

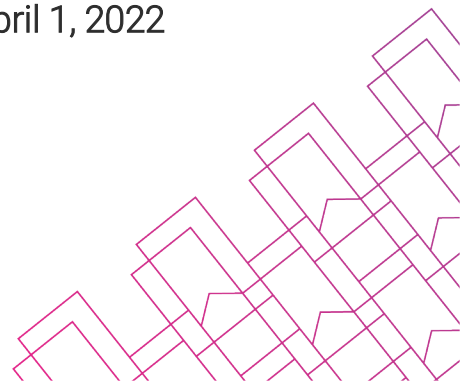


2022 Annual Conference Session Proposal Submission Guide

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Please note: Session proposal deadline now extended to April 1, 2022



Welcome!

Grantmakers for Education invites members to propose learning sessions for our 26th [annual conference](#) – *Igniting Hope in a Time of Recovery*. **Only Grantmakers for Education members may propose conference sessions** (click [here](#) to learn more about membership) – doing so is an exclusive member benefit. If you are not sure whether your organization is a member, please contact membership@edfunders.org.

In 2020, we pivoted our in-person conference to a virtual platform due to the COVID-19 pandemic. After two years of virtual programming we're happy to announce that the Grantmakers for Education's core annual conference programming will be held at the Hilton Austin in Texas from October 18-20, 2022. We will continue to monitor the public health concerns closer to the date.

The conference is Grantmakers for Education's signature program. Centered on improving outcomes for all learners, the annual conference is designed to challenge education philanthropists as they adapt to a rapidly evolving field that is ever more interconnected. Highly rated year after year, our conferences unite funders and experts in exploration of the deep and sometimes thorny education and philanthropic issues on the horizon.

We are seeking provocative proposals that proactively prepare funders for the future using engaging formats, innovative ideas, diverse perspectives and a focus on impact. Proposals should have clear learning objectives, specific strategies for engagement and relevance for funders. Proposal topics should have clear connection to the conference theme and Grantmakers for Education's [guiding principles](#).

As you write your proposal, think seriously about how conference attendees will engage with your session. Over the years, attendees have told us that **they most enjoy sessions that allow them to connect with presenters and fellow participants**. Engaging sessions leave attendees with more actionable learnings and encourage collaboration after the conference.

The instructions below should serve as guidance as you prepare your session.

2022 Annual Conference Theme

Igniting Hope in a Time of Recovery

The past three years have been some of the most destabilizing ever for American schools, postsecondary institutions, and other learning environments. Amid continued challenges for both learners and educators, a new day is dawning. This is a critical moment to reimagine the purpose of education, who it serves and the forms it takes. Given



heightened polarization, it is also a moment for constructive conversations about how we can continue to center issues of equity.

Funders are needed to catalyze innovation, support systemic change and rethink the practices that have led to inequitable outcomes both before and during the pandemic. We invite members to join us in person in Austin, Texas, October 18-20, 2022 to celebrate the bright spots that have emerged and grapple with philanthropy's next steps in transforming a still-unjust system.

INCORPORATING THE THEME

In applying the theme to your session proposals, imagine sessions that will help ignite hope for the future and imagine a new future for both education and philanthropy. As philanthropists for education, we are in a unique position to help move our field and the American education system into a new era at a critical moment.

Sessions can support grantmakers to gain a deeper understanding of, and take action on, issues embedded in the theme. For example, sessions could explore:

- Pathways to decrease polarization and increase equity and justice in grantmaking with attention to systemic issues.
- Action-ready tools or best practices to increase equity and justice in the classroom and beyond, with a focus on eliminating racial, health and/or economic disparities.
- Lessons from this historic moment that will help transform education at various points along the education continuum.
- Innovative roles for schools, postsecondary institutions and other learning venues in a time of recovery.

Your session may be the key to expanding awareness critical to student success, dismantling rooted inequities, or advancing grantmaking practice to a new level — and may ultimately contribute to the success of our communities and nation in an ever-evolving world.

Note: concurrent learning sessions will be 75 minutes long.

Selection Criteria

Grantmakers for Education's (EdFunders) annual conference planning committee—consisting of representatives from a range of grantmaking organizations across EdFunders' membership (including size, grantmaking budget, area of focus and type of foundation)—works collaboratively with EdFunders staff to provide critical input and perspective on the session selection process, which takes place in April and May. Selections will be informed by the following criteria:

GENERAL CRITERIA

Topical and future facing: We are especially interested in sessions that specifically address or reflect the conference theme and, within that context, showcase new and emerging work and innovative and break-through models. Additionally, we look for sessions relevant to what's happening in education today and that anticipate future issues in the field.

Insightful and reflective: We are looking for sessions that explore new concerns or take perennial topics and advance the conversation to a deeper level. We're particularly interested in sessions that challenge funders to consider old problems or assumptions in new ways. We like sessions that create genuine conversations among attending grantmakers and that engage their wisdom and experience.

Thought leadership and diversity: As the largest gathering of education philanthropists, EdFunders' annual conference is a one-of-a-kind opportunity to gather the leading voices in the field. Speakers and moderators who bring depth, experience and energy to a session are valued. Speakers should also reflect racial diversity and a diversity of perspectives and experiences including new and unexpected voices. It's an opportune moment to not only draw from your own grantmaking experience, but also that of grantees, educators, learners and other stakeholders.

Well-conceived and innovative learning format: Sessions should provide participants with practical tools and knowledge that will help them grow as education grantmakers and strengthen their work. Sessions should give a behind-the-scenes look at the rationale for a strategy, the lessons learned and the choices and decisions that led to particular outcomes. We look for sessions that engage the audience as active learners. Please consider untraditional and innovative strategies for learning; check the Selection Tips for ideas.

Clear lessons and evidence for funders: Craft sessions to meet thoughtful, relevant learning objectives. Ideas presented should be clearly linked to supporting data. Funders should leave the session with a clear understanding of evidence and how to apply lessons to their own grantmaking.

MEMBER VALUE

We encourage proposals that help to prepare our members for the challenges and opportunities of the future. Sessions should provide opportunities for new thinking, diversity of opinion, and open-minded discourse that respects different perspectives and encourages challenging conversation.



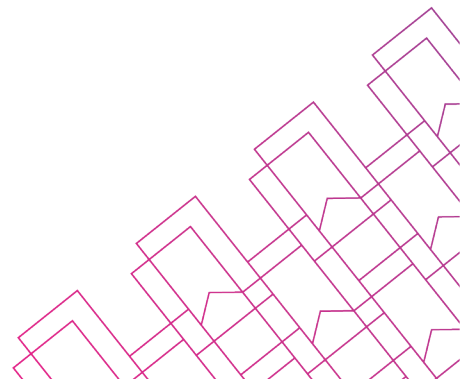
Outcomes based: Our intent is to encourage data-driven sessions, based on research and practices that have proven effective in the field.

Relevant to different types of funders: EdFunders' conference attendees are a diverse group of grantmakers working on issues across the education continuum—prenatal to career—with a wide range of strategies, budgets and geographic scope. The conference planning committee will choose a final slate of sessions that reflects this range of interests. In your submission, please select the focus area(s) that would be of particular interest to funders. While we appreciate proposals that are attractive to a diversity of funders, our strong preference is to have sessions that help a well-defined group of grantmakers improve their craft.

Selection Tips

Grantmakers for Education is always striving to provide the best experience possible for its attendees at the annual conference. Concurrent learning sessions comprise a major portion of the conference program, so it's important that they provide an atmosphere that inspires collaborative and experiential learning that our attendees will not forget. Here are some suggestions that can transform ordinary sessions into highly engaging ones.

1. **Make it relevant:** Proposals need to have a strong link with our conference theme.
2. **Accommodate different learning styles:** One of Grantmakers for Education's major strengths is the diversity we find in our membership, both at the organizational and individual level. Your session needs to incorporate strategies that will cater to learners of all types.
3. **Make it interactive:** Attendees continually ask for more interactive sessions. While using a PowerPoint presentation or having a panel of speakers can be informative, it often leads to attendees being talked to rather than included in the conversation. Consider an "unconference" format instead. Here are some strategies to consider:
 - **Keep the presentation brief.** Instead of making the presentation the focus of the session, use it as a jumping off point for discussion.
 - **Encourage small group discussion.** Use a format like a "[world café](#)" to allow participants to discuss topics with each other.
 - **Get up and moving.** Incorporate a "[data walk](#)" to allow participants to stretch their legs and engage with your session.
 - **Host a show and tell.** Share a tool that you use in your work, and allow participants to experiment with it.
 - **Teach a skill.** Use your session as a workshop to teach participants a skill or strategy that they will be able to use in their own work.
 - **Play a game.** Incorporate a game of Jeopardy to see what participants have learned, or play an improv game to brainstorm ways to use new tools or strategies.



Speaker Requirements

If it's possible to confirm your speakers before submitting your proposal, please do so and indicate this on the RFP form, as this will help to inform our decision.

Speaker registration:

- All speakers must register for conference the before the conference registration deadline (Date TBD).
- Speakers only attending on the day of their presentation may register for a single day (an opportunity reserved only for speakers).
- Speakers wishing to attend conference programming on days other than the day they present must register for the full conference.
- Many session organizers support some or all of speaker travel, lodging and registration.

All speakers must commit to the in-person presentation of their session at designated times during the conference.

Support

We are here to help! If you have any questions regarding your proposal submission, please email Grantmakers for Education at programs@edfunders.org.

Important Dates

February 28, 2022— Submission period opens.

March 25, 2022 – Proposals due by 5:00 pm PT. **Now extended to April 1!**

Late May to mid-June 2022 – Applicants will be notified about the status of their proposals.

DATE TBD – Conference registration deadline.*

October 18-20, 2022 – Annual Conference, Austin Hilton (TX)

How to Submit a Session

Only Grantmakers for Education (EdFunders) members may propose conference sessions ([click here to learn more about membership](#))—doing so is an exclusive EdFunders member benefit.

We have an online process for submitting proposals, which will open February 28, 2022.

[Submit your proposals here.](#)



We recognize that you may need several days to complete the form; before you start to fill out the form, create an account and you will be able to save and revise your proposal before submitting it. Multiple proposals may be submitted using one account.

All proposals are due by 5:00 pm PT on Friday, ~~March 25, 2022~~. Now extended to April 1, 2022!

