Call for Proposals
Open Submission Programs
for the 2021 AALS Annual Meeting

Submission dates vary

The Program Committee for the 2021 Annual Meeting is pleased to request proposals for "open submission" programs. Open submission programs are those that are not sponsored by an AALS Section. All annual meeting attendees are eligible to participate as speakers.

The 2021 Annual Meeting theme, selected by AALS President Darby Dickerson, is **The Power of Words**. Dickerson selected a broad theme to encourage creativity in meeting programs. In her presidential address, Dickerson challenged the academy to (1) eliminate the **caste** system in American legal education, (2) emphasize **candor** over spin, and (3) use the power of our words to inspire **change** that promotes democratic institutions and the rule of law. We encourage program organizers to consider using the theme in framing their proposals, but it is not a condition for submission or selection.

The AALS schedules four types of open submission programs (all more fully described below):

- **Open Source** programs offer an opportunity to present either traditional or innovatively structured programs that stand apart from those proposed by AALS sections.
- **Discussion Groups** provide a setting for focused discussions among a small group of invited discussants and engaged participation by the audience.
- **Symposia** are extended sessions (half-day or longer) that focus on in-depth scholarly exploration of a topic of academic interest.
- **Hot Topic** programs focus on topics that emerged too late in the year to be included in section programming. This year, the Program Committee is anticipating that some Hot Topic programs will be proposed for topics directly related to the outcome of the November 2020 election. Thus, the Committee has two Hot Topic proposal deadlines this year. The first is the "normal" deadline that occurs in October. The second deadline is in

November and is reserved for election outcome-related proposals that could not be made in time for the October deadline.

Open Source, Discussion Group, and **Hot Topic** programs will run for one hour and forty-five minutes. Open Source and Hot Topic programs should allow at least fifteen minutes for audience participation, and Discussion Groups should allow thirty minutes for audience participation. **Symposia** run for three to six hours (half-day or full-day) and should include appropriate time for audience participation.

Deadlines

Proposals for **Discussion Group** and **Open Source** programs are due **April 13, 2020**.

Proposals for **Symposium** programs are due **May 11, 2020**.

Proposals for **Hot Topic** programs are due **October 19, 2020.** Proposals directly related to the outcome of the November 2020 elections and that could not be proposed in time for the October deadline are due **November 13, 2020.**

General Submission Guidelines

Full-time faculty members or administrators at AALS Member or Fee-Paid law schools may propose programs. International faculty, visiting faculty (who have no permanent affiliation at another Member or Fee-Paid law school), graduate students, and non-law school faculty are not eligible to submit proposals but may serve as speakers.

A proposal for any of the four program categories should include:

- Program title.
- Names, affiliations, and contact information of the program organizers.
- Detailed description of the proposed program, including (a) the format of the proposed program; (b) an explanation of the overall goal of the program; (c) a description of how diversity is achieved by the program's speakers, content, and/or structure; and (d) if applicable, an indication that one or more speakers will be selected from a call for participants.
- Names, titles, and affiliations of speakers to be invited including links to or copies of their curricula vitae. Except for Discussion Group discussants, the number of speakers per program or Symposium panel should be limited to

a maximum of four, plus one moderator. Discussion Groups typically have between eight and twelve discussants.

- If applicable, proposals should name the journal or edited volume that will be publishing any papers that are presented at the program.

Program organizers should take the AALS core value of diversity into account when developing their proposals and identifying speakers. Relevant diversity considerations include but are not limited to speakers' gender; race; years of teaching experience; faculty status (i.e., junior/senior faculty, tenured/tenure-track/clinical/non-tenure-track faculty); type of law school; geographic location; and viewpoint. To further viewpoint diversity in programming in particular, proposals should include speakers who will represent a range of philosophical, ideological, doctrinal, and methodological perspectives on the program topic as framed.

The scheduled program time should be used only for the academic discussion itself; if there is any "business" to take care of (e.g., discussion of whether to form a new AALS section or combine with an existing section), that should take place outside of the allotted time. Examples of successful proposals submitted in prior years are **available online.**

General Selection Guidelines

In reviewing proposals in any category, the Program Committee will consider the overall quality of the program and whether the proposal:

- Is well-written and thoughtfully constructed;
- Is likely to be of interest to Annual Meeting attendees; and
- Includes presenters who further the diversity goals described above.

Open Source Programs

Proposals Due: April 13, 2020

Proposals should follow the General Submission Guidelines set forth above.

Open Source programs may take many shapes; programs may be interdisciplinary and cut across the interests of two or more sections, may address themes outside the scope of any existing section, or may focus on specific issues such as recent cases or developments in a given area of law.

In addition, we welcome innovative proposals for Open Source programs that depart from the typical format of having speakers present 10- or 20-minute talks. For example, Open Source proposals might offer the following:

- A roundtable-style program in which speakers answer a series of questions posed by the moderator and the audience.
- A program where speakers engage in one or more role-play sessions.
- A program that invites extended engagement with specific scholarly work, such as an "Author Meets Reader" program that discusses a significant new book, or a "Living Legend" program that invites attention to the overall work of an established scholarly figure.
- A program that consists of short presentations coupled with questions designed to set the presentations against one another to foster debate and discussion.

Proposals for Open Source programs may reserve one or more spots for speakers selected from responses to a call for participation. Speakers selected from a call for participation must be identified no later than **September 25, 2020.**

Open Source Program proposals are due **April 13, 2020,** and should be submitted using the [online submission form](). Questions may be directed to [opensource@aals.org]().

Discussion Group Programs

Proposals Due: April 13, 2020

Proposals for a Discussion Group program should follow the General Submission Guidelines set forth above.

A Discussion Group program provides a group of discussants the opportunity to engage in a sustained conversation about a shared topic of interest. Discussion Groups will not feature formal presentations. Instead, Discussion Groups will be made up of discussants who will typically each prepare a three-to-five-minute presentation (some past discussion groups have referred to these presentations as "opening statements"). These presentations are intended to stimulate a lively and engaging discussion that will include both the discussants and members of the audience.

Discussion Groups may be limited to a single substantive area and subject (e.g., "Equitable Remedies in Civil Rights Litigation"). Ideally, however, Discussion Groups will offer an opportunity for discussants in related fields to bring useful perspectives to the conversation. For example, a Discussion Group on "Free Speech and Community Policing" could invite perspectives from multiple vantage points including public law and criminal law as well as critical, feminist, and comparative law perspectives.

Discussion Group proposals should have at least eight and no more than twelve invited discussants, including the moderator. Discussion Group proposals should identify approximately two-thirds of the discussants and leave the remaining one-third of the discussants to be selected from an open call for participation disseminated by the AALS staff in coordination with the Discussion Group's organizers. For accepted proposals, the Program Committee and the AALS staff will post calls for participation and will facilitate the Discussion Group's organizers' review of the submissions. The final discussant list is subject to review and approval by the Program Committee.

Once discussants are identified, they should provide to the organizers one-page abstracts that preview their three-to-five-minute presentation. This process will allow all discussants to anticipate others' planned remarks as each discussant drafts his or her own presentation. Discussion Group organizers may also wish to

require discussants to write and share their three-to-five-minute presentations with each other before the Annual Meeting.

As with other Annual Meeting programs, conference attendees who are not invited discussants are welcome to attend the Discussion Group as audience members, and the moderator should open the discussion to allow audience members to participate for at least thirty minutes of the program.

Organizers are expected to moderate the Discussion Group unless another moderator is identified in the proposal. Organizers are responsible for ensuring timely communication among the discussants before the Annual Meeting, including disseminating any abstracts or other materials.

Discussion Group program proposals are due **April 13, 2020,** and should be submitted using the online submission form. Questions may be directed to discussiongroup@aals.org.

Symposium Programs

Proposals Due: May 11, 2020

Symposium programs are full-day or half-day programs that conduct an in-depth scholarly exploration of a topic of academic interest. The Committee encourages Symposium organizers to arrange for the publication of the papers in a journal or edited volume.

If the Symposium will be published in a student-edited law review, the AALS will waive the registration fee for up to two student editors from that law review to attend the Annual Meeting.

Proposals for Symposium programs may reserve one or more spots for speakers selected from responses to a call for participation. Speakers selected from a call for participation must be identified no later than **September 15, 2020.**

Because Symposium sessions will run simultaneously with other programs during the Annual Meeting, attendees may attend panels more sporadically than is common for traditional symposia. For that reason, organizers should think of each symposium session as a self-contained event and be attentive to ensuring diversity, including viewpoint diversity, in each session.

Additional Submission Guidelines

In addition to following the General Submission Guidelines set forth above, Symposium proposals should include:

- An abstract of no more than 750 words about the Symposium program and its anticipated contribution to legal scholarship.
- A 250-word-or-less abstract for each proposed Symposium paper.
- An indication of whether the request is for a full-day or half-day Symposium.
- A description of any publication arrangement (or potential arrangement) for the program in a journal or edited volume.

Additional Selection Guidelines

In reviewing Symposium proposals, in addition to applying its General Selection Guidelines, the Program Committee will consider the quality of the paper abstracts, the likelihood that the resulting papers will substantially contribute to the scholarship in the field, and the success of the proposal in achieving diversity for each Symposium session and across the whole of the Symposium.

Symposium program proposals are due **May 11, 2020,** and should be submitted using the online submission form. Questions may be directed to symposium@aals.org.

Hot Topic Programs

Proposals Due: October 19, 2020.
November 2020 election outcome-related topics that could not be proposed in time for the October deadline must be submitted by **November 13, 2020.**

Hot Topic programs focus on topics that emerged too late in the year to be included in other types of programs. The Committee anticipates that some hot topics related to the outcomes of the November 2020 election will not be able to be proposed until after the outcomes are known. Accordingly, the Committee has set a post-election deadline specifically for those proposals. The deadline for post-election proposals is shortly after the election, so the Committee encourages organizers to start planning their proposals before the election.

Hot Topic program proposals that are selected by the Committee will be assigned a program time slot by AALS staff. Due to scheduling constraints, program times cannot be changed to accommodate specific speakers.

Hot Topic program organizers should check the preliminary Annual Meeting program on the AALS website to be sure that there is no substantial replication of the substance of a proposed hot topic program and a program already on the schedule. The Committee will narrowly construe this requirement and will try to avoid disqualifying proposals on this basis.

Additional Submission Guidelines

In addition to following the General Submission Guidelines set forth above, Hot Topic proposals should include an explanation of (1) why the topic is "hot" and (2) why it was not possible to make the proposal in one of the other program categories with an earlier deadline. For proposals submitted in November, the proposal should also (1) describe the topic's connection to the election outcome and (2) state why it was not possible to submit the proposal for the October deadline. The Committee strongly encourages organizers to meet the October deadline if at all possible.

Additional Selection Guidelines

In reviewing Hot Topic proposals, in addition to applying its General Selection Guidelines, the Program Committee will pay particular attention to (1) the proposal's hot topic deadline explanation, and (2) whether the proposal's topic is substantially replicates an Annual Meeting program already on the schedule.

Hot Topic Program proposals are due **October 19, 2020, and, for Hot Topics directly related to November 2020 election outcomes, November 13, 2020.** Proposals should be submitted using the [online submission form](). Questions may be directed to [hottopic@aals.org]().

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