



PROPOSAL SUBMISSION GUIDELINES



This Year's Theme:
**EMPOWERING VOICES,
BUILDING FUTURES**

Date:
**February 23-25,
2027**

Location:
Louisville, KY & Online
Kentucky International Convention Center

The National ESEA Conference is an annual project of the National Association of ESEA State Program Administrators (NAESPA) and the only conference focused entirely on federal education programs for disadvantaged students.

This year, NAESPA is introducing ESEA Conference Tracks—the core framework that shapes every session, learning experience, and professional connection. Designed to meet the needs of today’s educators and leaders, these tracks guide session development and help attendees easily find the most relevant, impactful learning opportunities aligned to their roles and responsibilities.

At the foundation of every track are the Title programs (page 8) authorized under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, ensuring that all sessions remain grounded in the purpose and priorities of federal education programs.

Strong proposals will:

- Demonstrate clear alignment to the track focus
- Provide actionable strategies or tools attendees can implement
- Reflect evidence-based practices or real-world success stories
- Address compliance, innovation, or measurable impact

Your unique perspective is invaluable to us, so we invite you to share your ideas and expertise.

PRESENTER BENEFITS

- Complimentary full conference registration for each accepted non-promotional presenter (maximum four)
- Recognition as an education expert
- Connection with new audiences
- Access to all session videos for three months after the conference
- Downloadable copy of your session video available upon request

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IMPORTANT DATES

Friday, May 1, 2026

- Proposal Submissions Open

Tuesday, June 16, 2026

- Proposal Submissions Close

Wednesday, August 26, 2026

- Notification of Provisional Acceptance or Decline. (See page 5 for details)

Wednesday, September 16, 2026

- Terms & Conditions Return Deadline
- Deadline for sponsoring organizations to purchase booth space (Sponsored Sessions Only)

Tuesday, December 1, 2026

- Deadline for presenter change requests

"Quality experience. This conference was the most organized I have ever attended."

- 2026 National ESEA Conference Presenter



CONFERENCE THEME

EMPOWERING VOICES, BUILDING FUTURES

"Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself." - John Dewey

Teachers and other school leaders inspire students to learn wherever their life path may take them.

At the National ESEA Conference, our shared goal is to maximize the benefits of federal programs and funding for student success. We believe that engaging in high-quality professional development contributes to growth in knowledge, leading to increased student success. We know that effective teachers and school leaders have lifelong impacts on students' lives.

During my tenure as a state ESEA program administrator at the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, I have the opportunity and honor to work with and learn from teachers and school leaders from across the state. I have seen firsthand the value of empowering educators. When teachers and other school leaders apply their training, align learning to standards, and engage families in learning, outcomes for students improve.

I am often reminded of my third-grade teacher, Mrs. Klar, who cultivated a classroom culture built on positive relationships where all students felt valued and important. She inspired me to be curious and partnered with my parents to help me find my voice. Together, they built my confidence to explore new and different interests throughout my K-12 and secondary education.

The National ESEA Conference is a tool to empower educators from across the country to use their voices to influence their classrooms and communities. In turn, empowering students to find their voice to learn, grow, and build successful futures.

-Shelly Babler, NAESPA Conference Planning Committee Chair

"It was fabulous! The audience was receptive to my topic and asked great questions. I felt like I made a difference for the people who were in attendance."

- 2026 National ESEA
Conference Presenter

"As a speaker I was nervous as this was my first time ever speaking to many. I felt supported and the staff at the conference were very kind and helpful. Very encouraging."

- 2026 National ESEA
Conference Presenter

"It was a pleasure to present and an honor to be a part of the conference. I appreciate all the feedback and discussions that always happen after the presentation. The networking is amazing."

- 2026 National ESEA
Conference Presenter



SUBMITTING A PROPOSAL STEP-BY-STEP

All proposals to be considered by the Committee must be submitted **NO LATER** than 5:00 PM Eastern on **Tuesday, June 16, 2026**

-
- 1.** Read this Proposal Submission Guidelines document thoroughly to ensure you clearly understand all requirements and benefits of presenting at the National ESEA Conference.

Only submit a proposal if you agree to all included Terms & Conditions (page 11).

- 2.** Identify Your Proposal Type *(page 9)*

Standard Proposal - The proposal is free of commercial content and does not include one or more presenters associated with organizations that offer products or services to the ESEA market.

Promotional/Sponsored Proposals - The proposal includes commercial content and/or one or more presenters associated with organizations that offer products or services to the ESEA market.

- 3.** **Standard Proposal**
- Log in to your individual user account at ESEAnetwork.org, or create a new account, if you don't already have one.

Promotional/Sponsored Proposal
- Log in to your company account at ESEAnetwork.org, or create a new company account, if you don't already have one.

The system will populate the first presenter information with the name of the account holder who is submitting this proposal. If you are submitting the proposal on behalf of someone else, be sure to change this information to reflect the accurate presenter names and contact details.

If you want your assistant to receive notices about the proposal, include their contact information as your Account Manager (located under the "If someone else will manage your account" area) within your account Dashboard Contact Details section.

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- 4.** From either your user or company account Dashboard, select "2027 National ESEA Conference," and scroll down to "Presentations."
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CONTINUED ON FOLLOWING PAGE →

5. Between now and June 16, use the Manage Proposals button to “begin a new proposal”.

(or select "continue" next to the title of your unfinished proposal).

Please provide the following information for each proposal:

Proposed Presentation Characteristics

- Describe the concept for your presentation, including the relevance for this Conference. (max 1,000 characters, including spaces)
- ✦ • Select session format: Lecture or Workshop. (page 6)
 - Describe why your proposal is best suited for lecture or workshop delivery.
- ✦ • Select the primary and secondary ESEA Conference Tracks your proposed session best aligns with. (page 7)
- ✦ • Select the two topics that best describe the focus of your proposed session. (page 8)
 - Select the most relevant federal education title program that applies. (page 8)
 - Explain the research base and data used. (max 1,000 characters, including spaces)
 - Identify the specific successful federally funded school(s) and/or district(s) highlighted in your session, if applicable.

TIP: Use the buttons throughout the proposal submission process to review, revise, and save your information.

Session Details

Details needed if your proposal is accepted:

- ✦ **Presentation title** (max 90 characters, including spaces)
 - do not include "Empowering Voices, Building Futures" in your title.
- ✦ **Presentation description** (max 1,000 characters, including spaces)
 - presentation content must follow the description

Presenter introductions (max 800 characters, including spaces)
- brief description of each presenter (used onsite by the Session Host to introduce your presentation team to the audience)

Contact information

- provide the website or email address attendees may use to obtain more information after the Conference

Carefully review audio-visual inclusions (page 6)



If your proposal is selected, the starred items (✦) will make up the Session Details attendees will use to learn more about you and your session at the conference.

TIP: You may return at a later time to complete the information if you wish.

Access the unfinished proposal through the Conference section of your Dashboard when logged in to your account on ESEAnetwork.org.

Proposed Presenters

Each session may have up to four presenters. Each presenter is limited to speaking on only one session. Each presenter included on a proposal must have a fully completed free user account on the ESEA Network website. All of the fields below must be completed for each presenter.

- ✦ • Name, Title, Organization
 - Mailing Address, Phone, Email
 - Presenter Expertise on this Topic (max 300 characters) - included in the online presenter listings if your session is selected
 - Recent Presentation Experience – list conference, year, session title
 - Speaking Reference – name, phone, and email of someone with direct knowledge of your presentation skills
- ✦ • Photo – high resolution (jpg format at least 500px w&h) for use online – close-up, headshots are most effective
 - Honorarium Requested – most presenters are not paid, but requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis

6. Agree to the Terms & Conditions and select the blue "Submit Final Proposal" button when your proposal is 100% finished.

Once a proposal is submitted, changes are not permitted without Committee approval.

SELECTION PROCESS

- All proposals submitted will be reviewed by a committee of federal education programs professionals from across the country in a highly competitive two-part process during July and August.
- Decisions are based on an averaged proposal score from multiple committee graders, as well as a balance of critical topic areas.
- Proposals are graded by the Conference Planning Committee based solely on the information provided through this submission process.



Scoring: Committee members will grade each proposal using this grading rubric:

- Proposal focuses on a key area of interest for Conference attendees, aligns with the Conference theme, Empowering Voices, Building Futures, by including timely and meaningful content. (0-10 points)
- Proposal highlights current, specific successful federally funded schools or districts OR an original research project, theory, or trend in education that aligns with the scope of the Conference topics. (0-10 points)
- Research base listed is appropriate for the topic, and uses appropriate citations. (0-10 points)
- Content is appropriate for the identified audience. (0-5 points)
- Presenter(s) has relevant expertise and speaking experience for this topic. (0-10 points)
- Proposal has a descriptive title, clearly stated purpose, provides correct information and thorough content, and incorporates findings (where applicable) and implications for the field. (0-10 points)
- Bonus points are available at the discretion of the grader based on exceptional ideas, including applicability across ESEA programs and/or to the Conference theme: Empowering Voices, Building Futures, or the overall quality of the application submission. (0-5 points)

Notifications on August 26, 2026

Show Management will send email notifications to inform you if your application was accepted or declined. *The Committee's selection decision is final.*

Date and time assignments are made for the benefit of the overall schedule and are not negotiable.

Official Acceptance by September 16, 2026

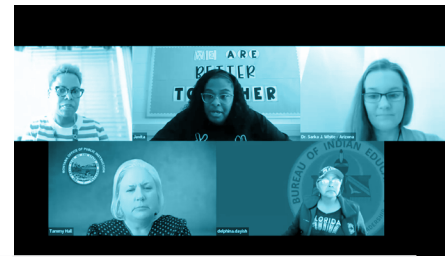
Each presenter listed on a proposal must agree to the Terms & Conditions by the deadline for the proposal to be "accepted." If the required acknowledgement is not submitted by the due date, the proposal will be declined and another qualified proposal will be selected in its place.

QUESTIONS? CONTACT THE NATIONAL ESEA CONFERENCE STAFF

MONDAY - FRIDAY | 10:00AM-7:00PM EASTERN | 800-256-6452 | CONFERENCE@ESEANETWORK.ORG

SESSION FORMATS

All sessions are 1 hour long



HYBRID LECTURE

IN-PERSON WORKSHOP

VIRTUAL WORKSHOP

The Conference Offers Three Types of Sessions

Larger sessions in which attendees are seated in rows facing the presenter stage. While these sessions may include limited attendee interaction, their larger room capacity is best suited for presenter(s) providing information to a stationary audience.

Smaller sessions focused on personal interactions among attendees and presenters. Workshop sessions must include an audience interaction component, such as opportunities to brainstorm with a partner, discuss a concept in a small group, or engage in other workshop-like activities.

Sessions involve an interactive component with the audience, such as opportunities to brainstorm with a partner (utilizing Zoom breakout rooms or polls). Presenter(s) are using Zoom.

Hybrid Component

Presenters are in-person in Louisville; sessions are live-streamed to the virtual audience and recorded for later viewing.

Presented in real-time ONLY to virtual attendees, and recorded for later viewing for all audiences.

Approximate Room Capacity

300 or more (subject to change)

200 or fewer (subject to change)

200 or fewer (subject to change)

Available AV for Presenters

- PC computer with PowerPoint software
- LCD Projector
- Screens appropriate for room size
- Sound capability for video
- Podium or lavalier microphone
- Wi-Fi

Virtual workshop presenters must present from a remote location and provide their own equipment.

Room layout / Stage Setup

- Theater-style seating
- Raised stage
- Head table with chairs for each presenter
- Podium

- Round tables and chairs (no stage)
- Podium

Note that one facilitator is allowed for virtual sessions without paid registration.

IN-PERSON PROMOTIONAL / SPONSORED SESSIONS

All sponsored session presenters are required to travel to Louisville, KY, and present in-person.

New!

ESEA CONFERENCE TRACKS



ESEA Conference Tracks serve as the guiding framework for our event—shaping how content is developed, organized, and ultimately experienced by attendees. Each track is designed to reflect the diverse roles and responsibilities of ESEA educators and professionals. Select the track(s) that best align with your session content and intended audience.

THE 4 ESEA CONFERENCE SESSION TRACKS:

For federal program leaders working at the state, district, and school levels:

Track A

Federal Education Policy & Practices

This track supports leaders in turning policy into practice through compliant, strategic program management. Sessions focus on implementation, monitoring, funding, and coordination of ESEA programs to drive improved student outcomes.

For educators and instructional leaders across all content areas:

Track B

Improvement in Teaching & Learning

This track focuses on delivering high-quality, student-centered instruction through data-informed practices. Sessions highlight strategies that strengthen teaching, elevate learning, and drive academic achievement for all students.

For professionals supporting students served under ESEA and IDEA programs:

Track C

Targeted Supports for Special Populations

This track emphasizes coordinated, compliant, and compassionate approaches to meeting the academic, social, and emotional needs of special populations. Sessions explore strategies that ensure equitable access to high-quality education.

For engagement leaders, liaisons, and educators working with families:

Track D

Family & Community Engagement for Student Success

This track centers on building strong, culturally responsive partnerships that empower families and support student success. Sessions highlight effective engagement strategies, compliance considerations, and community collaboration.

Note: Even though attendees will select a track when they register for the conference, they are free to attend all sessions.

SESSION TOPICS

In addition to following the four tracks described on the previous page, attendees can filter sessions by the following topics:

- Academic Standards and Assessment
- AI in Education
- Asset Based Needs Assessment/Evaluation/Monitoring
- Children in Foster Care
- College and Career Readiness
- Data-driven Decision-making
- Differentiated Instruction
- Digital Learning
- Early Childhood Education
- Effective Leaders
- Elementary Education
- English Learners
- Equitable Services to Private Schools
- Equity and Excellence
- ESEA Program Implementation and Monitoring
- ESEA Success Stories
- Evidence-based Practices
- Foundational Wellness for Educators, Family, and Community
- Immigrant Services
- Indigenous Student /Tribal Support
- Learning Delay/Unfinished Learning
- Legislative, Regulatory, and Fiscal Issues
- Mathematics
- McKinney-Vento & Students Experiencing Homelessness
- Migrant Education
- Multi-tiered Systems of Support
- National ESEA Distinguished School (Prior Year Awardee)
- Neglected/Delinquent Youth
- Neuroscience
- Parent, Family, and Community Engagement
- Professional Learning
- Program Implementation and Evaluation
- Public School Academies (Charter Schools)
- Reading and Writing/Literacy
- Refugee Services
- School Climate and Culture
- School Improvement
- Secondary Education
- Special Education
- STEM/STEAM
- Well-rounded Education

RELEVANT FEDERAL EDUCATION TITLE PROGRAMS

- **Title I, Part A** - Education for the Disadvantaged
- **Title I, Part C** - Education of Migratory Children
- **Title I, Part D** - Neglected & Delinquent
- **Title II, Part A** - Supporting Effective Instruction
- **Title III, Part A** - English Learners & Immigrant Education
- **Title IV, Part A** - Student Support & Academic Enrichment
- **Title IV, Part B** - 21st Century Community Learning Centers
- **Title V, Part B** - Rural Education Initiative
- **Title VI, Part A** - Indian, Native Hawaiian, and Alaska Native Education
- **Title VII, Part B** - Education for Homeless Children and Youth (McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act)
- **IDEA** - Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (Special Education)



CONFERENCE POLICIES & PRESENTATION DETAILS



Non-Promotional Requirement for Standard Sessions

Standard presentation proposals cannot include commercial references.

Only proposals that do NOT include one or more presenters associated with organizations that offer products or services to the ESEA market will be considered as a standard, non-promotional session. Non-promotional sessions must be submitted through the standard (not promotional) proposal submission process.

Commercial Promotion Allowed Only in Sponsored Sessions

Presentation proposals that reference commercially available products or services and/or include one or more presenters with commercial affiliations must be identified in the proposal and must be submitted through the promotional (not standard) proposal submission process. All selected commercial presentations will be identified as Sponsored Sessions and will be displayed with the organization's logo. All sponsored presentations will take place in-person.

Registration

Standard Sessions

All accepted presenters (**maximum four per session**) receive a complimentary full Conference registration at the time the Terms & Conditions are accepted. Do not purchase Conference registration prior to learning the status of your proposal on August 26.

Sponsored Sessions

There is no fee to submit a proposal for a Sponsored Session; however, companies whose Promotional Proposals are accepted must have a paid-in-full exhibit space by September 16. (**maximum of four presenters per session**)

Hotel Reservations

Do not reserve a hotel room prior to learning the acceptance status of your proposal.

A limited number of hotel rooms are set aside specifically for presenters and may be reserved and purchased once registrations (or exhibit space, if the session is sponsored) are paid in full. Presenters are subject to the same cancellation and refund policies that apply to all attendees.

Presenter Substitutions

Complimentary Conference registrations are non-transferable.

If a presenter change is necessary, a written request must be submitted before December 1st, 2026, and reviewed by the Conference Planning Committee.

If approved, new Terms & Conditions agreement(s) will be issued to the new presenter(s).

If the substitute presenter is not approved, the presentation may be cancelled.

Book Sales and "Meet the Author"

Presenters who have authored books may have the opportunity to participate in a dedicated "Meet the Author" time during the Conference. Details about "Meet the Author" time and book sales will be emailed once sessions have been finalized.

Session Videos

All sessions at the National ESEA Conference, without exception, are recorded for after-conference viewing by attendees. Each presenter will receive complimentary access to their session recording and all Conference session videos for a three-month period.

Presenters Limited to One Session

Presenters may submit multiple proposals if desired; however, each presenter who is selected to present is limited to speaking on only one session.

Scheduling

Presentations will be scheduled for the overall benefit of the Conference. If selected, presenters must be willing and available to present at the assigned date and time. Proposals selected by the Conference Planning Committee must be presented as described in the proposal process with the same title and description.

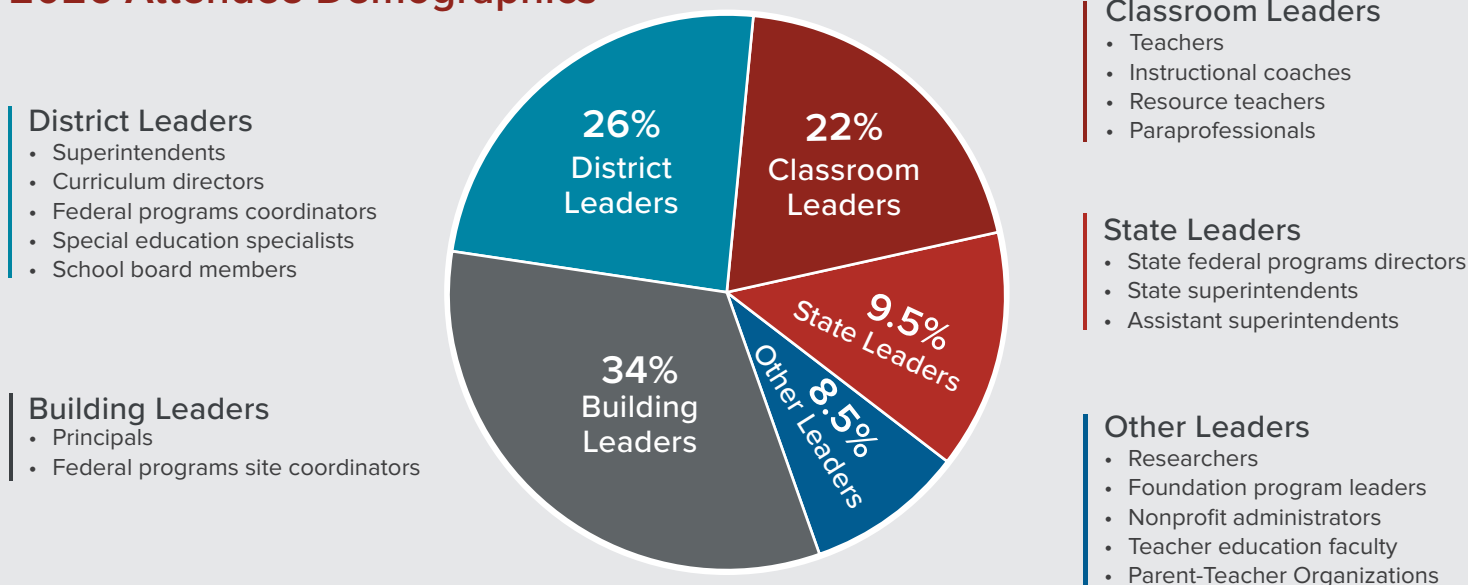
Session Introductions

All in-person sessions will include a designated Session Host to introduce presenters and support the session. Additionally, select sessions may be preceded by a brief Distinguished School Story of Success video (up to five minutes in length). Presenters will be notified in advance if their session is chosen for this feature.

Audience

Attendees at the National ESEA Conference represent many different federal programs perspectives, and the Conference Planning Committee selects sessions to appeal to each group, roughly aligning with the average percentage of attendees in each demographic shown below:

2026 Attendee Demographics



SAMPLE IN-PERSON STANDARD PRESENTER TERMS & CONDITIONS (SPONSORED SESSIONS HAVE A SIMILAR T&C)

Joe Sample, Speaker, has been tentatively selected to present at the 2027 National ESEA Conference, under the following Terms and Conditions.

EVENT DETAILS

EVENT: 2027 National ESEA Conference

February 23-25, 2027

HOST: National Association of ESEA State Program Administrators (NAESPA)

BACKGROUND: The National ESEA Conference is an annual project of the National Association of ESEA State Program Administrators (NAESPA) and the largest conference focused on federal education programs for disadvantaged students.

PRESENTATION DETAILS

Title: Example Session Title

Description: The session description is the same as was entered in the field for inclusion in the online session schedule. Listing it in the Terms & Conditions ensures that the session proposed is the session to be presented.

Authorized Speakers: Joe Sample, Speaker, [This will include anyone who has a completed presenter profile associated with the original proposal.] This presentation is only confirmed after all authorized speakers have individually accepted the Terms & Conditions.

PRESENTATION LOGISTICS

Date: Thursday, February 25, 2027

Presentation Time: 2:00pm – 3:00pm

Speaker Set Up Time: 1:30pm – 2:00pm

Location:
Kentucky International Convention Center
221 S. 4th Street
Louisville, KY 40202

Room Name: Room 504

Session Type: In-Person Workshop

Maximum Audience Capacity: 200

Stage Set: Standing Podium

Equipment Provided: PC computer with PowerPoint software, LCD Projector, screens appropriate for room size, sound capability for video, microphone.

Speaker Ready Room: At least two hours prior to your scheduled session time, one of the presenters of your session will bring the presentation and associated materials on a thumb drive or external storage device with them to the Speaker Ready Room. Cloud storage may also be accessed from the Speaker Ready Room. Staff will ensure all presentation slides and materials are uploaded properly.

There is free Wi-Fi available in the conference center, however, this will not support video streaming or other high bandwidth requirements during your session.

SPEAKER BENEFITS

Joe Sample will receive the following benefits as a conference presenter. All other expenses incurred in conjunction with this presentation not specifically identified below, including travel and hotel accommodations, are the responsibility of the speaker.

- Complimentary conference registration
- Downloadable copy of session recording available by request
- Access to all session recordings for three months

AUTHOR CONNECTION

If you and/or members of your presentation team are authors, there may be opportunities to promote your book(s) during the Conference. If so, books or other materials may only be sold in designated areas. Authors will be contacted by Show Management closer to the event.

USE OF VIDEO RECORDING AND PHOTOGRAPHY

By participating in the 2027 National ESEA Conference, Joe Sample acknowledges and agrees to grant Show Management the right to record, film, live stream, photograph, or capture the session and Speaker likeness in any media now available or hereafter developed and to distribute, broadcast, use, or otherwise globally to disseminate, in perpetuity, such media without any further approval from Speaker or any payment to Speaker. This grant to Show Management includes, but is not limited to, the right to edit such media, the right to use the media alone or together with other information, for example:

- In promotional materials for this or future ESEA Network professional development programs.
- As part of the professional development offerings at www.ESEAnetwork.org, viewable via a password-protected, closed, streaming video environment.

CONTENT CONSISTENCY

The speaker agrees that the content presented at the conference will be the same as that approved in their proposal and listed in the Session Description.

HANDOUT MATERIALS

Speaker agrees to provide all presentation supplementary materials for attendee access, by uploading electronic documents as directed. Any physical materials shipped to the conference venue will not be accepted.

CONFERENCE CONDUCT

The National ESEA Conference is dedicated to providing an inclusive experience for all participants, regardless of race, religion, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, ability, physical appearance, age or other marginalized affiliation. During the conference, all participants are expected to behave with common courtesy and civility; conduct themselves in a businesslike, ethical, and appropriate manner; and avoid engaging in or facilitating any discriminatory or harassing behavior.

PUBLIC HEALTH IMPACTS

The health and safety of all Conference participants is our highest priority. Presenters whose proposals are selected for inclusion in-person at the Conference must be willing and available to adhere to any and all health and safety requirements in place at the time of the Conference as specified by Show Management. However, in-person presenters whose proposals are selected for inclusion in the Conference must be willing to adjust their delivery format in the event that Show Management determines circumstances require a shift to an entirely virtual event.

NATIONAL ESEA CONFERENCE CONTENT

Speaker acknowledges and agrees that Show Management, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to change any and all aspects of the 2027 National ESEA Conference, including but not limited to, the event name, themes, content, program, speakers, performers, hosts, moderators, venue, format, and time.

ACCEPTANCE

By typing my name and today's date below, I agree to be bound by these Presenter Terms & Conditions.

TYPE FULL NAME

DATE ACCEPTED