

SRE CON[®] — AMERICAS



Rev. 02/09/2023

SANTA CLARA, CA, USA • March 21–23, 2023*Sponsored by USENIX, the Advanced Computing Systems Association*

Important Dates

- Talk and panel proposals due: **Thursday, December 1, 2022, 11:59 PST**
- Notification to talk and panel presenters: **Thursday, January 5, 2023**
- Confirmation of acceptances and deadline for program materials: **Monday, January 16, 2023**
- Proposals for lightning talks due: ~~Wednesday, February 8, 2023, 8:00 pm PST~~ **Monday, February 13, 2023, 8:00 pm PST**
- Notification to lightning talk presenters: **Wednesday, February 22, 2023**
 - Slides due for selected lightning talks: **Friday, March 10, 2023**

Overview

SREcon23 Americas is the first of three global SREcon events in 2023. Join us in-person as we reflect on the role of Site Reliability Engineering (SRE) in a changing world, discuss technical advances and current engineering trends, and dream about SRE in the future. We welcome submissions of talks on a variety of topics including but not limited to the concepts listed in the “Suggested Topics” section found below on this page.

SRE as a practice (whether you call it SRE or something else) exists not only in technology-focused companies but also in organizations of all sizes and backgrounds. Your insights will help create a meaningful, diverse, and inclusive program for SREcon23 Americas. Conversations are never complete when they focus just on successes; we also encourage talks that focus on lessons learned from failures, incidents, and hard problems.

We look forward to learning from both new and experienced speakers across SRE and the broader systems engineering space. This year we'd like to have even more speakers from different fields of work and those who haven't presented before. Many of our best talks have come from people with new perspectives to share. At each SREcon globally, we welcome and encourage attendance from all individuals from any country with an emphasis on “in-region” presenters, including people that are often underrepresented in or excluded from technology, including (but certainly not limited to): people of all colors, women, the LGBTQIA+ community, people with disabilities, neurodivergent participants, students, and veterans. Similarly, we welcome participants from

diverse professional roles such as QA testers, customer experience/support, security teams, DBAs, network administrators, compliance experts, UX designers, health care professionals, scientists, and economists. Regardless of who you are or the job title you hold, if you are a technologist who faces unique challenges and shares our areas of interest, we encourage you to be a part of SREcon23 Americas.

Proposals

- Talks
 - 15-minute talks with an additional 5 minutes for Q&A
 - 35-minute talks with an additional 10 minutes for Q&A
- Panels
 - Discuss a specific topic and engage in a conversation with a small group in front of the attendees.
 - Duration is flexible.
- 4-minute lightning talks with auto-advancing slides:
 - We are accepting proposals for 4-minute Lightning Talks on any topic related to the practice of Site Reliability Engineering. Each selected talk should have exactly 16 slides, auto-advancing to the next slide every 15 seconds. The time limit is strict, so make sure that you have only one core idea for your talk. Talk submissions are due on February 8, 2023. Slides for selected Lightning Talks are due on March 10 so that they can be run centrally. Please submit your proposals via the web submission system linked from the Call for Participation web page.

Suggested Topics

These topics are designed to help generate ideas for submissions. They are by no means inclusive of all ideas and we welcome submissions outside of these suggestions as well.

Systems Engineering/Principles

Talks on these subjects should focus on providing a deeper understanding of how key technologies used in large-scale distributed systems work: their architecture, their strengths and their sharp edges, and new developments. These are the details you need when designing, supporting, and scaling your infrastructure. Talks that deal with applied theory (e.g., queueing theory, load balancing theory, consistency models) are particularly welcome.

We seek proposals on a number of topics, such as:

- **Performance** (e.g., OS features, hardware design, bottlenecks)
- **Databases** (e.g., how is data stored on disk in MySQL, PostgreSQL performance, consistency models)
- **Observability** (e.g., monitoring overview, events vs. metrics, visualizations, debugging, scaling your monitoring infrastructure)
- **Distributed Systems** (e.g., consistency and consensus, Hadoop, MapReduce, Jupyter Notebooks, Containers)
- **Network** (e.g., SD WAN, load balancing, DNS, IP protocols, layer 2 networks, BGP)
- **Firmware** (e.g., Open Source Firmware, UEFI)
- **Security** (e.g., TPMs, Hardware Security Modules, transport encryption, filesystem encryption, data management)

Complex Systems in Action: Scaling, Incidents, Near Misses, and Learning from the Expected and Unexpected

- Talks centered around dealing with unplanned capacity constraints, scale, and latency
- All things incidents, including but not limited to incident management and coordination, analyzing incidents and near misses, and preparing through activities such as game days, tabletop exercises, and drills
- Experiences with chaos engineering and driving adoption across teams
- How teams and organizations learn from the unexpected and use information from incidents and other unexpected events, including learnings or systemic changes implemented as a result of learning from others' outages

Supporting the Humans in the Systems

- Career development, mentoring/internships, and supporting diversity in SRE
- Scaling work in a sustainable way, as well as topics around addressing and avoiding burnout
- Creating psychological safety in teams and organizations, especially in high-pressure and high-stakes environments

Panel Discussions

- Compare and contrast how SRE is practiced across different types of systems or technical domains. What are the nuances you have discovered or experienced? Invite key stakeholders from these systems to participate in a discussion
- Tell us about a challenging incident that you have experienced and resolved. Bring some of your team members onto this panel and tell us the story about what happened and how the team coordinated, reacted to, and solved the problem.

Speaker Information

To see the details of what we want to know about your proposal to speak, we encourage you to visit the talks submission system linked from the Call for Participation web page.

Please note that we make use of a two-phase submission process: Phase 1 provides details needed for the program committee to pick the best content. Phase 2 is where you provide your personal information and the short description for the program agenda. Only accepted and waitlisted proposals will proceed through Phase 2; that information *must* be provided by January 16.

Both presenters and organizers may withdraw or decline proposals for any reason, even after initial acceptance. Speakers must submit their own proposals; third-party submissions, even if authorized, will be rejected.

If you have questions about this Call for Participation, feel free to drop us a message at srecon23americas_chairs@usenix.org. If you are a new presenter or would just like some extra help, please reach out. We are happy to provide support.

SREcon23 Americas is scheduled to be held in Santa Clara, California on March 21–23, 2023. While we will consider talks from remote only presenters, we strongly encourage in-person presentations at the conference.

Background

SREcon is a gathering of engineers who care deeply about site reliability, systems engineering, and working with complex distributed systems at scale. Our purpose is to be inclusive as we bring together ideas representative of our diverse community, whether its members are focusing on a global scale, launching new products and ideas for a small business, or pivoting their approach to unite software and systems engineering. SREcon challenges both those new to the profession as well as those who have been involved in SRE or related endeavors for years. The conference culture is built upon respectful collaboration amongst all participants in the community through critical thought, deep technical insights, continuous improvement, and innovation.

For more information on the themes and programs of past conferences, see the list of past conferences available at <https://www.usenix.org/srecon#past>.

Conference Organizers

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