

AASLH Annual Meeting Call for Session Proposals

Proposals Due: December 9, 2019

Location: Las Vegas, NV

Meeting Dates: September 23-26, 2020

Dear Colleagues:

The American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) will present its 2020 Annual Meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada on September 23-26. Deadline for submissions is December 9.

[AASLH is now accepting proposals for sessions and workshops.](#)

What Kind of Ancestor Will You Be?

This question serves as our theme for the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) 2020 Annual Meeting in Las Vegas. Richard Josey, Founder and President of Collective Journeys, AASLH Council Member and Vice Chair of the AASLH Diversity and Inclusion Committee, first posed this question to us at an AASLH 2017 panel on diversity and inclusion in Austin, TX.

Our role as members of history communities come with a responsibility to advocate for the unheard and the unseen. Arturo Schomburg, the black Puerto Rican historian, writer, activist and bibliophile of whom the Schomburg Research Center for Black Culture is named after, was motivated to 'stand in the gap' for black people when his schoolteacher told him black people have no history. He went on to build one of the most prolific collections of books detailing the rich history of the continent of Africa and its growing diaspora. His legacy was to confirm the humanity of a people by disrupting the 'single story' that still attempts to de-humanize them today.

We have the chance to dislocate dominant culture and tell stories from multiple perspectives by being co-stewards with the communities that we serve in the spirit of equity and inclusion. Our history communities get to provide transformational experiences which allow the world to understand the value of all humanity.

Our sector should strive to be the types of ancestors that changed the course of history by how they stewarded it. What will historians, history professionals and history lovers say about us? Will they say that our generation were the ones to lift the veil of division? Will they say that our generation focused on community interpretation that focused on bringing proximity to differences as opposed to isolation?

One of our African American ancestors, James Baldwin said this about history: "History, as nearly no one seems to know, is not merely something to be read. And it does not refer merely, or even principally, to the past. On the contrary, the great force of history comes from the fact that we carry it within us, are unconsciously controlled by it, in many ways, and history

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is literally present in all that we do. It could scarcely be otherwise, since it is to history that we owe our frames of reference, our identities, and our aspirations.”

The single narrative in Las Vegas has always centered around gaming, gambling, and permissive culture. This belies the deep history of this city of nearly two million at the tip of Southern Nevada. As the city has grown so have the needs of the people that live here. A desire for more “authentic” entertainment and cultural offerings has driven the development of new institutions centered around the history and lives of the people that live here, while embracing the traditional role of Las Vegas. The city has matured beyond the simple designation as an adult playground into a truly international city.

With the growth of the city, its inhabitants and history practitioners have begun to ask **What Kind of Ancestor Will You Be?** Las Vegas and Nevadans are answering that question by protecting and preserving our stories outside of the single narrative that so many have come to recognize. The history and museum communities have worked to help tie incoming Nevadans to their new home and gain a better understanding of the efforts taken to build a city in the middle of a desert. What parts of our history deserve to be saved?

A new awareness of the importance of historic preservation has led to many neglected structures and their stories being preserved rather than imploded. New national monuments have preserved over 320,000 acres of land with over 200,000 years of geological, paleontological, and cultural history. In response to unprecedented challenges related to a changing climate, the people of Las Vegas have taken the challenge head-on reducing water usage by 36% over the past 15 years despite an increase of 660,000 in population. Local Native American tribes have taken control of their energy future leading to closure of coal-fired energy plants and the development of solar projects that will keep the region powered for over 25 years.

Our theme is not just a question. It is a clarion call to our professional community to consider our work in the temporal continuum of the past, present and future. Now ask yourself **“What kind of ancestor will you be?”**

In the spirit of this theme, the Program Committee seeks proposals that:

- Challenge the single narrative in interpretation, education, public programs, and exhibition development
- Demonstrate internal organizational strategies that increase equitable practices through cultural competencies
- Centralize issues that have been on the margins of our field to help our audiences see the humanity in one another
- Decrease traditional methods of engagement and increase decolonized practices across organizational operations

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- Embolden our members to utilize public history as a tool that informs the conscious of many communities.

In crafting your proposal, consider what your colleagues can learn from you, your institution, and others as you strive to:

- Develop new methods of fundraising and enterprise to solidify your financial stability
- Build diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion within the profession, AASLH, and other audiences
- Construct strategic coalitions that increase the capacity of your organizations to help you meet your missions
- Honor the continuum of time to use the knowledge of the past to inform the present and change the future.
- Encourage sustainable practices in your organization.

Requirements

Each session must have a session chair responsible for finding other speakers and coordinating logistics. Session chairs must be affiliated with an institutional member or be an AASLH individual member. Membership is not required for session speakers. Topics for sessions should fall into at least one of the categories listed on page one of the Proposal Form. **Proposals must be submitted on a Call for Proposals form through AASLH's online submission system.** [To access the form, click here.](#) For more information, visit the AASLH website, www.aaslh.org, or contact Bethany Hawkins at Hawkins@aslh.org or by phone at 615-320-3203.

The 2020 annual meeting will also include times for less formal presentation and discussion formats. More information will be released closer to the conference time.

Sincerely,

Omar Eaton-Martínez
2020 Annual Meeting Program Chair
Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Upper Marlboro, MD

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Select a Title: Be creative and memorable.

- 1) **What will your session DO?** Tell the program committee what you want to do during your session?
 - Provoke (How?)
 - Inspire (Who?)
 - Grow (Where?)
 - Solve (How?)
 - Play (With what?)
 - Complicate (Why?)
 - Ignite (How?)
 - Accelerate (When?)

- 2) **After you decide what your session will do,** answer, in one sentence, how you will address the question in parenthesis in question 2 in your session. For example, if you chose inspire, WHO do you want to inspire at the 2020 conference?

- 3) **This session addresses issues related to:** AASLH Council outlined four values/aspirations for the association and the field we serve. Please check which value your session will address. Go to <https://aaslh.org/aaslh-aspirations/> to read more about the four aspirations.
 - History Relevance
 - Diversity and Inclusion
 - Creative and Experimental
 - Stability and Transparency

- 4) **Relevance to theme:** How does your proposal relate to the question, *What Kind of Ancestor Will You Be?*

- 5) **Session Description and Abstract:** Tell the program committee about the goals of your session. Session proposals must specifically highlight central issues the proposal addresses and their significance to the field of state and local history and theme. Be as clear and concise as possible.

- 6) **Format:** The program committee introduced new formats in 2019. We encourage you to choose the most engaging format appropriate for your topic. Please read the description of each carefully before choosing.
 - **Thought Leader (15 minutes)** – Speakers briefly present a creative approach from your work from which other attendees can be inspired and surprised. One speaker, in Ted Talk format.
 - **Experiential (75 minutes)** - Do a program – don't just talk about it. Immerse your colleagues in a playful (or dark) example of your work.
 - **Problem Solving (75 minutes)** - Audience members work to develop creative solutions to a seemingly intractable problem at your site, in your community, or in the field at large.
 - **Conversation Provocation (75 minutes)** - The focus is audience discussion/debate. One facilitator poses a predetermined question and invites attendees to participate. The facilitator monitors the discussion to keep on track as a guide on the side, not a sage on the stage. One facilitator.

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- **Panel / Roundtable (75 minutes)** – These sessions should examine complex historical or professional issues. Includes one chair (who may serve as a speaker) and up to three panelists. These should emphasize takeaways for participants and discussion of the complexity of the issue. Panelists should provide contrasting perspectives and represent varied institutions (i.e. budget, mission, location, etc.). Presenters should allow ample time for questions and answers. Should include 1-3 panelists including moderator.
- **Back-to-School (75 minutes)** – Sessions led by AASLH and Sites of Conscience academic members/affiliates will give attendees an opportunity to sit in on a class at some of our nation's best public history/museum studies institutions. Speaker should not lecture or read a paper but engage the audience with the topic.
- **Workshops (full- or half-day sessions on Wednesday or Saturday)** - These long-form sessions are designed to teach special skills in a small group setting and may occur on or off-site. Workshops include appropriate printed materials. Proposals should specify the particular skills the workshop will teach as well as the methods and techniques instructors will use. Participants in workshop sessions pay fees which contribute to the conference budget and presenters and panelists all contribute their presentations in-kind. Workshops can have 1-4 instructors.

- 7) **Select Presenters:** AASLH requires that you, as the person submitting the session, serve as the session organizer responsible for logistics, requests for materials and equipment, communication with participants and AASLH staff, and leading the session itself. *Session chairs must be affiliated with an AASLH institutional member or hold an individual membership.* In order to involve as many people as possible in the meeting, no one can participate in more than **one session**.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

1. **Complete the Session Proposal Form online:**
 - [Submit all session proposals here.](#)
 - [Download a hard copy of the form here.](#)
2. **Submit your Proposal:** Submit your proposal online by December 9. Session chairs will be notified of their proposal's status by February 15, 2020.
3. **Registration Fees & Cost:** Organizers and presenters must register for at least one day of the annual meeting. Speakers are encouraged to take advantage of their attendance and register for the full meeting. Discounts are not given for meeting registration. AASLH does not pay travel costs or honoraria for any session chairs or presenters. Session chairs are responsible for making sure that all presenters register for the annual meeting.
4. **Scheduled Sessions:** AASLH planning staff will assign all session times and dates. Submission of a proposal indicates your willingness to accept the schedule as assigned. You may submit a request for a specific date or time; however, we cannot guarantee that we can honor all requests.

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Session Title:		
What will your session DO? (check one):	<input type="checkbox"/> Provoke (How?) <input type="checkbox"/> Inspire (How?) <input type="checkbox"/> Grow (Where?) <input type="checkbox"/> Solve (How?)	<input type="checkbox"/> Play (With What?) <input type="checkbox"/> Complicate (Why?) <input type="checkbox"/> Ignite (How?) <input type="checkbox"/> Accelerate (When?)
Answer, in one sentence, how you will address the question in parenthesis above in your session. For example, if you chose inspire, HOW do you want to inspire attendees at the 2020 conference?		
The session addresses issues related to:	<input type="checkbox"/> History Relevance <input type="checkbox"/> Diversity and Inclusion <input type="checkbox"/> Creative and Experimental <input type="checkbox"/> Stability and Transparency	
Session Description (50-words or less): <i>If session is accepted, this will be used in the printed annual meeting program guide. Please do not use bullet points.</i>		
Abstract (250 words or less): The abstract should address the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does your session address the theme of What Kind of Ancestor Will You Be? • What are the main takeaways for attendees from the proposed session? 		
What is your target audience of history professionals?	a. Directors/CEOs b. Administration (Finance, Marketing, Volunteer Coordinator, Fundraising, H.R., Buildings) c. Programming (Educator, Exhibitions, Public Programming, etc.) d. Archivists/Librarians e. Collections (Preservation/ Conservation, Collection Management, Curator, etc.) f. Historians/Teachers g. General Audience h. Other: _____	

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<p>Now that you have thought about what you want to do with your session, what format is best? (check one): <i>See full Call for Proposals form for definition of each category and minimum number of presenters for each format.</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Thought Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Experiential <input type="checkbox"/> Problem Solving <input type="checkbox"/> Conversation Provocation <input type="checkbox"/> Panel/Roundtable <input type="checkbox"/> Back-to-School <input type="checkbox"/> Workshop, Half-Day <input type="checkbox"/> Workshop, Full Day</p>
Session Organizer Name:	
Title:	
Institution:	
Mailing Address:	
City, State, Zip:	
Phone:	
Email:	
Check One:	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Organizer will moderate only. <input type="checkbox"/> Organizer will moderate and speak</p>
Describe what you bring to the session <i>Limit 125 words</i>	

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Other session participants: (Please fully list all participants including addresses, phone, e-mail, etc. Failure to submit complete information may cause a delay in the review of the proposal.)

Presenter 1

Name:	
Title:	
Institution:	
Mailing Address:	
City, State, Zip:	
Phone:	
Email:	
Describe what this speaker brings to the session <i>Limit 125 words</i>	

Presenter 2

Name:	
Title:	
Institution:	
Mailing Address:	
City, State, Zip:	
Phone:	
Email:	
Describe what this speaker brings to the session <i>Limit 125 words</i>	

Presenter 3

Name:	
Title:	
Institution:	
Mailing Address:	
City, State, Zip:	
Phone:	
Email:	
Describe what this speaker brings to the session Limit 125 words	

Presenter 4 (if necessary)

Name:	
Title:	
Institution:	
Mailing Address:	
City, State, Zip:	
Phone:	

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Email:	
Describe what this speaker brings to the session <i>Limit 125 words</i>	

Session Proposal Submitted by:

Name:	
Title:	
Institution:	
Mailing Address:	
City, State, Zip:	
Phone:	
Email:	

Complete the online session proposal form, including the description, abstract, and presenter information for the organizer and panelists via the AASLH website. Incomplete submissions will not be reviewed. ***Deadline to submit session proposals is December 9, 2019.***

Submit Proposals at www.aaslh.org.