PEAK 2023
Call for Ideas
Deadline: January 18, 2023
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Cocreate PEAK2023 with us!

PEAK2023 will be held May 8–10 in Baltimore. For our first in-person annual convening since 2019, we invite the PEAK community to join us on a collective emergent learning journey toward more equitable, effective grantmaking. Over three days, we’ll focus on our Learn, Share, Evolve Principle, lift up stories and insights from across the PEAK community, and explore ways that members are leaning into each of our five Principles to be activated change agents for philanthropy.

We invite you to cocreate PEAK2023 with us by sharing your ideas and innovative strategies so that we can collectively envision new ways of gathering and learning together.

We seek to reimagine how we share and build knowledge so that our sessions foster an emergent learning community of peers and elevate our members’ innovations and experiences in grantmaking practice. Sessions should center on what PEAK stands for—principles, equity, advocacy, and knowledge—in approach and content. In addition, they should advance participants’ thinking on critical issues, engage and feature diverse perspectives, introduce new ideas or fresh takes, and provide takeaway insight and resources. Session design should also take a thoughtful approach to delivering an engaging experience both in person and virtually.

Bring your energy and insight to make this annual convening a can’t-miss learning experience for the PEAK community and the best convening any of us will attend in 2023.
Eligibility to Present

PEAK Grantmaking seeks proposals from practitioners working across the spectrum of the philanthropic and nonprofit sectors. We welcome ideas from anyone who considers themselves part of the PEAK community, including staff and board members at funding organizations, staff and board members at nonprofit organizations funded by PEAK’s members, and PEAK’s partners, consultants, and vendors.

Audience

The PEAK network is expanding each year. Today, PEAK’s membership consists of a diverse community of philanthropic professionals specializing in grants management, IT, programs, operations, evaluation and learning, knowledge management, and human resources. Their experience levels span from early-career professionals to executive-level roles. Speaking generally, these professionals have multidisciplinary backgrounds and play a part in stewarding the grantmaking process within funding institutions. They seek content focused on grantmaking practice, inspirational case studies, competency development, and alignment with the Principles for Peak Grantmaking.

Content Focus

Our Learn, Share, Evolve Principle, which focuses on grantmakers contributing to building sector-wide knowledge and seeking wisdom from others pursuing change and impact, is the overarching theme of this year's convening. Individuals learn by being taught or through experiences; share their experiences, processes, thoughts, feelings with others; and evolve from one state to another, which can lead individuals and organizations to having greater impact.

Within that theme, our programming will focus on four content areas that align with what PEAK stands for: principles, equity, advocacy, and knowledge.

Principles

These are the Principles for Peak Grantmaking:
• Tie Practices to Values
• Narrow the Power Gap
• Drive Equity
• Steward Responsively
• Learn, Share, Evolve

Here are a few examples of session ideas:
• Best practices for streamlining applications to reduce grantee burden
• Case studies on participatory grantmaking
• Eliminating reporting requirements
• Creative approaches to impact measurement and reporting

Equity

Equity underpins all that we do and all that we are trying to advance.

Here are a few examples of session ideas:
• Envisioning foundation boards with a majority of directors who are people of color
• Reducing bias in your grantmaking process
• Collecting demographic data to support equity in grantmaking
• Reimagining the due diligence process to reduce applicant burden

Advocacy

PEAK advocates for our people, grants management, and the sector.

Here are a few examples of session ideas:
• Ways to advocate for small, grassroots-led nonprofit organizations
• Uplifting grants management professionals as change agents
• Advocating for multi-year general operating support grants
• Managing up and change management
Knowledge
Knowledge—and the pursuit thereof—supports our members in their roles and careers through hands-on skill building, sharing personal experiences, and exploring how emergent learning is a key element in professional and organizational success.

Here are a few examples of session ideas:
• Grants management system tools for efficiency in grantmaking
• Models that promote cross-functional collaboration, learning, and sharing
• Knowledge management as a core competency and through grants management system tools

Session Types

Open Fishbowl: 60 minutes
Engage the entire room by inviting attendees dive into the conversation! Two to three speakers will be seated in a circle and will actively discuss the session topic. An additional two to three chairs will be available for session attendees to join the conversation as they have questions or want to contribute and engage. A facilitator will be on tap to manage the discussion and share top takeaways.

Spark Talk: 30 minutes
Up to two speakers will have half an hour to speak on a selected topic and spark discussion among themselves and attendees. These sessions are a great way to highlight a specific idea, recommendation, or case study.

World Café: 75 minutes
Join the jet set! Select a topic, put attendees in small tour groups and have them travel across a series of small tables where they’ll respond to questions that explore the topic in greater depth. Each table will be covered with a paper tablecloth that attendees are encouraged to use to jot down notes and doodles to inform and inspire the discussion of the next group to visit the table. You can learn more about the world café methodology here.

Workshop: 60-75 minutes
These sessions provide attendees with practical tools and approaches to their work and can be structured as a presentation, a how-to session, or a panel. Sessions should be designed with some interaction in mind, such as breakout discussions, polling, open discussion, and other activities. Workshop sessions focused on skill building should be practical in nature and build competencies essential to grants management professionals.

Note: PEAK2023 will offer a limited number of sessions to be live streamed to those joining us online. At this time, we anticipate streaming a select number of spark talks and workshop sessions. Given the format of world café and open fishbowl sessions, they will only be offered to in-person attendees. The proposal submission form will allow session designers to select the format for their session from the four options.

Application Process

This year, we are using the Cadmium speaker management platform for the proposal submission process and to communicate with speakers about their sessions.

The proposal submission form requests information including session title, description, outline, learning objectives, the diverse perspectives the speaker(s) and content bring to the convening, consideration for inclusivity and accessibility in the session design, and alignment with the Learn, Share, Evolve theme and the four content areas. (See Content Focus above.) You will also be asked to supply the name, title, affiliated organization, and several demographic details on each of the speakers. Note: Spark talks may have no more than two speakers. Each session in any of the other meeting formats may have no more than four speakers in total.

SUBMIT YOUR PROPOSAL HERE
Selection Process

PEAK2023 Committee and Cochairs
Our committee is composed of PEAK member volunteers with extensive experience in one or more of the convening’s session themes. View our committee here.

The selection process will involve a rigorous review of every idea received. The committee, in partnership with PEAK staff, will make recommendations for selections and assist in planning other educational activities during the convening. We anticipate receiving many more session ideas than can be selected. Selection decisions are based solely on the information submitted, so please follow the instructions carefully and supply all requested information. Missing or incorrect information could make the proposed idea ineligible for consideration.

The PEAK team will also proactively invite sector partners and members to submit proposals to ensure that topics of importance to our mission and the work and voices of those we want to uplift are represented.

Selection Criteria
Your proposed session must clearly apply to the target audience, support the overarching Learn, Share, Evolve theme, and one of the four content areas. In addition, proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:

• Equity: Does the proposed session center equity in its approach and content?
• Compelling and Relevant: To what extent does the focus of the proposed session advance our thinking on a critical and timely issue in philanthropy? How well does the session connect to the convening theme or track?
• Diverse Perspective: To what extent does the proposed session highlight 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, or offer a fresh take on an issue? Does the proposal lift voices from the PEAK community?
• Action-oriented: Is the proposed session likely to engage participants in a way that inspires a real-world outcome?
• Desired Impact: Does the proposed session seek to impact individuals working in philanthropy, philanthropic organizations, or the sector as a whole?
• Format: Does the proposed session take advantage of a new way of presenting and leading? Is the session traditional in format or does it align with one of the new session formats (e.g., world café, open fishbowl).

Sessions must 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 diverse backgrounds, viewpoints, and organizational affiliations. Each individual or organization may submit up to two proposals. If you are with a large organization, please coordinate with your colleagues to ensure that you are submitting your two very best ideas. If a proposed idea is applicable to more than one content area, please make a note in your description rather than submitting it multiple times. Each proposal, with the exception of spark talks, may have a maximum of four speakers. Spark talks may have a maximum of two speakers.

Selection Timeline
PEAK Grantmaking must receive completed proposals no later than 11:59 p.m. EST on Wednesday, January 18, 2023. Session selections will be confirmed by mid-February 2023.

If the PEAK2023 Committee recommends your proposed idea for the convening, PEAK Grantmaking staff and committee members may work with you to further develop the session. While we will try to honor your desired session type and format, we will determine which will best showcase your ideas.

Due to our focused priorities and limited time slots, we will not be able to accept every submission. There will be approximately 25–30 sessions at PEAK2023.
Convening Policies

Your Commitment to Speak
It is an honor and a privilege to be invited to speak at a PEAK convening. By sharing your expertise, you make a valuable contribution to the profession’s field of knowledge and the learning of each participant. If you are selected, ensure 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 our 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 you to have another person prepared to deliver the session as a backup plan.

By committing to present at PEAK2023, you also agree to meet the following requirements:
Attend the speaker orientation session where we will cover responsibilities and accountabilities and provide more information about our Principles for Peak Grantmaking and our values as an organization.
• Eliminate any form of direct promotion of a product, service, or monetary self-interest from your presentation. PEAK2023 is a convening that seeks to build on the wisdom and experience of practitioners in the field, and as such must be noncommercial in content and delivery.
• Refrain from overt statements, harsh language, or pointed humor that disparages the rightful dignity and social equity of any individual or group.

Registration and Travel Expenses
PEAK Grantmaking is a nonprofit membership association with a responsibility to its members to carefully manage its resources.

For this year’s convening, we will offer speakers a discounted registration rate of $650. If this is not financially feasible for any of our members or partners, we will work with you to ensure you are able to attend. Speaker stipends and additional support for participation in PEAK2023 will be considered on a case-by-case basis and upon request.

All who submit a session proposal and are not selected to speak at PEAK2023 will be offered the appropriate early registration rate once speaker selections are made. Once you have submitted a session, we recommend waiting to register until PEAK notifies you about the status of your proposal. The PEAK team will support you in registering for the convening at the early rate.

Questions
Reach out to Community Knowledge Manager Chantias Ford at chantias@peakgrantmaking.org

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