Call for Proposals

The Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference is holding its spring 2027 conference in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, at the Pittsburgh Marriott City Center April 1-3.

To honor Pittsburgh's distinct and vibrant neighborhoods as well as its history as the home of the *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* television series, the Program Committee invites proposals related to the theme *Won't You Be My Neighbor? Stronger Together*. We are seeking proposals that highlight the many different skills, abilities, and backgrounds that enrich our archives, MARAC, and adjacent professions. This could include highlighting ways that communities and archives work together for the greater good as well as ways we can reach across any divides separating our internal and external neighborhoods and communities, whether they be ideological, budgetary, technological, geographical, educational, or otherwise.

The Program Committee encourages submissions from newer professionals and members of underrepresented groups. MARAC membership is not required. Presenters may submit more than one proposal but may present only one session or poster. Members of the Program Committee are not permitted to present.

Proposal Submission
The deadline for proposals is 5pm Monday, **November 16, 2026**. If you are looking for co-presenters or a moderator, consider posting to the Collaboration Spreadsheet. Spreadsheet entries are not proposal submissions and will not be considered. Please use the Submission Form to submit proposals.

In the winter of 2026/2027 there will be a call for poster proposals and a call for a student paper session. The student paper session which will be held on the last day of the conference.

For more information, view the full Call for Proposals or see the attached pdf.

Session Types:

- A moderator, presenters, and then questions from the audience:
    - **Standard Presentation/Paper Presentation:** Two to four speakers present on a common theme.
    - **Lightning Talks:** May or may not include slides or images. Presentations may be from 3 to 10 minutes long, with the time allotted depending on the number of presenters.

    - **Debate:** Moderator announces the topic, and two individuals debate. May include more than one topic and additional debaters.
    - **Mini workshop:** One or multiple speakers provide educational instruction on a given topic.
- Collaborative discussion led by a moderator, with more audience participation:
    - **Roundtable Discussion:** Three or four participants make very brief remarks, then discuss a topic together.
    - **Open Forum:** Topical discussion with moderator leading discussion with everyone present.
- Full audience participation, directed by an instructor or facilitator:
    - **Birds of a Feather:** Usually for a specific interest group or population segment, this is a topical discussion with a facilitator ensuring that everyone has a chance to speak, that all aspects of a topic are being explored, and to break up long silences with pre-prepared questions or remarks. Consider sessions based on experience, geographical location, and professional interests. Great for networking.

Sessions may be 60 to 90 minutes. Sessions should be planned as in-person presentations, as remote presentation capability is expensive and highly subject to glitches.

Representation and Variety

We seek to present sessions from a diverse and representative slate of speakers as well as a variety of topics that do not exactly replicate what has been presented before at MARAC. We encourage submissions from BIPOC and LGBTQ+ presenters, as well as new professionals, students, presenters from allied professions, and first-time presenters. Additionally, another goal is to cover a broad spectrum of archival functions and repository types, therefore it is imperative that session proposals include that information. We will enforce the MARAC Code of Conduct and will not tolerate discrimination or harassment.

The Diversity and Inclusion Session Scholarship is awarded to a session that promotes engagement with topics related to diversity and inclusion, and other conference scholarships can help with registration, travel, and lodging. If you would like to attend this conference but are facing financial hardships, please consider applying to receive a scholarship.

Proposal Evaluation

The Program Committee will evaluate proposals according to the following characteristics:

- Quality and clarity of the session description: can we tell that you have thought this out completely?

- Ability to address all relevant aspects of the topic: do you have enough speakers/presentations to cover the topic? If you are looking for more speakers on a topic, consider posting it to the Collaboration Spreadsheet.
- Originality of proposed topic: has this topic been covered recently at MARAC or SAA?
- Diversity of presenters and viewpoints: look for a co-presenter who doesn't look or think like you. Maybe they have a different viewpoint on the topic.
- Appropriateness of proposed format with session content: would this topic work well as a panel discussion or a mini-workshop? Think outside the Powerpoint slide deck.

All proposals will be considered in the context of the overall structure of the meeting and availability of time slots for proposed sessions. Unique audiovisual needs may impact selection due to cost, and we may not be able to accommodate your need for a specific time slot.

Questions? Contact the Program Committee Co-Chairs Joanne Archer at jarcher@loc.gov or Jane Cross at jcross@loc.gov