



Join us in launching the next 25 years of progress in grantmaking by presenting at PEAK2021 Online.

Our virtual conference in May 2021 will be an opportunity for all of us to examine and expand upon a pivotal and visionary year, PEAK's 25th in existence. While we step back from our day-to-day, reconnect, and strengthen our community of grantmakers, we'll also be looking at how far the profession of grants management has come – its growing influence and responsibility, critical work in this moment to meet the challenges of our day, and evolving role as a change leader in philanthropy.

Continuing our 25-year commitment to centering equity and community, we invite you to co-design our conference with us.

We welcome your proposal for a workshop, panel session, short-form talk, and networking and affinity group conversations based around the theme of community. We need your energy and insight to make this another can't-miss learning experience for the PEAK community, and the best conference any of us will attend next year.

Specifically, we want to hear your ideas for assessing where we've been and getting where we want to be in terms of:

- Listening to Community
- Supporting Adaptable Communities
- Learning with Community
- Creating Equitable Community
- Connecting with Community

Regardless of topic, sessions should aim to center equity in approach and content, advance participants' thinking on critical issues, feature diverse perspectives, introduce new ideas or fresh takes, and provide takeaway insight and resources. Session design should also take a thoughtful approach to the virtual format and be as interactive as possible.

Thank you for your consideration. We're excited to celebrate all that we have accomplished together over the past 25 years with you, and envision the next 25 years together.

Eligibility to Present

PEAK Grantmaking seeks conference presentation proposals from practitioners working across the spectrum of the philanthropic and nonprofit sector. We welcome proposals from anyone who considers themselves part of the PEAK Community. Staff or board members at funding organizations, staff or board members at nonprofit organizations, and consultants are all welcome to apply.

Because of this year's virtual format, we have fewer session times available than in a typical year, so we will be unable to accept all sessions that are submitted.

For vendors or consultants that would like to secure a spot on our calendar this year, we have multiple sponsorship opportunities, so please stay tuned.

Audience

Our audience is expanding each year. Currently, it consists of professionals in grants management, IT, programs, operations, evaluation and learning, and executive-level roles. Speaking generally, these professionals are multidisciplinary in background and play a part in stewarding the grantmaking process within funding institutions. They seek conference content focused on practical application, inspirational case studies, competency development, and alignment with the [Principles for Peak Grantmaking](#).

Content Focus

Below are the themes we're looking to explore, including one open track that will feature any and all ideas. Under each theme, we've listed a few ideas to inspire creativity; they are not meant to be all-inclusive. Please pick the category that most closely reflects the content of your presentation.

Listening to Community

How are grantseekers, nonprofit partners, and the community at large being engaged in the work of grantmakers?

Examples:

- Practices that build trust with grantseekers and grantees
- Collecting and using feedback to improve your practice
- Supporting and managing participatory grantmaking
- Finding and elevating voices that have been marginalized
- Technology for community listening and collaboration

Supporting Adaptable Communities

How are grantmakers leaning into this moment of national and international crisis to grow and support the capacity of nonprofit partners?

Examples:

- Practices that reduce the burden on nonprofit grantseekers and grantees
- Practices that support nonprofit adaptability and capacity
- Understanding and acting on risk data
- Tech and data that supports nonprofit partners
- Managing MRIs/PRIs

Learning with Community

How are grantmakers working with mission-aligned grantees and funders to define and measure broad outcomes and community-wide impact?

Examples:

- Knowledge management
- Using your convening power
- Using grant reports for learning
- Evaluating outcomes equitably
- Funder collaborations and sharing data
- Metrics, dashboards, and measuring impact
- Sharing learning with community

Creating Equitable Community

How are you creating more equitable practices within your own organization or with your community? How do you align action with goals related to reducing bias and directing more funding and resources to community-led efforts and movements?

Examples:

- Courageous conversations as a tool for organizational change
- Creating inclusive grantmaker cultures: Understanding and breaking down internal power structures and hierarchies
- Collecting and using demographic data
- Reducing bias in grantmaking decisions or expanding funding to communities of color, including technology that helps to support this goal
- Supporting BIPOC-led organizations

Connecting with Community

Do you have an important topic you'd like to address that doesn't fit into any of these categories? This is your chance to self-organize! Drop your ideas here and we'll help you get on the schedule.

Examples:

- Dine-around or happy hour for a specific type of foundation
- Self-care
- Emotional intelligence
- Career-growth strategies
- Black professionals
- LGBTQ+ professionals
- International grantmakers
- Skill development: Project management, intro to DEI, managing up, etc.

Proposal Types

Workshop Session: 75 minutes

These sessions are meant to provide conference attendees with practical tools and approaches, featuring interactive components that will engage participants in learning activities throughout the time block. These sessions are limited to two presenters.

Panel Presentation: 75 minutes

Panels are moderated sessions of no more than four panelists, plus one moderator. The moderator should have a predetermined set of questions and incorporate audience questions and feedback into the discussion. Panel presentations should be designed to engage – that is, not as a series of “talking heads” with slides.

Short Talks: 60 minutes

These should feature pre-recorded presentations of 15-20 minutes that cover a specific idea, recommendation, or case study. The remaining time will be used for live Q&A or facilitated activities.

Roundtable Discussion: 60 minutes

You'll facilitate a roundtable session for your peers where they'll share ideas and best practices concerning a single grants management topic. This is a great opportunity to grow your virtual facilitation skills! These sessions are limited to two facilitators.

Networking, Happy Hour, or “Dine-Around”: 75 minutes

Casual networking opportunities. Typically, these sessions will fall into the “Connecting Community” theme. These sessions are limited to three facilitators.

Please note: All sessions will be conducted virtually via our virtual conference platform. You will have access to features like polls, breakouts, whiteboards, and a chat box. We encourage you to design sessions that are interactive as possible, and recommend avoiding designs that rely on a single “talking head” plus slides. Our members appreciate creative session design and welcome smart virtual facilitation; please consider this when preparing.

Application Process

This year, we are using a speaker management platform called Event Rebels to collect and share speaker and session information.

Please be sure to provide all required information in the form, including names and contact information for the primary presenter and co-presenter, bios, the session title and description, a description of how your proposed session incorporates diverse perspectives, and a suggested track for your session.

When you click the link to submit a proposal, you'll be asked to provide your email, which we'll use to create your account on Event Rebels. You'll receive a follow-up email with a "Registration Number" that you'll then use to login in order to edit your session details.

Proposal Selection Process

Conference Committee and Co-Chairs

The Conference Committee is composed of individuals from the field with significant experience in one or more of the conference's session themes.

The selection process will involve a rigorous online review of every proposal submitted. The committee meets by conference call to make recommendations for selections and assist in planning other conference educational activities. Many more proposals are submitted than can be selected.

Selection decisions are based solely on the information submitted. Applicants are expected to follow the instructions carefully and supply all requested information. Missing or incorrect information could make the proposal ineligible for consideration.

Selection Criteria

Your proposed session must clearly apply to the target audience, fit into one of the themed tracks, and be delivered by a speaker with substantial topic knowledge and experience facilitating learning experiences or speaking to large groups.

PEAK continues to seek a balanced slate of speakers with a diversity of backgrounds, viewpoints, and organizational affiliations.

Each individual or organization may submit up to two proposals. Please submit your very best proposals and coordinate with your colleagues when submitting from large organizations. If a proposal is applicable to more than one track, please make a note in your description rather than submitting it multiple times.

Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- **Equity:** Does the proposed session center equity in its approach and content?
- **Compelling/Relevant:** To what extent does this proposal advance our thinking on a critical and timely issue in philanthropy? How well does the proposal connect to the conference theme or educational track?
- **Diverse Perspective:** To what extent does the proposal present traditionally underrepresented or marginalized perspectives? Does the proposal feature speakers from a diverse range of backgrounds and communities? Does it feature an intersectional approach? Does the proposal introduce new voices, new concepts, a new format, or offer a fresh take on an issue?
- **Action-oriented:** Is the proposed session likely to engage participants in a way that inspires a real-world outcome?
- **Translation to virtual format:** Is this session likely to work well in a virtual setting?

Please note: If the PEAK2021 Conference Committee recommends your proposal for the upcoming conference, PEAK Grantmaking staff and PEAK2021 conference committee members may work with you to develop the session, helping to identify interactive and dynamic formats. While we will try to honor your desired session type and format, we will determine which modality will best showcase your ideas within the conference agenda and available space. Unfortunately, due to our focused priorities and limited time slots, we will not be able to accept every submission.

Conference Policies

Your Commitment to Speak

It is an honor and a privilege to be invited to speak at a PEAK conference. By sharing your expertise, you make a valuable contribution to the profession's field of knowledge and to the individual learning of each participant. If you are selected, please view this opportunity as a commitment like any other: Ensure that you can deliver the session by securing the support of your organization and managing your workload to keep this time open. All speakers will be asked to sign a speaker agreement. We understand that things do happen and appreciate your advance notice in the event of extreme circumstances that prevent your attendance. (For solo presenters, we encourage a Plan B.)

Registration and Travel Expenses

PEAK Grantmaking is a nonprofit educational association with a responsibility to its members to carefully manage its resources.

For this year's conference only, we will be offering speakers free conference registration. Speaker stipends will be considered upon request.

Noncommercial Policy

PEAK2020 conference education programs are learning experiences first and foremost, and as such must be noncommercial in content and delivery.

Speakers must:

- Eliminate any form of direct promotion of a product, service, or monetary self-interest.
- Refrain from overt statements, harsh language, or pointed humor that disparages the rightful dignity and social equity of any individual or group.
- Attend the speaker orientation session where we will cover responsibilities, accountabilities, and more information about our [Principles for Peak Grantmaking](#) and our values as an organization.