

Call for Community Questions

The Rural Futures Institute aspires to connect rural communities with university resources to help create vibrant futures in rural places. During the 2013 Rural Futures Conference, organizations, communities and regions are invited to pose unique, specific, challenging questions concerning the future of their place. These questions will then be posed during a conference session where attendees are invited to offer their unique insights and expertise in imagining ways to respond. Through this “mash-up” session, the Rural Futures Institute hopes to facilitate new, action-oriented partnerships that tap the potential of collaboration between communities and student interns, graduate students, faculty and service providers.



Community Involvement

We are asking communities to share their compelling, concise, future-oriented questions about their place. What important opportunity(ies)/issues(s)/problem(s) is your community currently facing or do you see on the horizon for your place? How would you frame these concerns in the form of a question? Some examples of promising questions might include:

- “How can we provide quality of life amenities for both young families and older community residents with limited funding available?”;
- “What is the formula for high quality, affordable child care in small communities?”;
- “How do we build a community culture of entrepreneurship?”;
- “How do we provide local access to higher education?”

Keep in mind that, for the purpose of this exercise, “community” can refer broadly to both communities of place (i.e., town, county) or communities of interest (i.e., rural firefighter’s association, ranching families, young professionals).

Upon the proposal deadline, the submitted community questions will be juried. The jury committee will select up to 20 diverse and unique community questions to be featured at the 2013 Rural Futures Conference. In addition to being featured at the conference, the selected communities will receive three complimentary registrations to the 2013 Rural Futures Conference.

Tips for Developing a Community Question*

- Use 1-2 sentences
- Identify a specific opportunity/issue/problem
- Describe community: location, population, demographics, major assets, etc.

- Use words that reflect the nature of the question (i.e., qualitative questions might use *understand* or *discover* while quantitative questions might use *measure* or *gauge*)

*Before and after submission, RFI staff can and will help frame community questions.

At the Conference

If your community question is selected, you will showcase your question at the Rural Futures Conference from 5-7 pm on November 4. During this allotted time, community representatives will be asked to stand by their respective community question display. Alongside the academic poster session, your big question will provide an opportunity for you to connect with others who are interested in your community's situation. This is a unique twist to networking and will present your community with an opportunity to develop new ideas and think outside the box.

Dates & Deadlines

| | |
|--------------|--|
| August 1 | Call for questions released |
| September 25 | Call for questions due <i>Proposed questions due by 5 pm CST via ruralfutures.nebraska.edu/questionproposal</i> |
| October 9 | RFI announces selected community questions |
| October 9-18 | Selected communities work with RFI staff to prepare for conference session |
| November 4 | Community questions featured at Rural Futures Conference |

Requirements of Community Questions

- Name of community
- Primary contact person
- Name and contact information of three anticipated 2013 RFC attendees (at least one of these attendees must be less than 30 years of age)
- The question, concisely written
- Community demographics
 - Identify community of place or community of interest
 - Population demographics
 - Description of community (country/region/etc.)

Please note that the submission of a community question does not automatically guarantee a community's participation at the Rural Futures Conference.

For questions about the Call for Community Questions, visit ruralfutures.nebraska.edu/conference or email ruralfutures@nebraska.edu.

Sample Community Question

If your community question is selected, you will showcase your question at the Rural Futures Conference from 5-7pm on November 4. During this allotted time, community representatives will be asked to stand by their community question display.

COMMUNITY NAME

Town A

PRIMARY CONTACT PERSON

| Name | Organization | Email | Phone |
|-----------|--------------|---------------------|--------------|
| Joe Smith | Business X | Joe.Smith@email.com | 000-111-2222 |

ANTICIPATED CONFERENCE ATTENDEES

| | Name | Organization | Email | DOB |
|--|------------|--------------|----------------------|------------|
| Attendee 1: | Jane Smith | Business A | Jane.smith@email.com | NA |
| Attendee 2: | John Smith | Business B | John.smith@email.com | NA |
| Attendee 3*: <i>*Must be less than 30 years of age</i> | Jen Smith | Business C | Jen.Smith@email.com | 02/10/1987 |

THE QUESTION

How can our community take advantage of our state college system and better integrate the college students into the community?

COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS

- Community of place
- Population: 20,944
- Median resident age: 27.4
- Strong town square with great local businesses and public space
- Recent residential and commercial growth on edge of town