



WCSE Overview

The Western Conference on Science Education (WCSE) is a unique event that gathers passionate teaching and research faculty, staff, students, librarians, publishers and education-related vendors to collaborate on improving our ability to address the myriad of opportunities and challenges facing modern STEM education in our colleges and universities.

Although issues in the Canadian context are highlighted, the conference welcomes colleagues working outside the country or outside the traditional disciplines of STEM. Fueled by the insightful contributions of diverse conference delegates from coast to coast, WCSE provides a vehicle for networking and community-building across disciplines, as well as a venue for enhancing engagement in the scholarship of teaching and learning.

The Western Conference for Science Education is designed to:

1. Enhance a science education community by enticing faculty, educational staff, students, and education-related private sector partners to venture out of their respective discipline-specific circles to meet, discuss, and collaborate with one another;
2. Promote ongoing improvement in post-secondary Science education through support of a range of scholarly approaches to teaching and learning;
3. Contribute to the professional development of science educators by providing access to educational leaders, resources, and training;
4. Promote productive inter-relationships between educators and various private sector academic publishers, suppliers, technology providers etc.;
5. Provide an avenue to share and debate ideas, innovation, and research in a respective and scholarly manner;
6. Ensure that Conference proceedings are archived and accessible.

Conference Format

WCSE 2023 will be offered as a “hybrid” event. Both conference delegates and session presenters have the flexibility to attend and participate in person and/or online. In addition, all sessions will be recorded and available to view for a limited time after the conference.

Conference Theme

The theme for WCSE 2023 is “Belonging”. The last few years have been disruptive in many capacities: the way we do our jobs, the way we interact with one another, the way we engage with our families and friends have all needed changes. As a result, we may have felt out of place. Now we have an opportunity to reimagine these interactions rather than returning to our familiar approaches. WCSE 2023 invites you to think about moving forward, and new ways of *belonging*.

Belonging will mean something different to each of us. You might be thinking of questions like the following: What does it mean to belong in science and scholarship? in higher education? How do you support your students, your colleagues, your community to feel like they belong? WCSE has always had the philosophy that all individuals engaged in science education—whether as students, educators, technical staff, and education-oriented private sector partners—as well as all topics related to teaching and learning science are welcome. We want to hear your voice on science education because, ultimately at WCSE, we all belong.



Session Formats

WCSE 2023 invites **six types of open submissions** that highlight innovative practices, developing ideas/policy, works in progress, and/or research findings. All session lengths include question and answer periods. Sessions will be recorded and shared with all participants.

Plenary

Length: 50 minutes

New this year, WCSE is asking its community to be part of the plenary discussions. We value our members and their voices and want to give them an opportunity to showcase their work. These sessions will be limited in numbers and selected based on a strong connection to the conference theme of *Belonging*. Reach out to wcse@uwo.ca if you want to discuss this further.

Workshop

Length: 50 minutes

An interactive session where participants will “walk away” with a tangible product, tool, or skill. Workshops likely begin with some initial context/background, but the focus is on completing an activity/task during the session.

Presentation

Length: 20 minutes

An interactive session on a concise idea. Presenters may engage participants with a novel demonstration, interesting paper, results of research, or other ideas.

Poster

Length: 1-minute oral pitch + 30 minutes

Digital or print posters, with a brief oral ‘pitch’ at the start of the poster session. Static posters will be offered simultaneously in the specially equipped Western Active Learning Spaces ([WALS](#)). Digital posters may include embedded video but no audio.

Panel Discussion

Length: 50 minutes

Collaborate with 3 to 5 presenters from multiple science disciplines and/or institutions in a round-table, panel-led discussion, to share different experiences and perspectives on topics in science education.

Debate Topic

Length: 50 minutes

Pitch a controversial topic in science education with a few prompts that will get the debate started at the conference. During the session, participants will join one side of the debate, with you facilitating the discussion. The purpose of this session is to have a healthy debate about controversial, yet important topics that requires all sides and voices to be considered.



Western Conference on Science Education 2023



Submission Guidelines

Proposals are submitted online through the link at www.thewesternconference.ca

The required information for all submissions is shown below. **To facilitate the blind review process please do not include identifying information in the initial title or abstract**; identifying information can be added to the final submission after review if needed.

- **Proposal Title:** 25 word maximum
- **Presenter(s) Information:** first name, middle initial, last name, e-mail address, title, and institutional affiliation
- **Session Type:** Plenary, Workshop, Presentation, Poster, Panel Discussion, and Debate Topic
- **Keywords:** 3–6 keywords
- **Abstract:** 250 words maximum. Abstracts should convey clear outcomes relating to the provision of new knowledge or perspectives with broad applications across a range of science disciplines. If references are cited, please use APA formatting.
- **Elements of Engagement:** Conference presentations are all too often structured as a single presenter talking to a passive audience that may then ask some questions at the end. At WCSE we like to shake things up. What elements of engagement will you include in your plan?

Presenters are welcome to contact the conference organizers (wcse@uwo.ca) to discuss resources that are required for their proposed session. For example: it may be possible to arrange for sessions to have access to computer labs, multiple white boards, and other presentation/learning tools.

Review Process

The WCSE 2023 Program Committee will oversee a double-blind process by which each appropriate proposal will be reviewed by at least two invited scholars in the field of science education. Formative feedback regarding proposal criteria will be provided for consideration by authors. With consideration of reviewers' recommendations, and—where appropriate—authors' revisions, the WCSE 2023 Program Committee will make the final decision regarding the acceptance and programming of proposed sessions.

Timeline for Submissions

Although we appreciate receiving submissions until **April 16, 2023**, we understand that this deadline might not work for some colleagues. If necessary, just contact us and we will attempt work out an alternate submission timeline.

- **February 15:** Call for proposals/submission guidelines distributed
- **April 16:** abstract submission deadline
- **April 1–30:** review of submissions
- **May 1–15:** decisions for acceptance/revision

Submit proposals at www.thewesternconference.ca

Find additional information or clarification, contact:

- **E-mail:** wcse@uwo.ca
- **Twitter:** @WestConf