Call for Proposals for the 2024 Small and Strategic Pre-Conference

The Michigan Library Association Annual Conference is excited to announce the 2024 Small and Strategic Pre-Conference to be hosted ahead of the 2024 MLA Annual Conference. This day of programming is geared specifically to frontline library staff from Michigan's small and rural libraries, providing an opportunity for these dedicated library workers to network, learn, and discuss the concerns and needs specific to small libraries.

Small and rural libraries are some of the more important and nimble organizations that exist in our state, and they face unique challenges. The Michigan Library Association invites proposals for breakout sessions related to this specific audience at the Small and Strategic Pre-Conference to be presented in person, Oct. 15, 2024, at the Grand Traverse Resort and Spa. Breakouts are 45 minutes in length.

Breakout tracks will focus on Technology, Programming, and Stewardship.

We are looking for proposals that elevate the ideas of intellectual freedom, equity, and collaboration, with a focus on digital literacy, de-escalation, underutilized resources, capital improvements, making a difference on a limited budget, passive programming, and more. Share the joys and wins of what our small and rural libraries can accomplish!

This invitation extends to all library professionals and partners - from first-time to experienced presenters, as well as professional speakers and subject matter experts.

Session Proposal Guidelines

- Speakers must be able to present in-person at the conference hosted Tuesday, October 15, 2024, at the Grand Traverse Resort and Spa
- Sessions may be placed anytime during the conference. Speakers are not required to attend the conference beyond their session.
- Sessions are educational, generative, or inspirational in nature. Sales pitches of products or services will not be accepted.
- MLA reserves the right to edit or combine session proposals before acceptance.
- Contact information must be provided for all speakers.
- The submitter may or may not also be the presenter. Either is acceptable. You do not need to be an MLA member to submit.

Evaluation Criteria
The MLA Small and Strategic workgroup will use the following criteria in assessing the viability of including a program in the schedule. The work group retains the right to reject, modify, or combine proposals.

- Purpose: Does the proposal clearly identify a goal and takeaways for the audience?

- Audience: Is the target audience clearly identified?
- Practicality: Is the topic appropriate for a conference breakout session in content and target audience?
- Engagement: Will the presentation and presenter(s) keep the audience's focus and attention through clear speech, engaging visuals, useful and relatable content?
- Timeliness/ Relevance: Is the topic of current interest, bringing new ideas and a fresh perspective to its intended audience and theme?
- Qualifications: Does the presenter(s) have sufficient or relevant experience to present on the proposed topic?

Agreements and Selection Notification

- MLA will contact each presenter in writing with the workgroup's acceptance decision.
- MLA will send a Presenter Agreement indicating the date, time, and details of their presentation. This must be confirmed by the presenters and returned to MLA.

Handouts

- Handouts will be added to the event website and mobile app. Examples of handouts may be, but are not limited to presenter contact information, a list of additional resources, a copy of presentation slides, or related worksheets.
- Printed handouts are not distributed on-site by MLA. Presenters may provide hard copies of handouts if desired at their own cost.

Deadlines and Due Dates

- Friday, June 7, 2024 — Final day to submit proposals. This deadline is firm and will not be extended.
- Friday, June 28, 2024 — Selection notifications distributed via email from MLA to all presenters.
- Friday, July 26, 2024 — Presenter agreements due to MLA office.
- Friday, October 4, 2024 — Handouts received for posting on MLA website and mobile app
- Tuesday, October 15, 2024 — MLA 2024 Small and Strategic Pre-Conference, Grand Traverse Resort and Spa

Program AV & Room Setup

- All presentation rooms will be supplied with a PC laptop, HDMI-connected projector, screen, and podium with microphone.
- Microphone use is required.
- Wi-Fi internet will be in each presentation room however, MLA cannot guarantee the speed and dependability of the services at any given time.

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- Remote mouse devices/pointers are the responsibility of the presenter. If presenters choose to bring their own computer that does not connect to an HDMI cable, they will be responsible for providing their own connection cables or adapter.
- Rooms are typically sat theater style. MLA will take every effort to make sure the presentation rooms are set up according to the needs of the presentation.

Disclaimers

All speakers must agree to the following statements:

- I understand I will not be reimbursed or compensated by MLA for presentation time, mileage, or any other expense related to my participation in the conference.
- I agree to adhere to MLA's Code of Conduct
- I will be responsible for registering and paying for the conference if I plan on attending other sessions or events beyond my allotted presentation time.

Questions

Please feel free to contact MLA's Program and Event Director Amber Sheerin with any questions you may have prior to your submission at asheerin@milibraries.org.

2024 Session Proposal Information
Please provide the following information to the MLA Small and Strategic Workgroup for evaluation and acceptance in the 2024 program.

1.   Session Title
In 10 words or fewer please provide a title for your proposed session.
The best titles are clear, succinct, and describe exactly what will be covered in the session.

2.   Session Description
In 500 characters or fewer, please provide a concise description of your proposed session.
If accepted, this will appear in the final program, app, and the conference website.
Please write it in the third person, and make it lively, informative, and interesting. It may be edited for publication. Speakers will be listed separately; they should not be listed in the session description.

3.   Session "Elevator Pitch"
In 150 characters or fewer please provide a short description that gets attendees excited about attending this session.
If accepted, this may be used for social media and related marketing purposes.

4.   Learning Outcomes
Please identify two or three learning outcomes for your session that begin, "At the end of the session, participants will..."
Learning outcomes should use active verbs, be measurable, and state what the participants should know or be able to do after attending your session. Learning outcomes should not simply repeat topics that will be addressed or activities that will take place during the session. Your proposal will be evaluated on the clarity and specificity of its learning outcomes.

5.   Equity, Diversity, Accessibility, and Belonging
Fostering a culture of equity, diversity, accessibility, and belonging is a top strategic priority of MLA. In 1 paragraph or less, describe how this session aligns with those goals or contributes to wider representation of diverse groups and points of view.

6.   Relevancy
In 1 paragraph or less, describe why your session aligns with the conference theme of "Small and Strategic".

7.   Session Format
Please select your planned session format.

- Presentation – A 30-minute presentation on a particular issue, program, or service followed by a 15-minute discussion and/or Q & A session with the audience. Or a 45-minute presentation with active learning to engage attendees and opportunities for discussion throughout the session. It may feature 1-3 speakers.

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- Case Study – The speaker shares or analyzes the results of a specific study, program, or service with the audience. It may feature 1-3 speakers.

- Panel Discussion – A moderated session featuring multiple speakers focused on a particular issue, program, or service. Panel discussions allow panelists to share thoughts, opinions, and experiences about a particular issue, program, or service followed by discussion driven by audience participation. May feature 3-5 speakers including a moderator.

- Skill Building Workshop – The Speaker shares knowledge and expertise through interactive learning that enables the audience to develop and hone particular skills. Handouts should be provided to attendees. It may feature 1-3 speakers.

- Other – If your session does not fit into any of the above categories, please describe the format.

9.   Session Track
Please select up to two tracks that you think best describe your session:

- Technology – Sessions focused on new and emerging technology for staff and patrons, and how to make the most of available technologies.

- Programming – Sessions focused on services and programs that engage staff, patrons, and/or the community with the goal of improving library services.

- Stewardship – Sessions focused on ways to use library resources more efficiently, as well as planning, decision-making, leadership, and oversight.

11.   Audience Interaction
Please select the level of attendee contribution to your session.

- Limited – There will be time allotted for Q&A
- Moderate – The audience will be asked to participate during the presentation
- Heavy – The audience will help set the agenda or lead discussion

Presenter Information
The following information is required of every speaker:

- Name
- Organization
- Job title
- Email
- Phone

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- Mailing Address
- Emergency contact name and phone number
- Previous speaking experience or qualifications on chosen topic (500 characters or less)
- Biography (500 characters or less) *If accepted this will be used on MLA website*
- Headshot photo *If accepted this will be used on MLA website*