



## Proposal Submission Guidelines

Down Syndrome Affiliates in Action Leadership Conference  
 February 20-22, 2025  
 Isleta Resort and Casino  
 Albuquerque, New Mexico

Thank you for being willing to share your stories, your skills, and your expertise with DSAIA members and attendees at our 2025 Annual Leadership Conference. This document contains everything you need to know about submitting a proposal for this year’s conference at the Isleta Resort and Casino in Albuquerque, New Mexico. DSAIA is looking for proposals that are inspired by this year’s theme— *Albuquerque Ascent: New Perspectives in Leadership*. Please review the guidelines below. Proposal submissions are due October 1, 2024. When you are ready, go to [www.dsaia.org/conference](http://www.dsaia.org/conference), select Submit a Proposal.

The target audience for this conference is staff and board members of Down syndrome organizations throughout the country. Your audience could include a volunteer Board President from an organization with a budget of \$50,000 who serves 75 families to a paid Executive Director of a \$1,000,000+ budget organization who serves over 1000 individuals. When developing your proposal, be sure to address the organization size and capacity targeted for your session.

Before you begin your proposal submission, here are a few tips:

- All presenters must be registered for the conference. This year, DSAIA will offer 50% off registration for up to 2 presenters for each session accepted. Presenter registration closes on December 15.
- Be sure to check out the **proposal review criteria** below. If you really want your proposal to get accepted, you will want to know how our reviewers will be scoring each submission.
- Review the **proposal categories** carefully. If you are having a hard time choosing a category for your proposal, you may need to revise your content for our target audience.
- You can choose from two **session types**: sessions (60 minutes) and spotlight sessions (30 minutes). Choose the format that best fits your content.
- The **proposal review panel reserves the right to request changes** to your proposal which may include a change in category, session type, or other changes that the review panel feels are necessary in order for your proposal to be accepted. During proposal confirmation, you will have the opportunity to review and approve any requested changes.
- Lead presenters will be **notified by October 15** if the proposal has been accepted. Confirmation of your presentation (title, description, presenters, and time slot) is due on **November 1**.

### Dates to Remember:

October 1	Proposal Submissions Due
October 2-10	Proposal Review
October 15	Notification to Presenters
November 1	Proposal Confirmations Due
December 15	Presenter Registration Deadline
January 15	Conference Program Deadline—Last Day to Make Changes
January 17	Last Day to Make Hotel Reservations at the Isleta Resort and Casino
February 14	Last Day to Submit Documents You Want to Provide to Attendees (pdf only)
February 20-22	DSAIA 2025 Leadership Conference!

## Session Types:

There are two session types at this year's conference:

- **Sessions:** Conference sessions will be 60 minutes in length and specifically targeted to leaders of Down syndrome associations. We expect you to plan an engaging presentation that uses the entire hour. Limited to 4 presenters.
- **Spotlight Sessions:** These quick 30-minute sessions are designed to focus very specifically on one topic that can easily be presented in a short time frame. Examples include an overview of a successful program, how to create a specific document (content/design), how to manage board meeting minutes. Limited to 2 presenters.

## Proposal Categories:

DSAIA is looking for proposals in each of the following eight categories. Within each category, we are looking for presenters who can provide best practice procedures, examples relevant to DSAIA attendees, and practical information that attendees can use. Presenters may be staff or board members who can share successful programs, documents, or experiences within their local organizations. DSAIA is also looking for presenters with professional qualifications who can apply their expertise to Down syndrome organizations. For example, an accountant presenting best practices for budgeting who can providing an example of a budget from a Down syndrome organization. If you have questions, please contact us at [info@dsaia.org](mailto:info@dsaia.org).

### Leadership

**NEW!** This category includes topics that develop leadership skills, profile successful leaders, or share tips/strategies for leaders.

### Board Development

While many topics in this category are for Board members, topics also include skills and strategies that staff use to support strong Board functioning. Examples include board engagement, recruitment, and governance structure.

### Communications & Marketing

Select this category for proposals that describe effective strategies to communicate your mission and programs. Topics may include social media, marketing plans, websites, branding, or contact management.

### Development & Fundraising

Generating revenue is the important topic in this category. Topic may include grants, annual development plans, fundraising, events, donations, or other sources of income. Working with donors (e.g., cultivation, engagement, tracking) is of particular importance.

### Human Resources

For programs with staff, hiring/firing, position descriptions, contracts, staff development, and employee evaluations are important topics in this category.

### Organizational Management

This category includes all of the nonprofit practices required to run an effective organization. Proposals that address policies, procedural safeguards, taxes, nonprofit status, and insurance are of particular interest.

### Finances

Topics such as financial policies and procedures, risk management, and budgets are included in this category which includes any proposals that address an organization's financial responsibilities.

### Programming

Proposals that share a specific program idea, discuss program structure, needs assessment, program evaluation are included in this category. This is the place to share successful or innovative programs that could be replicated by other Down syndrome organizations or describe how you used data to improve desired outcomes.

## Proposal Review Criteria:

Your proposal will be reviewed using the following guidelines. Each proposal will be reviewed by at least three members of the 2025 Proposal Review Panel. Your proposal will receive a score of 1-5 on each of the following criteria. We encourage you to consider this scoring matrix when creating your proposal.

Criteria	What we are looking for	Potential Score
<b>Relevance to DSAIA Attendees</b>	Proposal establishes that the content to be provided is current, needed, and would be of interest to DSAIA attendees (e.g., staff, board members, volunteers). Content is distinctly different from the content one would expect at conferences for parents, policymakers, or educators.	5
<b>Skill/Expertise of Presenter(s)</b>	Presenter(s) demonstrates mastery of the content and is the right person to deliver this content.	5
<b>Organization of Proposed Session</b>	Presenter has provided a clear outline for the session. The proposal is logical, well-written, thoughtful, thorough, and clearly described. The content is substantial and can fill the session time appropriately.	5
<b>Ability to Engage the Audience</b>	DSAIA attendees want to be engaged as learners and leave with information they can apply in their daily work. Reviewers will expect to see concrete strategies you will use to encourage active learning.	5
<b>TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS</b>		20

**Questions? Send an email to [info@dsaia.org](mailto:info@dsaia.org) or call 701-354-7255**

**Ready? Go to [dsaia.org/conference](https://dsaia.org/conference)**

**All Proposals are due by midnight (ET) on October 1, 2024**

**NO LATE SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED**



**See you in Albuquerque!**