

TypeCon Proposal Tips

The Society of Typographic Aficionados (SOTA) thanks you for your interest in submitting a programming proposal. As a non-profit organization, we rely on proposals submitted by our community to fill our program each year. Aside from the keynote and TDC speakers, SOTA does not solicit speakers for the program. We want TypeCon's programming to showcase the knowledge, interests, and skills of its participants.

Who Can Submit A Proposal?

We encourage anyone who has the desire to prepare a presentation and speak in front of their type and lettering industry peers to submit a proposal, regardless of your background or level of professional experience.

- Not sure if you're ready? Remember, you don't have to be an expert. Bringing unique content together and posing interesting questions can make for a great presentation.
- You can submit more than one proposal, and make proposals in multiple categories.
- If you have submitted a proposal previously, and it wasn't selected, you are welcome to resubmit your idea. You might consider reworking your idea or rewriting the abstract for a greater chance at success.

Tips For A Successful Proposal

1. Remember your audience. What sort of subject matter would be appealing to the typographers, type designers, graphic designers, lettering artists, calligraphers, printmakers, educators, students, and others attending the conference?

Types of proposals that tend to score lower: Portfolio presentations, sales-pitch style proposals, demonstrations of common techniques or technology, and talks previously presented at other type industry conferences.

2. Well-developed topics, rather than fleeting ideas. Focus on a subject that you have spent time engaging in, not just a random idea. Relevancy, intent, previous research, and experience is inherent in a solid proposal.

3. Offer something unique. Have you conducted new research on a topic? Approached it from a different angle? Collected resources others haven't had access to? What can you show that isn't easily available on the internet?

4. Provide context. In your proposal abstract, be sure to show relevancy between the topic and the industry. Explain not only what, but why people should learn about this.

5. Be succinct. Spend the time to write a clear, focused presentation abstract of 1,200 characters or less. Remember, this will also be printed in the conference program, if selected.

Proposal Requirements

In order to fill out our Proposal Submission Form, you will need the following information:

- **Basic information:** Name, affiliation, title, email, phone, social media handles.
- **Bio:** Your brief biography for publication, 800 characters or less. *(See the TypeCon website for examples)*
- **Photo:** Headshot image, 1000×1000 pixels, black & white preferred. Avoid abstract images, illustrations
- **Co-presenter:** If you have a co-presenter, the above information is required for that person as well.
- **Programming type:** Pre-Conference Workshop, Education Forum talk, Main Conference talk.
If you have ideas for Panel Discussions or other special events, please email them to: program@typecon.com
- **Duration:** Proposed duration of the presentation. Workshops: Half-day or Full-day;
Education Forum: 20 minutes; Main Conference: 20 or 40 minutes.
- **Participant number:** If proposing a Workshop, please specify a realistic maximum number of attendees you can fairly teach during the event.
- **Abstract:** Written summary of your proposed talk or workshop, 1,200 characters or less. This will be printed in the conference program, if your proposal is selected. *(See the TypeCon website for examples)*

Tip: Avoid typing long passages of text directly into the submission form. Have your abstract and bio already completed and saved in a text document, for easy copying and pasting into the form fields.

If you are submitting the the **Education Forum**, you will also need the following:

- **CV:** Your professional CV in .pdf format
- **Images:** A .zip file containing a minimum of 6 supporting images for your talk proposal

Selection Process

SOTA utilizes a **blind selection process** to choose which proposals are successful. This method was chosen to reduce bias, and to ensure that proposals are selected based on the merit, thoughtfulness, and quality of the proposal.

The author's name, company, and other identifying attributes are removed from each proposal, to prevent influence on the panel of scorers. One SOTA board member is chosen to facilitate this scoring process, and abstains from scoring. The scoring panel, who remains anonymous while voting, consists of sitting SOTA Board members as well as independent, qualified, nonaffiliated individuals in the field.

Each scorer assigns a rank from 1 to 5 to each proposal, 5 being the highest score. The highest cumulative scores "win" and receive priority in the program in one of three categories: Main Program, Ed Forum, or Workshops. In the event that a submitter has two or more high scoring proposals, the highest scoring proposal will make the program, and the remaining will be discarded to provide a more diverse speaker list.

If your proposal is successful, you will be notified by TypeCon by the date listed on the web page.

Any questions? Contact us: program@typecon.com