

WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN HISTORIANS

50th Annual Conference, UC Davis, April 26-28, 2018

Proposal FAQ

Why should I come to the WAWH?

WAWH is a friendly, engaging conference that welcomes everyone, and offers particular opportunities for historians to meet, interact, and build relationships. In addition to excellent scholarly presentations, WAWH has a history of emphasizing professionalization workshops. Graduate students report feeling very welcomed at WAWH. We build communities as well as scholarly knowledge.

Wait, I don't identify as a woman/do not do women's history. Is this conference for me?

Yes! We welcome everyone who is interested in historical study/teaching. We have attendees and presenters who don't study women's history and/or those who identify as men or non-binary gender identity.

What is the difference between a panel, roundtable, workshop, and poster?

Panel: Panels traditionally are comprised of 3-4 papers that present original research on a unified theme; panels have a chair (who introduces panelists, keeps time, and handles audience questions) and a commentator. Panelists are expected to send written versions of their presentations to their commentator and chair several weeks before the conference. Audience members then ask questions about individual presentations.

Roundtable: A roundtable is comprised of 4-6 participants who engage in focused, interactive discussion on a historical, pedagogical, political, or professional issue. Roundtables have a moderator, rather than chair. Roundtable participants do not produce scholarly papers or submit detailed paper titles; they should instead be prepared to each speak for 5-7 minutes about their expert opinion on a topic, and then interact with the audience.

Workshop: A workshop is an interactive hands-on demonstration focused on a professional, political, or pedagogical topic. It typically involves the audience, not just as listeners and questioners, but as participants. It can have anywhere from 3-6 participants.

Poster: A poster uses visuals and text to present original research for display with and without the author's commentary. Posters can be a good choice for people in earlier stages of research. Poster sessions provide an opportunity to engage in conversation with conference participants about your work, so authors should be prepared to speak about their work to many people. Posters can be single or jointly authored.

What does presenting a paper exactly entail?

Paper presentations are typically based on research or pedagogical issues. We ask that presentations run from 10-15 minutes, so that there is plenty of time for audience questions. Presentations can range from formal reading of a paper (this is increasingly discouraged) to more extemporaneous presentations, sometimes with slide shows/decks such as PowerPoint, Prezi, or Google Slides. Presenting a paper means that you are agreeing to get a written version of your presentation (NOT a longer chapter/article on which your presentation will be based) to your commentator several weeks before the conference.

Help! We have presenters but no chair/moderator or commentator. Am I doomed?

Absolutely not! The most challenging part of a panel is to come up with a theme. The Program Committee can match panels with chairs and commenters from our extensive membership. Even if you only have 2 panelists speaking on a theme, that can be more helpful to the Program Committee than submitting two individual papers.

Why do you discourage submitting a single paper proposal?

If you have run out of time, or can't find anyone else to present with, please still submit your single paper. We will definitely consider it. However, creating your own panel also makes sure that you feel that the theme is most appropriate for your presentation and gives you the benefit of networking with other potential participants. We also ask for assembled panels to keep the Program Committee's workload more manageable. For instance, in 2016-2017, the program committee had about *eighty* individual papers that we spent hours and hours trying to sort into workable panels.

Ok, so how do I find other panelists?

No one minds being asked to be on a panel. You might look at past presenters to find people who have a history of attending WAWH, or look for scholars at institutions near the conference locale. Social media can be a great way to find new scholarship. Or send an email to a favorite scholar in your field. We are also trialing an [online spreadsheet](#) where prospective presenters can enter their information in the hope of finding other interested presenters. Potential presenters are encouraged to try out this tool (and feel free to offer feedback to us at conferenceprogram@wawh.org).

The [Call for Papers](#) states that you expect proposals “to represent the diversity of our membership and profession.” What exactly do you mean by that?

Promoting representation of the full diversity of women historians is a central goal of the WAWH. This means that we give preference to panels that are racially inclusive, that have participants from a range of institutions/in a range of career stages. #allmalepanel is usually not an issue at WAWH, but we still can do more to reduce the number of #allwhitepanel proposals.

We also strongly encourage proposals that address topics that are diverse and inclusive. We always like to see more non-North American and non-modern presentations.

I'm an undergraduate doing research, can I present or attend?

Yes! Some undergraduates do attend WAWH and report having a wonderful experience.

I'm ready to submit. How do I do that?

Go to www.wawh.org/conferences/2018/ for links and complete instructions for the information needed for your type of proposal. There are also links to blank samples for each proposal, so you can see what you need before starting to fill out the form. Any problems? Email conferenceprogram@wawh.org.

I don't have anything to present, but would like to participate. Do you accept volunteer chairs or commenters?

Absolutely! There's even a form for that at www.wawh.org/conferences/2018/. Just fill in your contact info, bio, and give us an idea about what kind of session topics/areas/time periods you'd be comfortable serving on.

How do you define the West for membership purposes?

While most of our members come from western states, anyone can join the WAWH and present at our conferences. We even have former West Coasters who come back every year.

I'm not affiliated with a university/I'm a K-12 history teacher. Is there something for me at WAWH?

Yes! Aside from hearing some of the latest scholarship, we frequently have sessions on activism, on pedagogy, and on new technologies and online resources. If you enjoy history, we would be happy to have you.

Just to be sure: do I have to do women's history to present?

Nope! The WAWH accepts papers and topics on all periods, regions, and fields of history, from ancient to modern. To be sure, there are lots of women's and gender historians at the WAWH, but we also include other historical specialties.

Any advice on how to write a convincing proposal?

There is lots of advice out there. You might look at <http://www.shear.org/2016/08/09/shear-2017-how-to-get-a-panel-accepted/>, <http://www.bu.edu/qdrs/files/2012/03/Guidelines-for-Writing-Conference-Paper-Proposal.pdf>, or <https://theprofessorisin.com/2011/07/12/how-today-how-to-write-a-paper-abstract/>.

Is there any funding for graduate students?

Yes! Because inclusion is one of WAWH's most central goals, we seek to make the conference affordable for all who wish to attend. Grad students may be eligible for assistance with registration and/or meals during the conference. Typically, students work the registration desk in exchange for reduced registration. Please contact our Executive Director at executivedirector@wawh.org for details.

Have more questions?

Please email the Program Committee at conferenceprogram@wawh.org, and we'll do our best to answer. And keep checking back – as the conference nears, we will have more FAQs about attending the conference!