HIMSS23 Proposal Writing Guidelines

Please refer to writing guidelines listed below. For items not listed below, refer to the Associated Press (AP) Stylebook.

General
- **Employ short copy:** Minimize copy length whenever possible—say more with less.
- **Use keywords:** Include relevant keywords to help users find your content.
- **Be consistent with word usage:**
  - 3-D, not 3D
  - blockchain, not block chain
  - Congress vs. congressional
  - C-suite, not C-Suite
  - cyberattacks, cybercriminal, cybersecurity, not cyber attacks, cyber criminal, cybersecurity
  - decision-maker, decision-making, not decision maker, decision making
  - email, not e-mail
  - end user, not end-user
  - healthcare, not health care
  - HIMSS's, not HIMSS'
  - internet, not Internet
  - log in (verb) vs. login (noun or adjective)
  - meaningful use, not Meaningful Use
  - meetup, not meet-up, meet up
  - mHealth, not m-health
  - online, not on-line
  - payer, not payor
  - policymaker, not policy-maker, policy maker
  - population health, pop health, not PopHealth, pop health
  - problem-solving, not problem solving
  - smartphone, smartwatch, not smart phone, smart watch
  - startup, not start-up, start up
  - U.S., not US
  - web, website, not Web, Website, web site

Titles
- **Content:** Make it interesting and informative to encourage viewers to read your session description.
- **Capitalization:** Capitalize all words except articles (ex: a, an, the); conjunctions of three or fewer letters (ex: and, but, or); and prepositions of three or fewer letters (ex: at, by, in, out). Capitalize:
  - Conjunctions with four or more letters (ex: After, Before, Than, Until, Which)
  - Prepositions with four or more letters (ex: Above, From, Over, Through, With)
Second part of compound modifiers (ex: Value-Based), unless the second word is a preposition (ex: Walk-in)
Both parts of phrasal verbs (ex: Find Out, Hold Up, Take Off)
“To” in infinitives (ex: To Be)

**Acronyms:** Don’t define a acronym in titles; only define them in session descriptions.

**Punctuation and Style**

**Acronyms:** Define an acronym on first use if referencing it again in copy. Don’t capitalize the full term unless it is a proper noun (ex: virtual learning environment (VLE), not Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)).
• Don’t define common industry acronyms (ex: CIO, EHR, EMR).
• Use a lowercase “s” to make an acronym plural—not an apostrophe (ex: Connecting with CEOs, not Connecting with CEO’s).

**And vs. ampersands (&):** Only use ampersands when they are part of a proper name or title; otherwise, use and.

**Commas:** Only use the serial/Oxford comma when required to clarify meaning—often due to long phrases or two uses of “and” in quick succession (ex: Topics include cybersecurity, innovation, mobile health, and privacy and security).

**Designations:** Don’t include periods in designations (ex: EdD, MA, PhD).

**Ellipses:** Construct ellipses with three periods and one space to the right (ex: Cybercriminals are getting smarter... are you prepared?).

**Em dashes (—):** Use to indicate abrupt change or introduce extra material. Don’t put space around them (ex: No such interoperability tools have existed—until now).

**En dashes (–):** Use to indicate a range of numbers, including dates and times. Don’t put space around them when linking two numbers (ex: Development averages 30–40 hours).

**Forward slashes (/):** Don’t put space before or after forward slashes (ex: AI/machine learning).

**Hyphens:** Hyphenate compound modifiers that come directly before nouns (ex: value-based model, world-class education).

**Numbers:** Write out numbers one through nine; use figures for numbers 10 and higher.

**Quotes:** Use double quotes (”) and, not single quotes (’), unless quoting a word/phrase within a quote.

**Semicolons:** Use semicolons to clarify long lists and complex sentences (ex: Speakers included Brenda Swanson, CEO, Scripts for All; Robert Carlmore, director, product management, Healthmine; and Justine Lawson, education consultant, CareerCom).

**Spacing:** Use a single space (not double) after colons and at the end of all sentences.