CONNECTICUT RIVER VALLEY ENVIRONMENTAL SUMMIT

Call for Session Proposals

2027 Connecticut River Valley Environmental Summit

April 3, 2027 at Wesleyan University in Middletown, CT

10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Proposal Deadline: January 8, 2027

Event Summary:

The Connecticut River Museum is hosting the fourth annual Connecticut River Valley Environmental Summit at Wesleyan University on April 3, 2027. Guided by the theme of "**Common Waters, Shared Future**," Environmental leaders will present sessions on pressing issues affecting the Connecticut River watershed, engaging an audience that includes scientists, policymakers, academics, cultural institutions, and more. This event serves as a platform for watershed professionals and community stakeholders to learn from their peers, forge new connections and explore opportunities for collaboration and coalition building to keep our waterways healthy and safe for future generations. **There are four ways to participate: giving a presentation (individual or group), serving as a panelist for a moderated discussion, or sharing a poster presentation.**

Speaker Honoraria

The Connecticut River Museum is able to provide a **$500 honorarium** for presenting speakers, a **$250 honorarium** for panelists, and a **$100 honorarium** for lunch workshop presenters. This honorarium is intended to defray travel expenses and to compensate presenters for their time and effort.

Submit a proposal

Presentations can range from 20-45 minutes and can utilize a range of formats, including dialogues, roundtables, moderated discussions, demonstrations, panel presentations, and more.

A successful presentation will highlight issues facing the Connecticut River watershed and/or its communities, connect environmental and climate-related data to tangible challenges and solutions, and present information in an accessible manner while providing actionable takeaways to participants.

To submit a speaker presentation proposal, please use this form on the Connecticut River Museum website. You may submit a proposal as an individual or as part of an organization. Speaker proposal submissions must include the following:

- The name and contact information for your main point of contact
- Name, title/role, affiliation (if applicable), and a bio (50 words or less) for each presenter
- Your presentation's title
- Estimated presentation length
- A brief abstract of your presentation (75 words or less) for the event program
- Your session's format (panel, roundtable, workshop, performance, think tank, etc.)
- The level for which the bulk of your presentation is intended: introductory, intermediate, or advanced (while an introductory level presentation might have "heavy" science mentioned, the majority of its content should be accessible to a general audience)
- A description (300 words or less) of your presentation, identifying its main objectives, how you will be addressing them, and its intended audience. Three expected takeaways of your presentation should also be included.

Here are some guiding themes to consider when drafting proposals or considering panelist nominations:

- **Environmental Justice and Equity:**
  - How can we ensure that marginalized communities have a voice in environmental decision-making?
  - What are the challenges in securing equal access to clean air, water, and land for all communities within the watershed?
- **Building Climate Impact and Resilience:**
  - What are the most effective climate adaptation strategies for rural and urban areas in the Connecticut River Valley?
  - How do we measure the success of climate resilience initiatives?

- **The Next Generation of River Stewardship**
    - What role can education and outreach play in preparing the next generation of river stewards?
    - How can we engage young people in environmental advocacy and conservation efforts?

- **Future Challenges: Addressing Emerging Threats to River Health**
    - What are the most pressing emerging threats to River's health in the coming decades?
    - How can we balance economic development with the need to protect the River's ecosystems?

- **Innovative Solutions: Technology and Ecological Practices**
    - What are new technologies that can help us monitor and restore the River's ecosystems?
    - What sustainable practices are showing the most promise?

- **Grassroots Movements, Citizen Science and Policy Solutions**
    - How can grassroots movements effectively influence environmental policy?
    - What are successful examples of citizen-led policy change in environmental protection?

- **The Role of Native Species and the Impact of Invasives**
    - How can/are we effectively managing and controlling invasive species without harming native populations?
    - What are successful stories of habitat restoration along the River?

- **Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Indigenous Perspectives:**
    - How are we integrating Traditional Ecological Knowledge into environmental management practices?
    - How can collaboration between Indigenous communities and environmental organizations improve conservation outcomes?

Moderated Panel

In addition to submitting proposals for presentations and workshops, we invite individuals to self-nominate as panelists. Panelists will engage in moderated conversations on critical issues, share insights, and answer audience questions during the conference. Candidates should have relevant experience, such as published work, speaking or panel participation at conferences, involvement in river stewardship or community leadership, or leading impactful projects.

To self-nominate as a panelist, please use this form on the Connecticut River Museum website. You may apply as an individual or as part of an organization. Proposal submissions must include the following:

- A panelist bio (300 words maximum) highlighting your expertise and experience

- A brief statement (150 words maximum) sharing why you would be a great fit for the panel and how your insights would help foster an engaging and thought-provoking discussion. We are looking to create panels with a diversity of experiences such as: Environmental Professionals, Culture Keepers and Environmental Stewards, Community Stakeholders, members of academia, or college and graduate students with an interest in Environmental Science, Studies, or Policy.
- Relevant links to past speaking engagements or published work and/or personal/professional website (if applicable)

Poster Presentations

Proposals for poster presentations will be considered separately from speaker presentations and moderated panels. Posters will be on view throughout the day so presenters can speak with attendees and answer questions regarding research and/or project outcomes related to the Connecticut River watershed. Poster presenters should plan to be near the posters to field questions during morning registration 9-9:30 am, the lunch hour from 12-1 pm and during breaks. Presenters of posters will be able to make an"elevator style" pitch to all attendees, that includes a brief summary of the work in a one- to two-minute presentation. Poster presentations should follow the same criteria for a successful presentation listed on the previous page.

To submit a poster presentation proposal, please use this form on the Connecticut River Museum website. You may submit a proposal as an individual or as part of an organization.
Poster submissions must include the following:

- The name and contact information for your presentation coordinator
- Name, title/role, affiliation (if applicable), and a brief bio for each presenter
- Your presentation's title
- A brief abstract of your poster presentation (75 words or less) for the event program
- The level for which your presentation is intended (introductory, intermediate, advanced)
- A description (300 words or less) of your poster presentation, identifying project objectives, outcomes, and conclusions.

River Stewardship takes many forms!

A PhD is not a requirement to speak at this summit! We want to provide a platform for a wide range of perspectives and expertise related to the Connecticut River watershed and its environment.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Statement

At the Connecticut River Museum's Annual Connecticut River Valley Environmental Summit (CRVES), we are committed to fostering an inclusive, educational and welcoming environment. As we gather River stewards, environmental leaders, scientists, and community advocates, we recognize the importance of diverse perspectives in advancing environmental stewardship and creating meaningful change for the Connecticut River and its communities within the watershed.

We encourage session proposals from individuals and organizations representing a wide range of backgrounds, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, age, ability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and geographic location within the watershed. We believe that diversity in all its forms—whether through lived experience, professional expertise, or cultural perspectives—enriches the conversation and strengthens our collective ability to address the challenges facing the Connecticut River and its ecosystems.

We welcome proposals that prioritize inclusive approaches to environmental issues and highlight initiatives that promote equity, accessibility, and justice in environmental work. The summit aims to amplify voices that are often underrepresented in environmental conversations and to foster a space where collaboration and innovation can thrive across all sectors of society.