consensus®

May 11-13, 2020 | New York, NY

Powered by
coindesk

Speaker
Submission
Guidelines

Overview

✔ As an extension of the CoinDesk newsroom, the Consensus agenda is crafted through an editorial lens that reflects the global, technological and demographic diversity of our industry.

✔ The Consensus content team is focused on creating impactful conversations, narratives and introspection that is reflective of the last 12 months and forward-looking toward the coming 12 months.

✔ Our speaker submission process is a critical tool for building an impactful and relevant agenda, and we strongly encourage submissions from across the industry.

✔ Because of spatial limitations and volume of submissions that we receive, we are only able to accept between 10-15% of applications.

✔ This manual seeks to offer guidance on how the speaker selection process is conducted, what types of speaking opportunities are available, what types of speakers we are looking for, how we evaluate submissions, what happens after you submit, etc.

✔ As a rule, all speakers and topics are chosen based purely on editorial merit and not on any "pay to play" considerations. This means speakers are selected independent of their status as sponsors, advertisers, or any other party with a financial relationship with CoinDesk.

✔ The deadline for speaker submissions is February 29, 2020. Applicants will be given a final decision about their selection status within four weeks of submitting and no later than 45 days before the event.

What is Consensus?

Consensus strives to be the premier 'Big Tent' event globally for the cryptocurrency and blockchain industry as it intersects with the worlds of legacy finance and commerce.

Since its inception in 2015, Consensus has striven to be the annual "state of the industry" event, providing an introspective look at the previous 12 months and paving the way forward for the next 12. We're called "Consensus" for a reason: we are the main forum where the industry discusses the most pivotal matters of the day, highlights the biggest successes and debates the most critical conversations.

Our goal is to reflect the best ideas and highlight the brightest minds in a manner that showcases the geographically and technologically diverse nature of the industry.

Our Principles

As the events arm of CoinDesk, the leading crypto and blockchain-focused media company, we treat Consensus - and all of our other events - as an extension of our newsroom. As such, we emphasize the editorial nature of all content that is produced on stage. This means you won't come across any advertorial content, promotional sessions or sales pitches.

Our events content team, comprised of former journalists and researchers from the Financial Times, Quartz, the Canadian Parliament and CoinDesk, is singularly focused on building Consensus into the premier industry platform for generating news and narrative-driving conversations.

A foundational principle of Consensus, just like with the CoinDesk newsroom, is editorial independence. What this looks like in practice is that all of our content and programming decisions are made independently of sponsorship or other considerations. There are **no "pay to play"** considerations made.
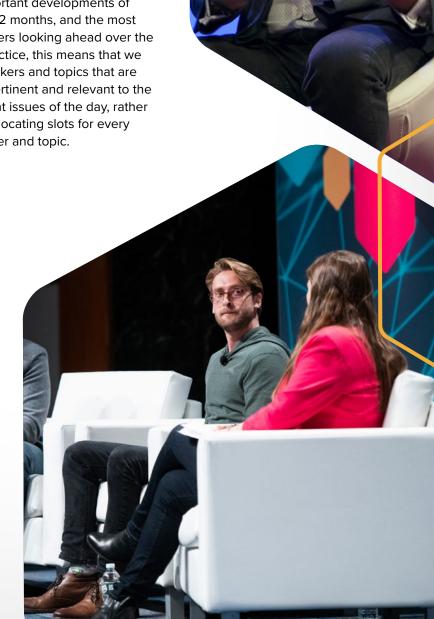
Please note that we do offer sponsored session opportunities. These are handled separately by our sales team, lie outside of the content team's purview and are clearly identified in onsite branding.
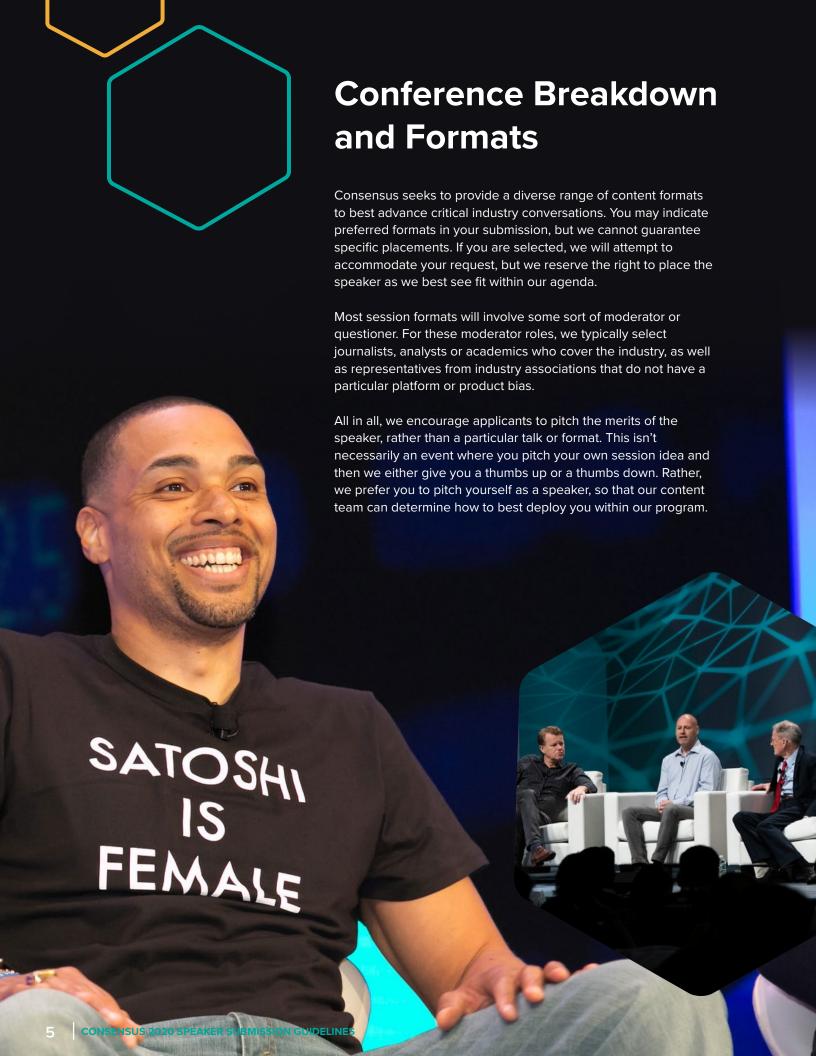
Because of the unique editorial nature of our event, it's important to note that Consensus is not a 'tabula rasa' or a neutral platform for ideas. Our program is biased in the sense that all of our on-stage content is tailored to encompass what we discern to be the most important developments of the previous 12 months, and the most pressing matters looking ahead over the next 12. In practice, this means that we highlight speakers and topics that are immediate, pertinent and relevant to the most important issues of the day, rather than simply allocating slots for every type of speaker and topic.

Our Call for Speakers

We work year-round identifying potential Consensus speakers and themes in our efforts to build a program that most accurately captures the industry's evolution. A critical part of this process is a formal Call for Speakers, and we highly encourage participants from across the industry to apply.

That said, we receive about 2,000 submissions each year from the industry's best and brightest, and can only accept between 10-15% of applicants. So rest assured that if your submission was not successful, it's not for want of quality.

Conference Breakdown and Formats

Consensus seeks to provide a diverse range of content formats to best advance critical industry conversations. You may indicate preferred formats in your submission, but we cannot guarantee specific placements. If you are selected, we will attempt to accommodate your request, but we reserve the right to place the speaker as we best see fit within our agenda.

Most session formats will involve some sort of moderator or questioner. For these moderator roles, we typically select journalists, analysts or academics who cover the industry, as well as representatives from industry associations that do not have a particular platform or product bias.

All in all, we encourage applicants to pitch the merits of the speaker, rather than a particular talk or format. This isn't necessarily an event where you pitch your own session idea and then we either give you a thumbs up or a thumbs down. Rather, we prefer you to pitch yourself as a speaker, so that our content team can determine how to best deploy you within our program.

Formats

Speech or Presentation

Because of our emphasis on dialogues, conversations and narratives, you won't see as many stand-alone speeches at Consensus as you might at other conferences. The ones we do put on stage, however, are high-impact and high-value to a broad audience.

Speeches and presentations of systemic importance to the industry (for example, the **Undersecretary of the Treasury**) will have homes on the Keynote Stage. More topic-specific and niche talks will be found occasionally across the other tracks.

Most presentations will be 20-30 minutes in length and will have Q&A periods built into the session.

Panel

The majority of the sessions you'll encounter at Consensus are panel discussions. Our standard panel format is a tight 30 minute session comprised of an expert moderator and no more than three participants. We find this structure to be most conducive to a lively and impactful conversation, and it affords each panelist sufficient opportunity to make their views known.

1:1 Dialogue

Known as a 'fireside chat' in other settings, we use these dialogues to highlight a noteworthy person or company representative who fields questions from an expert interviewer. These sessions will typically run 20-30 minutes.

Interactive, Hands-On and Experimental

Though we are a large event, we seek to grow smaller through **sessions** that allow our guests to participate directly in an interactive or hands-on fashion. These include curated coding and design-sprint type workshops, 'fishbowl' sessions, product demos and more. Have an idea for an interactive session? Feel free to suggest it in your submission.

Breakdown of Thematic Tracks

As Consensus has grown over the years, so have the number of tracks and stages incorporated into the event.

Business

The Business stage highlights the intersection of blockchain and cryptocurrencies with the traditional business world. These include sector-specific use cases like supply chain or banking, emergent opportunities like cryptocurrency mining and the role that loyalty tokens and stablecoins can play in an enterprise setting. **Sessions** on this stage are primarily panels and dialogues but can include a stand-up presentation or other format if warranted.

Markets

The Markets stage is where we showcase content pertaining to retail and institutional crypto markets, blockchain industry capital formation, regulation and compliance.

Markets **session** formats will primarily be panel sessions. We are also incorporating a new *"Trade Secrets"* module which features 30 minute presentations (20 minute talk + 10 minute Q&A) focused on a particular data point that can help inform a trade or investment decision. To be considered, proposals for these presentation slots must be dynamic, impactful and exclusive to Consensus.

Keynote

The Keynote Stage is reserved for the most significant topics with broad relevance to the market. These speaking **slots** are extremely competitive and require some type of market-moving news and/or marquee names from either inside or outside of the industry.

Construct

Blockchain-related ecosystems, projects and technology are the focus of the Construct stage. These **sessions** are a combination of presentations and panels centered around topics of interest to the developer and technologist community, ranging from Lightning Network **developments** and breakthroughs in **cryptography** to stablecoin design deep dives and discussions around **developer** considerations.

Changelog

First debuted at Consensus 2019, Changelog is a track designed to facilitate transparency and accountability in token markets. Selected blockchain projects are allocated a 30 minute slot to update their respective communities and stakeholders on project roadmaps and treasuries, and to take audience questions. These sessions will be moderated by a neutral third party organization such as Messari or CoinGecko that has a similar focus on transparency within the industry.

Projects featured on our Changelog stage at Consensus 2019 included **Tezos, Ethereum Foundation, Dfinity, Cosmos, Blockstack, Hyperledger** and more.

Workshops

Our workshop track is reserved for experimental and interactive content, as well as topical deep dives that will equip you with new skills and insights that can add immediate impact to your business, portfolio, investments or research.

For example, the Consensus 2019 workshop lineup featured a two-hour brainstorm on the role that blockchain and cryptocurrencies can play in helping to rebuild Venezuela, an examination of cryptoeconomics, deep dives into crypto funds, emerging legal topics and more.

Crypto Explainer

This is a new track for Consensus 2020 aimed at educating the next generation of crypto users and investors. These sessions will provide a hands-on look at topics such as setting up a crypto wallet, participating in the DeFi economy, reading and understanding transaction data, etc. Have a suggestion? Feel free to include in your submission.

Test Drive

Test Drive provides a hands-on environment for developers and aspiring developers to learn to build applications atop the leading blockchain protocols from representatives from those protocols themselves.

At Consensus 2019, developers were able to learn tricks of the trade firsthand from the likes of Adam Back, **Jeff Garzik** and **Sergey Nazarov,** as well as representatives from **AWS, IBM,** R3 Corda and more.

How to Create a Competitive Submission

How We Evaluate Submissions

Our goal is to field as many high-quality speaker submissions as we can, and we strive to give each one its due consideration. When assessing and grading these submissions, we employ a number of objective and subjective criteria. These include but are not necessarily limited to:

- **News and/or Announcements -** because we are an editorially-driven event, being able to create or break news at our event is an important factor in our decision-making. If you have news (or expect to have news) that you would like to announce at our event, please be as descriptive as possible in your submission (i.e. partnership with a major insurance company). We may follow up to request additional information or detail about your announcement. These conversations can be had under non-disclosure agreement if so desired.

  - Please note that you would be expected to share your news in the time allotted to you on stage; there is no guarantee of a dedicated special announcement slot. Our conference communications team will be available to help amplify your message.

- **Exclusive Insights and Analysis -** what differentiates the speaker from the rest of the pack? Do they have new and exclusive information or a relevant piece of new data to share?

- **Social media following and personal/company brand cachet.**

- **Alignment with our broader program objectives and the topical themes that we are trying to highlight.**

- **Prior speaking/on-stage experience at CoinDesk events and elsewhere.**

- **Has the speaker written for CoinDesk or been covered or quoted in CoinDesk articles?**

- **Does the speaker help us to achieve demographic and geographic diversity on our agenda?**

- **Does the speaker's company have a live product?**

- **Is the speaker a founder, CEO or C-Level executive?**

- **What unique crossover appeal does the speaker possess?**

- **Spacial and capacity considerations.**

- **Has the speaker been in the news, or is the speaker well positioned to speak on a topic of current editorial interest?**

Other factors to consider when crafting your speaker submission:

- Please limit to ONE submission per company.

- Upon completing a submission, the speaker commits to being present at the event should the submission be approved. Accepted speakers and companies who renege on this commitment may receive less favorable consideration at future CoinDesk events.

- Speaking slots are not inheritable. Should a speaker from Company X be accepted but then become unavailable, we reserve the right to allocate that slot to a different speaker altogether.

- If you are a public relations professional submitting an application on behalf of a principal, the proposed speaker's contact info must also be included in the submission. We must be able to communicate with the speaker directly to ascertain topics of discussion before approving a submission, should such a conversation be warranted. We will not negotiate speaking topics with third-party PR agencies without this information.

- We strongly urge companies to submit their founder, CEO or another C-suite representative as speakers.

- All decisions are made at the discretion of the content team on a rolling basis and are final.

- All else being equal, early submissions will be prioritized over late or last-minute ones.

- Travel subsidies are available for open-source developers, academics and independent researchers who are selected to speak. These will be awarded on a case-by-case basis.

I've Submitted My Application. What Happens Now?

We will keep you apprised every two weeks as to your selection status while our team reviews your submission. Decisions are made by the content team on a rolling basis. Our goal is to provide applicants a final decision within four weeks of submitting.

We will cease accepting submissions on **February 29, 2020.** Decisions will be made no later than 45 days before the event.

In the process of reviewing your application, our content team may reach out to learn more about the speaker or clarify items in the submission.

If you have questions about the process or a **material** update to your submission, please contact **speakers@ coindesk.com,** but please be aware that we field a very large number of applications so may not be able to respond in a timely manner.

If you are approved as a speaker, you will be provided with details of your speaking assignment approximately **three weeks** ahead of the event. For panel sessions, the moderator will be asked to set up a preliminary call with participants to talk through the on-stage discussion. For presentations and other formats, the content team will be in touch directly to walk through your session.