



WILDERNESS RISK MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE



Call for Proposals Speaker Information

SHARE YOUR KNOWLEDGE & EXPERIENCE

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Facing Challenges Together

You are invited to submit a proposal to share your knowledge and experience with the WRMC Community. Speakers, also referred to as Presenters, are vital partners in achieving the goals of the WRMC. It is only through the dedication and collaboration of practitioners, researchers, emerging leaders, and industry experts that the community continues to elevate wilderness risk management principles, knowledge, and practices through the WRMC. Often, those who attend and present at the WRMC have expressed that it is the one place where they find the comradery, mentoring, and inspiration that is so valuable in continuing their important, challenging, and rewarding work. Thank you for submitting your proposal and being a crucial part of the continuing legacy of facing challenges together.

Call for Proposal Process

How does your work, research, or expertise help achieve the core objective of the WRMC, which is to offer an ***outstanding educational experience to help mitigate the risks inherent in exploring, working, teaching, and recreating in wild places?*** Your proposal will have a better opportunity to be included in the schedule if it focuses on managing risk in outdoor and remote environments or the administrative practices of organizations that offer these programs. The best place to start is with a good understanding of the WRMC community, Steering Committee, and Shared Risk Management Philosophy.

Steering Committee

The [Steering Committee](#) manages the educational content and provides collaborative direction and leadership of the conference. The committee is composed of representatives from the partner organizations, which are selected to represent attendee demographics and industry sectors. The Steering Committee reviews and selects workshop proposals.

Shared Risk Management Philosophy

The WRMC shared risk management philosophy, as captured by the [WRMC Purpose and Tenets](#), guides the selection of the conference educational content. The tenets are:

- Wilderness and outdoor experiences create unique opportunities for personal growth and skill development.
- There is value to taking risks, and those risks need to be thoughtfully assessed and managed.
- We have a responsibility to share learning in order to promote collaboration and improved risk management practices across the industry.
- Each organization should define its own risk management goals and practices, while also striving to learn from the practices and experiences of others.
- Managing the risks to our participants and staff helps us manage the risks to our organizations.
- We can and should enlist our participants as partners in managing the risks inherent in our programs.
- Cultural humility supports risk management and is essential in creating inclusive programs.
- Transparency with participants and their families is valuable and appropriate, including in times of crisis.
- Timely reporting and debriefing of risk management incidents is key to promoting learning and improving practices over time.
- Prudent legal strategies are grounded in running quality programs that thoughtfully manage risk and prioritize the health and well-being of those involved.

2023 Conference

The 30th Annual WRMC will be held October 18-20, 2023, at the Holiday Inn Portland - Columbia Riverfront, 909 North Hayden Island Drive, Portland, Oregon 97217.

Proposal Timeline

Call for Proposals Open: January 16-March 3

Accept/Decline Notifications: June 1

Speaker Commitment Due/Schedule Final: June 15

Learning Tracks

Select the learning track for your proposal.

- Emergency Planning & Crisis Response
- Field Practices
- Legal & Insurance
- Mental, Social, & Emotional Health
- Program Administration
- Staff Training & Decision Making

Topics focused on technical risk management, and climate-related risk are encouraged for 2023.

Presentation Format Options

Presentation formats may include: Workshops, Short-Talk, Poster, General Session/Keynote, and Preconference Sessions. What's the best way for your audience to learn? How much time does your topic need? What's the difference between the main conference and the preconference? You will submit for your preferred format, but you might be accepted for an alternative format to balance and fill the schedule.

Main Conference:

Workshops featured during the main conference schedule on Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday.

- Workshops: 60- or 90-minute
- 18-minute "Short Talk" (i.e., TED talk, scheduled with 2-4 other Short Talks)
- Poster (displayed during the main conference)

Keynote, Plenary, or General Session Presentation

Proposals will be accepted for consideration as a keynote or general session and can include a panel discussion. Presentation time will be 30-45 minutes + Q&A for about 45-55 minutes total.

Keynote/General Sessions may happen at a keynote meal on Friday night as has been scheduled previously, or they could be part of other general session presentations such as at breakfast or lunch.

If your proposal is selected for inclusion during the main conference, you could be scheduled as early as Wednesday at 1:00 pm or as late as Friday at 5:00 pm (Keynote could end as late as 9:00 pm Friday). These sessions are included in the cost of conference registration. The 2023 schedule will likely have some changes, but you might find it helpful to see the [schedule from 2022](#).

Multiple Topics/Proposals

Do you have more than one topic or research finding to share? Great! Please submit one proposal form for each topic.

Preconference

Do you have a topic that is an innovative new technique, training opportunity, an off-site workshop, or research finding that requires more than 90 minutes? Then a preconference session might be the way to go. Preconference sessions can be any length but are typically scheduled between Tuesday 8:00 am and Wednesday 4:00 pm in half-day, full-day, or two-day formats.

There are three types of Preconference Workshops:

1. Fee to Attendees - [Provider Agreement](#) & W-9 will be required.
2. No Fee to Attendees, but has minimum or maximum attendance limits that require pre-registration. A charge of \$100-\$500 for a 1-4 hour session or \$200-\$800 for a 4+ hour session will be paid to WRMC by the provider.
3. No fee to Attendees with no registration, unlimited walk-in participation. These sessions do not require a Provider Agreement or charge.

Audience

Who is likely to be in your session? Thinking about the unique WRMC audience can be helpful in crafting your proposal. WRMC attendees are here to learn about wilderness risk management. They come from outdoor/adventure education, conservation corps, recreation and guiding industries, adventure travel, international education, secondary schools, therapeutic programs, college programs, camps, and other sectors. Total conference attendance is typically 550-600+ participants. Presenters can expect 50-125 attendees in their main conference workshop sessions. The main conference typically includes 40+ workshops, one or two short talk series (that include 2-4 short talks), and 6-8 posters. Four

or five workshops are scheduled simultaneously, so attendees have to choose from many excellent presentations and topics that interest them.

Your attendees may be new to the wilderness risk management profession, or they may be experienced leaders with decades of education and experience. In your proposal, please identify your preferred target audience as **Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced, or All Levels**. Presenters may be asked to broaden or limit the target audience level, but it's important your proposal identifies what level of material you are presenting.

Workshops that engage the audience are appreciated by attendees. This can include pausing for questions, using scenarios, having prompts for facilitated discussion, using real time online surveys, having breakout groups, or other methods.

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

The WRMC provides a forum to learn and share common practices in wilderness risk management and contributes to a culture of open dialogue among outdoor industry professionals. The WRMC is committed to the evolution of content and culture in a way that centers on diversity, equity, and inclusion principles. Commitment to these values helps ensure the best ideas continue to improve risk management practices for the industry. Individuals bringing diverse perspectives and innovative content are encouraged to submit proposals. Please reach out to wrmc@nols.edu if you would like to connect to gain a better understanding of the process and tips on how to submit a successful proposal.

Speaker/Presenter Discount

Speakers are eligible for a discount of \$500 on the conference registration. Facilitating a networking session will not be eligible for the discount.

Presenter registrations will follow all general conference policies for late fees, cancelation fees, etc.

Presenters should register and pay prior to the late fee deadline to receive the lowest-cost registration.

Type	Speakers per session
Workshop (60 or 90-minute)	1-3
Short Talk or Poster	1-2
Preconference	1-3
Panel	2-3 panel members, plus one moderator

Reasonable Accommodation

If you would like to request a reasonable accommodation to present at the WRMC, please use the most comfortable method to share your request. You may contact wrmc@nols.edu or 307-335-2222, provide information directly within your proposal, or request an opportunity to connect with the WRMC Chair or other leaders to have a conversation regarding your request.

Presentation Details

Description: Accurate and updated description for publication to attendees that clearly and succinctly describes your presentation in 100-200 words.

Outline: An outline of workshop content and estimated time allocated to each area will be requested with your proposal. This outline should be detailed enough for the Steering Committee to understand your workshop and consider it for selection. Please include links or citations to references or any other material helpful to understand the content of the workshop.

Action Steps: Tangible and practical implementation steps that attendees can take to improve risk management in their programs. Action steps are not learning outcomes, but rather, tangible steps attendees can take to incorporate learning outcomes into their programs.

Proposal and Presenter Changes after Acceptance

Only in extenuating circumstances can presenters or content be changed after the proposal is accepted onto the schedule. To request a change, contact wrmc@nols.edu and the WRMC Steering Committee Chair with an emailed request that includes: the reason for the requested change, what you are hoping to change, and if you are hoping to substitute a presenter who has not presented at a WRMC in the past, please also include an updated 75-word bio for the new presenter. If the change of any presenter is approved, the new presenter will be agreeing to all of the information in these instructions.

What happens if your proposal is accepted?

You'll be notified by June 1st with a tentative date, time, and format (workshop/poster/short talk/session). Speakers will register for the conference and confirm their acceptance by June 15, 2023.

Speaker Expectations

Promoting the WRMC Purpose Statement

The WRMC provides a forum to learn and share common practices in wilderness risk management and contributes to a culture of open dialogue among outdoor industry professionals.

Presentation & Reference Materials

The WRMC maintains an online Resource Center and speakers are expected to contribute to it. This is a service to the WRMC attendees and larger community. Please:

- Provide a separate slide with your Action Steps from your presentation
- Provide a public copy of your presentation
- Provide any other resources, references, or bibliography you used or referred to during your workshop

This information will be made available to conference attendees and the general public. Promotional materials are not appropriate and will not be accepted.

Handouts: If speakers want to provide handouts, they are responsible for printing them and having them available before their workshop. WRMC staff cannot assist in printing handouts.

Inclusive Culture

The WRMC is committed to fostering an inclusive culture where people of all identities are welcome and experience a sense of belonging. When submitting a proposal, you will identify how you will infuse diversity, equity, and inclusion into your presentation.

Please verbally share your pronouns during introductions. ([Why pronouns matter](#)).

Be considerate in your language and behavior when presenting. Examples of missteps attendees have observed in the past include language that reinforces cultural stereotypes based on race, national origin, or ethnicity; and people making inaccurate assumptions based on gender presentation and other aspects of appearance.

[Land/Territory Acknowledgments](#) are encouraged. An acknowledgment will be included in the main conference opening for the location of the current conference. Other land acknowledgements, when appropriate, are encouraged.

Jargon and Acronyms: It is not uncommon for our profession to utilize specialized language and/or simplify organizational-specific language with acronyms. Please ensure you are using terminology that is inclusive and accessible by checking your presentation and script for exclusionary jargon and acronyms.

Selected Presenter Demographic Survey

WRMC is measuring the demographics of presenters so that we can continuously improve on our goals of inclusion and diverse/appropriate/desired representation. Selected presenters will be encouraged to submit an anonymous Selected Presenter Demographic Survey. Link to be provided in acceptance letter.

Conference Communications

Please watch for and read the WRMC email updates. We know folks are overwhelmed with the volume of emails. You can help by making wrmc@nols.edu a trusted sender so important communications don't end up in your spam folder.

If an event management software app such as Sched is used, presenters should expect to use the app to connect with attendees and promote their presentation.

Separation of Presentation from Business Development

The highest level of professionalism and collaboration is expected. Speakers are expected to promote the WRMC Purpose and Tenants and may not leverage their contribution to the WRMC to promote services or products.

Designing a presentation to drive participants to purchase your products or services detracts from the educational integrity of the conference. Appropriate platforms for promoting your business include exhibitor space, conference advertisements, or sponsorships.

Conference Policies

General conference policies including, cancellation, late fees, meal plan add-on, COVID, or others, will apply to Speaker Registrations. [Conference Policies](#).

Referencing Other Programs

Professional Credit and Permission: Speakers will communicate in advance with any organization before referencing its policies, training, incidents, or risk management strategies and will obtain approval. This step helps speakers get facts and details correct and gives the organization a chance to be prepared for a public discussion of what may be sensitive material. The WRMC wants to foster an environment in which we can openly and accurately learn from each other.

Commit to Participants Carrying their Learning Forward

Speakers consistently receive feedback that their material was too broad and did not provide tools that could be directly applied to another program. Participants are often overwhelmed by the amount of information they receive throughout the conference; make it your goal to help them turn learning into action.

Evaluation and Feedback

Participants are asked to provide feedback through evaluations. Presenters will receive the results of the feedback after the conference.

New Speakers

Presenters who have not delivered a workshop, short-talk, poster, keynote, or preconference workshop in the previous three years are considered to be “New” Presenters. New Presenters will provide additional information in the submission form, including a 75-word biography.

Logistics, Scheduling, and Setup

Your presentation date, time, room, and other details may change. Your patience and flexibility are appreciated. Date and time changes are rare but do occur. You are encouraged to ensure your travel plans allow for flexibility. Room location changes are common.

Room Logistics

AV & Microphones

Presenters are required to use microphones when presenting unless the session is smaller than 20 participants and is not being recorded. Quality sound is an important part of giving everyone in the audience equal access to the material being presented. Each room will be equipped with a projector, screen, and two lapel microphones. **Presenters are responsible for ensuring that they bring a computer and adaptors that will connect to most types of projectors.** If you need to borrow a computer, please contact wrmc@nols.edu two weeks prior to the conference.

Room Setup

To accommodate a maximum number of attendees in your workshop, all rooms will be set with theater-style seating. If you would like to change the room layout, you may do so in the 30 minutes before your workshop. Volunteers, staff, and audience members can help you return the setup to theater style immediately after your session, but we ask you to drive the process.

Rooms will not be equipped with a Flip Chart unless requested in advance. Per the requirements of the conference center, nothing can be taped to the walls. To request a flip chart, email wrmc@nols.edu two weeks prior to the conference.

Quickly Transition

Please take post-presentation questions and discussions into the hall to make space for the next speaker. WRMC staff will gladly post handouts, articles, or slide presentations on the conference website for you after the event.

Collaborate with other WRMC Helpers

Presenters will work with and receive support from WRMC Staff, Steering Committee Members, Volunteers, and other community champions. Thanks for working collaboratively with all these folks. Typically a Steering Committee member and one or two Volunteers will be present during your session.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What is the deal with Short Talks?

Usually, Short Talks are grouped together and fit into one of the 90-minute workshop time slots. That means there will be four presentations (of 18 minutes each). Each presentation can include one or more presenters. It's a rapid-fire Ted Talk-style format.

I'm a new presenter. Is there someone I can ask some questions or get advice from?

Yes! New presenters are connected with a Steering Committee member or another experienced presenter so they can get an overview of what to expect, ask questions, and have a chance to put their best presentation together.

I've got amazing colleagues and collaborators and several areas of expertise. Can I submit more than one proposal with different co-presenters?

Yes! Please submit one proposal for each presentation idea - you can choose different formats. When you submit on behalf of others, ***it's your responsibility to ensure they have read and understood these updated instructions.***

What if I'm a frequent presenter? Do I still have to fill out and submit a proposal form?

I've presented a similar program for many years, and it's still relevant - do I have to complete the whole submission form? Yes. You'll receive an email with all the current info on your program when the proposal form opens. You can quickly cut and paste the info into the form. Submitting should take 10 minutes or less.

I have questions about the poster.

Actually, most folks do. So here's a specific [Poster Presentations Info and FAQ](#).

What if I want to present but am not sure I'm ready?

Consider starting with a Poster or Short Talk. Often the Steering Committee provides feedback or suggests format changes if your proposal is seen as great content but not ready for a full workshop. Sometimes poster or Short Talk presentations come back in future years as a full workshop.

What if I haven't been an active part of the WRMC community?

I'm not a current or aspiring wilderness risk professional, but I think my topic is important for the WRMC community. Can I submit a proposal or present without planning on attending the full conference? Yes, we'd love for you to submit a proposal. We like to prioritize new and innovative content within our conference; that said, we also encourage you to attend the conference

What if I have to cancel unexpectedly due to an emergency?

In cases of an absolutely unavoidable cancellation, please contact wrmc@nols.edu and the WRMC Steering Committee Chair as immediately as possible. Once the schedule is set, cancellations are difficult for the conference and disappoint attendees. We understand that the world is a little more unpredictable than ever. See above for information on requesting a presenter change. If there is an equally qualified presenter, you might consider suggesting a replacement first. Cancellation fees and policies apply to presenter registrations.

Do you ever allow topics that aren't in one of the learning tracks?

Yes, please just submit into the learning track you think most closely fits your proposal. The Steering Committee will re-evaluate the best fit for your session if selected"

Do I have to use a visual presentation tool (program), and are there any requirements for it?

While it is not required, presenters will likely want to include a contemporary, concise, and easy-to-read visual presentation. You may be presenting in a room with 200 seats that are all full or with only 40 people in a room of that same size, so plan for a presentation that can be seen easily from any seat in a large room.

Does the conference help presenters with travel arrangements or costs?

Presenters make and pay for their travel arrangements, including lodging reservations. Presenters receive the registration discount noted above. Presenters are encouraged to book lodging early using the WRMC Discounted Rate at the conference property. Discounted rooms will book quickly and may be sold out well before the conference.

I want to exhibit, sponsor or donate to the scholarship fund too. How do I do that?

Information on these wonderful ways to extend your involvement in the WRMC will be available on the website in the spring. With 2023 being the 30th Anniversary, expect some special options. Presenters who also exhibit or sponsor have a heightened obligation for impeccable professionalism during their presentations.

I don't think my topic fits into one of the formats - can I propose something else?

No, and maybe. Please submit your proposal under the format that you think it will most likely fit, then indicate what you would like to propose as the alternative format in "Other."

Does the conference print handouts or material for presenters?

No, presenters are responsible for providing any printed materials they provide. Presenters can use the conference app to upload digital resources. If you would like an option for printing, the hotel has a 24-hour business center, and there is a Staples office supply store near the hotel. [Staples, 1755 N Tomahawk Island Drive, Portland, OR](#). This location offers Print and Marketing Services. It is strongly

recommended that you speak directly with the store well in advance to ensure they can deliver the services you will need. (503) 283-8686.

Is there any way I can tell the Steering Committee more about my proposal than just the questions on the form?

Additional information is particularly important for new proposals, longer presentations, or old proposals that you are updating significantly. Use the “Other” section to share more detail you feel is important and be sure to upload helpful documents.

Submission Form

[2023 Proposal Submission Form](#)