

# EDRA HORIZONS: SYMPOSIA GUIDELINES

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## **What it is:**

EDRA Horizons is a series of regional symposia. The symposia make design research come alive by translating design research into design practice and policy. The translation of design research into practice and policy is the primary purpose of the EDRA Horizons Symposia series. They focus on timely and provocative design research topics and challenges that have a profound impact on society. Rigorous design research is understood to be a necessary solution and answer.

Topic domains are for building or environmental types. The purpose of each symposium is to convene policymakers, designers, design researchers, journalists, and students on a shared topic so that awareness of the latest advances in design research may result in changes to policy and design.

For example, the first EDRA Horizons Symposium was held in New York City at the New York School of Interior Design on October 11, 2013. The symposium's topic domain was *health and wellness*. The theme was titled *The Landscape for Accountable Care*. The theme was timely in light of healthcare reform within the United States of America since the implementation of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA or "Obamacare"). Policymakers, owners, clinicians, designers, design researchers, journalists, and students shared and deliberated design research's implications for New York State's Medicaid policies and strategies.

## **Topics:**

The topic domains for the regional symposia are purposefully broad and span the interests of several of EDRA's existing Knowledge Networks' interests. Currently (December, 2013), there are six topic domains that have been suggested for continued or initial development:

- Education
- Workplace
- Justice
- Long-term living
- Health and Wellness
- Climate Change, Adaptation, & Resiliency



Specific themes under each topic domain are highly encouraged and can be submitted by symposia organizers or identified by the EDRA board. Themes under a topic domain should differ from year to year and pertain to timely subject matter. There is no limit on the number of themes and topic domains that can be considered by the EDRA board.

If the content, revenue, and products demonstrated by a topic domain are successful, the EDRA board may consider regional twice-a-year symposia (spring/summer and autumn/winter for the same or similar symposium), or concurrent symposia (the same symposium held in two regions at similar times) for that topic domain.

If two or more submissions for a topic domain (e.g., health and wellness) are proposed, then both symposia may be considered for development that year pending the EDRA board's approval.

**When:**

For a symposium to be successful, it is critical that it does not compete with similar events held regionally or nationally. There may be opportunities for the symposium to complement sister events hosted by EDRA partners. For instance, an EDRA Horizons symposium may precede or follow another event within the region in which the symposium is being hosted.

To be convenient for practitioners and community members within the vicinity of a symposium, the events are limited to one-day. It is encouraged that symposia are hosted on a Friday or Saturday. Initially, symposia within a topic domain are to be held regionally in different regions and hosted by different academic institutions.

*Regional*

At a minimum, symposia on a specific topic domain are to be held once a year either in spring/summer or autumn/winter.

*Twice-a-Year and Concurrent*

The EDRA board may consider twice-a-year symposia (spring/summer and autumn/winter) or concurrent symposia (the same symposium held in two regions at similar dates) for a topic domain.

**Where:**

*Location*

It is recommended that each symposium within a topic domain occur in a different region. If a topic domain's symposium is regional, then a new region should be identified for each new symposium and new year.

If a topic domain's symposia are twice-a-year or concurrent, then the symposia should be hosted in two separate regions that year.

However, if a given location proves to be successful for a particular topic domain's symposia, the EDRA board may consider opportunities to consistently host the topic domain's symposia at the same location.

Regions are divided into the following:

- West (including the Southwest)
- South (including the Southeast)
- Midwest
- Northeast
- Northwest
- Canada
- International

*Host Organizations and Locations*

To facilitate interdisciplinary dialogue with academic institutions and mentorship of students, symposia should be hosted at EDRA members' institutions of higher learning including colleges, universities, and schools of design. Fundamental space and equipment criteria for a host organization include the following:

- Comfortably accommodate presentations for as many as 120 to 150 guests and several small group (8 to 15 people in 5 to 10 rooms) sessions
- Comfortably accommodate space for potential sponsors and their table top exhibits
- A sizable dining area should be available for luncheons and small group sessions
- Furnishings, including tables and chairs to accommodate luncheon guests, general session and breakout session seating, are to be provided by the host organization and at no cost to the symposia organizer(s) or EDRA
- Easels for signage and posters
- Audiovisual equipment, including a projector and screen for the general session, and whiteboards and/or Smartboards for the breakout sessions are to be provided by the host organization and at no cost to the symposia organizer(s) or EDRA

**Who:**

*Audience*

The target audiences will vary based on topic domain and should be broad. They can and may include consumers, advocates, policymakers, building owners, facility managers, designers, design researchers, manufacturers, students, and journalists.

*Speakers*

Speakers are invited by the symposium organizer(s). Potential speakers are currently not required to submit abstracts for a refereed abstract process. Speakers should be individuals within the region of the symposium and who can easily fund their own travel to and from the symposia venue. They should also be experts within their fields and able to cover their own travel, room, and board expenses.

When formally requested, the EDRA board may consider the setting aside of a fixed percentage of funds for invited speakers.

To promote a diverse and interdisciplinary mix of speakers, the symposium organizer(s) are encouraged to assign speaking slots for policymakers, owners, facility management, designers, and design researchers. A suggestion is to devote a session to a collaborative project (e.g., a post-occupancy evaluation, coastal reclamation project involving planners and biologists) involving the multiple roles. Such sessions demonstrate the translation of design research into practice and policy, a primary purpose of the EDRA Horizons Symposia series.

*Symposium Sub-Committee*

The symposium sub-committee is a group of 8 to 10 EDRA member volunteers appointed every August. The sub-committee approves and manages proposals for symposia for the following year. Specific tasks include the following:

- A bi-monthly meeting with symposia organizers
- Approval of symposia proposals
- Recruitment and approval of symposia speakers and breakout session leaders with a rationale given for any speakers from outside the symposium's respective region
- Approval of symposia agenda
- Approval of symposia registration rates
- Market the symposia to potential sponsors, registrants, and the media
- Initial review of symposia organizers' solicitations for speaker incentives prior to sharing the solicitation with the EDRA board with the sub-committee's recommendation
- Co-edit with symposia organizers the resulting publications from the symposia. This may include an regional compendium of all the publications produced by the symposia across and within topic domains



The sub-committee should be diverse and primarily represent individuals who are owners, design and design research practitioners, facility managers, and developers.

If a sub-committee has not yet been designated for a topic domain, EDRA board membership will assume the sub-committee's responsibilities.

#### *Proposal Submissions*

Eligible proposals may be submitted by EDRA members.

#### **Content and Format of a Symposium:**

An EDRA one-day symposium is jam-packed and full of buzz. Participants should anticipate the follow-up product and crave active participation in future symposia.

What follows are suggested events for a symposium's agenda. These events are not mandatory and symposium organizers are encouraged to be creative with events. However, it is essential that the events complement each other and build upon challenges posed by presentations given during the symposium. For example, a symposium organizer may have the sponsorship, material, and space resources to host a research and/or design charrette among research and design students. The charrette's content can facilitate breakout sessions and/or a Call to Action.

For an actual symposium's detailed agenda, please refer to the following website:  
<http://www.EDRA.org/content/EDRA-inaugural-fall-symposium-landscape-accountable-care>

#### *Presentations*

##### How Many and Durations?

A symposium can snugly fit four team presentations.

The opening keynote can begin at 9 a.m. and conclude at 9:45. The purpose of the keynote is to define the problem to be addressed by the day's events. The keynote should NOT go into depth about a specific case study, whether that be a building or research project. For simplicity and brevity the keynote should be limited to no more than two speakers. It is preferred that one of the speakers be a prominent individual active in policy and design and operational guidelines that impact policy.

The remaining three group presentations can consist of three or more speakers and be limited to 75 minute durations with the concluding 15 minutes set aside for audience participation. The third presentation may occur concurrently with the breakout sessions.

### Format

Team presentations that mix the different target audiences are highly encouraged. For example, a presentation may consist of a design researcher, designer, and policy maker or a building owner, facility manager, and design researcher. One or more doctoral-level design researchers should have a presence in each presentation. Ideally, the presenters will have worked with or known each other from the case study or work being presented.

### Content

The symposia should be engaging, educational, and applicable for individuals who do not have a mastery of or a doctoral degree in design research. Consequently, session content traditionally reserved for academic and research conferences are discouraged. For example, many participants will not be well versed in design research methods and it is not expected they will be well versed on how to read statistical data and tables after a 15-minute contribution to a team presentation. Presentation content should focus on the policy and design implications of research.

### *Lunch*

A one-hour lunch should be hosted in a setting within or directly adjacent to the host institution and that can comfortably house all symposia registrants. Lunch is to be provided to attendees and should be sponsored to maintain expenses.

### *Breakout Sessions*

#### How Many and Durations?

Breakout sessions can be concurrent and consist of groups of eight to fifteen participants. For participants not interested in breakout sessions, a third presentation can be hosted during the breakout sessions for these individuals.

Five to ten concurrent breakout sessions may be adequate. The symposia organizers may assign participants to these concurrent sessions or allow participants to sign-up for specific sessions. Upwards of 90 minutes can be set aside for each breakout session.

### Format

The breakout session facilitator and a recorder are equipped with a sizable marking surface (e.g., white board, smart board, chalk board). The facilitator presents the session participants with a problem and the recorder documents the challenges of the problem for policy and design and solutions.

Content

A breakout session presents a very targeted and specific problem represented by the conference theme. For example, what bus shelter types are appropriate in the host organization’s city to encourage safe use of mass transit?

Breakout session content can be used to inform the interlocutor’s questions during a call to action.

*Call to Action*

A call to action can be an effective capstone to the day’s events. Five to six presenters (including the keynote) and participants from the day can contribute to a panel. A journalist can question the panel on key issues raised during the breakout sessions and from the day’s events. The answers from the panel can inform a call to action for the industry. The call to action can last an hour.

*Networking Reception*

A networking reception can follow the call to action. Wine, cheese, and other refreshments should be made available, and should be sponsored to maintain expenses.

**Projected Revenue and Expenses**

EDRA will bear the responsibility of approved expenses, and will work with organizers to develop a budget specific to your proposal, as costs will vary based on location and number of attendees. **We strongly encourage proposals that consider sharing of resources with academic institutions.**

Based on the 2013 pilot symposium, we have provided a sample budget based on 100-150 attendees.

**Expenses:**

**Revenue:**

Food and Beverage	\$5,000	Registration Fees	\$7,500
Location/ Rentals	\$1,200	Sponsorships	\$4,000
Supplies	\$500		
Audio/Visual	\$500		
Speaker Expenses/Honoraria	\$1,500		
Other	\$500		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$9,200</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$11,500</b>

**Product:**

EDRA aspires with its members to achieve their academic and practice career goals. The symposia provide existing and new EDRA members an unprecedented and cost effective opportunity to have a substantial and direct impact on their profession and policy. Following each symposium, symposium organizers are to compile written summaries of the symposium's content and co-edit it in conjunction with a symposium presenter and the symposium subcommittee for a white paper or publication to be disseminated to EDRA membership and through the website. The papers may culminate in a compendium at the end of the year.

**Remuneration:**

EDRA is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization. EDRA members who are symposia organizers and/or symposium subcommittee members perform in their respective roles as volunteers.

Symposium organizers, presenters, and breakout session facilitators may have their registration fees waived.

**Symposium Organizer Submission Guidelines**

Proposals for symposia for the following fiscal year are strongly encouraged and must be received by September 15 of the current fiscal year. **All proposals must be emailed to [headquarters@edra.org](mailto:headquarters@edra.org).** A topic domain's subcommittee and the EDRA board will review the proposals between submission and November 15. Final decisions will be sent out on December 15.

In addition, a statement of intent must be shared with EDRA Headquarters by July 15 of the current fiscal year. The statement of intent should include the proposed symposium's topic domain, potential theme, and a one paragraph summary of the host institution and its reason for hosting the symposium. A statement of intent endorsed by an institution's administration with a written signature is desirable.

The proposal should consist of the following subsections and their contents:

- Cover Sheet
  - The symposium's topic domain
  - Symposium theme
  - Symposium year and month
  - Proposal submission date
  - Name of submittor(s) and their affiliations

- Executive Summary
  - An introduction sharing the relationship between the theme and topic domain
  - Is this a new topic domain or symposium? If not, what are similar EDRA Horizons Symposia
  - Regional, twice-a-year, or concurrent symposium(ia)
  - Target audiences
  - Projected number of attendees
  - Similar events hosted in your area that year and their dates (if any)
  - Dates for the proposed symposium(ia)
  - Hosting institution resources: number of meeting rooms available, available dates and preliminary room rates; additional funding or resources from the host institution
  - Summary of ideas about how and where to publicize the conference to maximize regional participation
  - Highlights of the symposium city and hosting institution. What amenities and features make it a good site for an EDRA Horizons symposium
  - Budget. Identify any special circumstances or opportunities that may impact the budget requiring additional expenditures.
  - Sponsors. A preliminary identification of potential sponsors to focus on.
  
- Symposium(ia) Theme
  - Provide a detailed description of the proposed theme. If approved, this material may be used in future publicity and symposium(ia) materials.
  
- Lunch and Networking Reception: Sites and Caterers
  - Provide a one page list of potential sites and caterers for lunch and the networking reception. Find locations that do not require event insurance and determine if these locations require select caterers .
  
- Symposium Budget
  - Using the sample budget provided above, project what actual costs might be considering the location, economy, and opportunities.

For items with costs that may be significantly higher, consider opportunities to fund these through special sponsorships. The honoraria for speakers are extremely limited and must be solicited.



- Hotel Information
  - Please have a list of local hotels in case attendees need to stay overnight.
- Host Organization and Location
  - Capacity of the host institution including time slots, space, seating counts, audiovisual equipment, tables, and chairs
- Potential Speakers
  - Provide a list of 16 to 24 potential speakers to consider for Keynote and plenaries. Speakers must be selected for their ability to speak on topics related to the conference theme. Provide a brief description of each speaker's qualifications.
- Publicity Plan
  - Timeline with intent to advertise 5 to 6 months prior the symposium
  - Identify local media outlets and organizations whose interests are consistent with EDRA and would be excellent resources for promoting the conference. Include print media (local newspapers and journals, business journals, etc.), radio and television, and local chapters of professional organizations
  - Where appropriate include photos of places and people in the symposium host organization and city
  - Identify continuing education units (CEU) opportunities that would appeal to your audience members. Please provide criteria to apply for and receive these CEUs. It is important that CEUs not be limited to design and research organizations, but be inclusive of CEUs that appeal to a symposium's target audiences. For example, consider CEUs for K-12 school teachers, nurses, physicians, developers, climatologists, etc...
  - Identification of potential sponsors
  - Description of the symposium's web-presence
  - Publication strategy for edited compilations following the symposium