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RightsCon26 Session Guidance

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RightsCon Proposal Form

About You

First name

Last name

Job title or position

Affiliation Share with us where you work or study. If you are not affiliated with any institution, you can write in “Independent.”

Stakeholder type

- ☐ Civil society
- ☐ Private sector
- ☐ Academia
- ☐ Investor
- ☐ Philanthropic sector
- ☐ Government
- ☐ Intergovernmental institution
- ☐ Media
- ☐ Creative
- ☐ Other

Email address If your proposal is accepted, you will be considered the point of contact for your session. Organizers are responsible for sharing all program updates, resources, and registration instructions with facilitators and speakers.

Country Please select whichever country you identify with. If you don't see your country represented on the list, you can select "Other" and write it in.

Gender Please select whichever option, if any, is most comfortable for you. We use this information to ensure gender diversity and inclusion in our program. We won't list your answer publicly, and will only share this data in aggregate.

Will you co-organize the session with someone?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Have you participated in RightsCon before?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

What is your previous experience with the RightsCon program? Don't worry, your response is not a deciding factor, but helps us understand your engagement and ensure we maintain space for both new and returning voices.

- ☐ I have hosted a session before
- ☐ I have never hosted a session before
- ☐ I have proposed a session, however, it was not accepted

About Your Session

Which program category does your session fall under? Categories inform the shape and scope of the RightsCon program, and the tracks that participants will use to explore sessions.

- ☐ Artificial Intelligence and Emerging Technologies
- ☐ Business and Human Rights
- ☐ Conflict and Humanitarian Action
- ☐ Content Governance
- ☐ Data Protection
- ☐ Digital Security for Communities
- ☐ Freedoms and Agency in the Age of Surveillance
- ☐ Freedom of the Media
- ☐ Futures, Fictions, and Creativity

- ☐ Global Cyber Norms and Encryption
- ☐ Governance, Politics, and Elections
- ☐ Human Rights-Centered Design
- ☐ Internet Access and Inclusion
- ☐ Internet Shutdowns and Disruptions
- ☐ Justice, Litigation, and Documentation
- ☐ Online Hate and Violence
- ☐ Organizational Capacity and Funding
- ☐ Tactics and Contexts for Activists

Select an intersecting theme, if relevant. Thematic advisors, as members of the Program Committee, evaluate proposals assigned to one of our intersecting themes, which cut across program categories. If you select an option below, your proposal will be reviewed by both track and theme.

- ☐ Gender justice
- ☐ Disability rights
- ☐ Health
- ☐ Environment
- ☐ Youth and children's rights
- ☐ Indigenous rights

Is there a geographic focus to your session? (If yes, please specify)

Session title (in English) Word count: 0 / 15

Which institution(s) will host your session? Write the full name of the institution(s) that should be credited publicly as the host of the session. If you have more than one host, separate them using a semicolon (e.g. "Access Now; RightsCon"). If your session is not affiliated with an institution, you can write "Independent."

Goal and Format

In this section, you will choose your goal, format, and where you want to host the session. If you're not sure which options are best for you, take a look at our [Guide to a Successful Proposal](#) for a more complete overview.

We will communicate with session organizers about capabilities for your chosen format and environment when we send notifications of acceptance in late December 2025. The scope and scale of our final program will be informed by the principles of participatory design, the needs of session organizers, and the cost and capacity of production.

You can choose to host your session either online or in-person.

- Online sessions are hosted entirely on our virtual summit platform and do not receive a dedicated room at the venue. Sessions in our online program can be scheduled with more flexibility, to accommodate participants in different time zones. If you run a session online, you are welcome to join us in-person, but all speakers, facilitators, and participants will access the session from personal devices.
- In-person sessions are held at our venue, the Mulungushi International Conference Centre (MICC) in Lusaka. Sessions in our in-person program will be scheduled from approximately 9:00 to 17:00 local time and will have limited technical capabilities to ensure more dynamic face-to-face interaction. If you select this option, all facilitators, speakers, and participants should plan to attend in-person, and your session will not be accessible to virtual participants.

Our approach to hybrid for RightsCon 2026

For the roundtable and private meeting formats only, there will be a select number of sessions that will be elevated to support a two-way exchange between online and in-person participants. If you are proposing a session in either of these formats, and are interested in being considered for hybrid elevation, we want to know why bringing both online and in-person participants together is necessary to support your session goals. Please note that unlike online sessions, hybrid sessions will only be hosted from 9am-5pm local time, and so may not be ideal for the timezones you intend to reach to participate. In this case, we suggest you opt to host fully online instead.

What do you want to achieve with your session? Select the goal that feels most applicable.

- ☐ Explore perspectives around a thematic or regional issue area
- ☐ Consult and collect input on a project, practice or policy
- ☐ Deliver a concise and direct call to action
- ☐ Teach skills, co-create resources, and build tactics
- ☐ Invite specific stakeholders to collaborate on a strategy
- ☐ Showcase a tool, technology, or technical project

Session format When you choose an option below, a series of questions will appear. The questions are tailored to each format. Once your selection is made, you will not be able to change your session format at a later point in the process. For more details about our different formats, see our [Guide to a Successful Proposal](#).

- ☐ Dialogue
- ☐ lightning talk
- ☐ private meeting

- ☐ roundtable
- ☐ tech demo
- ☐ workshop

Session description (250 words)

Do you prefer to host your session:

- ☐ online
- ☐ in-person

Co-facilitator's details

- Name
- Job title
- Organization
- Sector their organization represents (industry, civil society, etc)
- Nationality

Final Questions

Can we list information about your session on RightsCon's website and other channels?

If your proposal is accepted, do we have permission to share information about your session, including the title, description, format, and host institution(s), on the RightsCon website and other public communications?

Please note that all sessions will appear in the program agenda on the summit platform for registered participants to view and access. Private meetings are more restricted in nature and will only be visible to invited participants.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Data usage policy

Data collected from the RightsCon proposal portal is subject to OpenWater's [privacy policy](#), and RightsCon's [data usage policy](#) and [participation and privacy policy](#). We encourage you to review these policies and contact our team at legal@accessnow.org with any questions.

We collect certain information from prospective session organizers, including personal data, such as country and gender, to ensure our diversity, equity, and inclusion standards are upheld, and to understand how our community evolves from summit to summit, in aggregate.

Do you consent to the use of your data for these purposes?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Code of Conduct

By submitting a session proposal, I agree to abide by RightsCon's [Code of Conduct](#).

The Code of Conduct embodies our commitment to treat people with dignity, decency, and respect, and to build a community space for everyone, free of intimidation, discrimination, or hostility. To review the policy in full, visit rightscon.org/code-of-conduct.

Examples of Successful Wikimedia Applications

1) Africa Knowledge Initiative: Revolutionizing access to indigenous languages

Session description

Many African indigenous languages have been projected by UNESCO to likely go extinct in the near future. Some of these languages include the Igbo language, Yoruba and Hausa. The Africa Knowledge Initiative, a partnership between the Wikimedia Foundation and the African Union, leverages open source projects to preserve and promote these languages and the communities and histories they represent. In addition to preserving languages that are at risk of going extinct, the initiative ensures that Africans are the ones creating content about themselves. It's important for Africans to create content about themselves due to the dangers of a one-sided story from non Africans, which has globally misrepresented Africa for decades.

In this workshop, participants will learn how open source tools like Wikipedia and WikiCommons, among others, can help preserve indigenous culture and heritage beyond the African continent. The workshop will also include a brainstorming discussion to help the group explore how other influential regional institutions like the African Union could be approached to form similar partnerships. They will also learn how to start an incubator for a language in which Wikipedia does not yet exist. You might be surprised how many people are awaiting the emergence of a language-specific community in your context.

What do you want to learn from participants during the session?

I want to learn how they are collaborating with the necessary stakeholders in their contexts to preserve their respective indigenous languages from the risk of going extinct. I want to also learn from the African participants how the Africa Knowledge Initiative can rope in more local partners across the various countries of Africa, towards making its content campaigns more inclusive and more diversified, to ensure no African language is left behind.

How will participants continue to contribute and collaborate after the session ends?

We have Wikimedia communities spread across the globe. Participants would be roped into a community telegram platform where they would be followed up and introduced to the nearest Wikimedia community in their locality, to ensure constant communication and contribution to the subject.

2) Latin American Challenges of Accessing, Producing, and Circulating Knowledge of Black and Indigenous Populations Online

The challenges faced by historically marginalized populations to access, produce and circulate knowledge online are not comprehended enough in Latin America. Our objective with this session is to contribute to a deeper understanding of these inequalities and how they have been narrowed with the experience of the three themes proposed this year: gender justice, labor, and the environment. In this sense, we want to explore questions such as: how is more information about and from women, especially those with black and indigenous backgrounds, important to gender & sexuality topics? How is more information from the perspective of these communities important to understand labor issues? How does this knowledge help us understand and advance climate and environmental justice issues?

We believe that the knowledge produced by black and indigenous people provides a broader understanding of society as a whole, not just the specificities of these communities. We propose to provide space for speakers and participants to share experiences to reflect on challenges, strategies, and possible courses of action for the near future.

3) Wikipedia vs. the Ministry of Truth: Protecting our Community's Human Rights to Protect Free Knowledge

Wikipedia touches the lives of billions around the world, but editing it shouldn't be dangerous. Threats to the volunteers who make Wikipedia possible - and indeed anyone seeking or sharing the truth online - are growing as authoritarians and other malicious actors become more adept at exploiting vulnerabilities in digital spaces. This lightning talk will explore the disparate and dynamic threats facing free knowledge and those who make it possible, and how Wikipedia is working to counter these threats by putting communities first. As stakeholders in our mission, we will invite the civil society stakeholders at RightsCon to influence how the world's largest online encyclopedia protects free knowledge and freedom of expression online. Finally, this lightning talk will highlight how our community-centered approach to human rights can serve as a model for other online platforms to prioritize people and transparency and a model civil society and governments should protect.