



2022 CHESAPEAKE WATERSHED FORUM CALL FOR SESSION PROPOSALS

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: 11:59 PM on Friday, June 3, 2022

BACKGROUND AND THEME

The Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay will hold the 17th Annual Chesapeake Watershed Forum on November 4 - 6, 2022 at the National Conservation Training Center (NCTC) in Shepherdstown, WV. This watershed-wide event reaches up to 400 restoration and conservation practitioners annually to inspire and empower local action towards clean water. We do this by:

- Sharing successful tools and techniques, offering lessons and learnings from on-the-ground work,
- Building the capacity of local organizations,
- Fostering partnerships,
- Educating on new initiatives and emerging practices,
- Facilitating networking with each other, and
- Celebrating our successes.

Our theme for 2022 is “Nature in Your Neighborhood: Connecting Communities to the Outdoors”

Through this year’s theme, we intend to showcase the local benefits of the broader Chesapeake Bay watershed restoration movement. We will elevate tools, examples, and ideas on how to bridge the gap between local communities and their watersheds. In particular, we look for proposals about connections made to nature and the outdoors through recreation, public access, public health, stewardship, environmental education, advocacy and policy. We also will consider the ways historic inequities and biases have prohibited certain populations, notably low income and communities of color, from accessing and connecting with their local waterways. Special attention will be given to proposals that elevate these issues and demonstrate how to address them in a meaningful and lasting way.

A NOTE ON COVID-19

The Alliance intends to hold this conference in-person. **All presenters are expected to present on-site at NCTC in Shepherdstown, WV.** We will closely follow health



and safety protocols as set by the Alliance and our host facility. Based on current guidance, requirements may include:

- Proof of full vaccination and booster to attend in-person.
- Reduced occupancy to promote physical distancing in the classrooms, lodging, and dining hall.
- Staggered meal times, single-use and pre-packaged snacks and utensils, napkins, cups, and disposable dishware.
- Depending on [Community Transmission levels](#) in Jefferson County, WV, optional or mandatory mask wearing while indoors.

Our priority is to host a safe and enjoyable Forum. The Alliance may elect at any time to transition this year's Forum to virtual. In that case, we expect presenters to make requested changes in their sessions to accommodate the virtual format. These accommodations may include shortened session length, pre-recording some sessions, or delaying/canceling any sessions that are ill-suited for the virtual format.

FORUM SESSION GUIDELINES

Proposal Evaluation:

- We will evaluate each proposal using the rubric provided at the end of this document. A maximum possible score is 30 points for 90 and 180 minute sessions, 25 points for 60 minute sessions.
- We aim to serve our entire Forum audience by offering balanced content tailored to three different knowledge/experience levels:
 - Introductory or Early Career: 100 college course level or less than 5 year professional experience;
 - Intermediate or Mid-Career: 200 – 400 college course level or 5+ years professional experience; or
 - Advanced or Late Career: Graduate level or 10+ years professional experience.

Please select the knowledge/experience level that best reflects your target audience when submitting your proposal. If you feel strongly that your session transcends a specific experience level, you may submit your proposal without selecting one.

- More than one session proposal may be submitted, but each proposal must be submitted separately.

Presenter Expectations:

- One presenter per session will receive free registration to the conference for the day they are presenting. All other presenters must pay their own registration or may apply for a scholarship.
- Speakers are expected to attend a webinar on giving effective and meaningful presentations in September 2022. In the two weeks leading up to the Forum, they must also participate in a virtual run-through of their session with facilitators in preparation for the event.

Specific Guidelines Related to Session Length:

- Sessions are scheduled for 60 minutes, 90 minutes or 180 minutes.
 - **60 minute sessions** spotlight a case study or introduce new, innovative, and/or hot topics.
 - No more than two presenters per 60 minute session will be accepted.
 - 60 minute sessions will not be graded by the participant engagement criteria in the rubric.
 - **90 minute sessions** are in-depth presentations that facilitate discussion and application to activities and organizations at the local level. Panel presentations are discouraged.
 - We strongly encourage no more than three presenters per 90 minute session. Lodging at NCTC is limited, and we do not guarantee presenters will be housed on site. The more presenters in your session, the more likely some will be housed off-site during the Forum.
 - Panel presentations are discouraged.
 - **180 minute sessions** are an opportunity to lead a deeper discussion into a topic of choice about which the presenter(s) have special experience, knowledge, or expertise. 180 minute sessions are well-suited for workshops or field trips.
 - The 180 minute sessions must be held on Saturday, November 5.
 - The 180 minute sessions may occur on or off the NCTC campus. Classroom space, computer labs, and an extensive paved and unpaved trail system are available on the NCTC campus to incorporate into your session. If off campus, travel should be included in the 180 minutes.
 - Please be specific in your proposal about any expected costs (e.g., materials, entrance fees, bus rentals, boat rentals, etc.). The Alliance will work with you to either cover all of the costs associated with your activity or to build in an additional fee for participants to cover remaining expenses.

- Please consider if your session is accessible to people of all abilities and specify in the proposal if there will be any restrictions or limitations (e.g., farm tour requires walking on rough terrain).

SESSION TOPICS TO CONSIDER

The following list includes priority topics for sessions under the key focal areas of the Forum. We also encourage unrelated submissions, especially if the topic is theme-related and creative. However, proposals that relate to the priority topics identified below by the Forum Planning Committee likely will receive a higher ranking than others (see evaluation rubric).

Focal Area	Priority Topics	
Restoration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Agriculture (rural/urban/suburban) ● Riparian forest buffers ● Urban tree canopy ● Emerging green technologies ● Permaculture ● Forest gardening 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Soil health and climate ● Practice maintenance ● Wetlands ● Green stormwater infrastructure ● New Best Management Practices ● Conservation landscaping/design ● Green energy
Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Forest and urban woodland management ● Policies and laws ● Climate resiliency ● Landscape-scale 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Wildlife research/identification ● Chesapeake Bay 101 ● Native plants research/identification
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engaging diverse communities ● Workforce development ● Environmental justice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Traditional ecological knowledge ● Policy change/advocacy ● Collective Impact ● Trauma-informed care
Education and Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Art and the Environment ● Behavior change ● Organizing grassroots campaigns ● Water quality monitoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engaging rural landowners OR absentee landowners OR non-traditional audiences ● Youth engagement ● Ecotherapy
Organizational Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Diversifying funding ● Fundraising ● Introductory grant writing ● Large event planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Navigating multi-generational workspaces ● Volunteer management
Personal Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Advanced leadership training ● Volunteer skill development ● Self-care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Young professional skill development

Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic graphic design • Data interpretation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media engagement • Social media and marketing for small nonprofits
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ONLINE PROPOSAL SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Each proposal must include/answer the following:

- Title of proposed session (6 words or less).
- Under which focal area (see page 3) does your session fall? Which topic will your session focus on?
- A short summary/abstract (100 words or less).
- Describe your target audience, their knowledge and experience level.
- List the practical lessons and/or skills your target audience will take away from this session. Please be specific as to why these are practical lessons and/or skills best suited for the target audience's knowledge/skill level. Are these lessons and/or skills relevant and transferable across sectors? If so, how?
- 90 and 180 minute sessions only: How will you engage participants in your session? Do you intend to share your content beyond the traditional lecture format? If so, how?
- How does your session relate to the theme?
- Does your session address diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice issues in the environmental sector? If so, how?
- Does your presentation include diverse voices? If so, how? Including, but is not limited to, underrepresented communities, unique partnerships, farming/agriculture sector, community groups, etc.
- Is this a 60, 90 or 180 minute session?
- 180 minute sessions only: logistics of session that must include length, maximum number of attendees, cost, accessibility, and any specific equipment/clothing the participants should bring.
- Biography for each presenter (100 words or less).



- Have you presented at the Forum before? If so, how many times?

Where do I go to submit my session proposal?

[Click here](#) to submit your proposal. Please plan to prepare your proposal ahead of submitting your session via the online portal.

For further information or questions about the guidelines, please contact Jenny McGarvey at jmccgarvey@allianceforthebay.org or (804) 977-1657.

Evaluation Criteria	Poor (1 Point)	Fair (2 Points)	Good (3 Points)	Very Good (4 Points)	Excellent (5 Points)
1. Timeliness, importance, and appropriateness of the topic to the field and participants' interests and priorities (based on abstract)	The topic is not current or appropriate to the field or to the Forum participants. I would not attend this session.	The topic is somewhat relevant to the field and/or the Forum participants, but is not current. I probably would not attend this session.	The topic may not be current, but is a priority topic to Forum participants (as noted in the RFP). I may attend this session.	The topic is current, immediately relevant, and important to the field, but it does not focus on a priority topic for Forum participants. I would probably attend this session.	The topic is cutting-edge, relevant, and groundbreaking to the field. It also is a priority topic for Forum participants. I would definitely attend or recommend this session.
2A. Practical Application and Transferability (e.g., skill building, problem solving, action planning) <u>IF PROPOSAL TARGETS A SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE OR EXPERIENCE LEVEL</u>	No stated practical application in the proposal, or no attempt to connect practical applications to their target audience.		The practical applications appear to be for the target audience, but lessons are too broad and/or self-evident to be valuable.		The proposal content illustrates a clear practical application to the target audience. The learning outcomes are novel and important, and participants cannot find similar content elsewhere. It includes valuable resources that a specific set of attendees would highly appreciate.
2B. Practical Application and Transferability <u>IF PROPOSAL IS FOR GENERAL AUDIENCE</u>	No stated practical application in the proposal or the practical applications appear to be for a subset of attendees, not a broad range of participants.		The practical applications appear to be for a broad range of participants, but lessons are too broad and/or self-evident to be valuable.		The proposal content illustrates a clear practical application to a broad range of participants. This content is novel and important, and participants cannot find similar content elsewhere. It includes valuable resources that many an attendee would highly appreciate.
3. Participants' Engagement <u>FOR 90 OR 180 MINUTE SESSIONS ONLY</u>	There is no evidence of meaningful interaction with the participants beyond the traditional lecture format.	The proposal includes some vague or poorly defined activities to engage the participants beyond the traditional lecture format, and/or the activities proposed are inappropriate for the session type and use of time.	The proposal includes at least one clearly defined activity to engage the participants beyond the traditional lecture format, and is appropriate for the session type and use of time.	The proposal includes several clearly defined activities to engage the participants beyond the traditional lecture format, and are appropriate for the session type and use of time.	The proposal includes several clear, compelling, unique, and well-detailed activities to engage the participants, and are appropriate for the session type and use of time.
4. Relevancy to the Forum theme	The topic is not relevant to the Forum theme.	The topic is related only tangentially to the Forum theme.	The topic may not be current or groundbreaking, but is relevant to the Forum theme.	The topic is current, important, and relevant to the Forum theme.	The topic is cutting-edge, relevant, and groundbreaking and relevant to the Forum theme.
5. Proposal addresses DEI/J issues in the environmental sector.	There is no connection made to diversity, equity, inclusion and justice in the proposal.	Connections made to the topic of diversity, equity, inclusion and justice are vague and fail to provide examples, commitment or understanding of the concepts.	The proposal demonstrates some concepts of diversity, equity, inclusion, and environmental justice.	The proposal indicates experience, commitment and willingness to work in DEI/J space but does not include or integrate diverse voices in the proposal content.	The proposal content clearly addresses one or more DEI/J issues in the environmental sector. It also provides examples of successful coordination with underrepresented populations.
6. Presentation includes diverse voices. This includes, but is not limited to underserved communities, unique partnership, farming/agriculture sector, etc.	There is no apparent representation of diverse voices within this proposed presentation.	The proposal is vague and fails to mention specific actions for incorporating diverse voices into the presentation.	The proposal makes an effort but lacks concrete examples and/or experiences including diverse voices.	The proposal demonstrates an understanding and acceptance of equity, inclusion, diversity and environmental justice concepts but it does not necessarily include or integrate those voices into the content.	The proposal details how the presentation will incorporate diverse voices. These voices are integrated well into the presentation content and format and/or share successful experiences working with underrepresented populations.