



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFPs)

2026 NEA NATIONAL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT
March 13-15, 2026
Location: Chicago, IL

Proposal Submission Deadline: 11:59pm ET on September 5, 2025

Presenters will be notified of selection by: 5:00pm ET on October 31, 2025

Introduction

The National Education Association (NEA) is looking for skilled and engaging presenters to submit dynamic and presentations for its annual National Leadership Summit, March 13 – March 15, 2026, in Chicago, IL. This year's theme is *Resilience. Respect. Power. Saving Public Education and Our Democracy*

The purpose of the Summit is to develop activist leaders and prepare them with the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to lead relevant, thriving Associations and to lead in their careers/professions. The Summit is an experiential learning opportunity for action and not a professional development conference. Therefore, we are seeking proposals that are focused on leadership development for adults (andragogy) and not teaching children (pedagogy). All proposals should reflect the NEA Leadership Competency Framework and help grow members' leadership knowledge, skills, and abilities in one of the seven competency domains.

Click [here](#) for more information about the competency domains.

Proposals must:

1. Describe how the session will deepen the participant's awareness of the NEA Leadership Competency Framework;
2. Address how the session will help participants use their awareness to achieve their leadership goals and win on the issues facing public education and the labor movement;
3. Be experiential, specifically articulating how participants will be actively involved and contributing to the learning experience;
4. Contextualize the current social and political environment;
5. Be relevant, addressing how leaders can use the behaviors, skills, and knowledge in their personal, professional, and association;
6. Include ways for leaders to share sustainable solutions and to return to their school districts, worksites, and affiliates with innovative ideas, skill sets and a plan of action for leader development; and

7. Address how the session and content is applicable and relevant to all NEA membership categories and contextualized to address the unique needs of all local and state affiliates (i.e., small, large, metropolitan, rural, etc.

The following guidance will help prepare you as you submit your proposed session ideas.

[NEA Visionary Goals](#)

[NEA Strategic Objectives](#)

[NEA Organizational Priorities](#)

[NEA Leadership Competency Framework](#)

[Session Formats](#)

[How to Submit a Proposal](#)

[Request for Proposals \(RFP\) Frequently Asked Questions](#)

Session proposals must be submitted based on the [2024-2026 NEA Strategic Framework](#), as adopted by the NEA Board of Directors:

NEA Visionary Goals

To achieve our mission and to meet our shared responsibility to elevate and unite all our members, the NEA, in partnership with affiliates, will build connections that:

1. Enhance success, justice, and equity in our nation's public schools, and the well-being of all our students, parents, families, and communities.
2. Promote fulfilling professional lives and the success of our members.
3. Grow and strengthen our Union through leaders trained to retain, inspire, engage, recruit, and empower fellow educators and public employees.

NEA Strategic Objectives

Click [here](#) for an overview of the NEA Strategic Objectives. In partnership with our Affiliates, NEA will:

Strengthen Public Education as the Cornerstone of Democracy: Build a movement that promotes, protects, and strengthens public education, safeguards the rights of students, communities, and educators; advances economic justice; increase public regard for educators and their public schools from pre-K to higher education; and ensures that students are prepared to participate fully in our democratic society.

Advance Racial Justice and Social Justice: Support members in advancing racial and social justice in education, and improving conditions for all students, families and communities through awareness, capacity building, partnership, and individual and collective action.

Promote Safe, Healthy, Inclusive, Collaborative, and Future-Focused Public Schools: Support the development of modern, safe, and supportive public schools that are affirming to all students and employees, resourced to meet the academic and developmental needs of today's students, and that serve as beacons of pride and support in their communities.

Improve Professional Respect and High Quality Working Conditions: Enhance the well-being, satisfaction and respect of our members (aspiring, active, and retired), ensuring they receive fair compensation (salary, benefits and retirement); cultivate favorable working conditions for aspiring, new, and experienced educators; amplify opportunities for authentic voice; and safeguard the freedom to teach in the most effective manner for their students.

Support Professional Excellence and Student Learning: Enhance the education professions and the pride that all educators throughout their careers experience in their work by supporting educators' growth in the professional knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary to maximize students' academic and social-emotional learning and shape the future of learning.

Fuel the Transformation of Affiliate Organizational Capacity: Build the capacity of state and local affiliates for growth, collective action, and agenda-driving power with particular focus on: a Dynamically Aligned Leadership Development System; Membership Growth and Engagement, Organizing and a Culture of Connectedness; Racial and Social Justice Culture; Modern Affiliate Communications; Data and Technological Advancement; and overall Affiliate Health and Strength.

NEA Organizational Priorities

Session proposals must be submitted based on one of the five NEA Organizational Priorities:

1. Building a Movement to Promote, Protect, and Strengthen Public Education
2. Advancing Respect, Excellence, and Support for All Educators
3. Advancing Learning, Success, and Well-Being for All Students
4. Organizing for Power: Recruitment, Retention, Engagement, Empowerment, Mobilization of Our Members, Parents/Families and Allies
5. Securing and Supporting a Pro-Public Education, Pro-Union Environment

NEA Leadership Competency Framework

Session proposals must be submitted based on one of the seven competency domains and tailored to different levels of leadership experience (Level 1: Foundational; Level 2: Mobilizing & Power Building; and Level 3: Agenda Driving). Each domain has a specific set of skills, abilities and knowledge that define our leadership development goals. A summary of each domain is provided below.

Prior to writing your proposal, we encourage you to visit the Leadership Competencies webpage at www.nea.org/leadership-development and review the NEA National Leadership Competency Framework to ensure alignment to your proposal's competency domain. We also advise you to complete the asynchronous Leadership 101 and/or 102 course and the Self-Assessment for your proposal's competency domain. Information on how to access these items via our Learning Management System can be found [here](#).

Competency Domains:

1. **Advocacy:** Advances the cause of public education through advocacy for students, including addressing racial and social justice in education and how it benefits students and members' professional needs and rights.
2. **Communication:** Build and execute an integrated communications strategy that drives the mission, vision, core values and strategic goals of the Association.
3. **Governance and Leadership:** Provides strategic leadership to advance the mission and establishes and monitors strategies necessary for a relevant and thriving Association while motivating and fostering a pipeline of diverse leaders.
4. **Leading Our Professions:** Advocates for professional learning, professional quality and social diversity inside our professions and promotes our union's role in advancing education transformation, student learning, and equitable access to opportunities.
5. **Organizing:** Mobilizes, activates, and engages members and leaders to support internal and external relationships and Association capacity to recruit, retain and identify diverse groups of members and leaders, and advance strategic priorities at the national, state, and local levels.
6. **Social and Emotional Intelligence:** Understands the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors that create healthy identities, manage emotions, and achieve personal and collective goals; demonstrates ability to feel and show empathy, establish, and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible, caring decisions.
7. **Strategy and Fiscal Health:** Use Association resources responsibly to accomplish the goals of the Association through strategic thinking, effective financial management and understanding of fiduciary responsibilities.

Levels:

1. Foundational (Leading of Self)
2. Mobilizing and Power Building (Leadership of Others)
3. Agenda Driving (Agenda Driving)

Session Formats

We are seeking interactive workshop sessions that will be 120 minutes in length. Workshops are experiential learning sessions that actively develop specific leadership competencies and have widespread potential for implementation.

Interactive/Experiential Workshop: Workshops are experiential learning sessions that actively develop specific leadership competencies and have widespread potential for implementation.

Symposium/Panel: Panels are a group of three or more presenters gathered to discuss a single topic or multiple related topics with opportunities for participant engagement.

Unconference Session: Roundtable discussions are informal presentations that emphasize spirited discussion between the presenter(s) and session attendees. Presenters start the discussion by sharing information about the program/question they wish to explore, and then open discussion for input and exchange of ideas to share and create knowledge. Examples and interactive materials are welcome.

How to Submit a Proposal

Visit www.nea.org/leadershipsummit to access the link to submit your proposal. The deadline for proposal submissions is **11:59 p.m. ET on September 5, 2025**. **Proposals submitted any other way and after this date/time will not be accepted or reviewed.**

Once your proposal is submitted, you will receive a confirmation email. Please save your confirmation number and a copy of your submitted proposal for your records. You will not be able to retrieve/view your proposal after the submission deadline.

For an overview of the proposal submission process and other resources, please visit www.nea.org/leadershipsummit.

Request for Proposals (RFP) Frequently Asked Questions

Can I submit a proposal for someone and change the Primary Presenter's name later? The person filling out the RFP must be the Primary Presenter. Changes to the Primary Presenter will not be accepted after the proposal is submitted.

Do co-presenters have to be NEA members? It is highly recommended that any proposal includes an NEA member leader as a co-presenter.

If I don't complete all the information in the proposal, will it still be reviewed? Incomplete proposals will not be considered.

I have presented at previous Summits and/or other NEA conferences. Do I still need to provide my name, contact information, and NEA Member ID? Yes. All primary and secondary/co-presenters should include their name, contact information, and NEA Member ID (if applicable) on the online application.

How many proposals can I submit? To assist with maximizing the number and diversity of presenters and perspectives, each individual is limited to three proposal submissions.

When is the deadline to submit a proposal? The deadline for submission is **11:59pm ET on September 5, 2025**.

When will I be notified of the status of my proposal acceptance/non-acceptance? Presenters will be notified no later than **5:00pm ET on October 31, 2025**.

What expenses will NEA cover if my proposal is accepted? For primary presenters only, NEA will

pay for the registration fee, travel, hotel accommodation, and provide a stipend to cover reasonable travel-related expenses in accordance with our travel guidelines. NEA will NOT cover any expenses for secondary or additional presenters/panelists (e.g., registration fee, flight, hotel, ground transportation, etc.).

Please note, honoraria/fees and work release time are not reimbursable, and payment for substitutes is not covered. If selected, NEA will provide specific guidelines and information for travel arrangements and accommodations. NEA will also provide specific follow-up guidance and agreements for all presenters.

Can I make changes to my session title/description/secondary presenters/panelists after receiving my acceptance notice? No. Proposal submitters will not be able to make such changes once their session has been accepted.

If my proposal is accepted, do I still need to register for the Summit? Yes. All primary presenters and secondary presenters/panelists will need to register for the Summit.

If I'm an external partner, can I become a member of NEA? It is highly recommended that any external partners who are not NEA members join as a [Community Ally](#).

Who do I contact if I have questions about the proposal submission? If you have questions about your proposal submission, please contact us at SummitRFP@nea.org.

Should I save a copy of this document and the submitted proposal? We ask that you carefully review this guidance and utilize it as a reference as you complete your application. We also suggest that you save this information and a copy of your submitted proposal for your files. You will not be able to access your submitted proposal after the proposal deadline.