



FUTURE, INNOVATION AND LEADERSHIP

No speaker budget? Fund the keynote anyway.

A visual playbook for event organizers: three proven ways to pay for a premium keynote, with the sponsor offer, the maths and the templates ready to use.

Karl Lillrud

Keynote speaker on AI and innovation, author and two-time TEDx speaker

A

A sponsor pays

Fastest yes

B

Budget you already
have

Training, marketing,
members

C

The keynote pays for
itself

Tickets, VIP, masterclass
members



Start here

Which funding route fits your event?

"We have no budget for a speaker."

Most events don't lack money. They lack a line item. Pick the route that matches what you already have.

A

You have sponsors, exhibitors or partners

Offer one of them the keynote as a "presented by" package. Budget and approval process already exist.

Typical time to yes: 2 to 4 weeks



B

Your organization has training, marketing or member budgets

The keynote legitimately belongs in budgets built for education, content and retention.

Typical time to yes: 3 to 6 weeks



C

You sell tickets, VIP seats or memberships

A strong keynote sells extra seats. Usually far fewer than you think cover the fee.

Typical time to yes: 1 to 3 weeks



37%

of attendees come for industry experts. Only 1% want celebrities. Freeman via PCMA Convene

68%

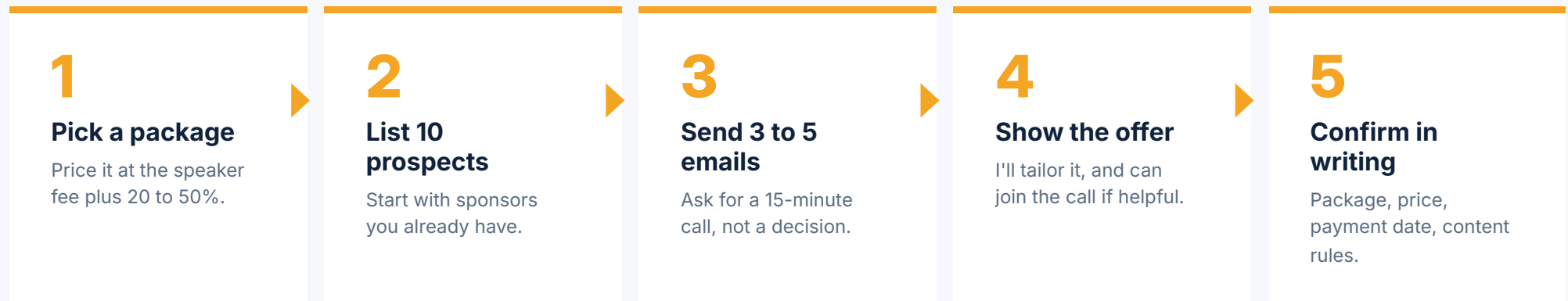
of keynote briefs now start with a business objective. 2026 Keynote Speaking Trends Report

91%

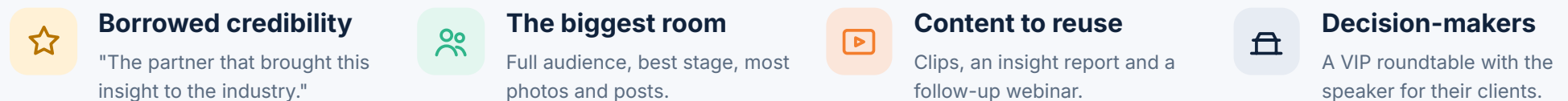
of planners expect bigger budgets in 2027, but costs per attendee keep rising. Amex GBT 2027 Forecast

The sponsor-funded keynote, in five moves

You are not asking for a favour. You are selling the most visible 45 minutes of your event to a company that wants exactly that audience.



Why sponsors say yes



Golden rule

The sponsor introduces the session and hosts the follow-up. The keynote itself stays independent and pitch-free. That is what makes it worth paying for.

The sponsor menu

Example prices for a USD 25,000 keynote. Scale them to the real fee.

Keynote Presenting Partner

USD 30,000 to 37,500

One sponsor covers the full fee and your margin

- "Presented by" in all keynote promotion
- 60 to 90 second stage introduction
- Logo on opening and closing slides
- VIP roundtable with the speaker for 10 guests
- Agreed video clips for their channels
- Co-branded insight report

Co-Presenting Partner

USD 10,000 to 12,500

Each. Three partners cover the fee

- Shared "presented by"
- Logo on keynote slides
- One roundtable seat
- Mention in the insight report

Insight Report Partner

USD 5,000 to 10,000

Pairs well with a co-presenter

- Logo and foreword in the post-event report
- Sent to attendees who opt in

Masterclass Partner

Per session

A private session for their clients or team

- Named workshop or webinar with the speaker
- Their guest list, their brand

Speaker fee

+

20 to 50% margin

=

Your sponsorship price

The margin pays for production and makes the deal worth your time.

Who to ask, and exactly what to send

Ask in this order

1

Your current sponsors

Budget already approved for your event.



2

Suppliers to your attendees

AI and software, banks, insurers, consultancies, recruiters.



3

Large member companies

Innovation, HR or employer-brand teams.



4

Convention bureau or chamber

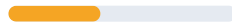
Many have support funds for events that bring visitors.



5

Universities and business schools

Executive education leads and AI positioning.



Ordered from the easiest yes to the hardest. Ask the marketing or partnerships lead, not the CEO.



Subject: Presenting the [Event] keynote

Hi [Name] ,

At [Event] on [date] , [number] [finance leaders] will spend 45 minutes with keynote speaker Karl Lillrud on how AI is changing [their industry] .

We are offering one partner the chance to present this session: an on-stage introduction, a VIP roundtable with Karl for up to 10 of your guests, and the post-event insight report under your name.

Given how closely [Sponsor] works with this audience, you were the first company we thought of. Open to a 15-minute call next week?

Best,

[Your name]

The money is often already in the building

A keynote is training, marketing, member value and innovation at once. Ask these budget owners.



Learning and CPD

It is professional education, often credit-eligible.

HR, L&D, education committee



Marketing and content

One keynote becomes videos, articles and clips.

Marketing or communications



Member retention

Great content is why members renew and return.

Membership or executive director



Innovation and AI

Change management for the whole audience at once.

CIO, CDO, innovation lead



Sales enablement

Inspiring partners and clients drives revenue.

Sales or channel leadership



Venue and destination

Venues and bureaus may offer credits or support.

Venue sales, convention bureau

USD 20,000

One coffee break for 2,000 people at about USD 10 each. Forgotten by lunch.

vs

One keynote

A session that changes how 2,000 people work, and why they come back next year.

Route C

Do the maths: any one of these covers USD 25,000

+ USD 12.50

per ticket for 2,000 attendees

100 tickets

extra sold at USD 250

50 VIP seats

"seat plus speaker reception" at USD 500

50 seats

in a paid half-day masterclass at USD 500

1 sponsor

as Keynote Presenting Partner (Route A)

3 sponsors

as Co-Presenting Partners

Or mix them: one realistic combination

Co-sponsor USD 12,500

25 VIP upgrades × USD 500 = USD 12,500

The content multiplier sells seats before the event

Interview

A pre-event podcast or video



Articles

Posts for your site and newsletter



Clips

Reels for LinkedIn and Instagram



Report

Insight paper and press release



Tracked code

See exactly how many tickets it sold

Close the deal

Smart structures, and a 6-week plan

Revenue share

Part of the fee comes from tickets the speaker's own promotion sells.

Two events, one deal

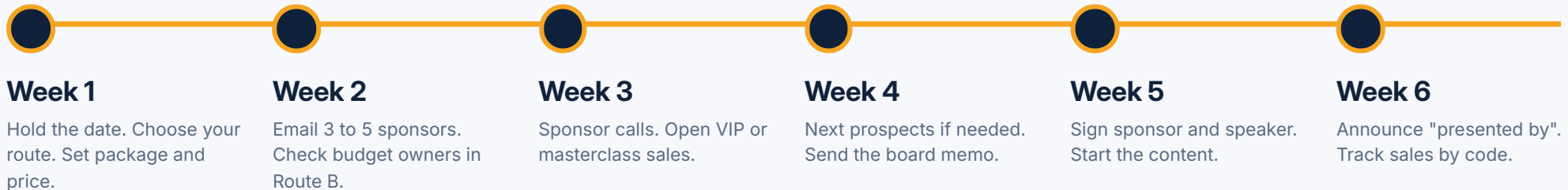
This year plus next year, or two regional events, as one package.

Co-hosting

Two organizations share the speaker on consecutive days and split the fee.

Content rights

The recording becomes a paid course or members-only webinar.



Extra value you can offer instead of cash

Professional recording, programme feature, media time, VIP and gala access, book sales, introductions to other organizers, a testimonial and referrals.

Get it approved

The one-page memo for your board

To	[Board, committee or manager]
Recommendation	Book Karl Lillrud as opening keynote on [topic] , funded by [sponsor / budget line / VIP add-on] .
Why	Attendees choose events for expert content. A premium keynote on AI and innovation lifts ticket sales, sponsor value and next year's attendance.
Net cost	[after sponsor and add-on income, ideally zero]
Risk	Low. A proven speaker protects the attendee experience and helps market the event.
Success measures	Registrations via speaker code, session rating, sponsor renewal, re-registration.
Decide by	[date]

What I bring to make it easy



A sponsor-ready offer

Tailored to your event, audience and city.



A call with your sponsor

On request, a short call to explain the session.



Content that sells seats

Pre-event interview and clips, plus a post-event insight summary.



Karl Lillrud

Keynote speaker on AI and innovation, author and two-time TEDx speaker. I have helped global organizations increase online conversions by 300% and protect USD 100M+ expansion projects. I don't just deliver a speech; I deliver a measurable business transformation.

IncreasedSpeed™

Faster execution,
time saved

ImprovedInsight™

Every angle: past,
future, competitors

FutureVision™

Future-proof
decisions, lower
risk

AudienceOutput™

Actionable tools
people use

SpeakerKPIs™

Takeaways
measured, not
assumed

**Tell me your event date, audience and city.
I'll show you which route fits.**

+34 601 988 244
me@karllillrud.com
www.karllillrud.com