

SAA 2012 Manuscript Repositories Section Meeting

SAA 2013 Proposal Breakout Group

Friday, August 10, 2012

SAA 2013 Proposal Evaluation (from SAA website)

Session proposals are welcome on any aspect of archives practice—local, national, and international—and its intersection with other professions and domains. Proposals will be evaluated on the strength of the 150-word abstract, the diversity of the speakers and their experience, and the completeness of the proposal. Session proposals should incorporate one or more of the following:

- Inclusion of diverse perspectives and initiatives.
- Relevance for the broad range of CoSA and SAA members and other interested attendees.
- An intention to address the impact of the given topic for CoSA, SAA, and/or the archives profession.

Tips for SAA conference proposals

1) Questions to ask yourself:

- What are the major themes of the conference?
- Who attends this conference/what is the composition of SAA and COSA's membership?
- What is the idea you are presenting?
- What is your purpose for presenting?
- What are three takeaways that you want your attendees to leave with?
- How much participation do you want from attendees?
- What are you looking for from attendees, ie. comments, discussion, share examples, brainstorming?
- What is the best format for articulating your idea?

2) Use active phrases to express your purpose and level of audience engagement:

- Foster dialog about
- Create awareness of
- Develop stronger ties with
- Disseminate knowledge through
- Increase participation in
- Highlight advantages of
- Enable sharing of
- Provide a forum for
- Advance our understanding of
- Connect more strongly with

3) Tips from non-archival websites re: proposal writing

- Go through your outline & trade out the beginning of each sentence with action verbs. Make your presentation proposal engaging.

- What not to do: Have a vague title; have an unbelievable premise; if you're discussing certain technology don't make it a sales pitch
- If you have time, let it sit and come back to it
- Get a second opinion
- Proof read, proof read, proof read!
- Know your profession; be relevant
- Read examples
- Be part of the conversation but don't be a meme
- Is your title informative and engaging? Does it accurately reflect the content?
- Identify audience involvement.
- Explain the relevance of the topic to the audience
- Complete the following sentence: "after this session, attendees will be able to..."
- Avoid sweeping generalizations

Words of Wisdom:

Sheryl Vogt, past Program Committee co-chair (SAA 2008) says the following:

I would say this is basic, but my experience is that a large number of submissions miss being accepted on this element: To make a more effective case for acceptance, you should give emphasis to why you are proposing the session, the speakers' experience, what the audience will know or be able to do after participating in the session, and how the speakers will engage the audience in learning. Proposals must be complete, including all information related to speakers. Session proposals that include only some of the desired speakers, that are missing the name of the chair, or that are missing speaker agreements to participate are very difficult to assess, especially when compared to proposals that are complete. It is best to submit a fully fleshed-out session proposal, including the names of all speakers and their agreements to participate.

Moral of the story: **have a complete proposal.**

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