

AMPO Drop-in Help Session for 2026 Annual Conference Call for Proposals

Feb. 12, 2026

AMPO staff held a drop-in session to field questions about the call for proposals for our [2026 Annual Conference](#). Below is a Q&A outlining the questions we received and responses we gave. We'll hold one more drop-in help session before proposals are due on March 9.

That session will be on March 3, and people can drop in anytime between 3 and 4 pm Eastern to ask questions and request feedback. [Register here](#).

Q: Do I need to propose a panel or group of presenters, or can I propose solo?

A: You can do either! Some successful proposals include multiple speakers/session leaders, and some are just a speaker. When solo speakers are accepted we combine them into a session. Panels of speakers are fine, but we encourage you to add an interactive element to engage the audience. [This document](#) has guidance on submitting a successful proposal, and in [this document](#) you'll find all the fields you'll fill out in your proposal, including the session types. You can also propose a brand-new session type!

Q: How are proposals reviewed and scored?

A: AMPO has a [Applied Research & Training Committee](#) made up of 30 MPO planning professionals from across the U.S., and they review and score each session proposal. AMPO staff then pulls together an agenda with the highest-scoring proposals. For our 2025 Annual Conference we received almost 150 proposals and were able to include about one-third of those in the agenda. Past acceptances aren't guarantees of future successful proposals, but if you want to look over the sessions that have been accepted for previous AMPO events, you can [find those here](#).

Q: If I wanted to pull together a proposal including other session leaders, how do I find other agencies to partner with?

A: First, think about your network. Who do you know at other MPOs, in local governments, in a state DOT, or at another type of agency who's doing work similar to yours and might want to propose with you? AMPO members can also post on our [member forum](#) to find potential proposal partners.

Q: What topics are most likely to be accepted for the Annual Conference?

A: We'll accept proposals on just about any topic that's relevant to MPOs. As part of your proposal, you'll identify the key topics, which helps us combine individual speakers into larger sessions if needed. But our reviewers don't focus just on the topic of a proposal. Rather, they look for proposals that are clear about how they will engage the audience and give them information and tools they can take home to inform and improve their own work.

Q: Will AMPO be offering support to small MPOs again?

A: Yes! For the 2025 Annual Conference we offered a half-price registration and \$1,000 travel stipend to up to 10 small MPOs with the goal of increasing the visibility of MPOs serving areas under 200,000 in population, and we're doing that again for the 2026 Annual Conference. So if funding is a barrier to your small MPO presenting, please keep that support in mind!

Q: Does every proposal have to come from an MPO and/or include an MPO?

A: No, a successful proposal can come from anyone, but each proposal needs to include a public agency. Typically that public agency is an MPO, but it could also be a local, state, or federal government agency, or an educational institution.

Q: The proposal submission portal allows us to upload documents and share links. What sort of documents and links are you looking for?

A: Those are optional elements of a proposal, but submitters can share a link or a document that's relevant to their proposal if they think that's helpful. For instance, if your proposal was about a data dashboard that your agency created, you could share a link to that dashboard.