

2025 Speaker Interest Packet

**TED<sup>x</sup>**

Oshkosh

**x** = independently  
organized TED event





January, 2025

Dear Potential Speaker,

We are excited that you are interested in our upcoming 9<sup>th</sup> “annual” event, **TEDxOshkosh 2025**, an independently organized TED event happening on November 15, 2025. If you are interested in applying to speak at our event, this document will outline some of the details of the event, speaking process, and provide a link to the application form.

TEDxOshkosh is a local, independently organized event curated by the TEDxOshkosh team. Our goal is to create a TED-like experience here in Oshkosh, with an event consisting of speakers giving their own TEDx talks to an eager audience. At its core, the fundamental goal of TED and TEDx is to spread great ideas, mostly through worldwide dissemination of TED and TEDx talks online. We hope our TEDxOshkosh talks will touch upon themes which impact our local community while also being of interest to a global audience. This is a licensed event, meaning that the rules and regulations we abide by are set forth by the TED organization.

If chosen to speak, we will assist you during the preparation process to craft your talk in a way that fits TED and TEDxOshkosh. Your talk will be filmed live at the event, and posted on the TEDx YouTube channel. The maximum length for a TED or TEDx talk is 18-minutes (but many exceptional talks are much shorter). Your talk may be on any topic you are interested in that you feel would fit the TED format. Please remember that it is the idea, not the speaker, that is the focus. If you have an “Idea Worth Spreading” we want to hear from you!

After reading through this packet of materials, if you are so inclined, please submit an application to speak by May 1, 2025.

All the best,

The TEDxOshkosh Team

[www.TEDxOshkosh.com](http://www.TEDxOshkosh.com)

# Executive Summary

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**There's plenty more to learn – don't stop with this summary!**

What: TEDxOshkosh 2025

Where: The Grand Oshkosh, Oshkosh, WI

When: November 15, 2025

What: Ideas Worth Spreading

We are accepting applications for Ideas Worth Spreading for TEDxOshkosh 2025 until May 1, 2025.

Length: Between 3 and 18 minutes. Your talk **does not** have to be 18 minutes. It can be shorter, and many of the best are.

Focus: Concentrate on only the main point you wish to spread. Think narrow and deep, not wide and shallow.

# Frequently Asked Questions:

## What is TED? (What does TED stand for?)

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### About TED

TED is a nonprofit organization devoted to Ideas Worth Spreading, often in the form of short talks delivered by leading thinkers and doers. Many of these talks are given at TED Conferences, intimate TED Salons and thousands of independently organized TEDx events around the world. Videos of these talks are made available, free, on TED.com and other platforms. Audio versions of TED Talks are published to TED Talks Daily, available on all podcast platforms.

TED's open and free initiatives for spreading ideas include TED.com, where new TED Talk videos are posted daily; TEDx, which licenses thousands of individuals and groups to host local, self-organized TED-style events around the world; the TED Fellows program, which selects innovators from around the globe to amplify the impact of their remarkable projects and activities; The Audacious Project, which surfaces and funds critical ideas that have the potential to impact millions of lives; TED Translators Program, which crowdsources the subtitling of TED Talks so that big ideas can spread across languages and borders; and the educational initiative TED-Ed. TED also offers TED@Work a program that reimagines TED Talks for workplace learning. TED also has a growing library of original podcasts, including The TED Interview with Chris Anderson, WorkLife with Adam Grant, Far Flung with Saleem Reshamwala and How to Be a Better Human.

Follow TED on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and on LinkedIn.

### About TEDx

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In the spirit of ideas worth spreading, TEDx is a program of local, self-organized events that bring people together to share a TED-like experience. At a TEDx event, TED Talks video and live speakers combine to spark deep discussion and connection. These local, self-organized events are branded TEDx, where x = independently organized TED event. The TED Conference provides general guidance for the TEDx program, but individual TEDx events are self-organized. (Subject to certain rules and regulations.)

### About TEDxOshkosh

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TEDxOshkosh was formed in 2016, and has put on an annual event each fall, with the exception of 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic interfered. Each year, TEDxOshkosh is held in the historic 1883 performing theater The Grand Oshkosh in downtown Oshkosh in front of a thoughtful, engaged, live audience. The TEDxOshkosh team also records each talk with 4 or more professional-grade video cameras, plus one or more professional still cameras. Videos and stills from those cameras are edited after the event, and combined with speaker a/v (if any) into a professional video that is submitted to TED for review, and release on the TEDx YouTube channel. See past [TEDxOshkosh videos on our summary YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@TEDxOshkosh>](https://www.youtube.com/@TEDxOshkosh)

### TEDxOshkosh 2025 Event Logistics

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**Where:** The Grand Oshkosh  
100 High Avenue, Oshkosh, Wisconsin, USA

**When:** Saturday, November 15, 2025, 7am – 4:30pm (See more details on the *Speaker Timeline* below)

# Interested in Being a Speaker?

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Speakers come from all walks of life, disciplines, and industries, but what they all have in common is an idea and the passion to share it. Everyone has an opinion or a story to tell, but we're not seeking entertainers, evangelists, pseudo-science, or marketers. Nor are we seeking professional speakers or recycled speeches. We're seeking truly unique ideas. Ideas worth spreading.

As a speaker, your objective will be to share your idea in an engaging way and to answer the question "Why?" Why do you care? Why should the attendees care? Why does your idea deserve to be on stage? If you are up to the challenge and passionate about your idea, we'd love to hear from you.

Per TED guidelines, speakers are not paid to speak at TEDx events. We intend to make this a mutually beneficial relationship by giving your idea a powerful platform to flourish.

## Becoming a Speaker

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1. **Research** – In addition to reading this document, we encourage you to watch some TED and TEDx talks online (specifically the TEDxOshkosh talks). Also consider visiting some of the additional resources listed under *Crafting a Great TEDx Talk*
2. **Apply** – Fill out the Speaker Application at [www.TEDxOshkosh.com](http://www.TEDxOshkosh.com) by **May 1, 2025 at 5:00pm CDT or participate in our late winter/early spring in-person "Pitch Night" (watch our social media for announcements about the pitch night)**.
3. **Review & Selection** – Our speaker selection committee will review all proposals received and will notify finalists by mid-May 2025. If selected as a finalist, you will be invited for an interview mid-May and mid-June 2025.
4. **Curate & Refine** – If selected, we will begin working with you to perfect and expand your idea and presentation in the timeframe allotted.

## Speaker Requirements & Expectations

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**Deadlines:** At specific deadlines, you will be required to submit a variety of information, such as a biography, speaker release form, talk outline, full-text drafts, and pertinent digital slides, if applicable. These deadlines are important as we cannot plan the event without them. These deadlines are noted in the *Speaker Timeline* below.

**Working Together:** As a speaker, you will work alongside TEDxOshkosh organizers to help present your idea the best way possible, including being open to edits and suggestions to your talk's outline as it evolves. Though you may know your topic best, we know our attendees and TEDx's purpose. By working together, we can best present your idea.

**Releasing Your Talk:** You must accept your talk's recording being released under a "Creative Commons" license. See Appendix A – the TEDx Speaker Release – for more detail.

**Content of Your Talk:** As an accepted speaker, your presentation time on stage and video release are conditional on your preparation and delivery of the talk idea discussed with and agreed to by TEDxOshkosh during the speaker selection process.

**Attendance:** You may also be required to rehearse your talk virtually and/or in person in the weeks leading up to the event as your presentation is refined. We will require your presence late afternoon and early evening the night before the event, in order to complete critically important "sound checks" with the venue's sound engineer. On the day of the event, we ask that you plan to attend the full event, as attendees and other speakers may want to further discuss your idea.

## Guidelines for Your Talk

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Your talk should run between 3 and 18 minutes, so it should be focused and sharp. You think there's no way your complex topic could ever fit into 18 minutes? Consider the wonderful [TED talk on neuroscience](#) that clocks in at less than 6 minutes. If you exceed your time, the coordinator will end your talk and your talk may not be included in the TED archives. The goal is not to hit 18 minutes – the goal is to speak for only as long as your idea requires! The TEDxOshkosh organizers will work with you to determine the time allotted for your individual idea.

Your talk should be deep, rather than broad. It can include visual slides that develop your idea. Corporate, political, or religious plugs from the stage are an abuse of the TEDx platform and are unacceptable. Pitching products and services or looking for funding are also strictly prohibited.

The TED format does not utilize teleprompters or lecterns, nor should TED speakers rely on notes or notecards. The TED style asks speakers to know their information well, in order to give the best possible presentation, and our team will work beside you to help you to learn to present in this unique and powerful way.

## Crafting a Great TEDx Talk

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- [The TED Commandments](#) – These are given to speaker before the main TED Conference, and offer a succinct glimpse at the basics of being a TED speaker.
- Be sure to watch the TED talk by June Cohen, Executive Producer of TED Media, called, "[What makes a great TED Talk?](#)" Here are some highlights:

### **Tell a Story**

It's not just relating facts. It's not just a lecture. A great speaker takes you on a journey. They tell you a story. It doesn't matter if it's about bacteria, architecture, fish, or climate change. Part of telling a good story is being personal. The story should tell us something about you. You don't have to be confessional. The personal story is the way each of us related to an individual TED talk. We may not know anything about the subject matter – we may not even have thought we cared about it. Speak on both success and failure. We can then relate to the personal story and the person.

### **Don't Lose the Audience**

Often, speakers who are experts in their own area will race ahead of the audience. Many speakers are used to addressing people in their own field. Scientists are used to talking to scientists. Artists are used to talking to artists. Avoid industry jargon. The audience needs to be able to follow along with you throughout the whole talk.

### **Contagious Emotion**

People want to share something when they've seen something emotional. People also want to share something that teaches them something new. If they have learned something really important that feels urgent to them, they want to pass it on.

### **Focus**

You're probably used to a much longer time than is typical for a TED or TEDx talk. There's only time for one main idea. You might want to tell everything. You might want to have multiple ideas and get it all under your time. Focus on one idea. Do not rush things or leave things out. Tell Us Something New Is this a fresh take? What's something we haven't heard before? Is this a new angle on an old topic? Is this new and relevant?

## Practice! Over and Over Again

The difference between a mediocre talk and a great talk is rehearsal. It may sound clichéd, but practice does make perfect. Even for experienced speakers, the audience can tell when a talk has been well rehearsed. The ideal speaker will speak slowly and clearly, will deliver their speech mostly by memory, and will be passionate and engaging.

- The [Illustrated Guide for TEDx Speakers](#) offers insights into the preparation process for giving a TED talk.
- Chris Anderson, the Curator of TED wrote [TED Talks: The Official TED Guide to Public Speaking](#) available in print and audiobook. The Winnefox Library System has many copies of this book available in [various formats](#).
- Watch some [TED talks](#), [TEDx talks](#), and especially the [TEDxOshkosh talks](#). These will give you a great sense of the style and format. It will also allow you to see the amazing things that can be accomplished in “only” 18 minutes.

## Speaker Timeline & Deadlines

*Although we will work hard to avoid changes, if circumstances dictate, TEDxOshkosh reserves the right to change these deadlines.*

### May 1, 2025: Applications Due

Submit your online application at [www.TEDxOshkosh.com](http://www.TEDxOshkosh.com) or participate in our late winter / early spring in-person ‘pitch night’. Applications close on May 1, 2025 at 5:00 pm CDT.

### Middle of May 2025: Finalists Chosen

Applicants will receive an email from the TEDxOshkosh team about their status as a speaker. If chosen as a finalist, we will work together to set up a mutually convenient time for you to come in for an in-person interview (video conferencing will be available for those from further away).

### Mid-May through Mid-June 2025: Finalist Interviews

This will primarily consist of learning more about your idea and how you hope to present it, as well as answering any question you might have.

### Mid-June, 2025: Speakers Chosen and Notified

If you are chosen, we will send you a contract to confirm your participation

### July 1, 2025: Speaker Contract, Headshot, Biography, and Release Due

Your first deadline! As a part of the TED family, there are certain requirements of releases and contracts that need to be completed. Your photo will be used on the website and in other advertising materials to announce your participation as a speaker, as well as a 100-150 word biography. We can’t announce you as a speaker until we have these things, so get them in right away so the world can get excited to hear your Idea Worth Spreading!

### July 15, 2025: Outline of Talk Due

A simple outline of your talk that covers the major points you will address. The TEDxOshkosh team will provide you with feedback and suggestions.

### August 1, 2025: Full-Text First-Draft

This draft will be reviewed by the team and comments shared with you so you can produce your second draft

### August 15, 2025: Second Full-Text Draft, With References

The TEDxOshkosh team will again review your talk for content & presentation style, and most importantly will fact-check your talk. You must present usable citation sources for **all** statements of fact and work that is not your own.



**September 1, 2025: *Final Draft***

This will be your final draft you will work from to learn your talk for presentation as a story, not a speech. **STOP EDITING NOW!**

**September & October 2025 *Practice Giving Your Talk – 2 Times a Day!***

Give your talk twice a day, every day, for these two months. Trust us – that half-hour per day makes the difference between a mediocre talk, and a great one. Continue to work with your speaker mentor and speaker support team to craft your Idea Worth Spreading.

**October 1, 2025: *Schedule Presentation with TEDxOshkosh Team***

Schedule with the TEDxOshkosh speaker coordinators to present your talk for the first half of October. You will give your entire talk – without notes – to the TEDxOshkosh team for review and feedback.

**October 1, 2025: *Digital Media Due***

If you have any digital media (slides, video), it is due now.

**November 14, 2025: *Sound Check & Speaker Reception***

On the evening prior to the event, the speakers will need to do a sound check (levels) in the Grand Oshkosh. This will also give you an opportunity to see the space, the backdrop, try the technology, and ask any last minute questions. **Attendance is MANDATORY.**

This evening there will also be the TEDxOshkosh speaker reception at the theater where you will do your sound check. It is an opportunity for the speakers to meet and talk with each other, the planning team, and others in the TEDxOshkosh community.

**November 15, 2025: *TEDxOshkosh 2025***

Here it is. Where all of your work has been leading. We ask that our speakers stay for the *whole event*, making yourself available to converse with audience members during breaks after your talk. You never know who will be in the audience who might be able to make your dreams a reality. You will also be our guest for the reception after the event, taking place in the Grand Lounge.

The talks given at the event will be filmed live, edited, and typically posted online within 8 weeks of the event itself.

Questions? Please contact us at [info@tedxoshkosh.com](mailto:info@tedxoshkosh.com).



## Appendix A

This is the speaker release form that is required of all TEDx speakers. You are not required to sign this now, but it is required to be signed by all selected speakers and returned to the TEDxOshkosh team by its due date. No exceptions.



### TEDxOshkosh SPEAKER RELEASE ("TEDx")

**Thank you for contributing to the TEDx Community.** Our goal is for your upcoming TEDx Talk to be widely distributed across a range of media platforms around the world. In order to do so, please review and if agreed, sign the **speaker release** below. Please note that if the materials in your TEDx Talk are not properly licensed, the Talk may be (i) rejected for publication, (ii) taken down from the TEDx YouTube channel by a copyright owner, and/or (iii) targeted for legal action due to infringement. **Please complete this form, make copies for your records and email or mail to your TEDxOshkosh contact: [speakersupport@tedxoshkosh.com](mailto:speakersupport@tedxoshkosh.com) / PO Box 1852, Oshkosh, WI 54903-1852.**

**1. Scope.** TEDxOshkosh will be recording all the presentations at the TEDx event to be held Nov. 15, 2025 (the "Event"). The Event is operated under license of TED Conferences, LLC located at 330 Hudson Street, 11th Floor, New York, NY 10013 ("TED"). This release (the "Release") represents our agreement concerning your participation at the Event. In consideration for the platform provided to you and in support of the goal of "ideas worth spreading", you agree that: (i) you have created your own presentation; (ii) the materials used in your presentation are owned by you or licensed appropriately for use; (iii) you grant TEDxOshkosh, TED and other entities authorized to do so — e.g., broadcasters — (collectively, the "TED Parties") the right to record, stream, film and photograph your presentation at the Event (the "Presentation"); and (iv) you grant TED exclusive, unrestricted rights to display, distribute, perform, reproduce, edit, create derivative works from, and/or otherwise use the Presentation anywhere around the world, in whole or in part, alone or accompanied by other material, in any and all media without any further approval from you, in perpetuity. This includes the ability to translate your Presentation into any language, and the right to sub-license the Presentation as necessary to third parties that TED deems appropriate.

**2. Personal information.** You understand and agree that by contributing to TEDxOshkosh, that you consent to have your Presentation published worldwide, and grant full consent to TEDxOshkosh and TED to process, manage, store and transmit personal information collected from your Presentation, including supporting information, such as your name, voice, photograph, likeness and biographical data (collectively, "Supporting Information") to third parties for permitted use. Examples of permitted uses of the Presentation and Supporting Information include TED's right to display the Presentation on the TEDx YouTube channel or on TED's website (TED.com) on television and distributing the Presentation on mobile phones, films, and other video distribution channels, such as iTunes, or through other third party organizations (such as airlines, hotels or corporate partners).

**3. Public distribution.** You understand and agree that TEDx Talks selected for publication may be shared under a "Creative Commons" license, CC BY – NC – ND 4.0 as long as appropriate credit

is given, not edited or distorted, nor used for **commercial purposes**.

**4. No conditions.** You understand and agree that your involvement is for the opportunity to present an idea to a wide audience and to support the TEDxOshkosh and TED mission, as good and valuable consideration. You agree that there are no other conditions required and that: (i) TEDxOshkosh and TED aren't obligated to use, publish or distribute the Presentation or Supporting Information in any way; (ii) you won't receive any form of payment in connection with the use of the Presentation and/or Supporting Information; and (iii) except as required by law, you may not revoke the rights granted in this Release.

**5. Ownership.** You affirm that: (i) you have the full power and authority to grant the rights set forth in this Release; (ii) you are the sole author of the Presentation; (iii) you have not violated the intellectual property rights of another party and have permission to include all material in the Presentation, including, but not limited to, all copyrights and trademark rights; and (iv) you will advise TEDxOshkosh in writing of all third-party material contained in the Presentation (and provide copies of licenses or permissions securing all necessary rights)..

**6. Legal claims.** If any third party claims arise stating the use of the Presentation violates their rights, you agree to hold harmless and to cooperate fully with TEDxOshkosh and TED to defend against or otherwise respond to such claim, pay license fees, if applicable, and provide written evidence of ownership of any portion of your Presentation if required.

**7. Entire agreement.** This Release contains the entire understanding between the parties and may not be modified except in a writing signed by both of us. This Release is governed by New York law, without regard to conflict-of-law principles. If you are under the age of 18, a signature from your parent/guardian is required below.