

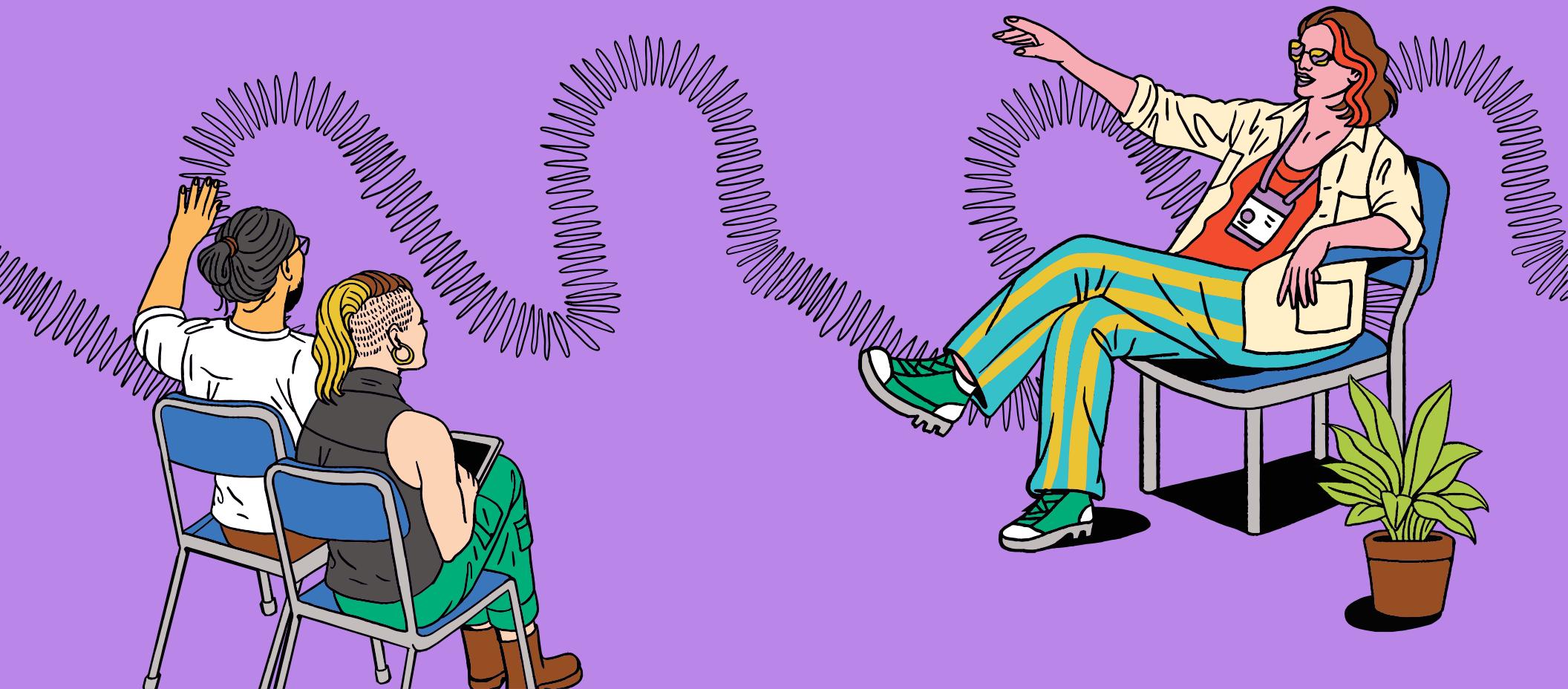
2027

MARCH 13-16

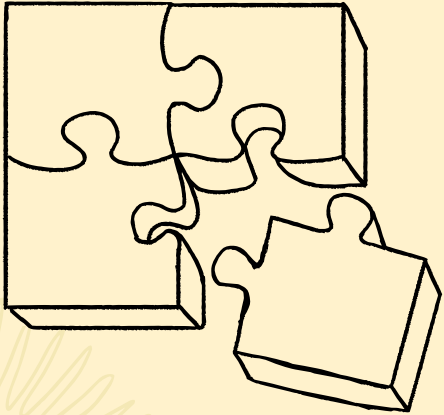
AUSTIN, TX

SXSW[®] EDU **↓**

PanelPicker[®] Guide



How PanelPicker Works



PanelPicker is the official online platform that enables the community to propose programming ideas in a variety of session formats.

Simply enter your session proposal for SXSW EDU 2027 during the submission window. Then PanelPicker will reopen for community voting, allowing the public to review, and vote on all ideas entered.

The final decision is derived from SXSW EDU Advisory Board evaluations, community voting, and staff review.

Important Dates

- June 23** PanelPicker opens for entries
- July 26** PanelPicker entry window closes
- August** Registration opens
- August 5** PanelPicker Community Voting begins
- August 23** PanelPicker Community Voting ends
- Mid-October** Notification of session decisions

Know Your Audience

Community Numbers

11,724	Total Attendees
7,002	Expo Attendance
1,145	Speakers
393	Sessions
130	Media Attendance
51	Exhibitors
43	Countries

Top Industries

PreK-12 Education
Higher Education
Non-Profit
EdTech
Workforce Education
Government / Public Sector
Media & Journalism

Top Roles

Vice President / Director
Teacher / Professor
Manager / Staff
Founder / Co-Founder
C-Level
School Leadership / Administrator
Student



Tracks

Accessibility Solutions

Exploring initiatives and programs that focus on special education, diverse learners and neurodiversity, and disabilities across the learning lifecycle including adaptive instructional strategies, assistive technology, universal design, and more

Arts & Culture

Exploring arts-based pedagogies and cultural and creative practices including the performing and visual arts, arts integration, media creation, gaming, and media and entertainment initiatives as well as approaches to storytelling, branding, and world-building for teaching and learning

Community Initiatives

Programs and projects focused on empowering and connecting communities in and out of the classroom by highlighting partnerships and work organized by community spaces and groups including libraries, museums, makerspaces, community centers, after-school and summer programs, informal learning programs, outdoor education initiatives, and more

Equity & Belonging

Addressing work championing equity, justice, belonging, diversity, and inclusion in education and beyond, including social and economic disparities, culturally responsive teaching, anti-racist practices, gender and LGBTQIA+ issues, restorative justice, and more to ensure equitable opportunities and outcomes for all

Future of Tech

Exploring development and implementation of educational technology including virtual tools, generative artificial intelligence, and data interoperability, with a focus on issues surrounding equitable access to and ethical use of technology and future-forward solutions for tech integration

Health & Wellbeing

Furthering social emotional learning, whole-child education, and human flourishing including initiatives addressing mental and physical wellness, trauma-informed practices, digital wellbeing, sports and physical education, and health education with a focus on comprehensive wellbeing for educators, students, and families

International Exchange

Programs exploring cross-cultural or international initiatives in education, including instructional approaches informed by different national contexts, international students and studying abroad, global business ventures, language learning and ESL/ELL instruction, program implementation across borders, issues impacting immigrant learners, cultural exchange, and more

Leadership for Tomorrow

Groundbreaking insights spotlighting work in leadership development and institutional transformation with topics including organizational management, issues impacting administration, executive leadership and strategy, systemic implementation, cultivation of youth leadership, pathway creation across the education sector, and educator development and support

Policy & Advocacy

Addressing education policy issues and legislative changes across local, regional, national, and international governance including funding, curriculum and assessment standards, student data use and privacy, school safety, and digital policies, as well as economic development, civic engagement and activism, and public-private partnerships

Startups & Investment

Content focused on the business and funding of education, with topics including entrepreneurship, philanthropic and social impact ventures, marketing and branding strategies, corporate initiatives and partnerships, market trends and flow of capital, and business scalability and adaptability

Teaching & Learning

Content focused on instruction and pedagogy across the entire learning lifecycle with a focus on solution-oriented strategies, innovative teaching, learner agency, and child development, with topics including instructional best practices for all educational levels and evolving curricula, teacher and faculty support, the science of learning, creative pedagogies, and communities of practice

Work Reimagined

Programs and new approaches to professional development, upskilling, microcredentialing, corporate learning, and talent development, including workforce revitalization, training, and career transitions, as well as initiatives for adult learners, traditional and non-degree pathways, and how the future of work will impact new generations of students



Focus Areas

Early Learning

Sessions that focus on issues impacting learning starting from birth, including child development, parenting and child care, best teaching practice for young learners, and beyond

K-12 Education

From primary to secondary education these sessions focus on issues impacting the practice and administration in classrooms, as well as initiatives and work that impact learners of school age and adolescence

Higher Education

Whether discussing issues impacting universities, community colleges, or non-traditional pathways, these sessions address post-secondary learning in all of its forms

Continuing Education

From workforce upskilling and re-training to innovative approaches to adult learning, these sessions focus on learning that happens once learners leave traditional levels of schooling

Convergence

For sessions and discussions on issues that span multiple levels of education or speak to initiatives that address pathways between education levels

Formats

Fireside Chat

(60 min, 2 speakers)

An in-depth interview, conversation, or debate that spotlights thought leadership and insights on a particular topic or area of expertise, followed by audience Q&A

Meetup

(60 min, 1-2 speakers)

A networking session where facilitators encourage connection and inspiration around similar interests, issue areas, or affinity groups in a relaxed setting. *Please note this is NOT a presentation-based session format.*

Panel

(60 min, 3-4 speakers)

A dynamic and diverse discussion offering multiple viewpoints on a particular topic, followed by audience Q&A

Performance

(90 min, 1+ speakers)

A musical, theatrical, storytelling, dance, poetry, or other performance that includes a workshop or extended Q&A to reflect on the value of the performing arts as a vehicle for deeper learning and offer takeaways for the audience

Podcast

(60 min, 2-4 speakers)

For media organizations and existing podcasts, a conversation on topics across the education landscape, recorded in front of a live audience to be used as a future episode

Solo (30 min, 1 speaker)

A short solo presentation highlighting new and emerging ideas, followed by audience Q&A

Workshop

(90 min, 1-3 speakers)

An in-depth, instructional program with hands-on learning activities and specific takeaways



PanelPicker Step-by-Step

Visit panelpicker.sxsw.com and sign in with your SXSW ID account or create one for free with your email address and a password.

Select “GET STARTED” on the homepage and then select “SXSW EDU” to be considered for SXSW EDU 2027. On the Introduction page, select “START” to begin your application.

Please note that you are only able to submit ONE (1) proposal for SXSW EDU per account.

The application form is divided into six steps and PanelPicker allows you to save and continue as you go. **Please make sure to select the “Save” button between each step or before exiting your proposal, as entered information is not automatically saved.**

Click on the “Info” buttons next to important fields for helpful tips and guidelines. For additional questions, please reference the FAQ.



Step 1

Session Organizer

Appoint a primary contact for your session, known as the organizer, to facilitate correspondence throughout the PanelPicker process and beyond, if accepted. The session organizer can also be a proposed speaker, but they are not assumed to be participating as a speaker unless indicated. **Remember that the session organizer serves as the main point of contact for the session, and is responsible for communicating information to the speakers and ensuring the success of the session.**

Step 2

Title & Characteristics

The information required in this step serves as the foundation for your session idea. Your selections will help the community understand and differentiate your proposal among many others.

- Try to keep your **title** as concise and explanatory as possible. Make sure your proposal is easily accessible to the community with a great title that clearly speaks to the audience you are trying to reach. (max. 60 characters including spaces)
- Choose the **format** that best fits your session structure and presentation style. Reflect on the goals of your session idea — are you looking to engage in a thought-provoking discussion, lead a learning activity, or find your next collaborator? Reference the corresponding options to determine which format best suits your idea.
- Further clarify the focus of your idea by selecting two **tags** from the menu that will help the community search for your session and home in on the specifics of your content.
- Select a thematic **track** that generally aligns with your idea so that attendees looking for similar content can find your session. Your idea may fit under multiple track options, so focus on the track that best represents your session content and goals.
- Designate a **session focus area** to set the level of education your session content will be addressing. The SXSW EDU program covers the entire learning lifecycle, and this allows your session to better stand out within the community. If your idea focuses on multiple levels of education or covers broader initiatives within the education space, please select “Convergence.”
- Clearly identify the **intended audience** for your session, as well as the **background knowledge required** to help attendees understand who will benefit most from your session and to further refine your session goals. We encourage specificity, as reviewers want to know exactly who your session is for.

Step 3

Description & Takeaways

Describe your session content (max. 600 characters including spaces) and session takeaways (max. 150 characters each including spaces). Accurately define the comprehensive focus of your idea in a compelling manner and provide three specific and concrete learnings that attendees will gain from attending your session. The SXSW EDU community looks for actionable insights that they can implement in their own work and development. Please keep in mind the following tips:

- Depth is more important than breadth in making your idea an impactful session.
- The audience at SXSW EDU is well-versed in the current education landscape. Given the limited space, your description does not need to reference broad statements and statistics about the state of education, and should focus on the specific content of your session.
- Please do not include speaker names or organization references in the session description as these are listed separately in the application process and beyond.
- Use paragraph form for your description (no bullets or lists).
- Be sure to spell out the first mention of any acronyms you include.
- Advertorial or brand-centered descriptions are not allowed. If you are interested in promoting your brand at SXSW EDU, email sales@sxswedu.com.
- Please note that session takeaways are not required for Meetup proposals, as the Meetup format is NOT presentation-based.

Step 4

Resources

Add a short creative video and/or visual aids to serve as the digital face of your proposal. You must provide at least one resource to support your programming idea. Videos are highly preferred, and there's no need for high-value production, as we just want to hear you speak — just record yourself on your phone or computer pitching your idea! Please note that you must have clear rights to whatever resources you include. **Please enable closed captioning for any videos you include and make sure they are publicly viewable.**



Step 5

Speakers

Speakers are an important part of your proposal and play a large role in the evaluation of your idea. Be prepared to enter each proposed speaker's name, contact information, short bio, and diversity contributions. Although most of this information is kept confidential, know that each speaker's name, title, organization, and bio will be shared with the community.

- SXSW EDU values diversity in perspective, opinion, and representation and the most interesting sessions are ones that offer many different perspectives. For each proposed speaker, you will be asked to address how they contribute to the diversity of the session.
- Keep in mind the maximum speaker limits associated with your selected session format. For example, the panel format is limited to a maximum of four speakers, including the moderator, if desired.
- Moderators are optional but should be independent, neutral facilitators in the discussion. Please note the moderator counts toward your maximum speaker limit.
- While a particular speaker may be proposed for multiple sessions, in the interest of providing diverse perspectives, speakers will be limited to participating in two (2) programmed sessions (with the exception of Mentor sessions).
- You must have consent from all listed speakers to be included in your proposal.

Diversity Guidelines

Speaker diversity plays an extremely important role in the decision-making process.

The most interesting sessions are ones that include many different perspectives. When choosing speakers keep in mind these basic diversity guidelines.

All sessions with 3 or more speakers should include:

- Diversity in gender
- Diversity in ethnicity
- Diversity in location and employment of speakers
- Diversity in thought and opinion

We understand that some sessions work best with full representation of a particular group and will review these on a case-by-case basis.



Step 6

Review & Submit

Proofread and double-check that your proposal is complete and error-free. You can select the “Back” and “Save and Continue” buttons at the bottom of the page to toggle between sections of the proposal.

Make sure you take a few moments to review all of the agreement terms before finalizing your proposal.

Your proposal is not complete until you click the **“Submit Application”** button.



Register to Attend in August

All accepted speakers will receive a complimentary registration



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