

Speaker Guidelines

Participation overview for prospective speakers, panelists, moderators, and workshop leaders

TIDES brings together leaders in trade, innovation, diplomacy, education, and sustainability to strengthen Tampa's role as an international connector. These guidelines help speakers prepare sessions that are practical, inclusive, globally minded, and aligned with the summit's mission.

Purpose of this document

This document is intended for individuals invited to speak at TIDES or considering submitting a speaker proposal. It outlines the kinds of sessions TIDES is seeking, what selected speakers can expect, and how speakers can prepare content that supports a high-quality attendee experience.

At a glance

Item	Guidance
Audience	Business, civic, nonprofit, academic, government, cultural, and international leaders interested in global exchange and practical collaboration.
Program focus	Sessions should help attendees understand international opportunities, build partnerships, and translate global relationships into local and regional impact.
Primary tracks	Trade, Innovation, Diplomacy, Education, and Sustainability.
Tone	Practical, forward-looking, respectful, nonpartisan, and accessible to a cross-sector audience.
Preferred format	Interactive, story-driven, and outcome-oriented. TIDES values case studies, lessons learned, and practical takeaways over purely promotional presentations.

Program tracks

Trade: International commerce, export readiness, investment, ports, logistics, global markets, and business development.

Innovation: Startups, technology, AI, robotics, health innovation, defense technology, research commercialization, and global entrepreneurship.

Diplomacy: City diplomacy, sister city relationships, civic partnerships, cultural exchange, protocol, and soft power.

Education: International students, faculty exchange, research collaboration, workforce development, and global learning.

Sustainability: Resilience, infrastructure, climate adaptation, water, energy, mobility, and sustainable growth.

Common session formats

- **Main stage keynote or featured conversation:** Visionary presentations or moderated conversations that connect Tampa to broader global trends.
 - **Panel discussion:** A moderated, multi-speaker discussion built around a clear question, case, or challenge.
 - **Case study session:** A focused example of an international partnership, exchange, business opportunity, research collaboration, or civic initiative that produced measurable outcomes.
 - **Workshop or roundtable:** A more interactive session designed to help attendees develop practical skills, make connections, or explore a specific problem.
 - **Cultural or protocol presentation:** A session that helps attendees understand cultural context, global relationship-building, or international etiquette.
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What TIDES looks for in speakers and sessions

- Clear relevance to one or more TIDES tracks.
 - Specific lessons, examples, or frameworks attendees can use after the summit.
 - Cross-sector relevance that can speak to more than one audience group.
 - Credible experience, demonstrated expertise, or direct involvement in the topic being discussed.
 - A global perspective connected to real local, regional, or organizational impact.
 - A commitment to inclusive, respectful, and nonpartisan dialogue.
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Speaker responsibilities

- Confirm participation by the requested deadline and provide all speaker materials on time.
 - Prepare remarks that fit the assigned session format and time limit.
 - Participate in any requested planning call with the moderator, panelists, or program team.
 - Avoid sales pitches, excessive organizational promotion, or content that is not directly relevant to the session topic.
 - Disclose any potential conflicts of interest or commercial relationships relevant to the session topic.
 - Respect the time of fellow speakers, moderators, attendees, and event staff.
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Content guidelines

TIDES sessions should be designed for people who want to understand how international relationships create tangible value. Speakers are encouraged to use concrete examples, data where appropriate, and practical recommendations. Strong sessions usually include a clear premise, a real-world story or case, and a concise set of takeaways.

- Open with the problem, opportunity, or question your session addresses.
- Use examples that show how international collaboration actually works.
- Connect your topic to Tampa, the Tampa Bay region, or the broader role of cities in global engagement when possible.

- Translate expertise into practical insight for attendees from different sectors.
- Close with a clear takeaway, action step, or question for further collaboration.

Requested speaker materials

Material	Purpose	Suggested deadline
Short bio	Website, agenda, moderator prep, and promotional materials.	Upon confirmation
Headshot	Speaker page, social graphics, and event materials.	Upon confirmation
Session title and description	Agenda listing and attendee communications.	As requested by program team
Presentation slides, if used	AV testing and accessibility review.	At least 7 days before session
Social media handles and website	Speaker promotion and tagging.	Upon confirmation

Presentation and AV guidance

- Use widescreen 16:9 slides unless the program team provides a different format.
- Keep slides visually simple; avoid dense text, small fonts, and overly complex charts.
- Embed video and audio files in the presentation file when possible and also provide backup files separately.
- Bring a backup copy of slides on a USB drive and have a cloud-accessible copy available.
- Notify the program team in advance about special technical needs, demonstrations, or internet-dependent content.

Accessibility and inclusion

TIDES is designed for a broad audience. Speakers should make their content as accessible as possible for attendees with different backgrounds, roles, and levels of subject-matter expertise.

- Define specialized terms and acronyms the first time they are used.
- Use high-contrast slides and readable font sizes.
- Avoid relying only on color to communicate meaning in charts or graphics.
- Provide context before showing technical data, research, or policy detail.
- Use respectful language when discussing countries, cultures, communities, and political systems.

Promotion and media

Selected speakers may be featured on the TIDES website, social media channels, email communications, press materials, and event signage. By participating, speakers should expect their name, title, organization, headshot, and approved bio to be used for event promotion.

- Speakers are encouraged to share their participation with their networks once TIDES provides approved promotional language or graphics.
- Panels and presentations may be photographed, recorded, quoted, summarized, or repurposed for post-event content unless otherwise agreed in advance.

- Speakers should not announce confidential event details, sponsors, partners, or other speakers before TIDES has made them public.

Professional standards and code of conduct

TIDES expects speakers to model the spirit of international exchange: curiosity, professionalism, respect, and a willingness to engage across differences. Sessions should not be used for partisan campaigning, personal attacks, discriminatory remarks, or unsupported claims presented as fact.

- Respect moderators, fellow speakers, attendees, sponsors, volunteers, and event staff.
- Stay within the assigned topic and time limits.
- Avoid defamatory, discriminatory, harassing, or inflammatory language.
- Make a good-faith effort to distinguish facts, opinions, forecasts, and personal experience.
- Comply with reasonable directions from the program team and venue staff.

Travel, registration, and expenses

Unless confirmed in writing, speakers should assume that TIDES does not cover travel, lodging, or incidental expenses. Speaker registration policies, access levels, and any complimentary passes will be communicated directly by the program team.

Speaker preparation checklist

- ☐ Confirm participation and session assignment.
- ☐ Submit bio, headshot, title, organization, and contact information.
- ☐ Review session format, time limit, and audience expectations.
- ☐ Coordinate with moderator or fellow panelists, if applicable.
- ☐ Submit slides or materials by the requested deadline.
- ☐ Share approved promotional materials with your network.
- ☐ Arrive early for check-in and AV preparation.
- ☐ Stay after the session when possible to continue attendee conversations.

Questions and contact

For speaker questions, proposal updates, session coordination, or accessibility needs, please contact the TIDES Program Team.

Program contact	Alfred Goldberg
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This document may be updated as the TIDES program, venue, and schedule are finalized.