



## Conference Workshops – Call for Proposals

National Farm Viability Conference  
October 2021

The 5<sup>th</sup> National Farm Viability Conference is seeking proposals for workshop sessions for the 2021 conference. The mission of the conference is to strengthen farm sustainability, build stronger and more resilient local food systems and support long term profitability of farming and agri-entrepreneurs from start-ups to generational businesses. The National Farm Viability Conference is geared towards professionals in the fields of farm and food business planning, financial planning, agricultural financing, farmland conservation, agricultural market development, and food hub management. It offers attendees the opportunity to learn from industry leaders and other professionals in their fields, develop new skills, and connect with colleagues from across the country.

We are committed to and working towards lifting up BIPOC perspectives throughout all aspects of the conference. We are actively seeking proposals from BIPOC led and focused farm viability organizations. We strongly encourage all workshop sessions to address the topics of diversity, equity and inclusion within the context of our shared work to support farm viability.

In 2021, the National Farm Viability Conference will collaborate with the New Entry Sustainable Farming Project's 10th annual FIELD School which offers professional development for service providers who operate incubator farm and apprenticeship training programs for beginning farmers and ranchers. FIELD School sessions relevant to incubator farm and apprenticeship training programs will be organized within a track throughout the conference.

All programming for the 2021 conference will take place online and programming sessions will be offered throughout the month of October. Conference organizers will work with session presenters to schedule a date and time that is convenient to the presenters and fits with the overall conference schedule.

Our virtual conference will be supported by Whova, an online event management platform that allows for virtual presentations, breakout rooms, chat, Q&A, and all the virtual functionality we've come to expect from online gatherings. There will even be a way to make available support materials such as handouts or pre-recorded content. All conference sessions will be moderated by trained volunteers. Session moderators will support presenters by providing technical assistance, welcoming attendees and introducing presenters, facilitating Q&A, and helping with time management. Presenters need not be familiar with Whova ahead of time, although experience presenting online content is desirable.

## Types of workshops we are seeking

We are seeking workshop proposals that fit the goals of the conference and provide relevant professional development to our target audience. We expect that most workshops will cover material that falls into one or more of the topic areas listed below.

### Topic Areas

- Business Planning and Development
- Food and Farm Marketing and Distribution
- Land Access and Succession Planning
- Accessing Capital
- Program Development, Funding and Design
- Equity and Social Justice in the Food System
- Agricultural Policy and Advocacy
- Farmer Training via Incubator and Apprenticeship Programs

A list of suggested workshop topics can be found at the end of this document.

The online nature of this year's conference allows for a variety of ways to interact with other attendees and learn from one another. **This Call for Proposals is specifically focused on lecture and experiential workshops, moderated panel discussions, facilitated roundtable discussions and "ask the expert" sessions.** We will also be encouraging attendees to take advantage of other options for connecting with colleagues as supported by the virtual platform, such as organizing and attending informal meet-ups and participating in networking tables.

Here is more information about the session formats we are looking for:

- Workshops: Some topics are best covered with a lecture and a traditional power point presentation. Others benefit from the inclusion of activities to apply and practice what is being taught, using break-out rooms, worksheets, or chat. We encourage you to incorporate creative ways to keep your virtual audience engaged.
- Moderated Panel Discussions: Bring together a small handful of farm viability professionals to share their perspectives on a hot topic.
- Roundtable Discussions: Pose a burning question that you'd love to have a conversation about with other professionals in your field and facilitate the discussion. You don't have to be an expert on the topic you want to talk about, you just have to keep the conversation flowing.
- Ask the Expert Sessions: Similar to a professor's office hours, these open sessions provide a chance for those with expertise in a particular area to field questions from the less experienced among us.

The conference can support sessions ranging from 30 to 120 minutes in length. Presenters will be able to indicate their preferred session lengths as part of the proposal process. Presenters are also welcome to offer multi-session workshops and are encouraged to offer the same workshop more than one time during the month.

## **Selection process**

The conference programming review committee will use a multi-step process to select proposals and develop the final conference agenda. Rather than selecting specific proposals exactly as they come in, we expect to play a role in developing the agenda for many of the sessions so that the content of each session meets conference goals.

1. Interested presenters submit initial proposals **by June 18**
2. The committee will review proposals based on the selection criteria (see below) and will work with selected presenters to hone their ideas, connect them with other potential session panelists, and massage content to best fit conference goals.
3. Selected presenters will finalize their sessions, confirm schedules with conference coordinators, and submit necessary information for the conference program (session titles and full descriptions, bios, panelist information, etc.) by August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021

## **Selection criteria for ranking workshop proposals**

1. Is the proposal targeted at the appropriate audience?
2. How well does the content fit with the goals of the conference?
3. How well would this session contribute towards a diversity of practitioners, experiences, and perspectives? We are particularly seeking diversity in race, ethnicity, and gender identity of presenters and who they serve, as well as in the geographic location and types of farm/food businesses served.
4. Presenter/facilitator level of experience (with the topic area and with presenting or organizing workshops) and ability to deliver a high-quality virtual session.

## **How to submit a proposal**

1. Review this Call for Proposals to understand the types of workshops that this conference is seeking.
2. Contact Rich Schwartz, Programming Committee Coordinator, with any questions: [info@farmviabilityconference.com](mailto:info@farmviabilityconference.com)
3. Submit a proposal online by June 18 at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2021NFVC-CFP>  
Questions from the submission form can be found at the end of this packet.
4. There is no limit to the number of proposals you may submit.

## **Compensation for presenters**

This conference is intended as a peer-to-peer professional development event, with most workshops being led by conference attendees who are practitioners in this field. For the 2021 conference, we are able to waive the full conference registration fee for workshop organizers and offer panelists 50% off the \$100 registration fee. If your proposal is selected, you will receive instructions for applying the appropriate discount code at registration.

If you identify as a BIPOC community member and wish to receive an honorarium for your workshop please check the appropriate box on the proposal submission form.

## Examples of workshop sessions

The following list provides examples of sessions from previous conferences as well as priority topics for 2021. This list is intended to be a guide to the types of workshops we are looking for but does not cover everything! We are seeking creative new ideas, engaging ways to organize content, and a variety of presenters from across the country. Please use the following list as inspiration, not instruction.

### Business Planning and Development

- How different communities relate to money and finances
- Advanced financial management
- Assessing the viability of a new product or enterprise
- Legal or human resource issues
- Developing, distributing and/or using business and financial tools
- Carbon markets for farmers as a business opportunity
- On-farm processing
- Agritourism
- Impacts of COVID and implications for the future
- Case studies
- *Supporting “advanced beginning” farmers\**
- *Online learning for beginning farmers\**
- *Preparing farmer apprentices for farm business ownership\**
- *Business management training for incubator farmers\**

### Food and Farm Marketing and Distribution

- Culturally sensitive marketing
- Marketing research, planning, and implementation
- Online marketing platforms
- How large companies connect with and cultivate farm suppliers
- Opportunities for premium pricing for climate-friendly production practices
- Trends in labeling: regenerative, Real Organic, etc.
- *Cooperative models for aggregation/marketing/distribution\**

### Land Access and Succession Planning

- Land access issues for historically disadvantaged farmers; reparations, heirs property
- Equity and social justice in land access
- Coaching families and retiring farmers through succession
- Financial readiness for land access
- Succession planning for farm families
- Communicating across generations
- Working with farmers without identified successors
- *Land-Access connections for graduates of experiential farmer-training programs\**

### Accessing Capital

- Access to capital issues and opportunities specific to BIPOC producers
- Leveraging capital for growth
- Creative or non-standard farm financing
- Borrower training for loan applicants
- The capital continuum – what types of capital work for farm and food businesses?

### Program Development, Funding and Design

- Anti-racism and DEI best practices within organizations
- Partnering with organizations that focus on BIPOC communities
- How to improve our farmer services in areas such as: peer/group education, experiential learning, reaching out to diverse populations, teaching behavior change effectively, meeting the needs of communities of color, incorporating technology into farmer education programs
- Marketing our programs to clients
- Business advisor training
- Fundraising and resource development
- Evaluating farm viability programs
- *Farmer training program planning and evaluation\**
- *Registering an agricultural apprenticeship program\**

### Equity and Social Justice in the Food System

- Systemic racism and its impacts on BIPOC farmers
- Supporting and serving immigrant and refugee farmers
- How farmers are using fair labor practices
- How white farm viability practitioners can support BIPOC communities without causing harm
- Addressing both farm viability and social justice simultaneously
- Understanding and operationalizing racial equity in food hubs
- Partnering with hunger relief organizations

### Agricultural Policy and Advocacy

- How to be an effective advocate for change
- Policy or programs that incentivize climate-friendly production practices
- Driving policy change at the local, state and/or federal level
- Building and maintaining thriving rural economies
- Farmland protection
- Impacts and opportunities from a changing climate

### FIELD School Track

- *Apprenticeship program 101*
- *Incubator program 101*

*\*italicized examples/ideas above are FIELD School Track sessions*

More detailed information on past sessions can be found at the following sites:

[2019 Conference](#)

[2017 Conference](#)

Ready to submit a proposal? Click [here](#) to launch the proposal submission form.



# National Farm *Viability* CONFERENCE

## 2021 National Farm Viability Conference - Call for Proposals Session Organizer Information

### \* 1. Your Name

### 2. Your Contact Information

Organization/Business Name

City/Town

State/Province

Country

Email Address

Phone Number

### 3. Job Title

### \* 4. Brief description of your organization or business

**\* 5. Please provide a brief bio.**

**\* 6. Please describe your experience teaching, presenting or facilitating at conferences. Include examples of a few past presentations (especially ones given at prior NFVC or FIELD Schools), and indicate which, if any, were presented virtually.**

**7. If you identify as a BIPOC community member and wish to receive an honorarium please check the box below.**

**Yes, I would like to receive a BIPOC honorarium**

**\* 8. The conference programming committee will be making final decisions regarding which proposals are selected, and where appropriate presenters may be asked to collaborate with others or shift the content of their proposal.**

**I understand that the committee may contact me to alter my proposal or seek changes in content or collaborators**



National  
**Farm** *Viability*  
CONFERENCE

**2021 National Farm Viability Conference - Call for Proposals  
Session Information**

**\* 9. Session Title**

**\* 10. What is the proposed format for this session? Please choose from one of the following:**

**Workshop:** Some topics are best covered with a lecture and a traditional power point presentation. Others benefit from including activities to apply and practice what is being taught, using break-out rooms or chat. We encourage you to incorporate creative ways to keep your virtual audience engaged.

**Moderated Panel Discussion:** Bring together a small handful of farm viability professionals to share their perspectives on a hot topic.

**Roundtable Discussion:** Pose a burning question that you'd love to have a conversation about with other professionals in your field and facilitate the discussion. You don't have to be an expert on the topic you want to talk about, you just have to keep the conversation flowing.

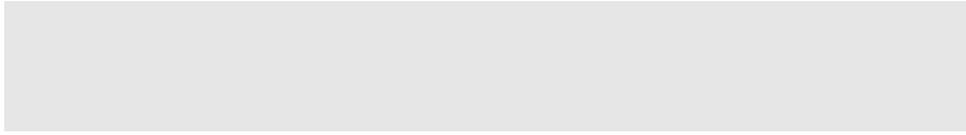
**Ask the Expert Session:** Similar to a professor's office hours, these open sessions provide a chance for those with expertise in a particular area to field questions from the less experienced among us.

- Workshop
- Moderated Panel Discussion
- Roundtable Discussion
- Ask the Expert Session
- Other (please specify)

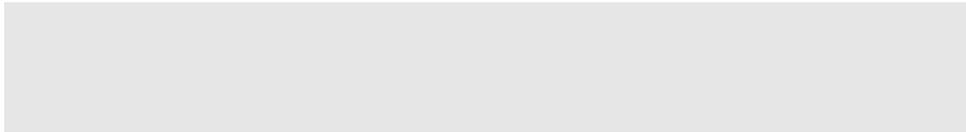
**\* 11. Describe the session you are proposing. For Ask the Expert sessions, please describe your area(s) of expertise.**

**\* 12. Who is the intended audience for your session?**

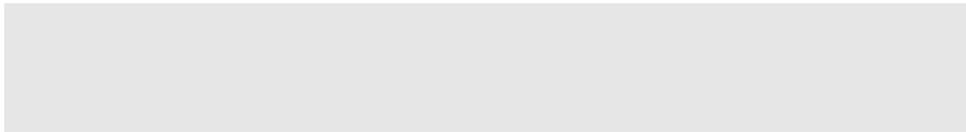
**\* 13. How will this session contribute to a diversity of practitioners, experiences and perspectives at this conference? We are particularly seeking diversity in race, ethnicity and gender identity of presenters and who they serve, as well as in the geographic location and types of farm and food businesses served.**

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**14. Please describe ways in which the topics of diversity, equity and inclusion will be integrated into your workshop session.**

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**15. Please describe ways in which attendees will be able to participate. This may include interactive learning (e.g. opportunities to apply new knowledge or try new tools or techniques), break out rooms, Q&A session, attendee surveys, etc.**

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**\* 16. Please select the topic areas that apply**

- Business Planning and Development
- Food and Farm Marketing and Distribution
- Land Access and Succession Planning
- Accessing Capital
- Program Development, Funding and Design
- Equity and Social Justice in the Food System
- Agricultural Policy and Advocacy
- Farmer Training via Incubator and Apprenticeship Programs
- Other (please specify)

**\* 17. We expect to offer some topics at both beginner and advanced levels. For example, we expect to have sessions on teaching farm financial management and helping farmers access capital for attendees new to those topics as well as for those with significant experience looking for new approaches or ways of thinking about those topics. If your session is targeted at attendees with a specific level of experience, please indicate which one.**

- Beginner
- Advanced
- Not Applicable

**18. If the session will have presenters or panelists other than the lead organizer please list their names and organizations, if known.**

**19. If you prefer to present in a language other than English, please let us know which language so that we can arrange for your workshop to be translated.**





# National Farm *Viability* CONFERENCE

## 2021 National Farm Viability Conference - Call for Proposals Scheduling Information

Please provide the following information to assist with scheduling. If your workshop is selected the conference organizers will work with you to schedule the session at a date and time that is convenient to the presenters and fits with the overall conference schedule.

\* 20. What is your preferred length of time for this session? Be sure to include sufficient time for Q&A.

- 30 Minutes
- 60 Minutes
- 90 Minutes
- 120 Minutes

\* 21. Would you be willing to offer the same session more than one time during the conference?

- Yes
- No

**22. If you propose offering the workshop over multiple sessions, please indicate how many sessions total.**

2

3

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**23. Programming for the conference will likely be scheduled Monday-Friday between 8am and 3pm Pacific time (11am and 6pm Eastern time), from October 4 through October 28. Please indicate times of day (Pacific time), days of the week, or specific dates when you know you will NOT be available to present during those days and times. For example, perhaps you need to finish your session by 2pm, that you are not available at all on Mondays, and will be completely unavailable on October 21/22.**





# National Farm *Viability* CONFERENCE

## 2021 National Farm Viability Conference - Call for Proposals Miscellaneous

\* 24. The conference committee is considering recording sessions and making them available to conference attendees or even the general public. What is your comfort level in having your session recorded and distributed? (Note that your answer to this question will have no bearing on the proposal selection process.)

- I'd prefer not to have my session recorded
- I'm OK recording the session, but only for viewing by conference attendees
- I'm comfortable having the session recorded and made available to the general public

25. Please leave any additional comments you would like the reviewers or conference organizers to consider regarding your proposal.