WOMEN WHO
CODE /dev-summit

BECOME A SPEAKER: TIPS TO SUCCESSFUL CONFERENCE TALK PROPOSALS

CFP WORKSHOP

Thursday, May 18, 2023
12:00 PM EDT

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WELCOME!

We will get started shortly.

Please share in the Chat:

- Where you're joining from
- What the weather is like today

Reminder: Set your Chat to "Everyone."

WOMEN WHO
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Our Mission

Empower diverse women to excel in technology careers.

WOMEN WHO CODE

Our Vision

A tech industry where diverse women and historically excluded people thrive at every level.

WOMEN WHO CODE

CODE OF CONDUCT

WWCode is an inclusive community, dedicated to providing an empowering experience for everyone who participates in or supports our community, regardless of gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, ability, physical appearance, body size, race, ethnicity, age, religion, socioeconomic status, caste, creed, political affiliation, or preferred programming language(s).

Our events are intended to inspire women to excel in technology careers, and anyone who is there for this purpose is welcome. We do not tolerate harassment of members in any form. Our **Code of Conduct** applies to all WWCode events and online communities.

Read the full version and access our incident report form at
womenwhocode.com/codeofconduct

WOMEN WHO CODE

Upcoming Global Events:

WWCode Dev Summit: Mobile & Web

May 24, 2023 | 9:00 AM EDT

WWCode Dev Summit: BlockDataPy

July 27, 2023 | 9:00 AM EDT

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Today's Goals:

- Understand why you should **consider becoming a conference speaker**.
- Learn tips and considerations when developing a **proposal idea/talk title.**
- Learn tips and best practices for developing your **proposal description**.
- Learn more about submitting to the **upcoming WWCode Dev Summit: BlockDataPy**.

Share in the Chat:

Why are you interested in becoming a conference speaker?

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Becoming a speaker is a great way to:

- **Challenge yourself** to develop new skills like teaching, public speaking, and proposal writing.
- **Build your portfolio** and create a foundation as a thought leader in tech to elevate your professional presence in the industry.
- **Network with other technology professionals** for exposure to more opportunities.
- **Support other technologists** and the WWCode mission.
- **Be a changemaker** and contribute to important conversations.

FINDING SPEAKING OPPORTUNITIES

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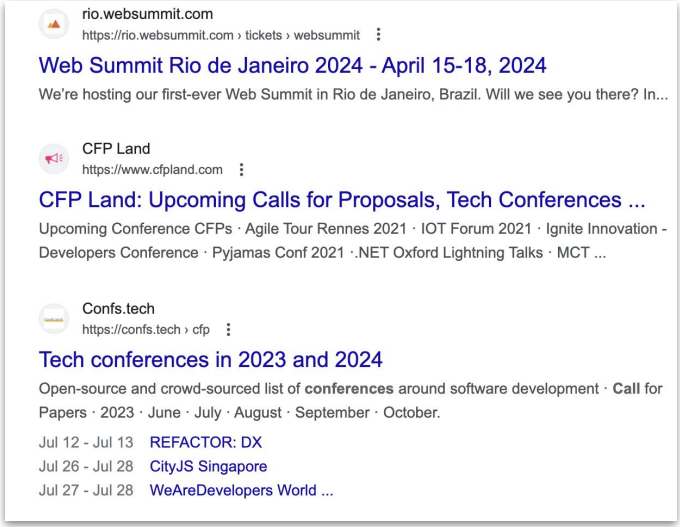
You can find speaking opportunities by:

- **Asking** your manager, team lead, mentor, etc. if there are opportunities for you to speak, teach or mentor.
- **Googling** key phrases like “Call for Proposal Tech Conferences or Events” / “Apply to Speak Tech Conference.”
- **Joining** a WWCode Network and volunteering to speak.
- **Responding** to WWCode Call for Proposals for Major Events.



COMING UP WITH A TALK PROPOSAL IDEA: CONSIDERATIONS

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First...overcome imposter syndrome!

- It is a myth that you have to be an industry expert or experienced speaker to present at a conference.
- You have knowledge, opinions, and experiences that could benefit your community and other technologists.
- Many technologists have made their speaking debut at WWCode events, including our Global conferences with thousands of attendees!

Understand what is a talk proposal.

- A talk proposal is your opportunity to offer to **share your expertise or experience** at an event/conference.
- Your talk proposal will include a **talk title and description**, as well as any other information the application requests (e.g., headshot, bio, more details about your proposal).
- You will likely encounter “CFP.” CFP stands for **“Call for Proposals”,** which is our call for your talk proposals.

Consider “talks” you have already given that you could base your proposal on.

- Have you given a talk, workshop or training session at work or school?
- Have you taught a colleague, friend, or mentee something technical or career related?
- Have you published a blog or article (either formally or informally – e.g., on LinkedIn) on a technical or career topic?

Consider experiences unique to you that you could base your proposal on.

- **Have you completed training or learning** you would like to now pass on to others?
- **Have you accomplished something personal** that has supported your career in tech that could be a good example or inspiration for others?
- **Have you accomplished something professional** (e.g., landed your dream job, deployed your first app, developed a new tool) and you could share the “how” with others?
- **Do you have an interesting perspective or opinion** on current industry trends?

Consider what you want to achieve by giving your talk.

- **Explain** a concept relevant to the audience they could benefit from knowing either personally or professionally.
- **Show or demonstrate** a new technology or technique through live examples.
- **Give the audience an opportunity** to try hands-on or learn by doing something.
- **Inspire** the audience to think differently.
- **Challenge** the audience to question the status quo through your diverse opinion.
- **Engage** the audience in discussion / connect them.

Consider the audience for your talk.

- What **level** of learner is your talk for?
- What **demographics** will make up your audience?
- What **subjects** interest this audience most?
- **What don't they know** that you can teach them?
- **Why do they need to know** this now? How will it benefit them?

Consider your talk format.

- Explain a concept relevant to the audience they could benefit from knowing either personally or professionally – **lighting talk!**
- Show or demonstrate a new technology or technique through live examples – **long/full talk!**
- Give the audience an opportunity to try or learn by doing something – **workshop!**
- Inspire or challenge the audience to think differently – **keynote or panel!**
- Engage the audience in discussion / connect them – **panel or networking session!**

Consider the conference CFP.

Pay attention to all guidelines and follow instructions fully, including:

- **Topic requests** – don't waste time submitting an irrelevant topic to the event.
- **Audience** – don't waste time submitting a topic that doesn't fit the audience.
- **Proposal lengths and requirements.**
  - Tip: Be sure your proposal is interesting, accurate and free of errors.
- **Speaker bio and headshot.**
  - Tip: Be sure your bio is concise (highlighting achievements why you are an expert in this area), name is as you would like it to appear and your headshot is professional/high quality.

Things to avoid:

- **Repetitive ideas / talk proposals** — what's something new you are bringing to this audience?
- **Borrowed content** – your idea / proposal should be unique to you!
- **Short / underdeveloped descriptions** that don't:
  - Explain what your talk will be about.
  - Explain what the audience will learn.
- **Poorly written descriptions:**
  - Full of errors.
  - Not edited / too long.
  - Not developed / too short.
- **Submitting without a peer review** to help ensure your talk is interesting, accurate, and free of errors.

BRAINSTORM HELP AND RESOURCES

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Get support for brainstorming proposals:

- Get inspiration from past WWCode sessions on our **YouTube channel.**
  - www.youtube.com/womenwhocode
- Learn more on the WWCode CFP Resources page, including **past CFP workshops** to guide you.
  - www.womenwhocode.com/cfp-resources
- Join the **WWCode Slack** for support in our digital community.
  - https://bit.ly/45dc1rR
- Reach out to past **WWCode speakers or network** with members of our community via LinkedIn for support or ideas.

WRITING A TALK PROPOSAL TITLE

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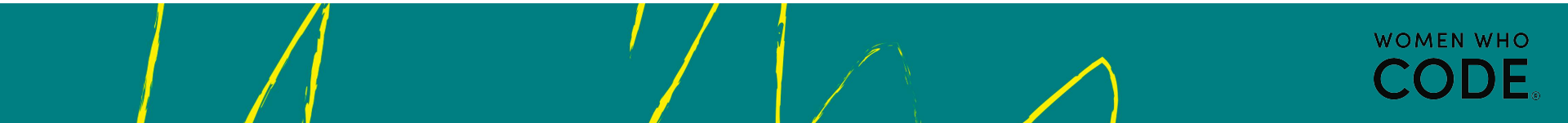
So now that you've decided...

- You have something to say...
- What you would like to accomplish with your talk...
- Who is the audience for your talk...
- What is the best format for your talk...
- Your talk is a good fit for a conference/event...
- You can follow the submission guidelines...

...it's time to write a talk title!



First impressions matter!

Your talk title is the **first thing** a CFP reviewer will evaluate when considering whether to accept your talk. It is also the first thing an attendee will evaluate when considering whether to attend your talk, if selected, so it is very important.

The goal of your talk title is to use exciting language to share what your talk is about using only a few words.

Your Talk Title Should:

- Be 5-10 words in length.
- Clearly describe what your talk will **discuss** or **teach** and not simply state the topic plainly.
    - Make sure to include keywords and language that help a reader to understand your talk and what sets it apart from other talks. A reviewer wants to understand your unique approach to your topic.
- Be accurate and free of errors.
- Bonus points: Be fun, playful, or clever.

Example successful talk titles:

- Let’s Get Fired Up: Getting Started with Firebase Firestore
- The Making of a Mentor: Elevate Your Connections & Career by Helping Others
- Secure but Accessible: Building Sites Your Users Can Actually Use
- 13 Tips to Write Code Like a Swiftie
- How to Get Out of Tutorial Hell and Start Building Something

Tip: Start with a verb!

One option for your talk title is to start with a verb.

Here are a few examples:

- Improving Communication for the Introverted Engineer
- Mitigating Biased Algorithms in the Real World
- Developing Emotionally Intelligent Teams in Tech

Tip: Tell it in two parts!

In two-part talk titles, the first part might strongly share what the talk is about and could stand-alone, while the second part explains more — goes more in-depth — about what the talk will cover.

Here are a few examples:

- Building More Inclusive Android Apps: Animation & Reduced Movement
- Type-Setting in CSS: Using Typography to Enhance Your Design
- Building Your Career Like a Product: A Project Manager's Take

Tip: Make it fun!

You can write a creative talk title, perhaps with a fun play on words — but be careful of “click bait.” Don’t write an “empty” title that still doesn’t explain what the talk is about or what the reader will learn.

Here are a few examples:

- Fun with (Feature) Flags: Make Changes Without Extra Code
- A CraSSH Course in SSH
- Digging Ourselves Out of Code Debt

Tip: Make it actionable!

You can highlight tips and tricks, do’s and don’ts, and mistakes and pitfalls to avoid — takeaways your reader can learn and start implementing right away.

Here are a few examples:

- What They Don’t Tell You About Tech Interviews
- Do’s and Don’ts of Professional Networking
- Mistakes to Avoid as an AI Practitioner in Industry

How could these be improved?

1. Python Fundamentals
2. Career Advice for Women in Tech
3. Machine Learning Tools to Help You Finish Your Project Without Wasting Any More Time so Your Boss Will Be Impressed and Promote You
4. Keeping Up With the Code-dashians
5. Don't Make the Same Mistakes I Did!

Share in chat or off mute how one of these could be improved!

WRITING YOUR TALK PROPOSAL DESCRIPTION

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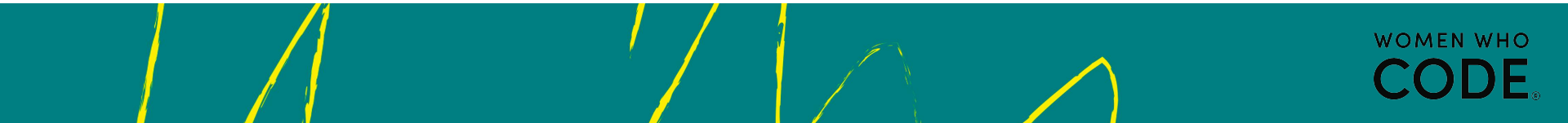
Make good on your title!

Your talk description is the **second thing** a CFP reviewer will evaluate when considering whether to accept your talk. It is also the second thing an attendee will evaluate when considering whether to attend your talk.

You will write a few sentences to describe what your talk will cover, who it is for, why they should come, and what they will learn.



Your talk description should:

- Be 50-100 words (but follow the CFP requirements)
- Answer “so what?” or “why should someone learn/know this?”
  - What problem or issue is your talk addressing?
- Clearly but concisely describe:
  - What your talk will cover.
  - What the audience will know or be able to do after coming to your talk that they could not do or did not know before.
- Be accurate and free of errors.

Description checklist:

- ❑ Does my talk description clearly match my talk title?
- ❑ Does the audience know what problem or issue I'm helping them solve?
- ❑ Did I cover the key topics I will discuss in my talk?
- ❑ Do I gesture toward the learning level or audience for the talk?
- ❑ Does the audience know what they will learn or be able to do after coming to my talk?
- ❑ Does my talk follow formatting guidelines and is free of errors?

Example successful talk description:

Is a Dev Bootcamp Right for Me?

◎ 15 Minute Career Lightning Talk, Main Stage

Dev bootcamps have become popular in recent years as a faster, more affordable path into tech — but how do you know if one is right for you? Join Chris Belanger, Head of Community at Kodeco, a global online mobile dev learning platform that runs iOS and Android bootcamps. Discover the benefits of participating in a bootcamp, what really happens during a dev bootcamp; and what your career options are after completing a bootcamp.

Share in chat or off mute what this proposal is doing well.

Example successful talk description:

Building More Inclusive Android Apps: Animation and Reduced Movement

◎ 35 Minute Technical Talk, Mobile Stage

Not all users enjoy animations. Different types of movement and animations can be distracting or cause symptoms such as nausea or dizziness. Many users survive in our animated digital world by modifying the operating system level setting to reduce animations. Join this session for a discussion on creating inclusive native Android apps to gain an understanding of potential problems that animations might cause for some users. Learn how to develop more inclusively and respect the animation setting in native Android apps.

Share in chat or off mute what this proposal is doing well.

APPLY TO SPEAK: GIVE IT A TRY!

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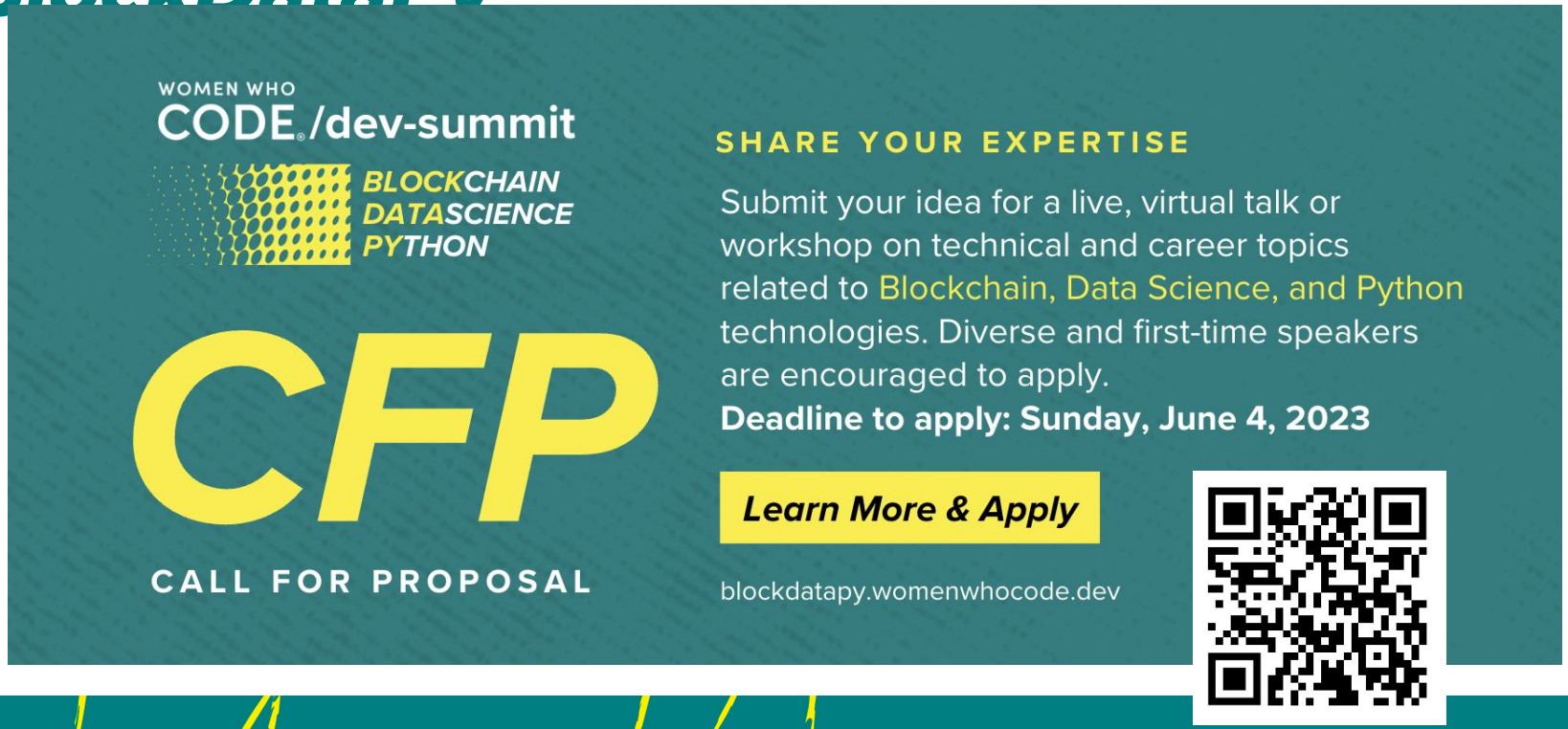
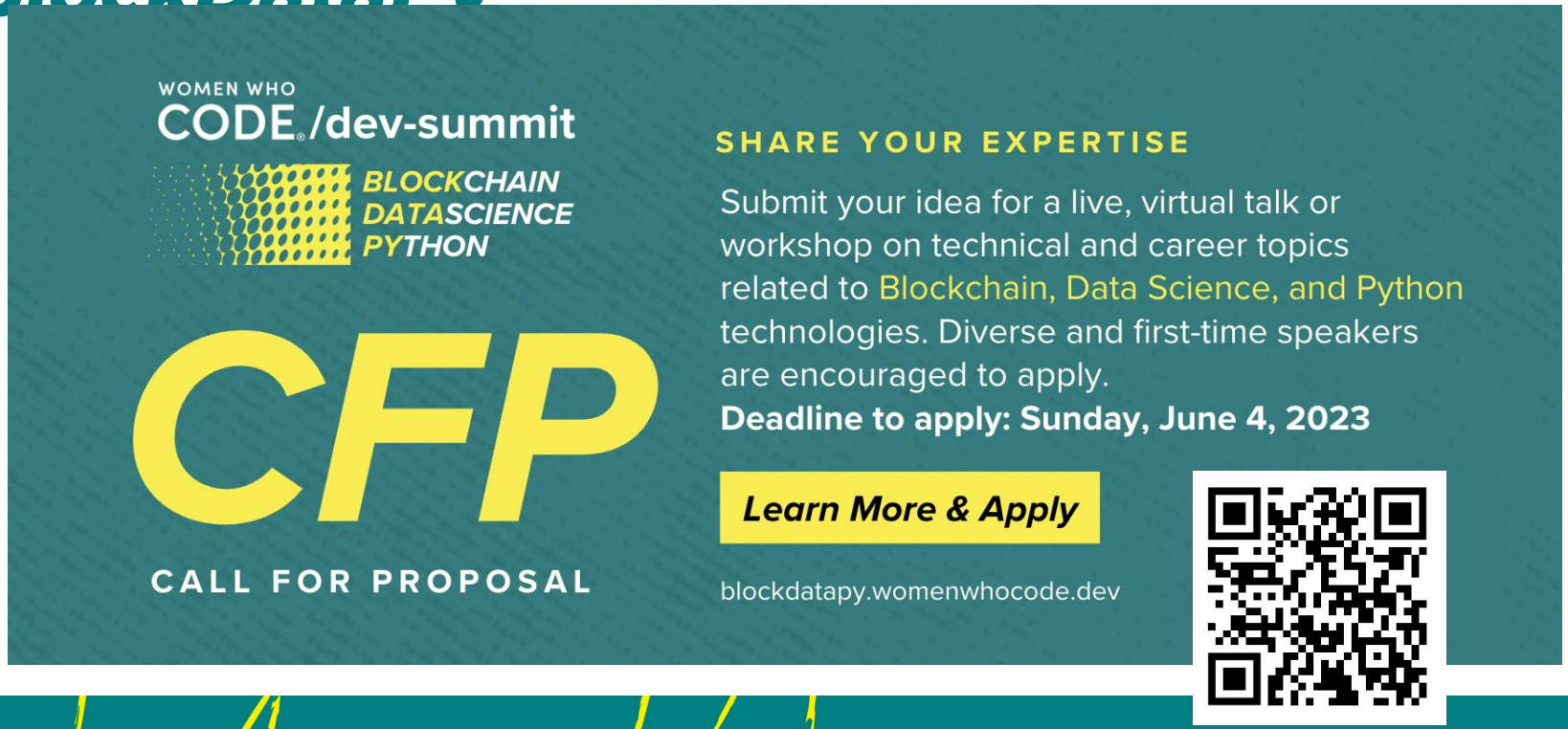
CFP: WWCode Dev Summit: BlockDataPy



We are looking for:

- **Diverse speakers** to share their technical expertise, and groups traditionally underrepresented in technology to apply.
- **First-time and experienced speakers!** We have a supportive team to help you through the CFP process!
- **Proposals for lighting or full talks, workshops and panels** that will help diverse women on their professional journeys in tech.
- **A variety of topics**, including Blockchain, Data Science, and Python technologies and a solution, tech career advice, a work project and its challenges, a project you created for fun, etc.!

CFP: WWCode Dev Summit: BlockDataPy



Q&A

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Mackenzie Bryant
Senior Program Project Manager
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Thank you for joining us!

We are looking forward to reading your talk proposals!

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