

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Due: Monday, August 31, 2020



As a NISTS 2021 presenter, you'll have the opportunity to share your insights and lessons learned with hundreds of higher education professionals who are specifically focused on improving transfer student success. Attendees hold a variety of roles within student and academic affairs and hail from both two- and four-year institutions throughout the country.

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

Transfer students need *transfer agents* to support them as they navigate the transition between institutions—people like you who understand college processes and resources, then share that knowledge freely and intentionally to ensure their students' success.

Using a holistic lens unbound by academic discipline or functional area, [the NISTS annual conference](#) will help you examine this crucial role and connect with like-minded professionals who care about the transfer student experience as much as you do.

Join us to explore practical, research-based strategies for improving transfer programs and services and for building a transfer-receptive culture. No matter your role, whether you work at a two- or four-year institution, or are involved in research, policy, or a statewide system, you'll elevate your transfer knowledge and advocacy skills and leave feeling ready to influence change.

WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR

The NISTS annual conference is only as strong as its content, so we're relying on you to propose sessions that address a variety of pressing issues and obstacles related to the transfer student experience. There are numerous topic options, and we're eager to see your creative approach to ensuring that your transfer students are successful.

Whether you focus on research, theory, or a specific policy, process, or program, please be sure your proposal is tailored to meet the goals and expectations of [this](#) conference. We cannot accept sessions that do not clearly address transfer students or the professionals who support them on their journey.

In addition, please keep in mind that conference attendees are interested in practical information, specifically how they might utilize your insights within their particular context. The strongest sessions are informative and interactive and also address how the material is relevant to institutions/systems of various size, scope, and sector.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Proposals are due by 11:59 pm PST on Monday, August 31st. Final decisions will be announced on or around October 21, 2020. Proposals will be evaluated in a blind review process using the [Proposal Evaluation Rubric](#), which includes the following broad categories:

- ▶ **Detail & Organization:** The proposal is thorough and well written; it is clear and organized; and it uses a professional tone and has proper grammar and spelling.
- ▶ **Learning Outcomes:** The proposal includes appropriate and real-world learning outcomes and adequately explains how those objectives will be met.
- ▶ **Engagement Strategies:** The use of [audience engagement strategies](#) is fully explained and reflects the basic [principles of adult learning](#).
- ▶ **Significance & Applicability:** The proposal is creative, timely, and noteworthy. The topic is relevant and important to the transfer field and is applicable to various institution types and sizes.
- ▶ **Presenter Expertise:** The proposal is based in theory, relevant research, and/or demonstrated best practices and includes assessment or outcome data. Based on the information provided, the presenter is qualified to lead the session and offers an important or unique perspective. If applicable, the session includes presenters from a variety of roles, disciplines, and institutions, offering a fair portrayal of the collaboration or partnership being discussed.

Reviewers will assess proposals on their ability to promote general understanding, practical applicability, and skill development across a range of conference attendee experience levels. When drafting your proposal, please keep in mind that the review process is highly selective. Unfortunately, we receive many good proposals we cannot accept due to space limitations.

RIGHT OF REFUSAL

NISTS reserves the right to refuse proposals that are not consistent with our mission and goals, as well as those that promote a for-profit product or service from organizations which are not confirmed [conference sponsors](#).

SESSION FORMATS

OPTION 1 PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOP (3 hours)

Pre-conference workshops are scheduled to occur on Wednesday, February 24th from 8:00 am – 11:00 am. Enrollment is limited to 35 or fewer participants who must pay a fee to participate. Although workshops may be tailored to a specific functional area, participants will likely have a range of experience levels and may include a mix of practitioners, faculty, and administrators. All transfer-related topics and ideas are welcome, but we are particularly interested in interactive workshops that include opportunities for networking, learning, reflection, and practice. [[Previous Workshops](#)]

OPTION 2 CONCURRENT SESSION (1 hour)

All concurrent sessions are scheduled for 60 minutes. Presentations styles may vary, but a minimum of 10 minutes must be reserved for audience questions and answers.

OPTION 3 POSTER (2 hour gallery)

Poster presentations will be showcased in a gallery format during the Opening Reception on Wednesday, February 24, 2021, from 5:00-7:00 pm. All posters will be displayed on a 4' x 8' bulletin board, and presenters will be expected to informally describe their ideas, report findings, and answer questions from a variety of conference participants.

When submitting your pre-conference workshop, concurrent session, or poster proposal, you must designate your session as one of the following concurrent session types:

► Educational

These sessions present strategies for effectively implementing innovative programs, policies, processes, initiatives, or technologies, the success of which can be demonstrated through assessment and outcome data. Alternately, these sessions might provide a broad overview of important transfer-related trends, issues, or concepts and highlight the implications for transfer student success.

Please Note: If you intend to highlight a specific transfer program, you should do so in case study form and include a balanced representation of the problem and target population, program structure, funding sources, outcomes, challenges and lessons learned, and considerations for replication/scalability.

► Facilitated Discussion

These sessions provide attendees the opportunity to take a collective deep dive into a specific theme, question, activity, or problem. These discussions can be coordinated around a particular topic, institution type, specific student or professional population, or state/geographic region and are intended to promote brainstorming, networking, and an intentional exchange of ideas. Facilitators are expected to present a robust set of outcomes for the conversation, provide a brief introduction to the topic, and ensure engagement throughout the session.

► Research Spotlight

These sessions share transfer-related research findings from well-designed studies or analyses of the literature. In particular, topics should increase understanding or contribute to existing research and focus on new implications for policy, practice, and further study. We welcome research projects from a range of disciplines, methodologies, and theoretical approaches.

Please keep in mind that the majority of conference attendees will be practitioners with varying levels of familiarity with research terminology. Presenters are expected to explain terms and use clear and concise language when presenting their findings.

▶ **Educational Partner/Sponsor Session**

These sessions provide confirmed educational partners and conference sponsors the opportunity to formally introduce conference participants to their organizations and, if applicable, the benefits and costs of their products or services. Presenters are strongly encouraged to co-present with institutional partners to illustrate tangible examples of their educational material.

SESSION THEMES

We believe it takes all of us working together, beyond silos, to effectively support transfer students. When drafting your proposal, please align your session with at least one of the following themes, which are intentionally designed to blur traditional boundaries between functional areas and across 2-year, 4-year, and blended institutional types.

▶ **Curricular Alignment or Degree Pathways**

Unclear academic plans too often delay transfer students' progress and persistence, causing excess credit accumulation, multiple major changes, and/or reduced personal momentum. Presentations in this category should address the creation and successful execution of aligned academic curriculum or degree programs that result in improved experiences for students moving between institutions and within academic disciplines.

▶ **Diversity and Inclusion**

Transfer offers students from a variety of backgrounds and experiences the opportunity to pursue higher education, while simultaneously bringing rich diversity to our campuses. These presentations should focus on creating a transfer-receptive culture for students from groups that often experience marginalization. Topics should address issues that directly affect these students, including assisting them as they move between institutions, easing their personal, social, financial, and academic adjustment, and facilitating student motivation and self-efficacy.

▶ **Matriculation Trends and Issues**

As they contemplate and initiate transfer, students rely on timely, accurate, and clear information from a wide range of campus constituents, including admissions, advising, financial aid, orientation, registrar, and even residence life. Presentations in this category should focus on enrollment and acclimation, specifically the trends, issues, policies, and practices that transfer students may face from the initial point of interest through the first semester of attendance at their new institution.

► **Partnerships and Collaboration**

Facilitating a holistic and inclusive transfer student experience requires identifying and involving key stakeholders that represent a variety of perspectives, disciplines, and functional areas. These sessions will address the importance of forming intentional relationships within and between institutions, with an emphasis on relationship development and measurable outcomes. Of particular interest are projects that involve personnel at both sending and receiving institutions and/or collaborative efforts that combine academic and student affairs expertise.

► **Special Populations**

Transfer students hold a variety of intersecting identities with needs that extend beyond their student types and demographics. Presentations in this category will discuss these unique groups in more detail and/or highlight programs and services tailored to facilitate a smooth transition. Special populations include, but are not limited to: adult learners, LGBTQ+, military-affiliated, online-only, those with disability accommodations, and students who have experienced trauma.

► **Transition Programs and Services**

Despite having previous college experience, navigating a new institution can feel overwhelming for transfer students, particularly during the first year. Presentations in this category focus on helping students adjust and build relationships as they ‘find their fit’ in the campus community and discover ways to participate in high-value personal, social, and academic activities. Of particular interest are sessions focusing on how these programs and services contribute to student persistence and retention.

HOW TO SUBMIT

Please review the [Proposal Checklist](#) for a detailed list of required information. All proposals must be submitted online using the University of North Georgia’s [InfoReady Review platform](#). Presenters will be required to accept the terms of the Presenter Agreement prior to submitting their final proposal.

InfoReady Instructions

STEP 1

Create an Account. Access the InfoReady Application Portal then click *Register* under the Login for Other Users section. Provide your name, email, and password and click *Create Account*. If you created an account to submit a proposal for the NISTS 2020 conference, your previous login information should still work.

STEP 2

Confirm Account. After creating your account, you will receive an automated email requesting account confirmation. Use the link provided to verify your account and enable proposal submission.

STEP 3

Log In. Access the InfoReady Application Portal and login using your newly created account under the "Login for Other Users" section. Select the "NISTS 2021 Call for Proposals" application and follow the prompts to submit your session proposal.

PRESENTER AGREEMENT

By submitting a proposal, you agree to the following:

1. The lead presenter is the designated contact person responsible for notifying all other presenters of acceptance, scheduling, and any other session-related information provided by NISTS.
2. Presenters may be listed on no more than two accepted sessions (excluding invited sessions).
3. All presenters must register for the conference by December 21st. Please note there is a discounted registration rate for all presenters through this date.
4. Presenters must be available to present any time during the conference, February 24-26, 2021.
 - ▶ *If your plans change and you are no longer able to attend the conference, please notify us immediately so that we can amend the conference schedule and materials accordingly.*
5. Presenters are expected to share a copy of their session slide decks and handout(s) via the conference mobile app.