

# MLA 2019 CONFERENCE ORIENTATION



MINNESOTA LIBRARY  
ASSOCIATION

THINGS TO KNOW BEFORE YOU GO.

# BEFORE THE CONFERENCE

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01

## **leave work at work**

Try to complete work-related tasks before heading to the conference. That way, you won't have unfinished business or deadlines hanging over your head. If you have projects that can wait, let them wait.

02

## **check out what to check out**

Check out the MLA website and get your hotel room booked, travel arrangements made and read the "Things to Do and See" section to plan an outing.

# 03

## GET THE APP

With Sched, you can plan your conference experience based on tracks you are interested in (Imagine, Challenge, Collaborate, Engage, Create & Play, Transform, Frontline). Or, you can pick sessions to attend based upon the session descriptions, speakers, or any other criteria of your choosing. Use the app to plan out your itinerary before the day of the conference. You can always make changes later.

After the conference, return to Sched to find slide decks, documents, and other information presenters make available.



# AT THE CONFERENCE

## ● **WHEN YOU ARRIVE**

Check in when you first arrive. Get your nametag and wear it proudly. Go ahead and stick on some ribbons from associations/organizations/initiatives you're a part of to further show your pride.

## ● **HYDRATE**

Bring a water bottle.

## ● **WHAT TO WEAR?**

You'll see a variety of clothing choices at MLA. Some wear jeans and a t-shirt, while others opt for business-casual attire, suits and ties, dresses or blazers.

Whatever you choose to wear, try to pick something that is comfortable to sit in.

Layers are always a good idea in Minnesota. Wear comfortable shoes! You will be doing a lot of walking and this is not the time to break in new shoes.

# AT THE CONFERENCE

## ● **SESSIONS THAT DON'T PAN OUT**

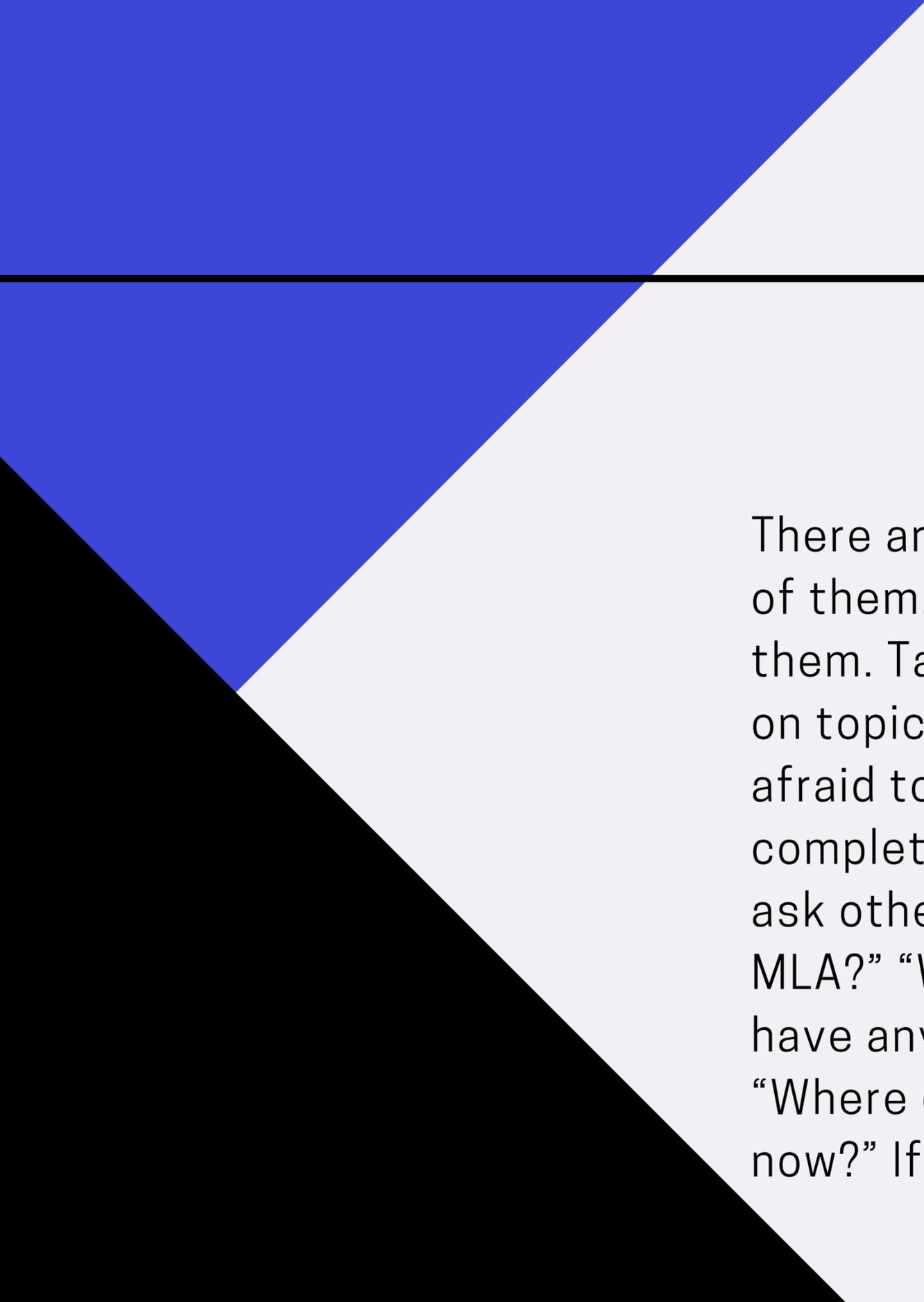
If you find yourself in a session that isn't what you expected it to be, don't feel bad about quietly excusing yourself to find a different session to attend.

## ● **FATIGUE**

Conference fatigue is a thing and it's okay to slip away and have a few minutes to yourself. There is pressure to connect and be "on" the entire time - don't feel like you have to be!

## ● **VENDORS**

They want to talk to you and there wouldn't be an MLA Conference without them. Even if you're not in a position to purchase anything, ask questions and bring that information back to your library.



# NETWORKING AT THE CONFERENCE

There are many opportunities to network at MLA. Take advantage of them. Introduce yourself. Bring your business cards if you have them. Talk to presenters after their sessions to get more details on topics you're interested in. Follow-up with emails. Don't be afraid to ask questions. If striking up a conversation with a complete stranger terrifies you, try preparing some questions to ask others beforehand, such as: "Is this your first time attending MLA?" "What has been your favorite session so far?" "Do you have any advice for a first-time attendee such as myself?" "Where do you work, and what projects are you working on right now?" If all else fails, ask them what they think of the food so far.



# NETWORKING

Also take advantage of opportunities to reconnect with colleagues, friends, former professors or students, and vendors.

Use social media to connect. The MLA hashtag is #mnlb19. Go ahead and live tweet if you feel moved. Remember your phone, tablet, and laptop chargers! Try to keep your work email at bay though.

# AFTER THE CONFERENCE

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Carve out some time to reflect and organize your thoughts and information from MLA. Reach out or follow up with people you met. Many libraries ask for a report after attending a conference. Find out if yours is one of them and prepare accordingly.

And then, start working on your own session for the 2020 Conference in Duluth!

