and some sample topics to use as a guideline for creating your session proposal. These sub-topics are meant to help you in the creative process, not to limit your thinking, so please use them as a guide only.

Building Sustainable Communities: How historic preservation supports economic, environmental and cultural sustainability in communities.

1. Defining sustainability and its relationship to preservation.
2. Barriers that impede building reuse.
3. Incentivizing sustainable practices that support preservation and reuse.

4. Practical messaging: what every preservationist needs to know when talking about sustainability.
5. Case studies from Main Street communities.
6. Other issues relating to Main Street.
7. Effective partnerships with environmental groups.
8. Quantifying the environmental value/impact of preservation.

Reimagining Historic Sites: Innovative, replicable strategies that create new models for historic site interpretation and stewardship.

1. New Business Models, perhaps a review of several examples.
2. Broadening stories – new stories at existing sites.
3. Historic sites that are developing and modeling good preservation practices.
4. Developing economic impact statements for historic sites.
5. Case study of sites that have tried innovative programming and/or business models and the results over time.

Promoting Diversity and Place: How we help people in diverse communities save places that matter to them.

1. How communities can begin to plan for the preservation of their cultural resources.
2. Impact of climate on Alaskan, Hawaiian and other Native American resources.
3. How ethnic/cultural turnover changes the significance of places.
4. Native American cultural resource protection case studies.

Protecting Historic Places on Public Lands: How we identify, protect, and interpret historic and cultural sites controlled by government agencies .

1. Impact of renewable energy on cultural resources.
2. The Wilderness Act's implications for cultural resources.
3. How majority peoples view landscape vs. how Native Americans view a landscape
4. The cases for and against removal of dams and other structures to restore habitat.

Session Formats

Most education sessions run 90-minutes, but some may lend themselves to a “double block”, or two-part format. Choose a session format from among the following that best suits your topic, educational objectives, and speakers.

Inspire

Modeled loosely on the Pecha Kucha®* concept or popular “Three Minute Success Stories,” this type of session can quickly and compellingly raise important issues and questions. Several speakers can be asked to produce an “Inspire” image deck around a particularly topic. For such a session to be

successful, speakers should be very well rehearsed and stick to the format and time allotted. (*A speaker speaks for 20 seconds each about 20 images that progress automatically for a total of 7 or so minutes)

Good vs. Good

Often efforts to preserve an historic resource appear to be in conflict with other worthy goals such as environmental protection, economic development, or energy efficiency. Good vs. Good sessions should look at cases where equally valuable goals are successfully addressed or conflicts between such goals adequately resolved.

Single speaker

While we tend to prefer sessions that offer a variety of views and examples as in the case of Panels, some topics lend themselves to a single speaker who is either singularly knowledgeable, or extremely engaging. Proposals that call for a single speaker should include references to the expertise, experience and talent of the presenter as a public speaker.

Panel

A very common session format, the Panel allows for the presentation of several points of view and/or examples. Panels work best when the speakers are asked to coordinate their remarks and where a strong moderator can tie the presentations together, manage questions, and guide discussion.

Interview Style

Rather than offering individual presentations, a panel of experts can be convened to answer questions that explicate a certain topic. In these cases, questions should be prepared by the “interviewer” ahead of time, but the interviewer can also accept written questions from the audience.

Debate

In an election year we may all be tired of debates, but this format can offer a lively way to present two sides of an issue. We will look for clearly defined opposing positions, and the recommendation of a strong moderator who can set an appropriate tone of respect, and ask thoughtful questions that allow both sides sufficient opportunity to make their points.

Role Playing

This format can offer a way to simulate various preservation related activities such as Historic District Commission meetings, advocacy visits, press conferences and the like, as a way to show best practices and identify pitfalls. It also allows an opportunity to show the rights, responsibilities, and roles of various preservation actors such as the State Historic Preservation Officer, property owner, citizen activist, etc...

Double Block or Series

Some educational topics or training sessions may require more time. This is especially true when the presenter offers break-out sessions or hands-on activities that aid the learning. We also find that it is

sometimes desirable to break down particularly dense material into several parts. You can also offer content in a sequential format where one session builds on another.

In all cases, we encourage the provision of meaningful audience participation, compelling real world examples, and opportunities for identifiable take-aways.

IMPORTANT REMINDER: All education session content should target experienced and emerging preservation leaders (professional and volunteer) and be appropriate for an advanced audience.

The Role of the Moderator

(Adapted from 12 Guidelines for Great Panel Discussions: Advice for Event Organizers and Moderators by Scott Kirsner, <http://www.scottkirsner.com/panels.htm>)

Every panel needs a strong moderator. Because the role of the moderator is very different from the role of a panelist, we do not recommend having one of your speakers serve as moderator. Choose an experienced moderator who understands the subject matter, knows the panelists, and is able to set aside his/her own opinions and knowledge. Moderators are there to make the speakers look good and make sure that they connect with the audience. Moderators also need an innate sense of pacing (how long each panelist should talk, and how long she should dedicate to each topic before moving on) and a smooth approach to weaving in questions from the audience.

There is a very delicate balance between a moderator who talks too much and one who doesn't talk enough. Be clear with your moderator that you asking them to run the show which will mean introducing the speakers, teeing up the discussion, and managing any questions and discussion that may follow the presentation.

Suggestions for Selecting Speakers

- Try to limit speakers no more than three per 90-minute session, in addition to the session manager/moderator. Fewer speakers are often adequate, as that leaves more time for discussion and audience participation.
- Contact proposed speakers to determine if they are willing to present on the selected topic before submitting this proposal. They should understand that it is sometimes necessary to merge proposals and that not all sessions and/or speakers can be accepted.
- Choose talented speakers who are experts in the field and who can effectively communicate their message to a variety of audiences. Seek new speakers instead of relying on the "known expert."
- Session moderators are key to the success of the program, Choose a moderator who has experience handling large audiences and who can encourage discussion and questions from the audience, while at the same time keeping discussion focused and relevant.

Learning Objectives

Your education session proposal must include four learning objectives to meet the requirements for AIA and AICP continuing education. Learning objectives for the National Preservation Conference will generally center around the following:

1. The acquisition of specific skills or knowledge that can be applied directly to preservation activities.
2. Foundational information about resources types -- their history, composition and significance -- and/or strategies for their preservation.
3. Information and research findings that help activists make the case for historic preservation.
4. Strategies for identifying new partnerships and innovative collaborations to save historic resources.

We ask that all learning objectives be specific, tangible, and measurable. Here are few prompts that should help you craft your objectives.

- Participants will gain knowledge of best practices regarding
- Participants will practice specific skills of....
- Participants will leave with tangible resources for future reference, including: ...
- Participants will be able to apply knowledge and skills to ...
- Participants will create...
- Participants will evaluate the strengths and challenges of...

Proposal Review and Selection

Education session proposals are reviewed by a national selection committee and may be combined when appropriate with other proposed sessions. Session proposals will be judged by the following criteria:

1. Relevance to preservation.
2. Ability to meet stated education objectives.
3. Contains challenging content.
4. Offers cutting-edge strategies and models.
5. Is advanced enough to meet the education needs of experienced or emerging preservation leaders.
6. Reconfirms and strengthens existing knowledge or offers training in new skills or exposure to new ideas.
7. Speakers have the experience, knowledge and talent to present the information in a compelling way.
8. The session format chosen lends itself to achieving the objectives of the session.

Responsibilities of the Session Manager/Submitter

As the session manager, you will be asked to affirm that you have done the following before finalizing your submission:

- Watched the brief (16 minute) mandatory webinar entitled "This Session Matters;"

- Followed the guidelines provided in this document that you are reading
- Designed a session that incorporates audience participation;
- Identified appropriate speakers and confirmed their availability before submitting the proposal
- Planned to manage the speakers and logistics for the education session, including communicating all session information (time, day, expectations, registration information, etc.) with all speakers, and that you will be in attendance at the session;
- You have endeavored to design an education session that is well conceived, engaging, and provides ample opportunities for attendees to interact with presenters;
- You have selected the session format and speakers that can best convey the information I want to convey and best achieve the educational objectives of the session;
- Pledged that, if your session is selected, to take part in a second brief mandatory webinar regarding best practices in session management and presentation;
- Pledged that you will maintain regular contact with speakers in your session and share all NTHP session-related communications with them;
- Should you be unable to fulfill the responsibilities of the session manager, you will appoint another manager rather than cancel the session.

Before you login and begin the submission process, please note that you will be asked for the following during the proposal process:

- Session title
- Target audience
- Session format
- Four learning objectives
- Session description, 100-word limit
- Session manager information, including brief bio
- Session moderator information, including brief bio
- Speaker information, including bio
- Tell us if you've contacted your speakers.
- Tell us if the speaker has spoken at a previous National Preservation Conference, and if so, give the most recent year.

Provided Audio Visual

Although there is no budget provided to cover travel or other speaker expenses, we do provide a laptop, LCD projector and screen, and encourage the use of good audio visual tools. We discourage handouts at the session. Instead, background material and a pdf of a powerpoint and other handouts can be added to the Preservation Nation website for download if available before the conference.

Complimentary Conference Registration for Education Session Managers, Moderators, and Speakers

We are pleased to offer session managers, moderators, and speakers complimentary registration, which includes conference registration and admission to the Opening Reception. Those who wish to attend additional special events, field sessions, and paid workshops must include payment for these events when they register. These additional event expenses are not included in the complimentary registration.

Have a question?

Call the NTHP Conference Office at 202-588-6100 or e-mail conference@nthp.org