TEDx Ohio University

Thriving in Rural Communities
2020 Speaker Request for Proposal
October 2019

Dear Potential Presenter,

Thank you for your interest in participating at TEDx OhioUniversity! We want to hear more about what you can contribute to the event and hope you will consider replying to the online Call for Speakers.

TEDx OhioUniversity is a local, independently organized event to be held on the University’s Athens Campus on **Monday, February 24** in the Baker University Center Theater. We plan to stream the event on OHIO’s regional campuses.

We want this to be an event that strives to re-create the unique TED experience, where the world’s leading thinkers and doers congregate to share what they are most passionate about. At its core, the fundamental goal of TED and TEDx OhioUniversity is to foster and spread great ideas.

We aim to provide a platform where thinkers, visionaries, and learners will be inspired and have the opportunity to inspire others. Our conference will be centered around the theme **Thriving in Rural Communities**. We’re looking for University community members and idea generators—students, faculty and staff, alumni and friends—who have made a lasting impact on our community and the world. Consider sharing your story about the impact you’ve made in or for a rural community.

The format will be a suite of short, carefully prepared talks, demonstrations, and performances on a wide range of subjects chosen to foster learning, and to spark ideas, inspiration, and wonder. Interactive activities and areas to congregate and interact will be used to provoke conversations that matter.

Please find included in this package detailed information for interested and invited speakers regarding TED and the TEDx OhioUniversity conference. Thank you very much for your consideration and we look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Jenn Bowie and Carly Leatherwood
Co-Coordinators, TEDx OhioUniversity
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Background

About TED

TED is an annual event where some of the world’s leading thinkers and doers are invited to share what they are most passionate about. “TED” stands for Technology, Entertainment, Design — three broad subject areas that are collectively, shaping our future. In fact, the event is broader still, showcasing ideas that matter in any discipline. Attendees have called it “the ultimate brain spa” and “a daylong journey into the future.” The diverse audience of CEOs, scientists, creatives, and philanthropists is almost as extraordinary as the speakers, who have included former President Bill Clinton, Bill Gates, Jane Goodall, Frank Gehry, Paul Simon, Sir Richard Branson, Philippe Starck, and Bono.

TED was first held in Monterey, California, in 1984. In recent years, TED has expanded to include an international conference, TEDGlobal; media initiatives, including TED Talks and TED.com; and the TEDPrize. Today, nearly 2,000 talks from past TED conferences are now freely available online at TED.com

About TEDx

In the spirit of ideas worth spreading, TEDx is a program of local, independently organized events that bring people together to share in a TED-like experience. At TEDx OhioUniversity and other TEDx events, TEDTalks videos and live speakers combine to spark deep discussion and connection in a small group. These local, self-organized events are branded TEDx, where x=independently organized TED event. The TED conference provides general guidance for the TEDx program, but individual TEDx events are self-organized.

About TEDx OhioUniversity

TEDx OhioUniversity will host its first event in February 2020, having received a license from TED Conferences of New York (www.ted.com) in June of 2019. TEDx OhioUniversity was created in the spirit of TED’s mission, “ideas worth spreading.” Our event is being planned and coordinated by a team of volunteers with support from individuals and organizations from across Ohio University and the broader community.

If you’re eager to know more, brush up on some history at:

TED: www.TED.com

TEDx: www.TED.com/TEDx
2020 Event information

What:
TEDx OhioUniversity 2020 Thriving in Rural Communities

Where:
Baker University Center Theater, John C. Baker University Center, Athens, Ohio

When:
Monday, February 24, 2020
10:00 am - 4:00 pm, talks from our selected speakers, with intermissions

Who:
Event attendees and speakers consisting of a diverse group of fascinating people with an Ohio University connection with ideas worth spreading.
Goals and Vision

• TEDx OhioUniversity strives to create a community where conversations about diverse ideas inspire others to make a difference.

Live performances combining dance, music and art intertwining with prepared talks will make this day a feast for the mind and the senses. The theater will be filled with interactive activities and audience participants engaging with one another during breaks.

• TEDx OhioUniversity will bring together a diverse group of people with an Ohio University connection, who want to be part of a vibrant community.

We are working hard to find speakers who can open participants up to a wide spectrum of topics and thoughts, from entrepreneurship to science and technology to global policy. We want speakers to think big, be creative and give the speech of their lifetimes. Our goal is for all participants to leave the conference empowered to effect positive change in our communities.

• TEDx OhioUniversity will provide a platform for the brightest minds to be inspired and to inspire others.

We are committed to creating an event where participants are challenged to communicate their passions in an exciting and engaging dialogue. At TEDx OhioUniversity, speakers will give the best talk of their lives and then will have the opportunity to discuss their ideas. Don’t worry, we are here to support those who are chosen and make sure they are ready for the challenge. The format of TEDx OhioUniversity will allow speakers and attendees to digest and debate the talks and encourage the exchange of ideas and information among all participants.

• TEDx OhioUniversity will provide professional presentation coaches.

Our committee includes some of Ohio University’s best speech coaches, who will work with you, offer suggestions, and help you give the best presentation possible. The sessions will be held in January and February.
Speaker Information

What We’re Looking For:

Speakers should be over the age of 10, and have some tie to Ohio University ... Live, work, play or have roots here. We are looking for stories of Ohio University grit, innovative breakthroughs and inspiration — ideas that shift paradigm, topple stigma, and advance thinking. Think about our theme Thriving in Rural Communities and try to define it in your own terms. How have you unleashed a positive change in your community? What challenges might you have faced to get to where you are? What are you still facing on your journey? How are pioneering change in the areas you are passionate about? What thoughts do you have to add to the public dialog? How can you create brilliance in your community and the world?

Your Talk

Your presentation, or “TED Talk”, should be anywhere from 6-12 minutes in length: long enough to say something of significance, but short enough to hold everyone’s attention and to be easily watched as a recorded video. The TED format has proven a carefully prepared talk of this length can have astonishing impact.

TEDx OhioUniversity will be following the TED speaker rules. For example, speakers are banned from “selling from the stage,” and there is strict enforcement of the clock. An additional benefit of speaking at TEDx OhioUniversity is that your presentation will be made available via Webstream and online following the conference at the TEDx OhioUniversity website, and possibly on TED.com, where some talks have been attracting online audiences upwards of a million. TED Talks have been viewed nearly one billion times worldwide and this exposure has transformed the careers of many TED presenters and performers.

TED has never paid speakers to appear, but has always committed to creating an experience that’s tremendously fulfilling and beneficial on all sides, and as a TEDx licensee we plan to do the same. If you are unfamiliar with TED or the format of a TED Talk, we invite you to view some past TED and TEDx Talks at www.TED.com or www.tedxohiouniversity.com
BRAINSTORMING

TEDx OhioUniversity wants to share lessons about change to inspire change—good change. Our theme this year is *Thriving in Rural Communities*. Our eager audience in the theater and across the world wants to hear how you’ve opened up a new line of thought, activity, new method or technical development. Share your experience and successes with a group of individuals who want to grow, learn, discuss and dream.

Please note the Brainstorm Section is not required to submit a proposal, merely an exercise to stimulate your mind and creativity.

- How do you define positive change in your community?
- What is the biggest impact you’ve made in your life?
- When were you most scared?
- What is the one single idea that will enhance our world?
- What is your greatest struggle?
- What innovation have you added to your life?
- Why would you describe yourself as a co-creator?

- **Past, Present, & Future**
  - What kind of person were you?
  - What kind of person are you now?
  - What kind of person do you plan to be?
USEFUL EXAMPLES

Below are five presentations featuring clean, crisp effective design that worked live at TED and TEDx OhioUniversity, and also online:

**John Doerr**  
Profit Salvation in Greentech  

**Clint! Runge**  
The Surprise of Life  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=ds3YgzykdSc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ds3YgzykdSc)

**Larry Lessig**  
Creativity and the Law  

**Erin McKean**  
Redefining the Dictionary  

**Poet Rives**  
The 4 a.m. Mystery  

**Structure Of Greatest Talks**

In this fascinating talk Nancy Duarte explains the model that she developed for designing transformative presentations. She explains the essential qualities of an excellent presentation by analyzing the speeches of Martin Luther King and Steve Jobs.  
[www.bit.ly/g06z75](http://www.bit.ly/g06z75)

**June Cohen**  
Executive Producer, TED Media  
Many of the ideas on this page are based on June Cohen's talk on the elements of great TED talks. We highly encourage you to watch her video.  
The TED Commandments

1. Thou shalt not simply trot out thy usual shtick.
You know when you hear an interview with your favorite celeb, and they make a hilarious joke, then you hear them make the exact same joke on the couch of some other late night show? Don’t do that. Don’t peddle out the same old stuff. No one wants to waste their time hearing you tell them something they already know.

2. Thou shalt dream a great dream, or show forth a wondrous new thing, or share something thou hast never shared before.
Originality captures the imagination and leads to legions of inspired followers. As per the first commandment, who wants to hear what they’ve heard before?

3. Thou shalt reveal thy curiosity and thy passion.
The best talks tap into the true enthusiasm and energy the speaker has for the chosen subject. If someone is talking to you about a subject it’s obvious they couldn’t care less about, you could barely care less either. Keep that in mind.

4. Thou shalt tell a story.
Who doesn’t love when a greatly inspiring TED Talk circles cleverly back to the opening anecdote, tying up all the inspiration into a perfect bow? Great talks are anchored by a story, and because that’s a big part of our history as humans, it feels great to have a beginning, middle and end. Your speech isn’t a David Lynch film – give it some flow, clarity and structure.

5. Thou shalt freely comment on the utterances of other speakers for the sake of blessed connection and exquisite controversy.
Discussion is a bit boring if we keep pedaling out the same perspectives and answers – if your colleague has previously presented an idea you don’t agree with, tell people about it. Differences in opinion is how innovation is bred and if you tread lightly and intelligently enough, your colleague might even thank you for adding some fire to the argument.

6. Thou shalt not flaunt thine ego. Be thou vulnerable; speak of thy failure as well as thy success.
To err is most certainly human and no one is perfect. Because we’re all alike in that way, it’s nice (note: inspiring, uplifting, though provoking, etc.), when someone admits a fault, discusses a mistake, takes some blame in the face of failure. It’s what makes you you, but also what makes you like others, and the best part of mistakes is learning from them. Help your audience do the same by being honest about how you’ve bounced back – they’ll be grateful for your frankness.

7. Thou shalt not sell from the stage: neither thy company, thy goods, thy writings, not thy desperate need for funding; lest thou be cast aside into outer darkness.
There’s a reason that being sold to feels icky – it’s the desperation of someone to capture your wallet, rather than your interest, that seriously puts people off. Put away the rolling suitcase and forget the sales speak – if you concentrate on what someone might feel if they didn’t buy into your idea as opposed to why they should buy in, you’ll be much more successful.
8. Thou shalt remember all the while: laughter is good.
Laughter loosens people up and makes you a more relatable speaker. Try it sometime.

9. Thou shalt not read thy speech.
Probably the worst of all public speaking sins is the temptation to disappear into your notes and read, as opposed to speak, to your audience. If they wanted to be read to, you could’ve just sent them an email with your speech content – make sure you practice (in front of others too), so that you’ll only need a prompt when it comes to presenting.

10. Thou shalt not steal the time of them that follow thee.
How would you feel if you were the person waiting to take over during talking time? Waffling on is never a positive – make it (relatively) short and sweet, and give others the courtesy of enough time to speak.

The preceding ten directives were given to us by TED headquarters in New York. These are the same rules that all TED speakers are given.

And, here are 10 more, simple rules to follow:

1. **Dream big.** Strive to create the best talk you have ever given. Reveal something never seen before. Do something the audience will remember forever. Share an idea that could change the world.

2. **Show us the real you.** Share your passions, your dreams … and also your fears. Be vulnerable. Speak of failure as well as success.


4. **Connect with people’s emotions.** Make us laugh! Make us cry!

5. **Don’t flaunt your ego.** Don’t boast. It’s the surest way to switch everyone off.

6. **No selling from the stage!** Unless we have specifically asked you to, do not talk about your company or organization. And don’t even think about pitching your products or services or asking for funding from stage.

7. **Feel free to comment on other speakers’ talks,** to praise or to criticize. Controversy energizes! Enthusiastic endorsement is powerful!

8. **Don’t read your talk.** Notes are fine. But if the choice is between reading or rambling, then read!

9. **End your talk on time.** Doing otherwise is to steal time from the people that follow you. We won’t allow it.

10. **Rehearse your talk in front of a trusted friend** … for timing, for clarity, for impact.
Proposal Submission

Concept Proposal Deadline: Dec. 2, 2019

The TEDx OhioUniversity Curation Team will review all interested speakers’ concept proposal submissions. A limited number will advance to the next round of selection, requiring a video submission (no need for a professional video) and written proposal. The finalists will be selected and will be invited in for personal interviews with the committee. If you would like to be part of TEDx OhioUniversity, we ask you to please complete the following:

1. Fill out the online application at https://tedxohiouniversity.com/

Include the following in your online proposal submission:

• A brief biography of yourself (no longer than two paragraphs)

• The main idea of your talk and how it fits the theme Thriving in Rural Communities, which shouldn’t be more than 500 words. If you are unable to fill out the submission document online, or you have questions, please email us at bowiej@ohio.edu.

TEDx OhioUniversity Deadlines and Required Events

Dec. 2, 2019 Concept application due
Dec. 13, 2019 Speakers notified if invited to submit full proposals
Jan. 6, 2020 Full proposal and sample video due from potential speakers
Jan, 10, 2020 Final speakers notified
Jan. 20-24, 2020 Topic outline meetings with coaches
Feb. 3-21 2020 Private Coaching (2 session minimum)
Feb. 23, 2020 REQUIRED Technical Rehearsal at NET Individual times TBA
Feb. 24, 2020 TEDx OhioUniversity event

Speakers and all participants in TEDx OhioUniversity will be announced in Jan. 2020.