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## National Comp 2026 Proposal Guidelines & Information

It's time to build the National Comp 2026 program, and we couldn't be more excited to find out what you're hoping to bring to our Las Vegas stages. But there's a hard part — only about 20% of the proposals we receive will make it onto the program. That's why it's important to make your proposal stand out from the crowd.

Successful proposals will help reviewers understand why the topics matters, what you plan to include in the conversation, and what kind of real-world value it will deliver to attendees.

Here's an updated list of guidelines and suggestions that will help you understand what National Comp reviewers are looking for. 2026 Educational Tracks are listed at the end of this document.

### Proposal Info

- Give your presentation a descriptive and engaging title. Think about your target audience and the issues top of mind for them. What statement or question will resonate with them? If you want to get clever or punny with your title, that's great. But avoid ambiguity – the topic should remain clear. If you need inspiration, ask ChatGPT or your favorite AI platform for suggestions.
- Write your abstract description for your potential audience. Include enough detail to give the selection panel a clear grasp of why the topic matters to the workers' comp community, what you're going to talk about and what attendees will gain from it. Give attendees a clear picture of how this content fits into their work.
- Engagement is essential. Describe how you intend to connect your audience with your content and with speakers. Can you include a poll? Add a short quiz? Ask an attendee to help you demonstrate something? Let reviewers know how you plan to make attendees a part of your presentation.
- We urge presenters to consider offering PDF resources or tools that attendees can download from the conference app and use once they've returned to their

employers. Examples include checklists, assessment forms, whitepapers, how-to's, toolkits, templates, or worksheets.

- Give three (only 3 please) key learning objectives for attendees, clearly articulated, with measurable outcomes where applicable.
- Optional: List any evidence-based references or supporting documents used for developing the presentation.

### **Presenter Info**

- Who are your panelists? We want to know. Enter each intended presenter as a co-author of the proposal. Please submit a name, title, company, brief bio, high-resolution headshot photo and email address for each person.
- Proposed panels with too many voices from the same company are rated less favorably by reviewers. Create a panel of diverse perspectives on your topic so that attendees can get a well-rounded view, and tap into new insights on the issues they're facing.
- **Helpful hint:** Sessions that include professionals directly involved in managing employer safety or workers' compensation programs will be given preference by the selection panel. Attendees tell us they benefit most from the firsthand experience of their peers facing similar challenges. We value all vendor and provider perspectives, but ideal presentations should also include an employer-client engaged with the topic firsthand.
- Panelist qualifications and connection to the subject matter are a key part of the selection criteria focus. While we understand that speaker changes may occur later due to schedule availability, it is our expectation that the speakers included in your abstract are the same speakers you will bring to the stage if the proposal is accepted.
- Please secure at least a 'handshake' agreement to participate from all presenters before including them in your submission. "Surprise, you're speaking in Las Vegas" isn't everyone's idea of the best way to kick off a Monday morning in May.
- **2026 Policy Update:** There is a maximum of 4 chairs onstage for all breakout sessions, no exceptions. Requests to include a 5<sup>th</sup> speaker **may** be approved in limited circumstances, with a stipulation that one participant serves as moderator and is able to remain standing throughout the presentation.

## Choose Your Format

Choose a format and structure that will best engage the audience in the specific material being presented. Format options include:

- **Masterclass** – Attendees consistently request more intermediate- to advanced-level content. Open a discussion that gives attendees an opportunity to dive in and apply the concepts being illustrated, whether through breakouts, table exercises or other forms of active participation and engagement with the material.
- **Lecture** — A typical lecture-style presentation with slides.
- **Group panel discussion** – Unscripted group discussion on a topic, typically without slides.
- **Moderated Q&A** — A moderator leads subject matter experts who explore a topic from diverse or even opposing points of view.
- **Case study** – Step-by-step account of one company's experience implementing a new strategy, with results measured and explained.
- **Demonstration** – Can be used to present approaches to material using what-if situations or to illustrate specific practices or use cases. ***Demonstrations of specific products or paid programs will be rejected.***

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## Important Deadlines

Application Deadline: **March 19**

Decision Notifications: **May 11**

If you have any questions or problems submitting this form,  
email [NationalCompProgram@theinstitutes.org](mailto:NationalCompProgram@theinstitutes.org).

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## Before you hit submit ...

### Zero Tolerance for Selling and Promotion

National Comp's mission is to educate, elevate, and connect the workers' comp community. Each year, our chairs and advisors select presentations based on the value of the educational content for attendees.

An invitation to speak at National Comp is a thought leadership opportunity. We invite professionals throughout the workers' comp community to share knowledge and experience that is "vendor-agnostic" –without bias toward or promotion of any specific product, program or service.

We expect presenters to come to the stage with the intent to educate, but not to sell or to promote their business, products or services, or to attract new clients. Proposals that promote or endorse particular products or companies will not be considered.

If you're not certain where your presentation stands, here's a question that may help. *Can you identify three substantive takeaways that an attendee can bring back to their organization and use, whether or not they ever become your client?*

### **More Important Reminders**

Feel free to submit up to three proposals. We're looking for diverse approaches across tracks. Submitting proposals for multiple tracks increases the chance we'll find an ideal fit for your material on the session agenda.

Make sure all corporate approvals are secured prior to submitting your proposal. Speaker names and photos will be promoted in our pre-event, onsite and post-event marketing activities.

### **Final Advice**

- Be passionate about your chosen topic.
- Avoid using undue amounts of jargon. Draft your proposal in plain language.
- Include specific strategies attendees can implement within their own workers' comp and injury prevention programs. The best presentations give attendees a framework to envision how your ideas can be applied to the challenges they face.
- Start with your goal in mind. Consider the key ideas you want attendees to walk away with and develop your proposal around how you'll deliver those ideas and instill attendees with the urgency of your message.
- Keep in mind that participants learn not only from successes, but also from the lessons taken away from failed efforts.

[\*\*Click Here to Submit a Proposal for 2026\*\*](#)

## **Educational Tracks at National Comp 2026**

In a rapidly evolving workers' compensation landscape, staying informed and connected is more important than ever. Our carefully curated educational tracks address the full spectrum of today's industry challenges—from breakthrough medical innovations and behavioral health insights to legal shifts, financial strategy, and cutting-edge technology. These sessions not only deepen your expertise but also highlight the collaborative spirit that powers our community, making education an essential part of your National Comp experience.

### **Protect & Prevent**

Protect & Prevent focuses on proactive strategies that stop injuries before they happen and reduce workplace risk through innovation and evidence-based approaches. These sessions equip you with tools to create safer workplaces and prevent costly claims through advanced return-to-work program design, biomechanics and ergonomics, injury prediction analytics, and cutting-edge safety technologies. You'll explore solutions that move prevention from reactive to predictive, including digital modeling, real-time hazard detection, and data-driven approaches that deliver measurable results. Whether you're in safety, risk management, or claims, you'll leave with actionable strategies to build prevention programs that protect workers, reduce injuries, and demonstrate clear ROI.

### **Care & Treatment**

Care & Treatment examines the clinical innovations and diagnostic advances that are transforming injury care and accelerating recovery outcomes. These sessions deliver evidence-based insights on managing medical complexity, addressing diagnostic accuracy, controlling pharmacy costs, and exploring emerging treatments that show real promise in workers' compensation settings. You'll gain practical knowledge on the full spectrum of medical management—from metabolic and musculoskeletal health to pain management alternatives and the latest therapeutic approaches. Claims professionals, healthcare providers, and employers will walk away with strategies to deliver higher-quality care, improve recovery timelines, and control medical costs without compromising worker outcomes.

### **Legal & Regulatory**

Legal & Regulatory keeps you ahead of the legislative shifts, court decisions, and compliance requirements reshaping workers' compensation in 2026 and beyond. These sessions unpack the legal forces driving change across jurisdictions, from major Supreme Court decisions affecting regulatory interpretation to evolving compliance mandates,

causation standards, and worker classification issues. You'll explore emerging challenges in areas like workplace substance policies, the evolution of disability rating systems, and strategies to influence policy through industry participation. Attendees will leave with practical insights to maintain compliance, avoid costly legal missteps, and adapt quickly to a shifting regulatory landscape.

### **Wellness & Support Systems**

Wellness & Support Systems explores the psychological, social, and environmental factors that profoundly impact recovery outcomes and claim costs. These sessions go beyond the physical injury to address the whole person, examining how mental health, social determinants of health, family dynamics, cultural factors, and systemic barriers shape recovery trajectories. You'll explore critical issues affecting both injured workers and the professionals who serve them, from trauma and resilience to health literacy and the hidden drivers of litigation. This track equips you with tools to identify barriers to recovery, implement effective support systems, and improve engagement strategies that prioritize human connection alongside clinical care—creating outcomes that benefit workers and reduce costs.

### **Real-World Solutions**

Real-World Solutions brings you authentic, practitioner-driven insights straight from employers who have tackled universal challenges and achieved measurable success. This track showcases creative approaches to modified duty, return-to-work coordination, claims leadership development, and the strategic use of technology and data—not from vendors selling solutions, but from the people implementing them in the trenches. You'll hear honest discussions about what works, what doesn't, and why, covering everything from essential skills development and stakeholder partnerships to accommodation strategies and the critical infrastructure needs the industry often overlooks. These sessions deliver field-tested strategies, lessons learned from real programs, and actionable takeaways you can implement immediately to improve outcomes, reduce costs, and build programs that actually work in the real world.

### **Risk & Cost Management**

Risk & Cost Management delivers the financial strategies and analytical frameworks that drive sustainable workers' compensation programs and control total cost of risk. These sessions translate complex financial concepts into actionable business intelligence, from understanding actuarial processes and collateral requirements to calculating real ROI on prevention investments and quantifying the true cost of delays. You'll explore critical economic drivers including attorney cost trends, systemic incentive problems, and

emerging financial technologies that promise greater transparency and efficiency. Whether you're a CFO, risk manager, or claims leader, you'll gain data-driven decision frameworks and proven strategies to reduce costs, optimize reserves, and demonstrate measurable value to your organization.

## **Data & Technology**

Data & Technology explores how artificial intelligence, advanced analytics, and digital tools are revolutionizing every aspect of workers' compensation while raising important questions about privacy, ethics, and effective implementation. These sessions examine both the promise and the challenges of technological transformation, from AI-driven predictive capabilities and the critical need for data standardization to emerging safety technologies, blockchain applications, and the strategic decisions around technology adoption. You'll gain insights into maintaining compliance and security with new systems, navigating emerging regulations, and understanding technology's impact from multiple perspectives—including one the industry has largely overlooked: how injured workers themselves will use these tools. This track equips you with practical knowledge to leverage technology strategically, make informed investment decisions, and ensure that digital innovation enhances rather than replaces the human elements essential to quality care and successful outcomes.