**Conference Session Proposal Template**

The AFT’s next biennial professional learning conference, TEACH (Together Educating America’s Children), will be held July 6-10, 2021. Conference workshops will be held on a virtual platform. If you would like to be a presenter at the conference, please use this document to turn your presentation idea into a well-written proposal.

Important Information to Consider:

* Session length: 60-90 minutes
* Virtual workshops, trainings, demonstrations, discussions or presentations. For more ideas, see *Session Format Ideas*, page 6.

Proposals will be selected based on the following criteria:

* Quality of content
* Clarity of proposal/writing
* Member interest in the topic
* Relevance of content to the profession and to learning and thriving beyond the COVID-19 pandemic. Inclusion of engagement strategies for virtual sessions
* Presenter background and experience
* Included handouts, resume or other supplemental materials submitted with your proposal

Please join us on **March 11 at 4 p.m. EST** for a webinar if you are interested in submitting a proposal. We will discuss best practices for submitting your proposal and expectations of presenters.

**Overall, our attendees want:**

* Sessions with a greater **depth** of content
* Best practices and **tools** they can use right away and share with colleagues
* Sessions designed to **engage and inform** via a virtual environment
* Differentiated content for **veteran educators and school staff**
* Sessions highlighting **tools, resources and strategies for classrooms returning to in-person learning**
* Plenty of time for **Q&A**—at least 10 minutes of Q&A

**Attendees do not want:**

* Sessions with **basic content**,unless they are specifically designed for beginner-level attendees
* **Sales pitches** or promotion of products or services
* Panels that **don’t include educators** as presenters
* Presentations that **do not match** the session description
* Sessions **without engagement**
* Sessions that are **unorganized** and presenters who are **underprepared**
* **To be lectured**; instead, they want to be engaged and trained

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| **Submission Deadlines** | |
| Call for session proposals opens | March 5 |
| All proposals due by | April 9 |
| Notification of session status | April 23 |
| Notification of session schedule | April 23 |

**General Tips for Creating a Strong Proposal and Session**

* Be clear, concise and complete with your responses. This will help reviewers gain a clear picture of what you plan to share and do in your session.
* Write a title and description that are accurate and would draw an audience. Be sure to include what grade level the content is most appropriate for. If participants read your title and description, would they be interested in attending the session? Would they have enough information to make a decision on whether to attend or not?
* Incorporate interactive components into your session. Participants want to work with and learn from presenters and each other. Consider ways to break up your session with activities, think-pair-shares, group discussions and other learning experiences in a virtual environment. Remember to leave time for audience Q&A.
* Identify the right content level for your audience. Participants should feel like they are learning something new and working toward advancing to the next level.
* We are seeking thoughtful and engaging proposals for sessions on topics most critical to our members and leaders who are grappling with returning to school and planning for post-pandemic learning and development; the proposals should have clear learning outcomes, present intermediate to advanced content (most attendees are veterans), engage the expertise in the audience and address a significant topic/issue.

After completing this template, submit your proposal by **April 9 at 11:59 p.m. EDT** via the [Proposal Form](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1LSR8G1Vf-BdRQNah5C8Jx2d9fvfrdyzeQ6OMvkRiInQ/edit?usp=sharing). We will not accept proposals via email.

Main Contact Information

(Complete all information for the main contact for the session)

First Name:

Last Name:

Job or Title (include grade level and content area):

School/Organization:

Union Affiliation (name of state or local union and role (member, leader, staff, etc.); if not affiliated, type “none”):

Street/Mailing Address:

City:

State:

ZIP Code:

Main Phone (xxx-xxx-xxxx):

Primary Email (non-school):

Twitter Handle:

Short Bio:

Role in Conference Session:

* Main Contact/Organizer and Presenter/Speaker
* Main Contact/Organizer Only
* Presenter/Speaker Only

If you are an AFT member, has your local union president approved this proposal for presenting at TEACH 2021? Yes or no.

* If a member’s proposal is accepted or if any of the presenters are members, we would require approval from their local president to present at TEACH 2021.

Nonunion Affiliation Referral

* If you are not a member or leader of an AFT state affiliate or local, tell us which AFT staff member referred you to submit a proposal for TEACH 2021. If you are a member, type “none.”

Session Overview and Information

**Content Level (select one)**

Based on participant experience or knowledge:

* Beginner: Very basic content for attendees who are new to the topic or have less than two years of experience with relatable content.
* Intermediate: More in-depth content that goes beyond basics and is intended for attendees with at least four years of experience on the topic or relatable content.
* Advanced: In-depth analysis and discussion intended for attendees with 10 or more years of experience on the topic or relatable content.

**Content Area (select one)**  
These are the four theme areas that conference sessions will be organized into. To figure out which strand would be best for your session, use the descriptions below.

* Advocate: Content related to the latest developments in education, including district, state and federal policies, and activism related to school reopening and educators’ professional issues. Topics include the big-picture vision for the future of public education post-COVID-19, the impact of the political landscape and overcoming policy-induced obstacles.
* Collaborate: Content related to programs and practices that foster collaboration among parents, families, communities, labor-management partnerships and university partnerships, and that use philanthropic resources to sustain programming.
* Educate: Content designed for members to deepen their practice, address instructional challenges and learn new strategies for the classroom. Topics include supporting English language learners, special education, English language arts/literacy, classroom management and mathematics. Sessions in this strand are geared toward teachers, paraprofessionals, special education teachers, counselors and curriculum specialists.
* Organize: Content designed to engage members in topics related to strengthening unions, fostering member engagement and building capacity. Topics include opportunities for growth in the profession, the big-picture vision for teachers unions, using AFT professional learning for organizing, using Share My Lesson for member engagement, and issue-based bargaining.

**Target Audience (select up to four)**

Administrators, Advocates, Counselors, Curriculum Specialists, Elementary School Teachers, Health Specialists, High School Teachers, Management, Middle School Teachers, Paraprofessionals and School-Related Personnel (PSRPs), Principals and School Leaders, Policy and Legislative Staff, Specialized Instructional Support Personnel, Teachers of English language learners, Teachers of Special Needs Students, Union Leaders, Other.

**Session Length (select one)**

* 60 minutes
* 90 minutes

**What tags would best describe your session (select all that apply)**

* Achievement Gaps
* Anti-Racist Education
* Art Integration
* Bilingual Education
* Career and Technical Education (CTE)
* Community Organizing
* Community Partnerships
* Community Schools
* COVID-19
* Civics and Social Studies
* Culturally Relevant Pedagogy
* Differentiation
* Digital Citizenship
* Digital Literacy
* Discipline Disparities
* Early Childhood Education
* Education Policy and Research
* Educator Well-Being
* English Language Arts
* English Language Learners
* ESSA Implementation
* Immigration and Undocumented Students and Teachers
* International Insights and Comparisons
* Literacy
* Maker Education
* Mathematics
* Media and Cultural Studies
* Mental Health and Illness
* Opportunity to Learn
* Parent Engagement
* Performing Arts
* Project- and Problem-Based Learning
* Race and Unconscious Bias
* Remote Learning
* Resource Equity
* Restorative Practices
* School Climate
* School Diversity
* School District Collaboration
* School Finance
* School Reopening
* School Safety
* Science
* Social Emotional Learning
* Special Education
* STEM or STEAM
* Student Trauma
* Supports for LGBTQ Students
* Supports for Low-Income Students
* Teacher Leadership
* Team and Co-Teaching
* Technology in the Classroom
* Trauma-Sensitive Instruction
* University Partnerships
* Other

Specific Session Information

**Title:** Make it interesting, marketable and accurate. Some of our best sessions include a question as the title or pose a challenge and solution. (10-word limit)

**Description:** Make sure it’s aligned to your content, focuses on learning outcomes and provides information that would help participants decide if they want to attend your session and if it’s a good fit for their grade level and/or content area. (175-word limit)

**Objectives:** What is the purpose of this session? Provide up to three bullet points expressing the objectives.

**Session Agenda:** Please provide an outline and agenda of your session describing the time, content and process.

* Time: How much time is needed for each part of your session?
* Content: What content will be addressed?
* Process: How will participants experience the content?
* What will you do for an opener, knowledge checks and closer?

What is the suggested maximum number of attendees for this session?

**Practical Application:** After attending your session, what actions would the participants realistically be able to implement immediately upon returning to their job, school or community?

Why is this topic/content important to educators or union leaders at this time?

How would you connect this topic/content to the work of the union at the local level?

Why is TEACH the right place to present your content?

What interactive and adult learning elements will be part of your session?

Does your session require any of the following?

* Pre-Work or Pre-Reading
* Breakout rooms
* Polling
* Annotation tools
* Other:

How much knowledge and experience do you have on this topic/content? Select one:

* I have presented this content before and have 10 or more years of experience with this topic.
* I have not presented this content before to an audience, but have trained others in my organization or at my school.
* This would be my first time presenting this content, but I’m eager to do a great job.
* Other (please describe):

**Tools/Resources:** What tools and resources will attendees receive or work on completing in this session? (There will be a section to upload resources.)

**Presentation:** Please upload your presentation slides here.

We will have a [webinar on Thursday, March 11 at 4 p.m. EST](https://aft.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJMtc--rpjgvHN2kE337bGb4621wOX-9H2-b), for those interested in submitting a proposal. This will be a great opportunity for you to get information on best practices for submitting your proposal and the learning expectations of presenters.

I plan to participate or have participated in the presenter webinar: Yes or no.

Presenter Contact Information

(Complete all information for each presenter, up to four)

Presenter Experience: Have you presented at a previous TEACH (or QuEST) conference? Yes or no.

If no, have you presented at any other past conferences? Please indicate the conference, year and location.

First Name:

Last Name:

Job or Title (include grade level and content area):

School/Organization:

Union Affiliation (name of state or local union and role (member, leader, staff, etc.); if not affiliated, type none):

Street/Mailing Address:

City:

State:

ZIP Code:

Main Phone (xxx-xxx-xxxx):

Primary Email (non-school):

Twitter Handle:

Short Bio:

If this is an AFT member, has the person received approval from his or her local union president to present at TEACH 2021? Yes or no.

* If a member’s proposal is accepted or if any of the presenters are members, we would require approval from their local president to present at TEACH 2021.

## Session Format Ideas

* Boot Camp: A workshop or instructional program with hands-on learning opportunities and specific takeaways.
* Duo/Panel: Traditional format with up to four presenters to share their perspectives around a topic or question or opposing views, providing the audience with lessons learned and points to consider, and using interactive tools and audience engagement. The moderator ensures opportunities for audience engagement and shares resources.
* Fishbowl: The moderator introduces the topic and the ways in which people should be grouped. When time runs out, the fishbowl is closed and the moderator summarizes the discussion. A few ideas:
  + Participants are split into two to three smaller and distinct subgroups (such as men and women, or early career and veteran participants) that convene separately and come up with three to four questions for the other group, which are shared with the other group. The participants reconvene, exchange the questions and form two virtual “circles,” with one group of speakers spotlighted.
  + The first group reads a question and discusses it, while those in the other circle listen but do not speak. Each question is discussed in this way, making sure everyone in the first circle has a chance to speak. The circles are then reversed. The questions that the groups generate can be on the same subject or not, at the discretion of the organizer. This is a good activity for groups of 10-25 people.
* How-To and Tips (up to four presenters): Presenters take attendees through a series of tips and hacks to help them improve performance in a certain work area. Presenters walk attendees through setup and initial use to see how things work. This works best with technology use in the classroom, instructional practices, and resources and supports.
* Problem-Solving: An interactive exercise designed to address a challenge. Speakers facilitate a number of small-group discussions to identify possible solutions and resources/supports. Solutions are shared with all attendees, and participants could join together to form a community on the AFT’s eLearning site.
* TED-Style Talk Series (up to four presenters): A series of short lectures that present the speakers’ perspectives around a topic or question. The lead organizer organizes the topic and speakers, while also ensuring opportunities for audience engagement at the end.

Thank You

We will notify you on the status of your proposal by April 23. If your proposal is accepted, you will be asked to confirm your participation within one week of being notified.

If you have any questions, please contact Jasmine Oke in the AFT Educational Issues Department at [jgary@aft.org](mailto:jgary@aft.org).

We look forward to reading your proposal!