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# Strategies for Writing Conference Proposals & Presentations

# Agenda

Introduction

Analyzing CFPs

Strategies for Writing

Proposals

Presentation Tips

Comments/Questions

# Introduction

Presenting at conferences is an important part of being a graduate student and growing as a professional. Conference presentations should also be included on your CV as they boost your employment opportunities. Presenting at conferences is especially important if you plan to go into higher education, or any kind of leadership role within your field.

# CFP / CFA / CFS

- Common components of CFP/CFA/CFS include:
  - Conference theme
  - Date & location of conference
  - Deadline for submissions
  - Notification of acceptance timeline
  - Types of presentations (and specific strands/sub-groups/sub-committees)
  - Word limit
  - Acceptable submission types (docx, pdf, etc.)
  - Title of submission
  - Rationale for the presentation type
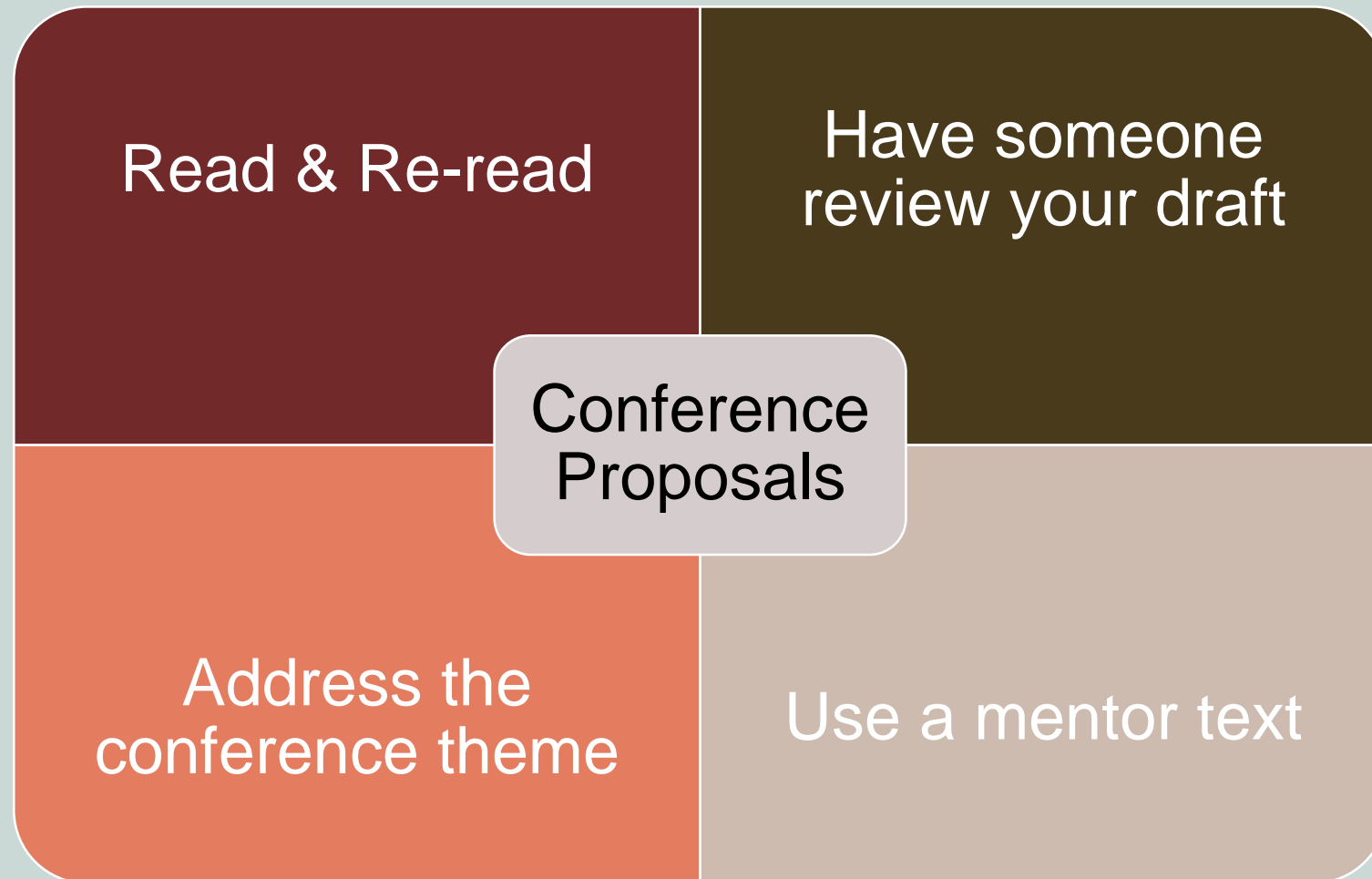  - Content of submission (research-based, practitioner-based, theory-based, etc.)

# Sample CFP

- [https://writingcenters.org/events/2022-iwca-annual-conference/](https://writingcenters.org/events/2022-iwca-annual-conference/)

# Your Turn!

- Find a CFP from a conference where you'd like to present (if there isn't a current call, you can use an old one).
- Spend a few minutes reading it closely to see if you can identify the following:
  - Conference theme
  - Date & location of conference
  - Deadline for submissions
  - Notification of acceptance timeline
  - Types of presentations (and specific strands/sub-groups/sub-committees)
  - Word limit
  - Acceptable submission types (docx, pdf, etc.)
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# General Strategies for Writing a Proposal

Read & Re-read

Have someone review your draft

Conference Proposals

Address the conference theme

Use a mentor text

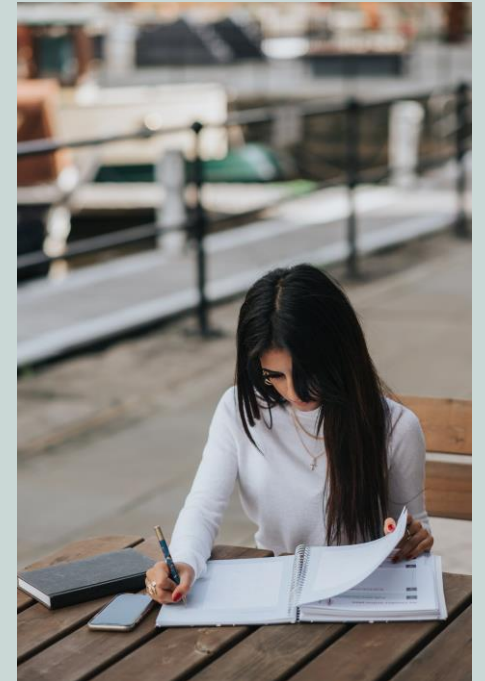# More Strategies for Creating the Proposal

## Reading

- First, read through the entire CFP.

- Closely read and read "in-between the lines." What are they *really* asking for?

- Pay attention to the language of the CFP (and use it).

- Highlight/underline important ideas and tasks.

- Make note of any ideas you have as you read.

- When you are finished writing, read your draft aloud. Listen to how it sounds, how it flows.

## Writing

- Use your prior knowledge and experiences of past conferences to inform how you write your proposal (genre awareness).

- Use your existing knowledge of the field and its values to help you write your proposal (know your audience).

- Use the language of the CFP as you write your own submission.

- This is formal academic writing, so you need to include genre conventions like scholarship and references.

- The tone/style need to align with your discipline's preferred style guide and ways of writing.

- Write clearly and to the point.

# Modeling Reading and Notetaking of a CFP

- Let's take a look at an example.

# Modeling Writing Process and Moves of a Proposal Submission

- Let's take a look at another example.

# Questions? Advice or Experiences to Share?

# Conference Presentation Tips: Visual Aides

## Poster

- *Readability is key*

- Include only the most important information (for each section)

- Determine what information you want to highlight or privilege and *how* you want to do so

- Imagine/envision how your poster would look up close and at a distance…does it have curb appeal?

- Follow your discipline's conventions, but add a twist

## PowerPoint, Google Slides, etc.

- *Readability is key*

- Create a balance between images and text

- Consider your use of space

- Don't overload your slide with information

- Make design considerations (font, font size, color, slide layout, etc.)

- Think about effective, maybe alternative ways to represent data (chart/figure vs. words…how does it tell a story?)

- Consider simply displaying an (intriguing?) image

- Don't let the technical functions of the presentation tool overshadow your presentation

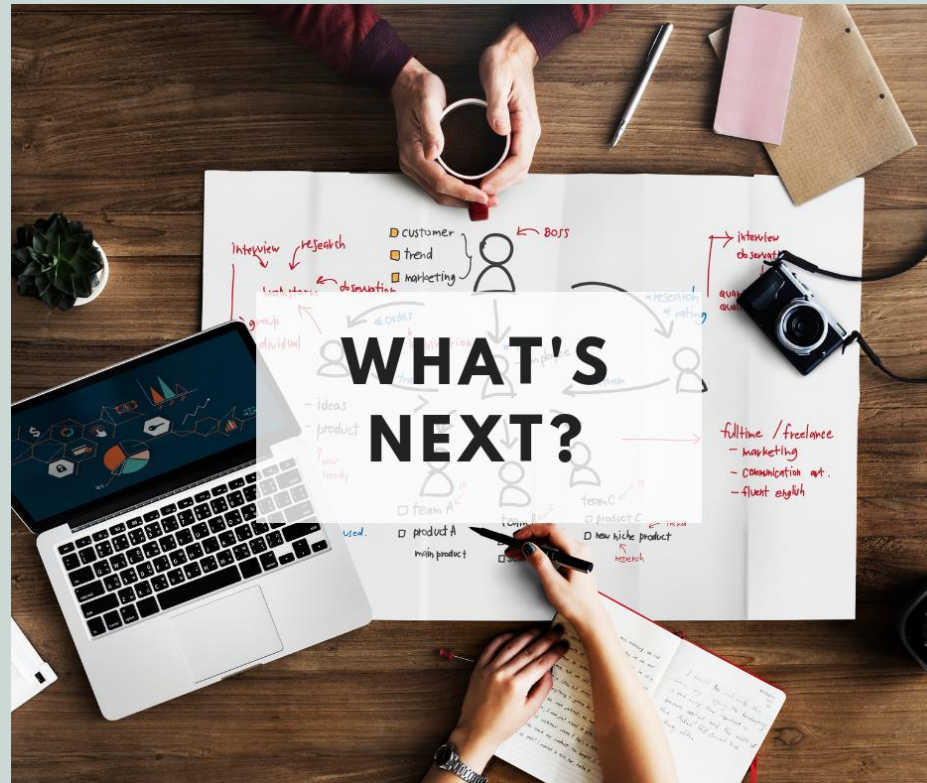# Conference Presentation Tips: Oral Communication

- Organize your thoughts prior to presenting them (in other words, don't jump around from topic to topic AND be sure to give context for the presentation)
- Don't read off of your slides
- Take notes or make yourself a list of talking points
- If necessary, explain key terms
- Speak at an audible volume and clearly/articulately
- Try not to rush, or speak too quickly
- If possible, engage audience participation
- Practice your presentation before you give it
- If someone asks you a question you don't know, it's okay to admit that you hadn't considered that before and that you will look into it.

# Questions? Advice or Experiences to Share?

# Next Steps/Downshifting

- If you are interested in presenting at a conference, what are the next, most immediate steps you need to take in this process?

# Resources for Writing Conference Proposals and Presenting at Conferences

- UMES's Graduate Writing Center: https://wwwcp.umes.edu/grad/graduate-writing-center/

- *Effective Data Visualization: The Right Chart for the Right Data* by Stephanie D. H. Evergreen

- Data visualization tips: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G9v5bxMuK2k

- https://fourwaves.com/blog/how-to-make-a-scientific-poster/

- Strategies for writing a conference proposal: https://advisingmatters.berkeley.edu/submission-applause-conference-proposals-get-accepted

- Tips for presenting at a conference: https://fourwaves.com/blog/conference-presenting-tips/

Thank you

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