# ACFID National Conference 2021 Concurrent Session Information Pack

## Instructions

1. **Read all sections of this Information Pack and/or** [**register for an online information session**](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/C9CQ6LG) **to learn more about what we’re looking for and what’s involved.**
2. **Send this opportunity to your local civil society partners (a number of guaranteed sessions will be reserved for sessions led by partner organisations).**
3. **Complete all sections of the Application Form and send to** [**jsmith@acfid.asn.au**](mailto:jsmith@acfid.asn.au) **by 5pm AEST Monday 21 June 2021.**

## What is this year’s theme?

The theme of the ACFID National Conference 2021 is ***The Defining Decade: An agenda for civil society-led development***.

Action has commenced around the world to begin the roll out of COVID-19 vaccines. Yet, uneven response to the pandemic coupled with the worst global recession in 90 years, has increased the inequalities within and between countries. A recent report by the UN warns we are facing a “lost decade” for development and calls for investing heavily in a sustainable recovery and reforming the global financial and policy architecture to ensure it is supportive of a recovery aligned with the 2030 Agenda.

As the international community grapples with the scale and complexity of issues arising from the pandemic, it is insufficient to ignore consequences and suffering that stretches beyond borders.

COVID-19 has accelerated and reinforced the need for local civil society organisations to be at the heart of the change and solutions required. Momentum has been gathering both in the global community and here in Australia. Oceania Connect 2020 focused on the theme of “shift the power, raise the ambition”. ACFID Conference 2021 will build on this momentum, moving past the ‘why’ and ‘what’ and focusing on the ‘how’.

Acknowledging the complexity of the challenge before us, this conference seeks to distil how the INGO community can challenge and change these configurations of power and partnerships, placing local CSOs firmly in the focus. This will be explored through current examples from within and external to the sector, centring in on those that are:

* Amplifying the dynamic work of local CSOs.
* Contributing to and improving the wider civil society ecosystem.
* Transforming accountability relationships.
* Responding with new organisational structures, mandates and focus based on local CSOs’ calls for change.

The future of development is locally designed and led. Now is the time to shift from rhetoric into action for real structural and institutional change.

## What are our selection criteria for concurrent sessions?

We are looking for concurrent sessions that:

* Hear directly from local civil society partners.
* Contribute to advancing the theme ‘The Defining Decade: An agenda for civil-society-led development’, particularly:
  + How to achieve development that it locally designed and led.
  + Tested changes to ways of working with donors and partners.
  + Locally led adaptation and innovation in response to COVID-19.
* Share practical insights and/or actionable strategies, particularly:
  + Case studies that foster learning.
  + Reflections on the experience of change and creating space to learn from both successes and failures.
* Engage delegates in creative ways, particularly concise formats such as one-one-one interviews / fireside chats, lightening talks, data blitzes and poster presentations.

**When completing the application form, ensure that you address the selection criteria.**

In-country partners are strongly encouraged to submit their own applications. A number of guaranteed sessions will be reserved for sessions led by partner organisations. ACFID members are strongly encouraged to share this opportunity with local CSO partners.

## What is a ‘virtual’ concurrent session?

This year all concurrent sessions will be virtual sessions.

Our online conference platform will bring together speakers and delegates, and there will be no in-person elements. Please [register for an online information session](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/C9CQ6LG) to learn more about the conference platform.

We encourage you to consider approaches and suited to delivering an engaging online session.

## General guidelines for concurrent sessions

For all concurrent sessions, the following guidelines apply.

### Session Design

You will need to propose a session format and your approach for interacting with delegates. Based on your proposed format and/or interactions with delegates, you will need to select one of two delivery options: ‘Stage’ or ‘Zoom Room’.

The two delivery options are outlined below.

#### ‘Stage’ delivery option

* **How it works:** Stages place your speakers in a Zoom meeting and broadcast their audio and video to delegates in the Conference platform.
* **Supported formats:** Most formats (panel discussion, case study presentation, interview/fireside chat, lightening talks, data blitz, poster presentations, etc.). Does not support open discussions, roundtables, workshops, or other formats requiring delegates to unmute and/or turn on video.
* **Supported delegate interactions:** Written questions/comments from delegates, sharing resources and links.

#### ‘Zoom Room’ delivery option

* **How it works:** Zoom Rooms place your speakers in a Zoom meeting and bring delegates out of the Conference platform and into the Zoom Room with your speakers.
* **Supported formats:** Most formats, and is best suited to open discussions, roundtables, workshops, and other formats requiring delegates to unmute, turn on video and/or participate in breakout rooms.
* **Supported delegate interactions:** Moderated discussion/Q&A, polling, breakout rooms, written questions/comments from delegates, sharing resources and links.

### Time Allocations

Virtual concurrent sessions can run for 30, 60 or 90 minutes.

* **30-minute sessions:** Are suited to one-one-one interviews / fireside chats, lightening talks, data blitzes, poster presentations, etc. May not support delegate interaction/involvement.
* **60-minute sessions:** Are suited to many formats but should not feature more than three speakers. May not be able to support substantial delegate interaction/involvement.
* **90-minute sessions:** Are suited to more interactive sessions. Can include a balance of speaker presentations and delegate interaction/involvement.

### Session Speakers

Based on our experience running virtual sessions, the following speaker guidelines will be applied to virtual concurrent sessions.

#### Speaker involvement

* Speakers can be involved in your session as a live speaker or via a pre-recorded video.
* Pre-recorded video can be used to accommodate speakers’ time zones, low internet connectivity, etc.
* Pre-recorded video can also be used to streamline the speaker segments of your session.

#### Speaker numbers

* In our experience, virtual sessions successfully support fewer speakers compared to in-person sessions.
* Unless you intend to arrange pre-recorded video for some of your speakers, we recommend limiting the number of speakers in your session to **no more than four speakers**, including for 90-minute sessions.

## Session Preparation

If your session is selected, you will work with ACFID to prepare your concurrent session.

You will correspond and/or meet regularly with organisers from ACFID to:

* Share the purpose, objectives, and outcomes of your session.
* Refine the format and delegate interactions of your session.
* Confirm the participation and roles of your speakers/presenters.
* Brief your speakers on the ‘The Defining Decade: An agenda for civil-society led development’ theme, your session format and use of the online platform.
* Access support in preparing and promoting your session.

### Support from ACFID

If your session is selected, ACFID provides:

* A central point-of-contact for ensuring alignment with ACFID’s requirements, for organising session logistics and support in achieving delivery of stated session objectives and outcomes.
* Platform, audio-visual and other event support as required and agreed.
* Promotion via the Conference program, website and app, and ACFID social media channels.
* Waiving of conference registration fees for your session speakers/presenters.

### Key Dates

Week of 26 April: Call for Applications

Week of 10 May: [Online information sessions](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/C9CQ6LG)

**5pm AEST Monday 21 June: Due date for all applications**

Week of 2 July: Notification of acceptance

Monday 2 August: Deadline to confirm session title and description

Monday 30 August: Deadline to confirm session speakers

Monday 20 September: Deadline to finalise all session logistics and details

**Wednesday 29 and Thursday 30 September: ACFID National Conference 2021**

## Submission Process

To submit your EOI:

1. Read the EOI information pack and register to attend an online information session.
2. Complete the EOI form, ensuring all sections are answered.
3. Send the EOI form to Jess Smith via [jsmith@acfid.asn.au](mailto:jsmith@acfid.asn.au) by **5pm AEST Monday 21 June 2021.**

## ACFID Contact

For questions or more information contact Jess Smith via [jsmith@acfid.asn.au](mailto:jsmith@acfid.asn.au).