2025 Call for Session, Workshop, and Design Team Proposals
Estuaries: Tradition and Transition

Opens: Wednesday, 6 November 2024
Closes: Friday, 17 January 2025, 11:59 PM ET
Proposal acceptances will be sent on or about 7 March 2025

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The Scientific Program Committee for the Coastal and Estuarine Research Federation's 28th Biennial Conference (CERF 2025) invites proposals for **Scientific Sessions, Workshops, Collab Sessions, and Design Competition Teams.**

The theme for the CERF 2025 Conference is "**Estuaries: Tradition and Transition**" to encompass the history of estuarine research while understanding emerging challenges and future opportunities. Our planned program draws on the deep heritage of estuarine science in the Chesapeake Bay region where we started and where CERF 2025 will be held, but embraces how estuarine and coastal research, management, and education are world-wide and of more importance than ever.

We invite topics and interest groups that include knowledge created by local Tribes, watermen and other coastal citizens, and Western scientists while exploring emerging scientific trends and novel tools such as environmental DNA, new remote sensing technologies, and artificial intelligence. Our theme also encompasses approaches to weaving together these different ways of knowing to address the pressing coastal and estuarine issues facing the world today. It affirms CERF's longstanding emphasis on management implications, education, and communication. This theme embraces the past, present, and future of coastal and estuarine science, management and communications.

You are welcome to submit more than one proposal either within a proposal type (e.g., two scientific session proposals) or across types (e.g., one scientific session proposal and one workshop proposal).

Scientific Session Proposals

Please consider submitting a proposal to convene a **scientific session** that explores CERF's traditional science, management, education, and policy disciplines from a unique perspective, taking advantage of the diverse experiences of conference attendees. CERF conferences have a policy of one presentation per person; however, presenters may submit a second abstract to sessions that fall under the umbrella of education; diversity, equity, and inclusion; or arts and humanities. Therefore, in addition to traditional scientific session proposals, we seek proposals for sessions that fall in these categories.

While any relevant topic may be submitted, we are particularly interested in sessions that address the theme "Estuaries: Tradition and Transition" as well as one or more of the following topics:

- **Coastal Resilience:** How estuarine and coastal disciplines can inform coastal resilience– the ability of coastal ecosystems and communities to recover following disturbances such as hurricanes, coastal storms, and flooding – rather than simply reacting to impacts. This may include technological advancements, successes in management and policy, co-production of knowledge with community members and other engaged parties, and transdisciplinary research approaches.
- **Understanding Impacts of Global Change:** The range of ways global changes are affecting coastal and estuarine science and management. This may include using historical data to understand past patterns and forecast future conditions; using modern methods to recreate historic conditions and transitions; and documenting shifting baselines and predicting future trends in ocean warming, intense storms, hydrologic trends and extremes, sea level rise, ocean acidification, and their coupled physical, biogeochemical, and ecological impacts at multiple spatial and temporal scales and across the land-sea interface. It may also include how the impacts of COVID-19, social unrest, and other major historical events of recent years have changed our lives and work, and the ways that we have adapted and innovated because of these events.
- **Identifying Solutions:** Solutions to decrease physical, chemical, and/or biological stressors; restore habitats; and increase the resilience of ecosystems and coastal communities to climate change and other anthropogenic impacts, including transdisciplinary design and adaptation solutions for more sustainable and resilient coastlines.
- **Traditional and Local Ecological Knowledge (TEK/LEK):** Ways in which TEK/LEK and academic knowledge are complementary and effective in answering scientific and social issues.
- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion:** Innovative approaches that directly incorporate or address diversity, equity, inclusion, justice, and accessibility in coastal and estuarine science, education, and management, including strategies to address racism in STEM and the legacy of underrepresentation in our fields.
- **Successfully Engaging End-Users:** Management of multiple, conflicting uses of coastal resources across the natural and sociological continuum; integration, quantification, and valuation of ecosystem goods and services; and other scenarios that successfully engage end-users and community members (e.g., participatory science programs, science co-production) to acquire new data and solve coastal problems.
- **Exploring Coastal Communities:** Understanding how ecosystems, economic activity, and social structures interact on the coast, and the role science has or could play in decision-making around this complex interplay. It may address urban estuaries and other highly managed ecosystems.
- **Advances in Estuarine and Coastal Modeling:** Advances in physical, biogeochemical, and ecological modeling and their applications to investigate diverse topics such as eutrophication, coastal flooding, harmful algal blooms,

coral bleaching, plumes and pollutant transport, climate change, waves, and microplastics.

- *Advances in Open Data Science and Their Applications to Coastal Research and Management:* Management, analysis, and synthesis of modern datasets (e.g., continuous monitoring, remote sensing, gene sequences and bioinformatics) in an open environment to glean new information about estuaries and coasts, including quantitative description of status and function and development of predictive models and tools.
- *Characterizing, Communicating, and Managing Threats to Estuaries*: Addressing environmental change and variability associated with greenhouse gas emissions, population growth, resource acquisition and scarcity, war or other conflict, and biodiversity loss and interactions.
- *Transdisciplinary Design*: Bringing together natural sciences, architecture, engineering, policy, planning, law, and other disciplines in partnership with affected communities to co-produce designs and solutions that will allow coastal communities to adapt to changes and to be more sustainable and resilient.

Please frame your session proposal topics in a broadly relevant way to encourage diverse participation and engagement. Sessions arising from a single project or program or based on a singularly local question or issue (e.g., species, process) are less preferred.
Information you need to submit a session proposal:

1. **Lead convener.** Name and full contact information.
2. **Co-conveners.** Limited to three additional conveners. Names, affiliations, and email addresses. We strongly encourage sessions to include one or more student or early career professionals as conveners, and to have at least two conveners in case one cannot attend the conference for unforeseen reasons and to assist with managing large sessions with high numbers of presentations.
3. **Preferred session format.** All oral sessions will have an associated poster session. For the oral portion, traditional talks (15 minutes), "lightning talks" (5 minutes), or some combination may be selected. We cannot guarantee that your preferred format will be granted.
4. **Title.** Limited to 10 words. If your title is greater than 10 words, it will be cut off during the submission process.
5. **Short description.** 50 to 100 words. Provide a short description of the session to be shared in the call for abstracts, conference website, and other materials.
6. **Detailed description.** Under 750 words. Provide a long description of the session to assist reviewers in understanding the context and purpose of your session. including the t*arget audience* for your session.
7. **Keywords.** Select up to 5 keywords from a curated list to describe the field, method, ecosystem/habitat, and/or geography.

Download List of Keywords

Workshop Proposals

Workshops offer participants an interactive experience addressing the conference theme, technical/scientific content, professional skills development, or other topical areas. All workshops will be held on **Sunday, 9 November**. Participants will be required to register and pay a fee for workshops; in general, the fees cover only the space and A/V, and no funds are available to workshop hosts or presenters. The ideal workshop will appeal broadly to CERF conference attendees at all career levels and across academia, government, NGO, and private sectors. In addition to the themes outlined above, workshops that address the following topics are encouraged:

- *Introductory and advanced R*
- *Introductory GIS*
- *Statistics and data processing (e.g., R, mapping/GIS, bioinformatics, data visualization, dashboards)*
- *Remote sensing*
- *Tools for data gathering (e.g., acoustic telemetry, drones, satellite imagery)*
- *Workshops that offer certifications, continuing education credits, or similar credentials (e.g., in sampling or analysis skills, use of tools)*
- *Using historical data to address modern challenges*
- *Grant writing for traditional and non-traditional funding bodies*
- *Successfully navigating the tenure track (work-life balance, focus areas, how much is enough?)*
- *Successful job hunting inside and outside academia*
- *Incorporating Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) and Local Ecological Knowledge (LEK) in research*
- *Conducting coastal and estuarine research through an equity-minded lens*
- *Scientific writing and peer review*
- *Science communication and translating science to management*
- *Effective co-production of actionable science*
- *Use (and abuse) of generative AI*
- *Open-source and low-cost tools and methods for democratizing science*

Information you need to submit a workshop proposal:

1. **Lead convener.** Name and full contact information.
2. **Co-convener.** Limited to one additional convener. Name, affiliation, and email address.
3. **Time requested.** 2 to 7 hours.
4. **Title.** Limited to 10 words. If your title is greater than 10 words, it will be cut off during the submission process.
5. **Short description.** 50 to 100 words. Provide a short description of the session to be shared in conference materials.
6. **Detailed description.** Under 750 words. Provide a description of the workshop theme and format. Please include:
   a. *Session presenters*. May be different from conveners.

b. *Target audience as applicable*. May include career stage (student, early career, mid-career, late career), employment sector (academic, government, NGO, private), and field(s) of expertise.

c. *Format*. Method(s) of delivery, such as seminar-style lectures, panel discussions, group discussions, and computer-based activities. If the workshop has different sections (e.g., starting with a short lecture, moving to a computer activity, and concluding with a discussion), please describe.

7. **Anticipated technology or supply needs**. All rooms will have a standard A/V set-up (laptop, projector, screen, Wi-Fi); describe any specialized needs beyond this. In addition, indicate if participants are expected to provide their own laptops or other materials. Note that specialized needs may come with added costs that CERF may not be able to cover.

8. **Room setup.** Rooms will be set up in theater format unless another room set is requested. We will do our best to accommodate special requests but may be limited by space and costs.

9. **Enrollment limit**. If attendance must be limited for logistical reasons, please specify an enrollment limit. Otherwise, state "no limit" and CERF will assign a limit based on room capacity.

NEW FOR CERF 2025: Collab Session Proposals

In addition to the traditional oral and poster scientific session blocks, the new Collab Sessions are concurrent sessions built into the conference schedule to allow for dynamic, informal interactions among attendees. See **schedule-at-a-glance** for proposed times. This format may include panel discussions, meetings, networking events (e.g., affinity groups), and other activities that don't fit neatly into a standard presentation format. The Collab Sessions will facilitate networking and collaboration, increase discussion and idea exchange, and provide more flexibility and inclusivity for attendees to engage in their preferred ways. Collab Sessions are like workshops in that conveners will organize the entire session; no abstracts may be submitted.

Each session will be 90 minutes long and we aim to have no more than six at a time. Because of the way Collab Sessions are embedded in the schedule, there will not be time to change room set-ups; therefore, Collab Sessions must utilize existing room set-ups to include scientific session rooms (i.e., theater-style seating for up to 150), plenary room (i.e., theater-style seating for up to 1000), rooms with round tables of varying capacity, and empty rooms of varying capacity.

What can you use the Collab Sessions for?

- *Informal research meetings:* Examples include meetings for your collaborative project, to explore emerging topics with other interested attendees, to find new collaborators and develop a new group project/proposal, to extend the discussion from a scientific session, and write up results for a publication.

- *Panel discussions and town halls:* Alternative formats to the traditional oral session block to explore topics in coastal and estuarine science, management, and education. You may include invited speakers and allow for interactive discussions about the topic.
- *Networking opportunities:* These events would help CERFers connect with others with similar interests or that could help with career development and mentorship, such as a "live job board" to connect job seekers with job opportunities and affinity group meet-ups for those with similar identities to connect, provide support, and exchange ideas.
- *Creative sessions:* Examples may include sessions dedicated to art, music, dance, and poetry.
- *Short professional development sessions and other activities that provide skills training.*
- *Events that support diversity, equity, and inclusion in coastal and estuarine science and management.*
- *Sessions that encourage rest and restoration (e.g., guided meditations, yoga).*
- *You tell us!*

Information you need to submit a Collab Session proposal:

1. **Lead convener.** Name and full contact information.
2. **Co-convener.** Limited to one additional convener. Name, affiliation, and email address.
3. **Title.** Limited to 10 words. If your title is greater than 10 words, it will be cut off during the submission process.
4. **Short description.** 50 to 100 words. Provide a short description of the session to be shared in conference materials.
5. **Detailed description.** Under 750 words. Submit a detailed description of the session theme and format. Please include:
   a. *Session presenters.* May be different from conveners.
   b. *Target audience* as applicable. May include career stage (student, early career, mid-career, late career), employment sector (academic, government, NGO, private), and field(s) of expertise.
   c. *Format.* Method(s) of delivery, such as seminar-style lectures, panel discussions, group discussions, and computer-based activities. If the session has different sections (e.g., starting with a short lecture, moving to a computer activity, and concluding with a discussion), please describe.
6. **Anticipated technology or supply needs.** Indicate A/V requirements (e.g., laptop, projector, screen, Wi-Fi) or other special needs. In addition, indicate if participants are expected to provide their own laptops or other materials. Note that specialized needs may come with added costs that CERF may not be able to cover.
7. **Room setup.** Rooms will be set up in theater format unless another room set is requested. We will do our best to accommodate requests, but because there is

no time in the schedule to change room setups, accepted Collab Sessions will need to fit into existing spaces and room setups.

8. **Enrollment limit.** If attendance must be limited for logistical reasons, please specify an enrollment limit. Otherwise, state "no limit." You may also describe a preferred range of attendees (e.g., 10-20, 100-200).

Coastal Design Competition Team Proposals

The CERF Coastal Design Competition is an initiative inspiring students and faculty across disciplines to address community-based challenges of climate change. The goal of the competition is for university-based teams to propose research, design solutions, and innovative strategies to make our coastal environments more resilient in the face of climate change and other pressing challenges. The Coastal Design Competition focuses on critical issues such as coastal settlement, ecosystem restoration, flood protection, and economic development, while highlighting the capacity of faculty-led transdisciplinary teams to solve coastal problems and respond to climate change. The competition requires an emphasis on data-driven design and actionable plans that work with and for the priorities of a coastal community in Maryland. The Coastal Design Competition organizers will work with community members to organize in-person or virtual site visits for the teams to maximize the priorities of the local community from the start of the design process.

We seek proposals from faculty interested in taking part in the 2025 Coastal Design Competition. Teams must be interdisciplinary (e.g., architecture, engineering, ecology, policy, planning, law). They may cross disciplines/departments within a single academic institution or be a collaboration across two or more institutions. Connections with groups underrepresented in these disciplines are encouraged along with diverse teams and thoughtful inclusion of regional Minority Serving Institutions. Faculty-student teams may partner with architecture and engineering firms, but research and design must be faculty-led. Teams will be provided flexibility to develop designs in a mechanism that works best for their collaboration (e.g., spring semester course, extracurricular activity, paid internship program) as long as submissions meet the competition deadlines.

Supporting materials, including detailed site information, webinars, and community engagement opportunities, will be made available to selected teams in early 2025. Final designs will be juried, and winners will be announced by a panel of experts during the conference. **Limited funding is available to support students from finalist teams to attend the CERF conference and present their designs to be judged by experts and community members.**

Information you need to submit a Coastal Design Competition Team proposal:
1. **Lead convener.** Name and full contact information.
2. **Co-convener.** Limited to one additional convener. Name, affiliation, and email address.

3. **Faculty team members.** May be different from conveners. Include departmental/disciplinary, institutional, and professional (if applicable) affiliations.
4. **Faculty team expertise.** Describe faculty team expertise in addressing coastal resilience issues and how diversity, equity, and inclusion were considered in faculty team composition.
5. **Methodology.** Under 300 words. Describe the proposed method of student engagement (e.g., class[es]; extracurricular; paid; for credit) and how diversity, equity, and inclusion will be considered in student team composition. Describe the role (if any) of outside partners (e.g., advisors from architecture and engineering firms).

Contacts

Please contact the Scientific Program Committee Co-Chairs (Pedro Morais, Marcus Beck, and Elizabeth Lacey) at **spcchairs@cerf.science** to discuss ideas for scientific sessions, workshops, collab sessions, or design competition team proposals. For questions about proposal submissions, please contact Tricia Fry at **abstract.manager@cerf.science**.