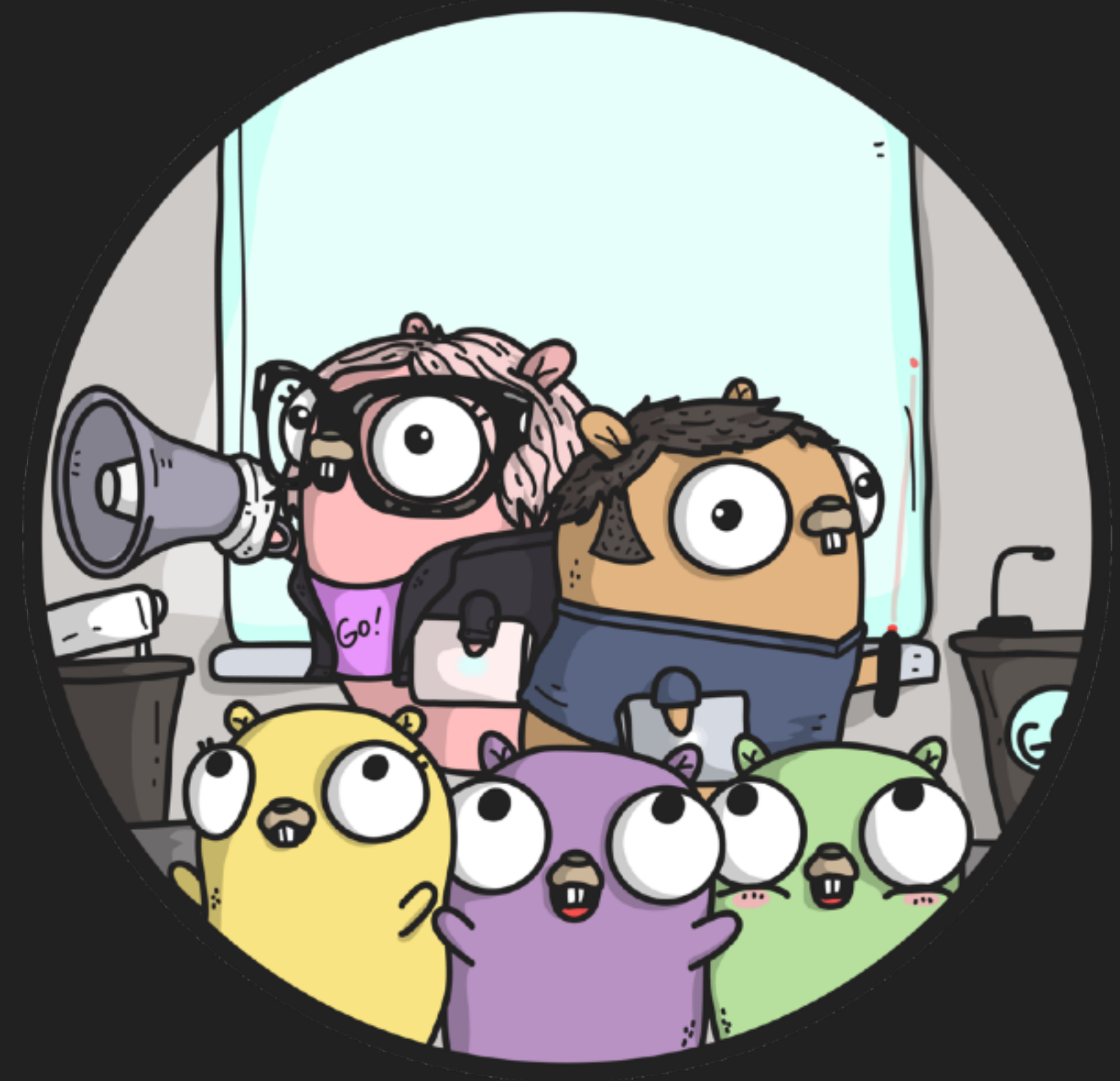


Write a Go Conference Proposal

Tips for getting your talk accepted

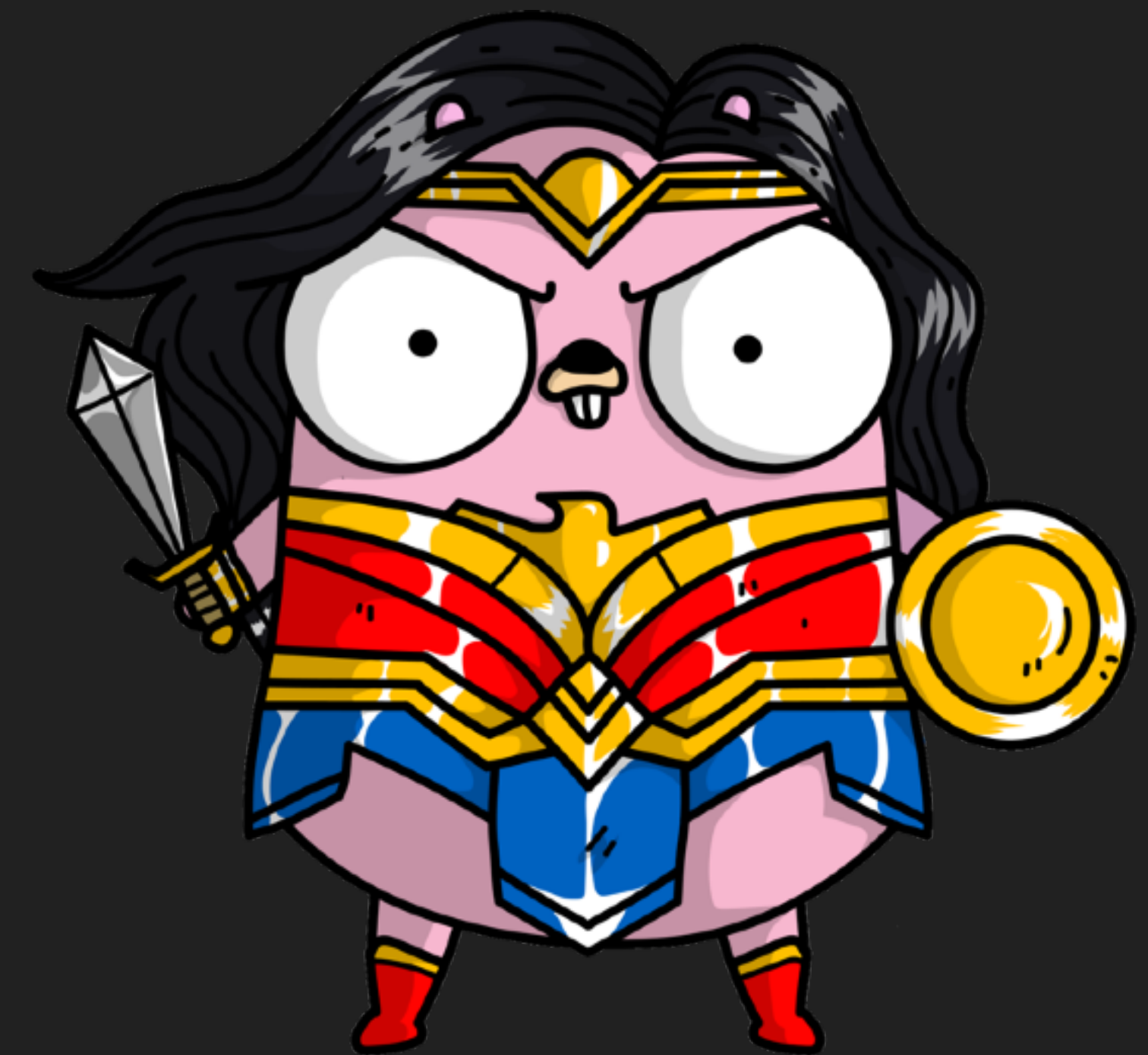


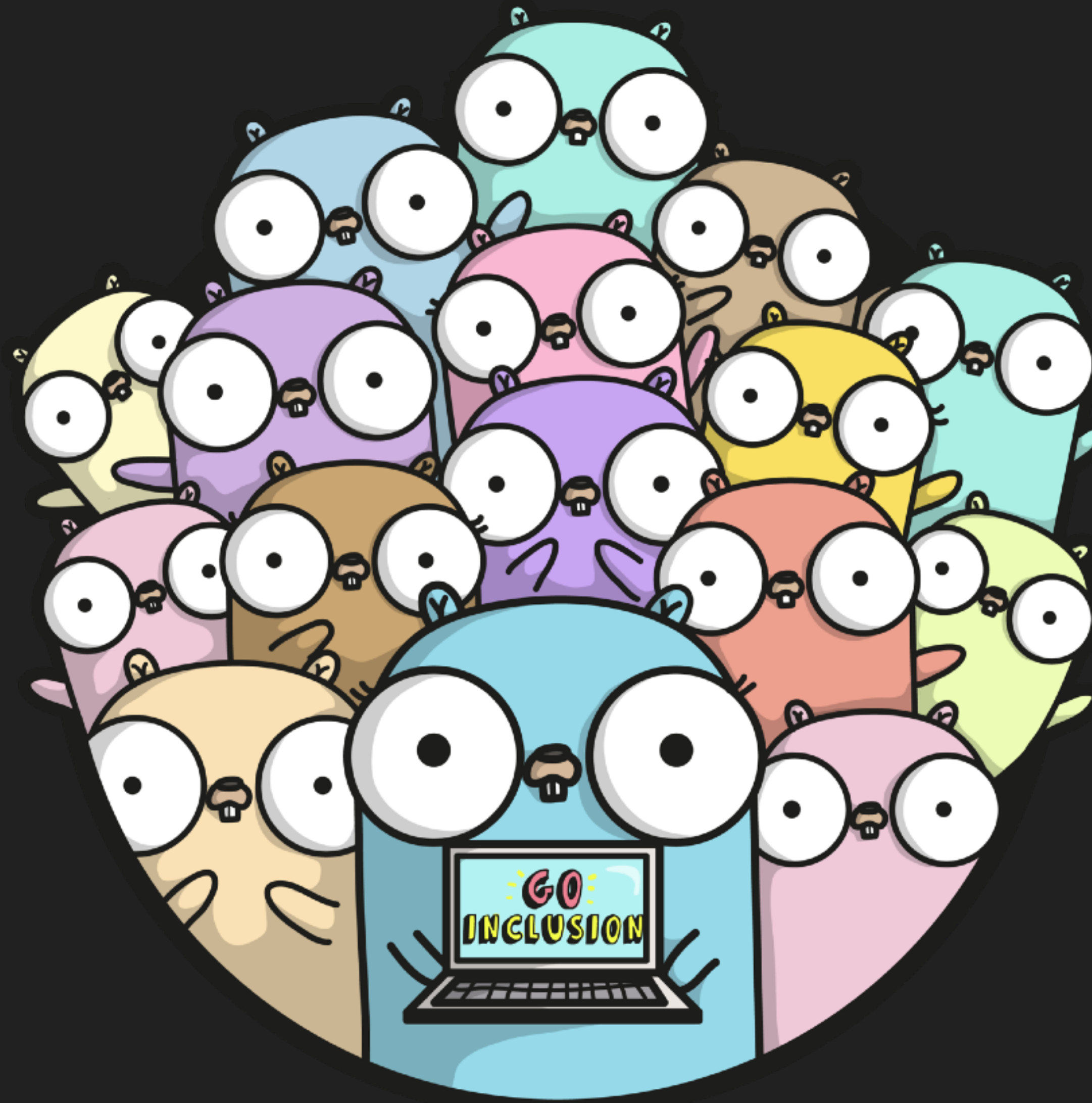
Carolyn Van Slyck

April 2022

Tonight, I am a rogue gopher

- Reviewer for GopherCon CFP for the past few years
- Leadership team for GoBridge and Women Who Go
- Advice is based on GopherCon materials, and my own experience
- **I am not representing GopherCon, GoBridge or Women Who Go. This is my personal opinion.**





Gophers want to hear your ideas



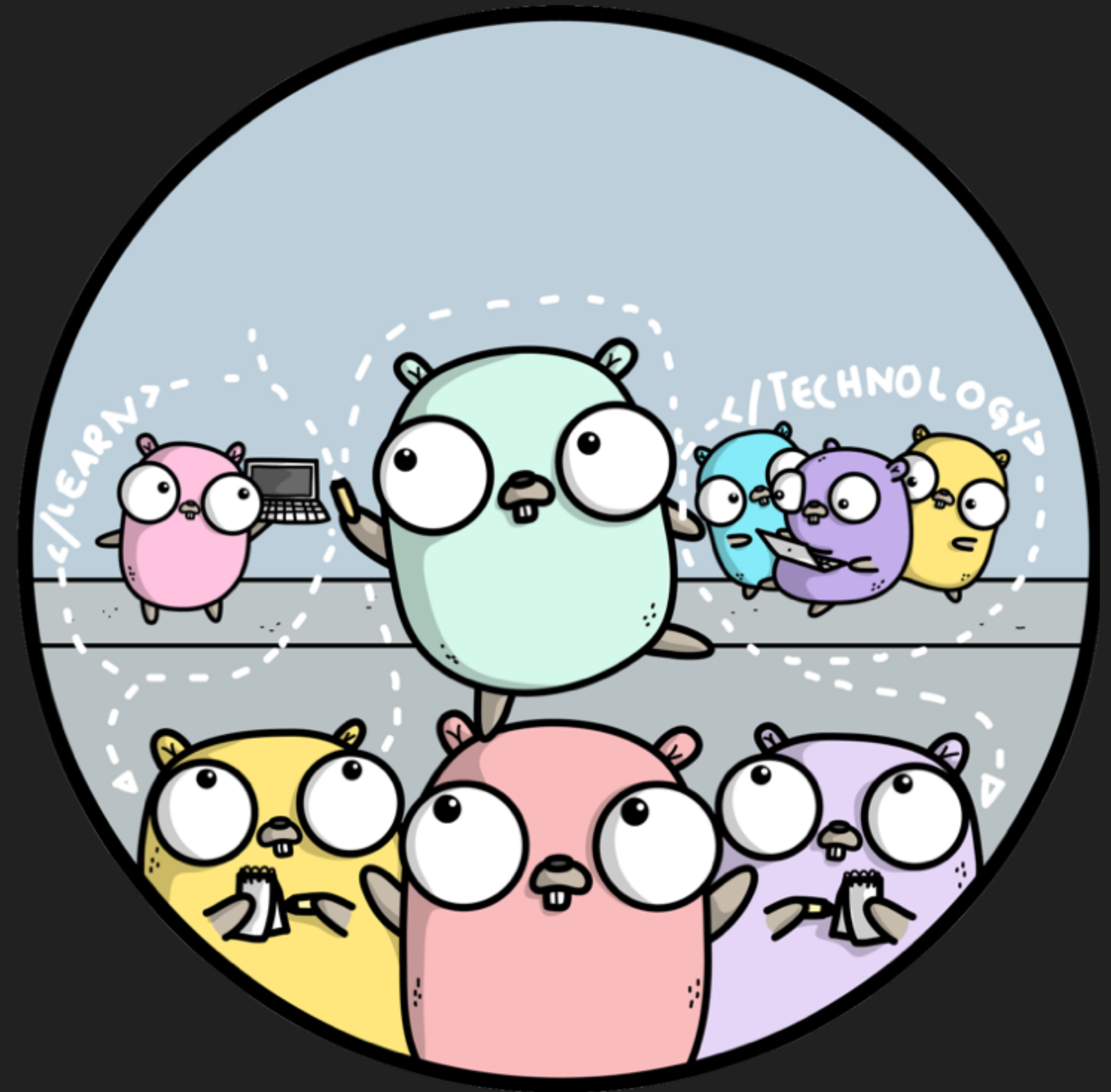
Each Go conference is different



Proposals should be

- Useful
- Relevant
- Correct
- Clear
- Achievable

<https://www.papercall.io/gophercon-2022>



Useful

What does the audience takeaway from your talk?

Learn: Concepts, techniques, and tools

Act: Actionable takeaways

Grow: Change how people see the world

Learn

“Channels provide a simple mechanism for goroutines to communicate, and a powerful construct to build sophisticated concurrency patterns. We will delve into the inner workings of channels and channel operations, including how they're supported by the runtime scheduler and memory management systems.”

Kava Joshi

Understanding Channels

Act

“Suggestions for structuring your commands to help users quickly and intuitively learn your cli:

- **Select a grammar**, a basis for making decisions about what your commands and flags will look like so you aren't arguing later [...]
- **Understand existing tools in your ecosystem** so you can take advantage of muscle memory and point to precedent when desirable
- **Have a plan for how people will [...] use your help text.”**

Carolyn Van Slyck

Design Command-Line Tools People Love

Grow

“There’s never been a better time to adopt Go. The language is attracting more newcomers every day and by all accounts, its community has a lot to do with it. If, however, we want to retain what makes Go special beyond the language itself, we, as a community, must recognize and amplify what makes us great and address what threatens our unity.”

Johnny Boursiquot

What Got Us Here, Won't Get Us There

Relevant

A Go talk should:

- Be about Go or the Go ecosystem
- Not just about “X written in Go”
- Belong at a Go conference

Can I talk about my Go app?

Use Porter to package and deploy applications

VS

Reproducible builds with go mods and Project Athens

Can I talk about my Go Library?

Learn how to use my Go http library

VS

Writing cross-platform build scripts with Mage

The same old story

- Focus on transferable takeaways
- Show a new angle on a old topic

**WHY
WE USE GO**

**OUR GO
MIGRATION**

**GO BEST
PRACTICES
AT COMPANY**

**IMPROVING
THE LIVES
OF ALL GOPHERS**

imgflip.com



More than a story

Zillow has hundreds of services that are used to connect millions of consumers to real estate partners. Their team has been ramping up usage of Go at Zillow; this tutorial will share how they write maintainable Go services, repeatedly. Doing so allows developers at Zillow to focus on adding business value while making important things like instrumentation, configuration, and resiliency transparent. You will learn how they compose their applications to be transport agnostic, highly testable, and easy to maintain.

Arish Labroo

How we Go at Zillow

Correct

- Prove that you will provide correct information with solid best practices
- Avoid unfounded opinions or advice that only applies to your company

Give away all your secrets

- Busting common myths? Got 3 tips?
List them in the notes!
- Don't be coy, name that app, library, or project.
- Demonstrating an unusual code trick?
Include snippets so we can vet it

Hi, my name is 🗑️

- Superheroes and speakers should keep their identities private
- Don't include your name but it's okay to provide facts that they could use to identify you when relevant
- Sharing that you are a creator, maintainer, employee can demonstrate why you know the topic well

Clear

- What topics are covered
- What problems are addressed or solved
- What the audience will takeaway

Topic

“In this talk, I’ll start with a brief history of broken dependencies both inside and outside our community. Then, I’ll summarize why proxies matter, how they help solve broken dependencies today, and where they’re still lacking. Finally, I’ll focus specifically on how Athens solves many of those problems, and I’ll show a live demo of Athens in action!”

Aaron Schlesinger

The Athens Project

Problem Solved

We used to download dependency code directly from GitHub, and that led to major problems for the community. Over time, heavily used packages would change owners or disappear completely, leaving everyone who used it out in the cold. But now we can build federated module proxies [...]

This new development lets us, as a community, treat our dependencies as immutable artifacts, free up the package owner to focus on development, and separate the code from the released module artifact.

Aaron Schlesinger

The Athens Project

Takeaways

You'll walk away understanding **why module proxies and Athens matter**, where they're already being used, what this new technology actually fixes, how it makes your life easier (without changing your current workflow much!), and **how you can start using Athens right away** with very little work.

You'll also **learn why you might want to set up your own Athens server** and how to do it...

Aaron Schlesinger

[The Athens Project](#)

Achievable

- How you organize the proposal indicates if you will give a good talk
- Provide the right amount of detail for the talk length
- Talk length dictates the level of detail

A peek at real conference proposals



Screenshot from The Wizard of Oz (1939).

Design Command-Line Tools

People Love

carolynvs.com/cli-cfp



- Provides examples to back up claims, without naming names
- Lists recommended libraries and why
- Spells out advice and gives brief context or explanation to back it up
- 🚫 Don't list things that you aren't sure will fit into the talk

Carolyn Van Slyck

[Design Command-Line Tools People Love](https://carolynvs.com/go-cfp)

Queues, Fairness and The Go Scheduler



- Abstract has a fun question that makes you want to watch!
- Explains why you would want to understand the scheduler
- Outline demonstrates knowledge of the scheduler. Just the right amount of detail

Madhav Jivrajani

Queues, Fairness, and The Go Scheduler

The Athens Project

A Proxy Server for Go Modules



- Elevator pitch isn't just a snippet of the description
- So tempting to disparage the technology that you are helping to fix (go mods). Keeps it professional.
- Links to video of the talk at another conference

Aaron Schlesinger
[The Athens Project](#)

DIY Home Netflix

carolynvs.com/cfp-kubecon-handbrk8s



- Fun idea with actionable takeaways
- I'm using Kubernetes but it's not about Kubernetes
- 🚨 Based on a side project that isn't used by others. No link!
- 🚨 Outline would only make sense to me, it's not clear what I would show
- Has a great supporting [blog post](#)... that I didn't link to 🙄

Filling out the form

Title

- Seen by attendees
- Seen by reviewers
- Titles are what attendees use to pick talks
- Don't be cute or coy

Description

- Sometimes called abstract
- Seen by attendees
- Seen by reviewers
- Description of your talk for the website/schedule
- Explain the problem/topic, talk highlights, and key takeaways

Elevator Pitch

- Not included in all CFPs
- Seen by reviewers, usually not attendees
- 1-2 sentence summary of talk

Notes

- It's not always called notes but this is where you convince reviewers you have a good talk
- Seen by reviewers only
- Tip: If the length is too short, do your best and provide a link to your full notes in case they want to see more.
- Include your outline, all your “secrets”, and answer any questions they include in the CFP instructions

Biography

- Seen by attendees
- May not be seen/judged by reviewers initially
- Write the bio for the attendees, not the reviewers
- This is not your life/career history, CV, resume, etc
- Provide context on who you are, with details that are relevant to the talk

Submission Checklist

- Is this *about* Go or does it only *use* Go?
- Is the talk topic clear from the title?
- Does the abstract explain the problem/topic that your talk will address?
- Does the abstract include 2-3 concrete actionable takeaways for the audience?
- Does your outline include all major points that you will make and spell out exactly what your recommendations/advice/pros/cons are?
- Have a friend read just the title and description. Do they understand what the talk will be about and what they will learn?

References

- <https://www.papercall.io/gophercon-2022>
- <https://carolynvanslyck.com/blog/2018/12/talk-at-gophercon/>
- <https://dave.cheney.net/2017/02/12/how-to-write-a-successful-conference-proposal>



Now go write that proposal!