The fifty-third conference of the Mormon History Association will be held June 7 – 10, 2018, at the Grove Hotel and Convention Center in Boise, Idaho. The 2018 conference theme “Homelands and Bordered Lands” raises questions about how borders both disrupt and generate ideas about individuals’ and communities’ “homes,” broadly construed. The theme highlights the ways in which the dynamic interactions between peoples, places, and identities have always been central to Mormon histories.

The conference theme “Homelands and Bordered Lands” connects the history of the Latter-day Saints to Idaho’s diverse past. Idaho is first and foremost a Native homeland. The first Mormon settlement in the Idaho was created near present-day Salmon, Idaho, at Fort Lemhi in 1855. Immigration by Mormons and other Euro-Americans caused conflict with Native communities and led to the depletion of natural resources as well as outbreaks of violence. On the other hand, there have also been many instances of cooperation and mutual respect between the various communities.

Idaho has also always been a place where the boundaries of Mormon identity have been negotiated. The state has been a refuge and highway for those seeking to practice plural marriage. Polygamy contributed to a pronounced strain of anti-Mormonism in Idaho politics and law in the late nineteenth century. Idaho also has a healthy tradition of Mormon education, intellectualism, and dissent. Ricks College, now BYU-Idaho, has been foundational in LDS higher education. Furthermore, Leonard Arrington was born in Twin Falls and graduated from the University of Idaho, Sonia Johnson was born in Malad, Maxine Hanks attended Ricks, and the blog Feminist Mormon Housewives was founded in Boise.

While Idaho provides a rich tableau for the study of Mormonism in the context of the state’s history as a multiracial, multi-ethnic, and multireligious place, we also seek papers and panels that address the theme of “Homelands and Bordered Lands” from any vantage point in the Mormon past. In addition to papers and panels that address the conference theme, the program committee also welcomes proposals on any topic in Mormon history.

The Mormon History Association intentionally embraces both academic and amateur historians. The conference organizers encourage submissions that think outside of the traditional format for conference sessions. We encourage people to organize roundtables, “cafés” in which participants are arranged in small groups to discuss a topic, pre-circulated papers, and so forth. Additional ideas for alternative session formats can be found at: http://solveforinteresting.com/category/good-conference/event-sessions/

Please send 1) a 300-word abstract for each paper or presentation and 2) a brief 1-2 page CV for each presenter, including email contact information. Session proposals should also include the session title and a 300-word session abstract, along with a confirmed chair and/or commentator, if applicable.

Previously published papers are not eligible for presentation at MHA. An individual may only submit one proposal as a session presenter, although it is acceptable for a presenter in one session to be a chair or commentator in another. Limited financial assistance is available to some student presenters and presenters from less economically-developed nations. Those who wish to apply for funding should include estimated travel expenses with their proposals. Since its founding in 1965, the Mormon History Association has been dedicated to the promotion of intellectually rigorous, diverse scholarship on the history of the Mormon tradition. To help us create a welcoming space that embraces work from a wide variety of methodological and religious viewpoints, we encourage individuals to organize panels for the 2018 Conference in Boise, Idaho, that include presenters from a variety of institutional, social, and religious backgrounds. The program committee will give preference to panels that reflect the diversity of the historical profession by featuring women and underrepresented minorities.

The deadline for proposals is November 15, 2017. Proposals should be sent to the program co-chairs at mhaboise2018@gmail.com. Notification of acceptance or rejection will be made by December 15, 2017.