Session Proposal Guidelines

Below are tips for proposal success and guidelines for submission. Higher education institutions face unique challenges, and we want to hear about your experiences navigating this ever-evolving landscape. The lessons you share as a speaker may help another attendee solve or avoid critical problems on their campus.

We invite clear, effective proposals that emphasize problem-solving and inspiration. Please make our job of selecting sessions difficult with all the outstanding proposals. We want to make each year's Payments Academy the best yet and we can only do that with your help!

Guidelines for Submission

- Each proposal must have at least one speaker from a college or university.
- There is a maximum of three (3) speakers per session.
- Must identify session format: lecture, lab, or panel. (See descriptions below)
- The committee will review proposals and might request a virtual meeting to discuss details.
- Speakers must complete the speaker agreement form to be confirmed for a session.

Session Format

- **Lecture** – A presenter-led educational talk to attendees followed by a Q&A.
- **Lab** – Facilitator-led collaborative activities and discussions.
- **Panel** – A moderated discussion or conversation with up to three (3) speakers.

Evaluation Criteria

The entire conference committee evaluates each proposal. To help you put your best foot forward, here is a partial list of things we consider when selecting proposals.

How well the topic and learning outcomes are articulated. We understand it can be difficult to know exactly what you want to say several months in advance, but ultimately that's the purpose of the proposal process. A session description that clearly defines the session topic, supported by concrete learning objectives, tells the committee you have a vision and a plan.

Number of proposals on the same topic. Sometimes we must pass on otherwise strong proposals simply because they would overlap with another presentation. This is an opportunity to be creative; part of higher education industry is that we all have the same problems, and we are looking for how you solve them.

Number of proposals from the same school. We try to ensure that proposals and speakers come from a mixture of perspectives—small school/big school, finance/IT, and different parts of the country. We encourage you to make our job difficult by submitting multiple, outstanding proposals that are hard to turn down, but if you submit ten proposals (smarty pants!), please understand we may only pick the best one or two so that other institutions are represented.

Presenter history. Yes, we really use session scores from previous years. None of our sessions are poorly rated so that isn't an issue, but a *stellar* score might be the thing that pushes your proposal over the edge. That being said, we *also* want to encourage first-time presenters, so the same is true of first-time proposal submitters. Put yourself out there if you have not before!

Scope. This one is as much alchemy as science, but we look at whether a topic is too broad or too narrow to be appropriately covered in a 50-minute session. If the other factors above are in your favor, the committee might ask you to consider narrowing or expanding your scope and submit a revised proposal.

Examples

Here are examples of good and bad proposals.

Good	Bad
Session Title – How to Execute an Incident Response Tabletop Exercise	**Session Title** – PCI Scanning
Session Description – Having an incident response plan is great, but will it work? During an incident is not the time to realize you failed to include vital people or did not include important steps. This is why it is important to test your IR plan by executing an Incident Response Tabletop Exercise. In this session we will walk through how you can plan for and execute a tabletop test of your IR plan to fulfill Requirement 12.10.2 of PCI DSS v4.0.	**Session Description** – Join Committee University as we discuss how to interpret the results of your PCI scan.
Learning Objectives – This workshop discussion will help attendees answer questions, such as: 1. How to pick an incident to test? 2. Who should attend the tabletop exercise? 3. What does a tabletop exercise look like? 4. Test - Complete, now what?	**Learning Objectives** – Understand how to interpret the results of a scan.

Final Tips

- Put yourself in the place of an audience member and what *you* would want to take away from topic and apply (or avoid) on your campus. Those are your learning objectives.
- Consider partnering with a colleague from another school. We like multiple perspectives.
- Practice your presentation out loud.
- Think of a creative solution that you or your institution has solved.
- Tell us your story on how you solved that problem/issue or policy.
- Be specific, we want hands-on experiences that have a story and real perspective.