What follows is a sample email message that was used by the 2017 IASSIST Program Chairs. It is a suggestion of what you should include when inviting someone to be a plenary speaker. With regard to finances, that depends on the budget that given year. Please see the manual section on *Finances Related to Plenary Speakers, Workshop Presenters, Honored Members, etc.*

Dear Dr. [*lastname*],

We’re writing in the hope that you might be willing to serve as the keynote speaker for the International Association for Social Science Information Service and Technology ([IASSIST](http://www.iassistdata.org/)) for our 2017 conference in Kansas. [name drop with current title] suggested you would be perfect, and your background is very well aligned with the organization and the topic. We’re interested in having you address [*topic*] [in 2017: data writ large: what’s next for data globally, what’s coming in twenty years (or even five, since technology is moving so fast)?]

IASSIST is the premier professional organization for data librarians but is much broader than just that in its membership: we have statisticians, data archivists, faculty, folks who work in data centers and federal statistical agencies, technology experts, etc. The meeting is at the University of Kansas in Lawrence, near Kansas City, May 24–26, 2017, and we are hoping you would be willing to speak on Wednesday, May 24th for the opening session in the morning. We can cover $[*amount*] in travel costs.

Below is more information on the organization and the conference. Please let us know if you would be interested. We are, of course, available for any questions you may have.

Thank you for considering,

Michele Hayslett, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Samantha Guss, University of Richmond

Conference Program Co-chairs

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**Background on the association**: IASSIST has been around since the mid-1970s. It is (obviously) international in scope and the meeting rotates between the U.S., Canada and Europe (this year’s conference was in Bergen, Norway). In the past five years (maybe ten), the association has offered travel stipends to attendees from developing countries, too, so our attendance from African nations in particular is growing. Our name is reportedly a “bacronym,” engineered backwards from the words, “I assist,” because we all assist our users with navigating data. Although the name specifically includes “social science” and we still have a large contingent of people from the social sciences, we’re broadening our scope to be more inclusive of the sciences.

We won’t put out the **call for proposals** until September but here is a draft to give you a better sense of the conference; past conference agendas are available on the [web site](http://www.iassistdata.org/conferences).

Many issues around data (sources, strategies and tools) are extremely similar across disciplines. IASSIST has its roots in social science data. We see that disciplinary divisions between data organizations are less and less meaningful for those who support researchers and, because of that background, we want to arrange a conference that focuses not only on the social sciences but crosses over disciplinary boundaries, and benefits social science data too. Please join us "in the middle" of the U.S., in Lawrence, KS, for a conference that crosses over such disciplinary boundaries, and be inspired by how researchers in disciplines other than your own are finding, manipulating and managing data!

We welcome submissions on the theme outlined above and encourage conference participants to propose papers and sessions that will be of interest to a diverse audience. To facilitate the organization and scheduling of sessions, five distinct tracks have been established. If you are unsure to which track your submission belongs or if you feel that it applies to more than one track, submit your proposal and if accepted, the Program Committee will find an appropriate fit.

**2017 Tracks**:

Data Sources & User Services

Reference

Instruction / teaching / curriculum

Data sharing

Data visualization

Research Hub-type installations to provide technology tools and services, especially around data

Data Policies

Partnerships with other campus services

Tools & Technologies

Manipulation / Analysis / Movement / Storage

Data sharing

Data visualization

Apps & APIs

Data Management & Metadata

Repositories

Instruction/teaching/curriculum

Data policies

DDI uses and updates

Other metadata standards

Intellectual Property

Ethics

Anonymization

Reproducibility

Open Data

Sharing

Strategies, Stakeholders, Advocacy

Strategic planning / future scoping

Outreach to users

Data policies

Networking with other providers

Ex. “how to set up” “how to do x on a shoestring” aimed at people who are trying to figure out what to do

things people are considering, not necessarily implemented yet