

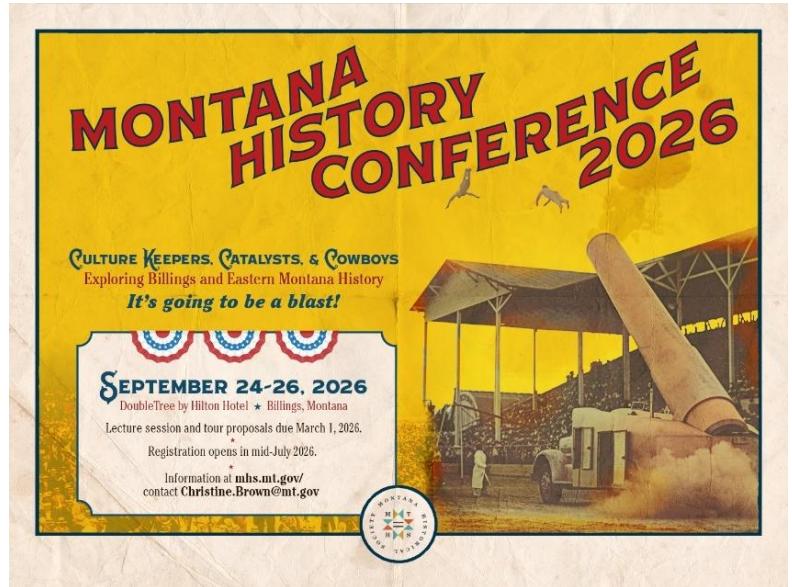
# CALL FOR CONFERENCE PROPOSALS



MONTANA  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Montana Historical Society invites proposals for the 53rd Annual Montana History Conference, *Culture Keepers, Catalysts, and Cowboys: Exploring Billings and Eastern Montana*. The conference will be held September 24–26, 2026, at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel in downtown Billings.

We welcome proposals for 25-minute lectures, hour-long panel and roundtable sessions, bus and walking tours, and workshops. All proposals featuring the Billings area and/or eastern Montana history are welcome. We strongly encourage proposals addressing agricultural development and food production; the history of Indigenous, Black, and ethnic communities; women; military history; labor; archaeology; resource extraction; and artists, writers, and musicians.



The deadline for submitting proposals is **March 1, 2026**. Since we generally receive far more proposals than the schedule will accommodate, we cannot accept late proposals.

## [SUBMIT A PROPOSAL](#)

**Questions?** Christine Brown, conference organizer, (406) 444-1687, [christine.brown@mt.gov](mailto:christine.brown@mt.gov)

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **1. DO HISTORY CONFERENCE PRESENTERS GET PAID?**

Sort of. History conference presenters receive complimentary, full-conference registration, which includes appetizers at the Thursday night opening reception, five meals, workshops, and tours during the three-day event (a \$250-\$350 value). Although we do greatly appreciate the time and effort that a presentation at the history conference entails, we are, unfortunately, not in a position to pay for speakers' travel or lodging expenses. We encourage staying all three days but it is not required.

### **2. HOW LONG SHOULD MY PRESENTATION BE?**

Your presentation should last no more than 25 minutes. Each lecture session lasts one hour and 15 minutes and typically consists of brief introductions, two speakers, and a 15-minute Q & A. The program committee typically pairs speakers together so that their topics relate in some way or, if you prefer, you can submit a proposal for a pair comprising an entire session (see #3).

### **3. CAN I PROPOSE A FULL LECTURE SESSION OR KEYNOTE LECTURE?**

Yes. If you would like to present with another speaker(s) on a similar topic, please work with that person to propose a full session, consisting of two 25-minute presentations (or three speakers presenting for 20 minutes each). If you would like to lecture alone for a longer time, you may also propose it as a full lecture session (one hour) or a keynote (45-minute mealtime) lecture with only you as the speaker.

#### **4. WHO IS THE AUDIENCE?**

The Montana History Conference is a public history conference that attracts a **general audience** comprised mainly of Montana history enthusiasts, including retirees, students, professional and avocational historians, archaeologists, professors, K-12 educators, authors, researchers, curators, preservationists, conservationists, and cultural geographers. *It is not an academic conference.*

#### **5. IF I PROPOSE TO LEAD A BUS TOUR, WHO WILL PROVIDE TRANSPORTATION?**

Should we accept your proposal, the Montana Historical Society will work with you to arrange and pay for van or bus transportation.

#### **6. WHAT IS THE CONFERENCE SCHEDULE FORMAT?**

The Montana History Conference lasts three-days, starting on a Thursday. Thursday offers optional workshops; museum, bus and walking tours; and an evening opening reception. Friday is jam-packed with concurrent lecture sessions in the morning and afternoon, a few afternoon tours, and keynote presentations at breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Saturday consists of two blocks of morning concurrent lecture sessions, breakfast and lunch keynote presentations, and afternoon tours.

#### **7. CAN I READ MY ENTIRE PRESENTATION?**

No. We strongly encourage you to know your topic intimately and only rely on your notes or the slides to aid your memory. Reading within a presentation is appropriate when presenting direct quotations or excerpts from legal documents.

#### **8. DO I HAVE TO GIVE A POWERPOINT PRESENTATION?**

No, but people enjoy and benefit from images and illustrations. If you choose not to offer visuals, we trust that your verbal presentation or performance is strong and engaging enough without them.

#### **9. WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A PANEL AND A ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION?**

Panel sessions consist of three to four expert speakers who answer questions from a moderator. The session allows for one hour of panel discussion with 15 minutes of audience questions at the end.

Roundtable discussions consist of small groups at separate tables focused on discussing ideas for solutions to a shared goal or problem. The discussion is facilitated by a knowledgeable and organized person who guides the groups with directed questions. One member of each table presents their recommendations at the end of discussion time. (Proposals should include both the topic and the moderator.)

#### **10. DO I NEED TO SUBMIT MY POWERPOINT PRESENTATION AND NOTES BEFORE THE CONFERENCE?**

No. The conference committee does not review, archive, or republish your presentation. We do video record all conference presentations and rebroadcast them on the MTHS YouTube Channel unless otherwise directed.

#### **11. WHEN WILL YOU NOTIFY US IF WE HAVE BEEN SELECTED?**

The History Conference Committee will meet in mid-March to evaluate the proposals and put together a comprehensive program. You will be notified in late March whether your proposal has been accepted.