Abstract submission guidelines

Thank you for your interest in submitting an abstract for the Australian Disaster Resilience Conference 2027. We greatly value the innovative ideas and insights that you bring, which contribute to the success of this event. Abstract submissions for the Australian Disaster Resilience Conference 2027 are open to disaster risk reduction practitioners, volunteers, researchers and academics, industry, community and all levels of government.

To facilitate a smooth and efficient submission process, we ask that you review the submission guidelines carefully before proceeding. Adhering to these instructions will help ensure that your abstract receives the attention it deserves during the review process. Should you have any questions or require assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out. We look forward to receiving your submissions.

Conference theme

From action to impact: Driving resilience through evidence and experience

Across Australia and around the world, communities, governments, researchers and organisations are working to reduce disaster risk and strengthen resilience. While our understanding of risk continues to grow, progress is uneven and many communities remain exposed to increasingly complex and interconnected challenges.

ADRC27 will explore how ideas, knowledge and commitments are being translated into meaningful action, and how that action is contributing to *a future where hazards do not become disasters*.

The conference will showcase initiatives, partnerships, policies and practices that have moved beyond intention to create meaningful outcomes. Presenters will be encouraged to share not only what they did, but what changed, for whom, how that change is understood and what others can learn from the experience.

Impact may be demonstrated in different ways. This could include quantitative or qualitative evidence, community feedback, lived experience, changes in policy or practice, stronger partnerships, reduced exposure or vulnerability, improved decision-making, or progress towards preventing harm. ADRC27 will recognise that some of the most important disaster risk reduction outcomes are difficult to measure, particularly where success means that harm was avoided or the conditions that create risk have changed.

Through practical examples, evidence and honest reflection, ADRC27 will consider what is making a difference, what remains challenging and how promising approaches can be sustained, adapted or applied in different contexts.

Sub-themes

How to use the sub-themes

These sub-themes are submission pathways, not checkboxes. Choose the pathway that best fits your work. Each pathway includes a purpose explanation to keep contributions practical and transferable.

1. Community leadership and collective action

This sub-theme will explore how communities and local leaders are shaping decisions, building capability and creating locally relevant approaches to disaster risk reduction and resilience. It will provide a home for submissions about:

- community-led and place-based resilience
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and leadership
- multicultural community leadership
- young people and intergenerational approaches
- lived experience in planning and decision-making
- volunteering and community networks
- local government and community partnerships
- social cohesion, participation and belonging

Submissions should explain how communities were involved, what changed through that involvement and how the resulting outcomes are understood.

2. Adapting to an interconnected risk landscape

This sub-theme will examine how communities, places and systems are responding to climate change, emerging threats and risks that cross traditional geographic, organisational and sector boundaries. It will provide a home for submissions about:

- climate adaptation
- heat, flood, bushfire and coastal risk
- managed retreat and relocation
- nature-based solutions
- cascading and compound risks
- housing, health and infrastructure resilience
- essential services and supply chains
- misinformation and harmful information
- anticipatory and long-term planning

Submissions may present successful approaches, emerging practice or honest accounts of complex work where outcomes are still developing. Presenters should explain what has changed, what has been learned through implementation and what the work could mean for future practice.

3. Changing the systems that create risk

This sub-theme will explore how organisations and sectors are working beyond individual projects to address the wider social, economic, environmental and institutional factors that create or increase disaster risk. It will provide a home for submissions about:

- systems-based disaster risk reduction
- underlying drivers of risk and vulnerability
- risk-informed policy, planning and development
- governance and shared accountability
- collaboration across sectors and portfolios
- equity, inclusion and accessibility
- institutional and cultural change
- integrated approaches across prevention, preparedness, response and recovery
- policy and practice reform

Submissions should demonstrate how the work has influenced, or is beginning to influence, the wider system rather than focusing only on the activities of an individual project.

4. Investing in lasting change

This sub-theme will explore what enables effective disaster risk reduction and resilience initiatives to continue, grow and create sustained value. It will provide a home for submissions about:

- investment and financing for disaster risk reduction
- innovative and diversified funding approaches
- moving beyond short-term project funding
- demonstrating public, community, social or environmental value
- partnerships that support long-term action
- evaluation and understanding impact
- data and evidence for decision-making
- sustaining effective initiatives
- adapting or applying successful approaches in different contexts

Special session: Lightning stories (10-minute storytelling)

Stories of resilience, connection and change

Stories are often about a moment, a decision, a conversation, a disaster, a relationship or a turning point. This dedicated storytelling session will share personal and community experiences that reveal the human dimensions of disaster risk reduction and resilience.

The session will create space for **community members** to reflect on an experience, relationship, decision or moment of collective action that created change. Stories do not need to present formal evaluation findings. Their value may lie in lived experience, personal insight, community knowledge or a shift in understanding.

Stories may explore:

- lived experience of disaster risk and disruption
- community action and local leadership
- moments that changed decisions or practice
- identity, connection and belonging
- unexpected outcomes
- barriers that were challenged or overcome
- the human experience behind policies and programs
- what impact looks like from a community perspective

The session will connect the conference's focus on action and impact with the people and communities at the heart of disaster resilience.

Abstract submission types

All presentations must adhere to the subject matter as outlined in the abstract submitted.

Oral presentation	An oral presentation is a verbal presentation by one to three presenters. PowerPoint slides may be used. Presenters will present the content as outlined in their abstract. Names of all presenters must be provided in the abstract at the time of submission.
Panel presentation	A panel presentation is a verbal presentation and/or discussion by three or more presenters. Names of the panellists must be provided in the abstract. Presenters will generally be seated in a more casual seating arrangement on the stage to facilitate a more informal conversation.
Poster	Posters are a summary of the presenter's research or project content and findings and are displayed in the Knowledge Centre in the Exhibition Hall near the AIDR stand and Resilience Lane. Please note that abstracts for other presentation types that are not selected may be offered the opportunity to be presented as a poster.
Lightning storytelling session	This special session features short, story-driven lightning talks (10 minutes each) from community members who became resilience advocates through lived experience, community work, policy moments, unexpected career pivots, or creative practice often outside traditional disaster risk reduction (DRR) pathways. The purpose is to celebrate and highlight people who didn't start in DRR but became powerful changemakers, exploring the unique journeys and practical lessons that shaped their impact. Stories may explore a personal experience, community initiative, relationship, decision or turning point that created change. The focus should be on authentic storytelling and practical insight rather than a formal project or research presentation.

Selection criteria

Abstracts need to meet the following criteria to be eligible for consideration:

- Applicants may submit a maximum of one abstract per submission type. See previous section for description of submission types.
- Abstracts should be 300 words or less. Abstracts over this limit will not be assessed.
- Abstracts should clearly outline how they reflect the conference theme.
- Abstracts should demonstrate how the Australian Disaster Resilience Conference delegates will benefit from the presentation.
- For panel presentations, the names of all proposed panel members must be included in the submission.
- Abstracts may be referred by ADRC27 Program Committee to the AFAC27 Program Committee if the abstract is more closely aligned with the AFAC27 conference theme.

Assessment criteria

The ADRC27 Program Committee will assess the abstracts against the following criteria:

- Clearly defined purpose
- Engages with the theme, and selected subtheme
- Demonstrates brave and innovative thinking
- Encourages and empowers transformation in policy, practice, partnerships, or community outcomes
- Inspires action and change
- Provides practical impact and transferability.

Language

Use clear and concise language, and avoid the use of jargon and acronyms. Ensure your language is inclusive. AIDR recommends avoiding use of the phrase 'natural disasters', following the guidance of the United Nations Office of Disaster Risk Reduction No Natural Disasters | UNDRR.

Key documents and frameworks

We welcome consideration of, and reference to, key Australian and global disaster risk reduction documents, including:

- National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework
- Second National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction
- Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030

The Australian Disaster Resilience Knowledge Hub houses a comprehensive collection of international, national and state documents that frame disaster resilience.

Key dates

Thursday 26 November 2026	**Submissions open** Applicants are invited to submit an abstract using this portal. Their abstract can be a personal submission, a submission on behalf of a colleague, or a submission on behalf of their organisation. Abstracts must address the Australian Disaster Resilience Conference 2027 theme.
Monday 1 February 2027	**Submissions close at 11pm AEDT** Submissions must be lodged on the Australian Disaster Resilience Conference 2027 abstract portal.
Late March 2027	**Program finalised and applicants notified** Shortlisted abstracts will be selected by the Australian Disaster Resilience Conference 2027 Program Committee, and endorsed by the Steering Committee by Thursday 25 March 2027. Successful applicants will receive a formal offer as soon as possible following endorsement by the Steering Committee. Applicants whose submissions were not selected may be offered the opportunity to display their work as a poster in the Knowledge Centre. Please note that all decisions made by the Program Committee are final.
Thursday 8 April 2027	**Applicants accept offer** Following the acceptance of their offer, speakers agree to register to attend the conference.
Friday 11 June 2027	Presenters provide high-resolution photo and up to 200-word bio to info@afacconference.com.au.
Monday 2 August 2027	Presenters submit their final presentation slides, if applicable. An event template will be provided to presenters.

Enquiries

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