Call for Proposals
Proposals due by May 15ᵗʰ 2017!

The 20ᵗʰ Annual Collaborations Conference provides education and networking opportunities for rehabilitation and employment professionals, employers, educators, and anyone interested in advancing Employment and community based services for Virginians with Disabilities.

We are looking for innovative presentations that expand state-of-the-art practices advancing employment and community based services or Virginians with disabilities.

PRESENTER REQUIREMENTS

1. Conference proposals must be submitted to Donna Bonessi via email at Donna.Bonessi@dars.virginia.gov. All required information must be provided at the time of submission. **Incomplete proposals will not be accepted for review.**

2. All presenters and co-presenters accepted as a result of the Call for Proposals **are expected to register for the conference, paying the full conference registration fee if they will be attending the conference**.

3. **All presenters and co-presenters are responsible for their own travel and lodging to the conference.** The conference organizers are not able to pay travel expenses for presenters.

4. The conference organizers provide an LCD projector, a screen, flipcharts, and internet access for all sessions. **All other audiovisual needs** (including audio for computer files/videos, laser pointers, etc.) will be the **presenter's responsibility.** A/V information will be provided to presenters at the time of presentation acceptance notification.

IMPORTANT DEADLINES AND TIMELINES:

May 15, 2017: Submit proposals electronically to Donna Bonessi at donna.bonessi@dars.virginia.gov Receipt of proposal will be emailed to lead presenter upon submission. You will receive a notification that your submission was received within 48 hours of submission.

July 15, 2017: Selection notification will be sent to lead presenters via the email listed in your submission.

August 15, 2017: Lead Presenters must confirm acceptance to present.

CONFERENCE SESSION FORMATS

This year the conference planning committee is encouraging proposals that use alternative formats for presentations. Alternative formats are innovative sessions that allow for increased audience engagement. Priority will be given to proposals that use an alternative format. Submissions will be required to include interactive activities planned for the session.

We have identified some examples of alternative format presentations below, as well as the tried and true topical breakout session. When using an alternative format please keep in mind that these sessions often involve significant planning, coordination, and skill with facilitation. They present different set of challenges. You should either have experience in the facilitation of this type of session or ensure you can get significant practice before the conference.

The Conference planning committee strongly encourages the inclusion of individuals with disabilities, family members, employers and other stakeholders in presentations. Inclusion of diverse cultural perspectives for diverse populations is also encouraged.

Power of 1 (30 minutes) Power of 1 sessions are designed around one success story – 1 employee, 1 employer, 1 staff person or one great idea that had an impact on services for people with disabilities. Note: Only 1 presenter per Power of 1 presentation. However, PO1 Presenters will be grouped together. 2 to 3 PO1 presentations make a great session.

Campfire Session **(60 minutes):** Unlike a typical breakout session where the presenters are experts on a topic and make a structured presentation, a Campfire Session is primarily an open discussion, facilitated by one or more discussion leaders on a specific topic. You don't need to be an expert, just willing to lead a conversation! The discussion leaders will start with a short presentation (maximum of 15 minutes) to set the stage and then open up the session for lively discussion and dialogue among the attendees.

Power of 5 Presentations (PO5) **(5 minutes):** Based on the Lightening Talk concept, Power of 5 presentations are 5 minutes, with a maximum of 5 slides, and no more than 5 words per slide. The idea is to quickly share a concept, idea, or story, in a short amount of time in a way that is entertaining and engaging. Each PO5 presenter will be grouped with other PO5 presenters. Presentations slides will be required to be submitted two weeks in advance of the conference. PO5 presenters may be asked to present outside of normal conference session times, such as at a reception.

Panel Session (60 or 90 minutes): Panel sessions are a great way to get more than one expert opinion on a topic in a short amount of time. Panels often consist of three-to-five people discussing a specific topic or challenge in a conversation moderated by a session chair. Panels tend to be more open and interactive than traditional presentations. Because panelists often take different perspectives and offer different solutions to problems, these sessions are great for public conversations on issues that are common to many audience members.

Topical Breakout Sessions **(60 or 90 minutes):** Breakout sessions provide participants an opportunity to engage with the presenters and each other in learning about the session topic and how to apply it in their own work. These sessions begin with a brief framing of an issue, theory, model, or process and include data, practical examples, and evidence that presenters and the participants can then use to examine and discuss the topic. Sessions will be led by one or more presenters using audience participation and interactive activities as the primary mechanism for sharing information and learning.

Other session format ideas: Have an innovative idea for an engaging session format that wasn't included above? The conference planning committee will consider all alternative session formats submitted. Please very specific in your submission in order for the review committee to be able to get a good understanding of your proposed format.

Session topics should be relative to employment and community based services for people with disabilities.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION
All submissions must be sent to Donna Bonessi at donna.bonessi@dars.virginia.gov using the attached submission form. After submission you will receive a confirmation email within 48 hours. If you do not receive a confirmation

email, your proposal has not been received, and it is your responsibility to re-submit or contact Donna Bonessi about your proposal.

Proposals that do not include all required information will not be accepted for review.

Title: (limited to 100 characters)

Format: (Campfire Session; Power of 1, Topical Breakout; Power of 5 Presentations; Panel Session or other.)

Conference Program Abstract: This will be the information in the conference program to market your session, so be sure to make the abstract engaging and interesting!

Presentation Details:

1. *Detailed description*: Identify in greater detail the issue, problem, or question to be addressed, and a description of implications, implementation, challenges, usefulness to audience, and take-home message. Describe how the presentation will address the topic and how the presentation format selected supports the information you want to share. Indicate how your presentation will follow the guidelines described for the selected presentation format.

2. *Learning Objectives*: Provide 2 to 3 participant outcomes. Describe the skills, knowledge, and/or behaviors attendees will know or be able to demonstrate after the session.

3. *Interactive Activities*: Describe a set of planned techniques, interactive exercises, or other methods you will incorporate into your presentation to promote learning by and among attendees. (response required for Topical Breakout Sessions ONLY)

Presenter Information: Contact information & bios for lead presenter and all co-presenters.

SELECTION PROCESS

Submissions in acceptable formats and successfully submitted by 5pm EST on **May 15, 2017** will be evaluated by a review committee.

Selection Criteria

1. Clarity and coherence of submission.
2. Relevance and usefulness to the intended audience
3. Presentation approach and level of participant engagement.
4. Measurable participant outcomes: skills, knowledge and/or behaviors attendees will gain or be able to demonstrate after session.

HAVE QUESTIONS? NEED ASSISTANCE? If you have questions or need assistance, please email Donna.bonessi@dars.virginia.gov or call 804-662-7177.