



Suncoast Connect: Innovating and Thriving in the Digital Age

The Patterson Foundation's Digital Access for All Symposium

Call for Presentation Interest

The Patterson Foundation (TPF) is hosting a Digital Access for All Symposium: **Suncoast Connect: Innovating and Thriving in the Digital Age**, October 15th and 16th, 2024, in Sarasota, Florida. TPF is seeking presenters for breakout sessions, panel discussions, flash presentations and other innovative options during the symposium. Day one will consist of a special keynote presentation and dinner. Day two, October 16, 2024 will be the full day Symposium. Presenters will be selected from proposals that best match the theme and objectives of the Symposium.

We are seeking presenters for symposium sessions that pertain to one or more of the three elements of the digital access:

Connectivity: The ability to connect to affordable, reliable, high-speed internet

Devices: Possessing the right device for one's needs

Skills/Support: Having access to the necessary training and support to use devices and programs effectively while solving technical issues when they arise

If you are interested in taking part in the symposium sessions, either by presenting, collaborating or as a member of a panel discussion—please complete [this form by June 28, 2024](#) to be considered. This is a preliminary application, we are not seeking full presentations to be submitted at this time. You will be asked to provide additional materials if you are selected, and will have an opportunity to speak with a team member to clarify any questions. Please read all the information below before submitting.

Background:

In June 2020, The Patterson Foundation created Digital Access for All (DA4A) to explore the efforts of multiple sectors working to enhance access to technology that connects people in ways that foster inclusion and well-being. The initiative aspires to discover how individuals,

businesses, nonprofits, government, and the media are moving the needle on access to digital technology. At the center of this initiative is how vital digital access is for all people and entities, with humans being at the center of a vibrant society. The DA4A team has engaged in enriching and insightful conversations with more than 30 national and state organizations and over 50 county leaders in schools, libraries, economic development, and nonprofits. This knowledge informs opportunities to strengthen these efforts collaboratively within our four-county area: Charlotte, DeSoto, Manatee, and Sarasota.

Examples of Presentation Topics:

- Artificial intelligence
- Cybersecurity
- Partnerships in Digital Access
- Digital Access Broadband, Skills and Support, and Devices Centers
- Digital Navigation
- Skilling and Upskilling for Digital Jobs
- Entrepreneurship Connections
- Tech Jobs and Economic Mobility
- The Connected Economy

Overall Theme and Objectives:

Connecting: Strengthening community anchor institutions including schools, libraries, health facilities, medical providers, public safety entities, institutions of higher education, public housing organizations, or community support organizations that facilitate greater use of broadband service by vulnerable populations including,

- Low-income households (ALICE)
- Aging populations
- Veterans
- Incarcerated individuals
- People with disabilities
- People with language barriers
- Racial and ethnic minorities

Innovating: Sharing best practices and innovations in education, health care, and civic engagement that are evolving to develop partnerships and investment that increase equity, develop a more inclusive society and provide for community wellbeing and resilience. This may include transforming the digital access landscape to address barriers of access, adoption, affordability and awareness.

Thriving: Connecting broadband expansion and digital access to economic competitiveness and economic mobility for all by increasing entrepreneurship, business growth and competition and aligning workforce development programs to promote digital and tech job opportunities and ensure the future talent pipeline.

Evaluation Criteria:

Sessions that achieve the following will be considered:

1. Relevance to Theme:
 - a. How well does the proposed session align with the overall theme and objectives of the digital access symposium?
2. Expertise and Experience:
 - a. Does the speaker have relevant expertise and experience in the field of digital access, technology, or a related area?
3. Innovation and Uniqueness:
 - a. Is the proposed session innovative and unique? Does it bring a fresh perspective or present new insights into digital access opportunities, challenges, and solutions?
4. Audience Engagement:
 - a. Does the proposal outline provide innovative and interactive elements or engagement strategies to keep the audience involved during the session?
5. Practical Applications:
 - a. Does the session offer practical and actionable takeaways for the symposium attendees? Will it provide valuable insights that can be applied in real-world scenarios?

The Patterson Foundation will review all submissions and contact those that are most relevant to our symposium for additional information.

Session Planning Key Dates & Deadlines

May 20, 2024	Call For Presentation Interest Sessions Opens
June 28, 2024	Call For Presentation Interest Sessions Closes
July 5, 2024	Contact for Presentation Interest Session Information
August 2, 2024	Final Session Submissions Due
August-October, 2024	Selected presenters work with DA4A to finalize sessions
October 15 & 16, 2024	2024 Symposium, Sarasota, Florida

Symposium Details

- **Registration:** symposium registration and meals are free to all attendees, generously sponsored by The Patterson Foundation.
- **Audience:** nonprofits, business, government, stakeholders of digital access especially in Charlotte, DeSoto, Manatee and Sarasota Counties.
- **Attendance:** 200 overall attendees anticipated
- **Breakout Sessions:** timeframes will vary but not exceed 45 minutes

Expectations for Accepted Session Presenters

Presenters are asked to keep the symposium dates, October 15th and 16th, available until they're notified of the final acceptance of their proposal. Session presenters will follow the guidelines below to ensure a professional and engaging event. The Patterson Foundation will have full discretion for creation of the Symposium agenda.

If selected for a session, presenters agree to:

- Be flexible to adapt the session to fit the criteria.
- Participate in a virtual speaker webinar to review key steps.
- Submit a bio and headshot.
- Complete all session planning tasks and meet all deadlines.
- Commit to be present at the symposium and serve as a point person in the session.

Please contact Karen Stewart at kstewarttpf@gmail.com for any questions.