How to Write A Successful Conference Session Proposal
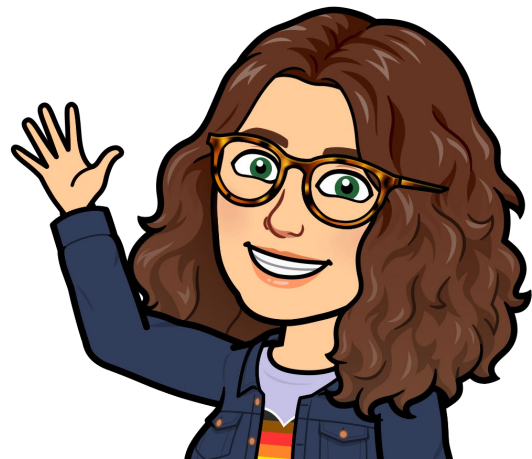
Sajni + Sarah

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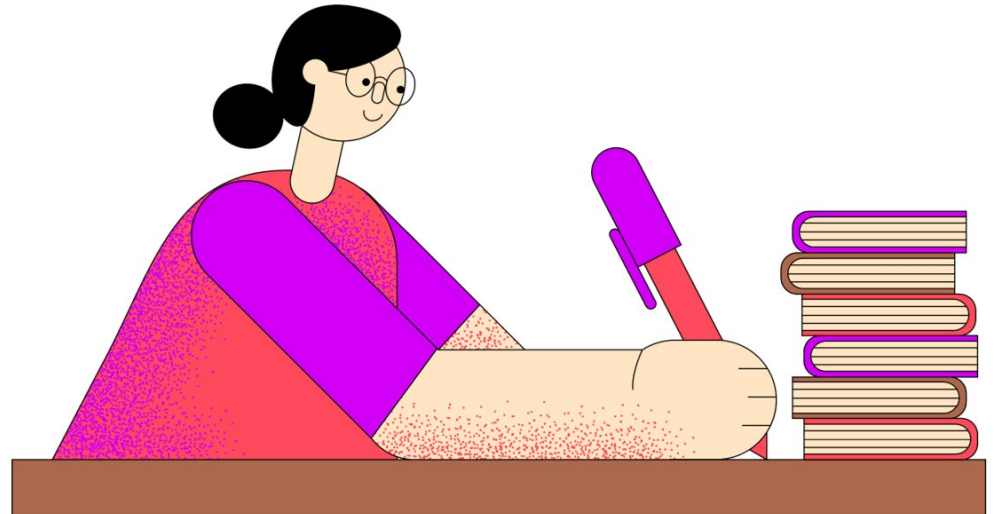West Vancouver Memorial Library

Agenda

- Abstracts
- Theme
- Audience
- Evidence
- Partnering
- Resource sharing
- Editing
- Format
- Requirements
- Adjudication
- Questions!

More than a synopsis or summary

- Clearly articulate the outcomes of the session
- What attendees will get out of the session
- What it adds to the conference theme

Writing to the conference theme

Libraries.
Connections.
Communities.

The Equity Minded Academic Library

Connect, Converse, Collaborate

Archives: Bridging the Gap

Walking in Two Worlds

Wine-ing About Records

Traveler, there is no path, the path is made by walking

– ANTONIO MACHADO, BORDER OF A DREAM: SELECTED POEMS
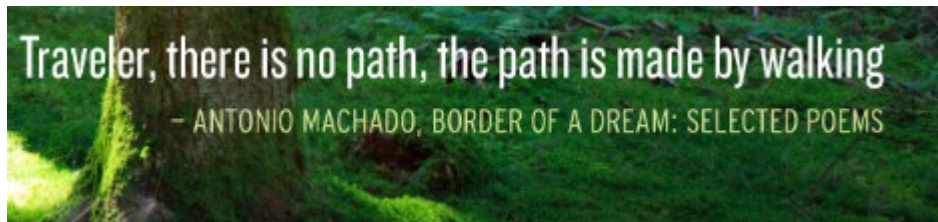
Audience

- Define audience for your session and what they will get out of it
- But also how will it have some broad applicability (potentially) for others if a larger conference with multiple types of library workers

What's the evidence?

- How did you get to this topic or idea?
  - Programming data
  - Community engagement
  - Literature or other evidence from the field

Partnering

- ○ Did you engage with different types of workers (students, librarians, library technicians, community organizations, patrons)
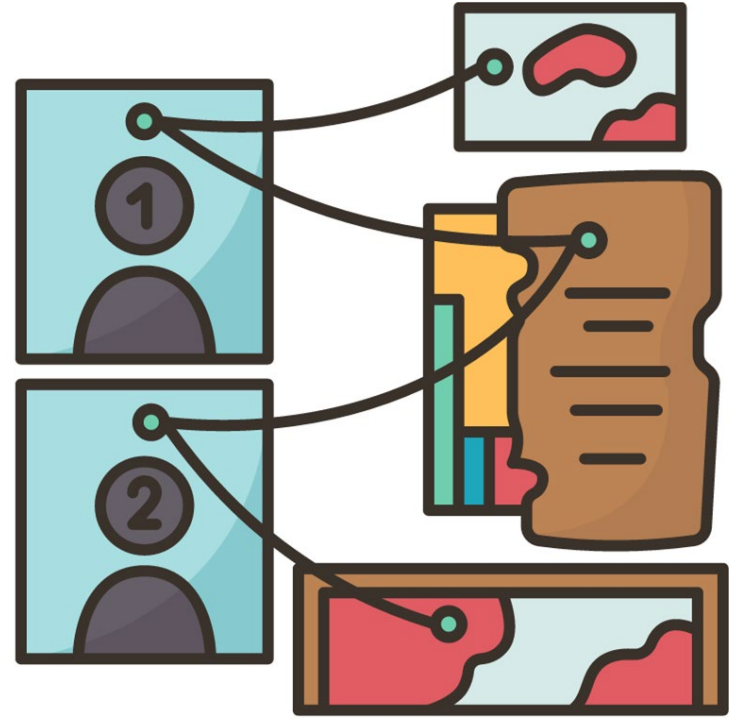- ○ Show different perspectives of who is or engaging with the work

Resources, tools, and takeaways

- What are attendees going to get out of it
- Do you have resources that you can share so they can apply it in their own context
- How would this translate to other institutions or organizations
- What were the lessons learned, what would you do differently?

Editing

- Have someone else read it
- Revise, revise, and revise
- Keep your proposals
    - If get accepted great! Will remind you what you said you would do
    - If didn't get accepted, that's okay! Can use for other things

Format

- Write to the format
  - Posters
  - Panels
  - Presentations
  - Workshop
  - Lightning talks

Typical Proposal Requirements

Basics:

- Name, email, institution
- Bio of presenter
- Author presenter names
- Format
- Keywords
- Library type
- Audience
- Sometimes some identity questions

More detailed:

- Abstract, write up
- Condensed abstract for conference schedule
- Learning outcomes
- Articulation of how it connects to the theme
- What attendees will get out of it
- Recording/Prerecording

Reflect on past conferences

- Going forward think about conferences, and conference sessions that you liked
- How did they lay out what they were going to do
- Read the description in the conference schedule

Past Conferences | BCLA Connect - https://bclaconnect.ca/conferences/bcla-conference-archives/

Adjudication

- Sometimes a rubric
- How is it written
- Who will it appeal to
- How many proposals in that topic area
- How does it connect to theme
- How representative is it
- Do we have a diverse range of experiences
  - Students, technicians, librarians, public, academic, special
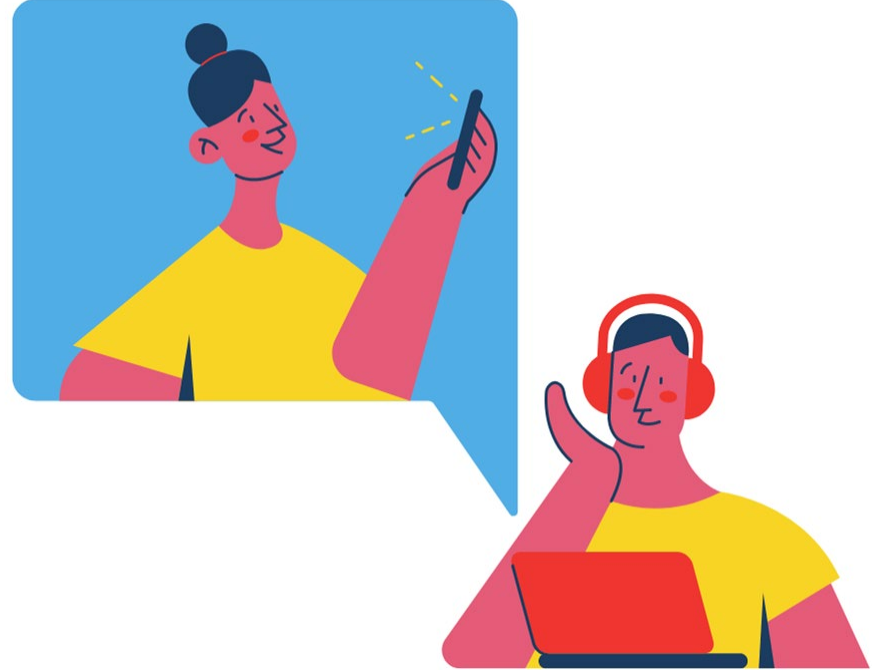
Sarah's Sample: BCLA 2018

Session Title: Steal this Framework! ==Approaches== to Digital Literacy Instruction at the Public Library

Session Description: *(300 words max)*
Can I use Photoshop to make a business card? Should I be scared that Facebook is mining my data? What's Minecraft? How do I make a website to sell my hats? Which apps are safe and educational for my preschooler? Can you help me email photos to my grandchildren? How do I spot fake news?

Demand for digital literacy learning opportunities at the public library is both increasing and diversifying. Many still need to learn the basics; privacy and security concerns are ever-present; and people of all ages want to explore advanced, cutting edge and creative technology.

==Your library needs to not only decide what to offer, but how it will fit in with community needs, strategic goals, and staffing. Join an interactive discussion with panelists from four B.C. libraries who have recently created new, evidence-based digital literacy frameworks, programs and resources. Learn what we learned, what worked and what didn't, and how you can adapt our work for your library.==

Session Length: 75 min

Sarah's Sample: BCLA 2018

Tell us why relevant - why participants will benefit:

The library is a central place of learning for all community members. By embracing new topics and modes of learning we are changing to meet community needs and revitalizing our own work and instructional cultures. This has meant both refreshing public-facing resources and programs, and supporting staff development.

With panelists from 4 different libraries, we'll show a variety of approaches, and enable participants to select parts of each approach to best meet the needs of their own libraries and communities.

We plan to give an overview of each of our libraries' recent work, results, and plans, but we also want to leave a lot of time for questions and discussion. Participants will also be shown exactly where to go to find our work for themselves, so that they can remix it to fit their library's context.

Sarah's Sample: Non-Library Conference

bit.ly/LibECCC2017

Your Library Loves You Back

How Artists + Writers Can Get the Most Out of Library Services!

"Are you a writer? An artist? A fan looking to connect with other fans? This session will focus on how libraries can support you in completing your work and achieving your dreams. We'll cover strategies for successful research, using both text and image sources, for everything from character design to historical context to large scale world-building. We'll demonstrate and discuss the creative services provided by public libraries across North America, in person and online: tools, classes, and resources to help you succeed in digital media design, print and electronic self-publishing, self-promotion, and community collaboration. And we'll open up the discussion so that the librarians on the panel can learn what you would like to see at YOUR library!"

Sajni's example: BCLA 2022

In his book ==*Reading as Collective Action* Nicholas Hengen Fox== outlines how reading can go beyond just exposing people to new ideas, and when done in public and collaborative ways can be used for political power and actionable work. At UBC Okanagan (UBCO) Library, members of the Library's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee have organized and led multiple collaborative reading projects ==to build community, develop cultural humility, and incite discussion and planning for actionable change related to anti-racism and anti-colonialism in our library contexts.==

==A few examples of projects include== an anti-racist book club that invited librarians, staff, and students to read and discuss *How to be an antiracist* by Ibrahim X. Kendi and *So you want to talk about race?* by Ijeoma Oluo. The UBCO Library also engaged in a cross-campus discussion group with Indigenous Initiatives at UBC Vancouver and Okanagan College on the series *What I Learned in Class Today*, a renewed project focusing on Indigenous faculty experiences with teaching and engaging with Indigenous Knowledge in the classroom and with Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. We have also engaged with an Inclusive Teaching online course, and a group reading of the Indigenous Information Literacy Pressbook by Rachel Chong. ==Planned future projects== include a live group reading of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action, and the development of an ongoing structure to engage with UBC's Indigenous Strategic Plan, an institutional foundational document, as well as The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG).

All of these reading opportunities provide a space for collective learning and collective action.

While we acknowledge the criticism around reading as anti-racist work, we argue that these reading and reflective exercises provide an opportunity to challenge and subvert white supremacy culture in the workplace (e.g. immediate actioning, perfectionism, etc.). They provide a space for collective learning and collective action and help us move toward actionable change in our systemic policies. ==They provide a foundation with which people can build== trust with each other, hear lived experiences, and develop their knowledge to engage in the tangible work of decolonization, equity, diversity, inclusion, and more.

Sajni's BCLA Continued

Three Learning Objectives:

- Identify opportunities for developed collaborative reading at your institution
- Explore strategies for structuring reading groups at your institution
- Reflect on how and why developing collaborative reading groups can support cultural humility development and collective action

Tell us why you think this session is relevant to libraries right now and how you think delegates will benefit from attending it. (100 words)

Many, if not most institutions are looking for ways to engage and take action towards cultural competency, decolonization, reconciliation, antiracism and equity, diversity and inclusion. Collective reading provides a space to build trust, enable time to do the learning, and create opportunities for people to figure out how to take meaningful action.

Sajni ACRL 2021 Poster

Description of project

The University of British Columbia has developed an Inclusion Action Plan and an Indigenous Strategic Plan over the last year. In an attempt to engage with these documents within the Library, one campus branch located in the unceded and ancestral territory of Syilx Okanagan peoples which includes (but is not limited to) the seven member communities including the Okanagan Indian Band, Osoyoos Indian Band, Penticton Indian Band, Upper Nicola Band, Upper and Lower Similkameen Indian Bands and Westbank First Nations and create funded student positions within the Library, UBC Okanagan Library created two student positions for the 2020-2021 academic year using grant funding to have students create and develop projects within the Library that spoke to their own personal interests that were focused on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion from the student perspective.

Goals of this project included:

Seeking to identify and further develop areas and initiatives that embed inclusion into Library work from the student perspective, increase student developed content within the library, provide an opportunity to pay students for equity, diversity, and inclusion focused work at the undergraduate level. In addition, positioning the library as a resource to support and conduct inclusive teaching and learning through the information provided.

This poster will include details on the environmental scan of the literature and other EDI focused internships focused on the undergraduate level, as well as the process of creating these positions from conception, the posting process aimed at students from historical underrepresented and marginalized communities on the University of British Columbia Okanagan campus, hiring, and projects that have been developed and created as part of these internships.

Examples of projects completed to date include the launch of a two-spirit and queer Indigenous literature event, libguides on Trans Day of Remembrance, a Queer Reads social media compaign, and Indigenous Libguide on the regional Indigenous community, and more as this pilot is still underway.

Next steps and initial takeaways for this internship will be included such as supporting student staff in project development, using strategic and action plans to construct library driven content, advocating and soliciting support from campus partners, and advocating for permanence of these positions.

Questions?