Session application guidelines

Festival de Datos will take place in Punta del Este in Uruguay between 7-9 November, 2023. The Festival aims to strengthen data communities and our collective ability to unlock the value of data for all.

If you care about using data and technology to protect the environment, improve people's health and wellbeing, and achieve equality in all forms, then this is the event for you!

This document provides information on what sessions are open for applications and guidance for applicants.

Please read this guidance document before *applying here* by:

~~23rd April 11:59pm Eastern Daylight Time~~

Deadline extended: 3rd May 11:50pm Eastern Daylight Time

FESTIVAL DE DATOS

Content overview

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What will Festival de Datos deliver?

Collaboration across geographies, sectors, and communities to leverage data and technology for a better world is what brings us together.

The Festival is being co-curated by 40+ partners across a National Task Team of local partners in Uruguay, a high-level Steering Group that provides strategic sectoral insights, and a Program Advisory Group focused on the Festival content.

The principles on the next page are intended to guide the Festival de Datos experience, the selection process, and how we will catalyze progress on using data to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Festival de Datos Principles

➔ We believe in crowding-in perspectives on data practices, so the Festival de Datos will feature an accessible and inclusive program.

➔ We believe that sharing data and new approaches helps tackle real-world problems, so Festival de Datos sessions will showcase collaboration and be practical and useful.

➔ Our community holds rich knowledge and insights on data and technology and its ethical use, we will leverage this to deliver learning experiences that are empowering.

➔ We value the creative and intellectual energy of our global community, so we will co-create an experience that is thought-provoking and vibrant.

➔ We believe that data systems must be built to benefit people and the planet in the long term, so we will focus on environmental sustainability and sustained progress.

Introduction to the Festival de Datos sessions

The Festival will be a forum for celebration, exchange, and discovery of practical data solutions to the world's biggest challenges. Discussions should bring the most recent advances and barriers to the forefront, including around open data, transparency, and non-traditional types of data.

As organizers, our aim is to produce a program with a balanced slate of speakers and facilitators from diverse backgrounds, viewpoints, and organizational affiliations. We welcome applications to this end.

We are particularly interested in sessions that cover the following pillars:

Timely Data	Inclusive Data	Accountable Data Governance
Harnessing up-to-date data for environment and climate adaptation Data systems and technological approaches to crisis preparedness and response Maximizing timely data to transform economies	Advancing the availability and use of inclusive data so no one is left behind Taking an intersectional approach to data Institutionalizing citizen-generated data	Supporting people to shape how they are represented in data Creating cultures of transparency, data sharing, and use Democratizing data skills for greater equity

Session types overview

There will be eight session types. See these outlined here, with more detail on the pages that follow.

Session title	Type and capacity	Max duration	Outcome
Capacity Exchange	Training session	1h 45m	Participants gain new skills for their work in humanitarian and development contexts.
	Peer exchange	1h 45m	
Connect & Collaborate	Simulation	1h 45m	Participants practice collaborating and identify relevant partners for their work in the data for development field.
	Matchmaking	1h 15m	
Consult & Debate	Ideas lab	1h 15m	Participants share their insights on an emerging challenge or trend, or input into the design of new approaches and initiatives.
	Fishbowl	1h 15m	
Case Study Analysis	Lightning talk	1h 15m	Participants gain knowledge on what causes success and failure in the community's use of data approaches.
	Interactive panel discussion	1h 15m	

In addition to these, the program will feature sessions including plenaries, town hall debates, exhibitions and activations, plus host and sponsored content and curated exhibition and booth space. Applications for these exhibition opportunities will open in the coming months.

Detailed guidance by session type

Please note that all applications will require a maximum 500-word outline of the content including proposed activities.

Capacity Exchange
Training Session

Ideal for providing hands-on technical and non-technical training including soft skills, such as leadership, to enhance knowledge and skills of participants along one of the pillars: Inclusive Data, Timely Data, Accountable Data Governance.

Summary of session - guidance

Must include:
- A clear description of the learning objectives.
- Intended audience(s), including experience level and prerequisites.
- Proposed length and structure of the training content.
- System requirements for technical hands-on type training requiring individual system use.
- Profile of the instructor(s), including experience in delivering the area(s) identified. Max 2 instructors.

Session-specific selection guidance

Proposal submissions will be selected on the basis of the potential impact of the training content, instructors' experience in teaching/delivering the proposed training, alignment with and relevance to the conference pillars, and the resources required.

Resources available

Instructor PC/Laptop, projector, internet, flipchart, flip chart paper and markers, tables, demonstration boards/easel, computer display units

Peer Exchange

Ideal for persons, institutions/organizations wanting to display, discuss, or demonstrate lessons learned and/or solutions (i.e., platforms, open source tools). The session can include a demonstration of a product, tool or services, as well as a poster presentation highlighting learnings on a topic aligned with the pillars.

Summary of session - guidance

Must include:
- A clear description of the exchange/demo objectives.
- The intended participants/audience (experience level and prerequisites).
- Proposed length.
- Profile of the presenter(s) including experience in delivering the area(s) identified.

Resources available

Instructor PC/Laptop, projector, Internet, flipchart, flip chart paper and markers, tables, demonstration boards/easel, computer display units

Connect & Collaborate
Simulation

Ideal for demonstrating an all-of-society approach to challenges, based on a real or partly fictionalized scenario with globally recognizable elements, such as rising sea levels, pandemics, or megacities.

Preparation
- Group people into teams and ask them to play a character (community member, policymaker, media).

Phase 1: Scenario setting
- Ensure there is enough information for attendees to understand the scenario using visual materials
- Set a clear task that is feasible to achieve. Attendees will have different objectives or skills to offer.

Phase 2: Play out
- To keep up momentum, introduce new information (e.g. news flash, change in data, funding cut)

Phase 3: Reflection
- Leave time to share what the simulation made attendees realize and how they might change their policy or practices in the future.

Summary of session - guidance

Must include:
- A clear description of the demo objectives.
- Profile of the facilitators including experience in delivering the area(s) identified.

Resources available

Lectern screen, speakers, 2 handheld microphones, round tables and seating for 100 people, space for 1 pull up banner, flipcharts and pens, projector, internet, PC/ Laptop.

Connect & Collaborate
Matchmaking

Max duration: 1h 15m
Capacity: 75 persons

Ideal for those with brokering skills wanting to connect different communities together.

Tips for matchmaking sessions approach
- Consider a matchmaking session that targets newcomers to the sector who get to be matched with more experienced individuals.
- Consider whether you want to curate the matchmaking or create space for anyone to meet and discover, pre-selecting individuals looking for collaborators, matching by gathering information on participants
- Consider language and communication differences, for example, individuals indicating their languages with colored stickers.

- It is important to give enough time for people to understand what each can offer. A minimum of 5 minutes for people to meet, introduce themselves, and identify shared objectives and complementary roles is recommended.
- Consider wrapping up the session by encouraging participants to share actions they will take from their discussions.

Resources available
Lectern screen, speakers and 2 handheld microphones, rectangular tables and seating for 75 people.

Ideas Lab

Ideal for those with a challenge they want to crowdsource a solution for. Ideas Labs allow multidisciplinary teams to come together to prototype products, services, and ideas.

Tips for Ideas Labs session structure and approach

We encourage creativity in the session design and suggest that the session includes the following phases:

Phase 1 - Set the context
Provide a brief overview of why this problem is important, stakeholders, and how they are affected. Set parameters and consider limitations such as resources, connectivity issues, political context.

Phase 2 - Ideation
For example, running groups with or without a facilitator, stationary small groups (random allocation or self-selection into themes/approaches), rotating around flipcharts and building on previous groups' ideas, assigning scenarios to play out.

Phase 3 - Share-out and next steps
For example verbal feedback from each table, sharing highlights, 3–5 min pitches with a jury selecting a winning group. End with next steps of how these ideas will be taken forward and to continue engagement.

Resources available
Roundtable table and chairs set up for 25 participants, Color-coded cards for participants to signal if they want to speak (green); are happy to be called on (blue), or are in listening mode (orange).
Projector, internet, PC/ Laptop.

Fishbowl

Max duration: 1h 15m
Capacity: 60 persons

Ideal for those who want to surface different perspectives and experiences around a specific topic that is often controversial, new, or complex. A fishbowl stimulates participant-driven dialogue.

Tips for Fishbowl sessions structure and approach

- Select a topic that highlights different vantage points and ideas to find unexpected approaches through open dialogue.
- The moderator takes a seat in the center of the circle (the fishbowl) and opens the session by setting the scene for the discussion.
- Moderator closes the session, summarizing key discussion points, and outlining next steps, and how participants can stay engaged.
- We recommend that participants share their responses through an online poll which are shown on a screen for audience inclusion.

- The moderator selects 3 participants to take seats in the fishbowl, leaving one chair empty. Selected participants will begin the discussion by responding to a question from the moderator. Any participant can sit in the empty chair and contribute. When this happens, an existing member of the fishbowl must voluntarily leave the fishbowl and free a chair. This fosters an open discussion.

Resources available

Seating is set up in concentric circles for up to 60 participants, with 5 seats in the center making up the fishbowl, 4–5 microphones, screen set up in the room. Projector, internet, PC/ Laptop.

Lightning Talk

Total duration: 1h 15m, Individual duration: 5m
Capacity: 50 persons

Ideal for those with a thought-provoking story, solution, or failure to share that will be valuable to others. Applications from individuals are welcome as this session type does not require a group of speakers. We want to hear about successes and failures, and will seek to strike that balance.

Tips for Lightning Talk sessions structure and approach
- Presentations will be max 5 minutes, a bell is rung at the 5 min mark to inject drama.
- Use of slides should be limited and visuals are preferred over text. Avoid reading a script.
- This forum is a safe space to share hard won experiences and sometimes humorous stories of challenges, failures, or surprising solutions.
- Talks should include the problem addressed, impact achieved, expected or failed to achieve, the call to action you are leaving people with.

- You can use this format to launch reports & initiatives in an entertaining way

Resources available
Small stage, screen, speakers, and 1 handheld microphone, seating and standing for up to 50 people, Bell or alarm for when speakers overrun.

Interactive Panel Discussion

Total duration: 1h 15m
Capacity: 75 persons

Ideal for probing into a specific question or thorny issue. This is a format where panelists are able to share deeper, more meaningful context, and engage in dialogue with the audience.

Session-specific guidance
- Outline a topic of discussion which should be broad, inclusive, and accessible to engage with and invite a varied audience.
- The panel should have max 3 panelists who should bring distinctly different perspectives and experiences to the conversation.
- The structure of the conversation should invite the audience to get involved either through online platforms, such as polls or by giving opportunities to ask questions.

- Panelists should be encouraged to interact with each other and the audience
- Light visuals or relevant and inspiring videos less than 3 minutes are ok.
- Consider inviting questions from the audience early to avoid them being squeezed out.
- Consider warm up exercises, interactive polls, or games to engage the audience.

Resources available
Four chair set-up, microphone and AV, floor mics for Q&A. Projector, internet, PC/ Laptop.

Selection criteria

For Festival de Datos, we have created a set of principles which will guide how we shape the schedule and content. Our Program Advisory Committee will evaluate proposals against the following:

A.   The application's relevance to the pillar themes outlined on page 4.
B.   The goals of the session and any announcements or commitments that will catalyze further action beyond the Festival.
C.   Session-specific criteria which have been included where relevant in the individual session types overviews in this document.

The selection process will take place in May 2023. Following this, applicants will be contacted and the schedule will be announced. Please note that session approval does not confer travel support to the Festival.

If you have any questions, please get in touch by emailing festival@data4sdgs.org

Have you registered yet?

We kindly ask you to register as soon as possible as tickets are limited.

Register here.