

Together We Rise

October 27-28 • Bellevue, Washington



2025 BRIDGE CONFERENCE WORKSHOP REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Thank you for your interest in presenting at School's Out Washington's 2025 Bridge Conference! Our annual convening brings together presenters and participants with many different identities, perspectives, and backgrounds from the expanded learning opportunities field, including welcoming people who speak multiple languages. This year's theme is **Together We Rise**. Learn more about our theme [here](#).

We look forward to reviewing your proposal. Thank you for your commitment to the field!

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the process for submitting a Workshop Proposal?

This list below is designed to support you through the RFP application process. We recommend following the steps outlined below:

1. Review the Frequently Asked Questions below.
2. Review the [PDF](#) of the Workshop Proposal Form before completing the RFP Form.
3. Sign up for SOWA emails to receive announcements: <https://schoolsoutwashington.org/about-us/connect/>
4. If you would like support with the RFP application or workshop development, please make an appointment for RFP Application/Workshop Development via this [booking form](#).
5. Complete and submit the RFP using this [form](#).

What are some important dates in the proposal process?

- The Request for Workshop Proposals is being released on **May 5, 2025**
- The deadline for proposal submissions is **June 27, 2025**
- All applicants will be notified of the status of their proposal by **Friday, August 29, 2025**
- If selected to present, you will be required to confirm your plans to present by **September 8, 2025**
- If selected, we require all presenters to attend a virtual Presenter Orientation Meeting during the week of **October 8, 2025-October 12, 2025**
- The Bridge Conference will take place **October 27 and October 28** at Meydenbauer Center

Together We Rise

October 27-28 • Bellevue, Washington



What are some benefits of presenting at the Bridge Conference?

- Share your expertise with leaders in the expanded learning opportunity field from Washington state and beyond
- Opportunity for professional development via our offer up to 2 complimentary registration (value of \$650) to each presenting team selected through the RFP.
- Promotion of your session and organization through social media and our public-facing conference agenda on Sched
- Share your contact information with attendees who may be interested in inviting you to share your expertise with their own organizations
- Receive workshop survey feedback to support your development as a presenter, with the potential for a testimonial
- Opportunity to join our list of potential trainers for paid contracts with School's Out Washington

How can I prepare a workshop that aligns with the Bridge Conference?

Please review the event description and learning objectives.

2025 Bridge Conference: Together We Rise

SOWA's annual Bridge Conference brings together youth program professionals, community leaders and organizers, funders, and policymakers from across the country. Many of our attendees work in grassroots youth programs with limited resources. For those attendees, Bridge serves as an important connection to the broader youth development field, relationship building, and knowledge to help them sustain and grow their impact.

Reflected in all aspects of Bridge are the values of equity, belonging, leadership, nourishment, change, innovation, and community. Our conference actively centers diverse BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) voices and youth program providers throughout the event and planning process. In 2022, 64% of attendees identified as BIPOC, and represented a diverse range of urban, suburban, and rural-based programs.

When gathered, our attendees and presenters work toward a collective vision of more equitable systems for young people that include community care, best practices, and advocacy.

We gather to:

- Learn how to implement tangible practices that promote high-quality programs and an equitable expanded learning ecosystem

Together We Rise

October 27-28 • Bellevue, Washington



- Identify and address the ways that racial inequities impact youth, expanded learning opportunities, and educational outcomes
- Highlight strengths and inequities in programs and systems and begin to strategize how to co-create stronger partnerships across sectors
- Experience belonging and personal/professional nourishment through social connection and networking

What is this year's Bridge theme?

Together We Rise

Like seeds taking root, young people will grow and flourish. Each of us has a role in nurturing that potential. When we come together, our collective efforts shape the landscape, transforming communities from the ground up—from grassroots programs to systemic change. Individually, we are strong. Together, we are unstoppable.

This year's theme, Together We Rise, emphasizes collective resilience, empowerment, replenishment, and shared success. It underscores that individual growth and wellbeing are intertwined with the strength and support of the community.

Bridge Values:

- **Collectivism – *We rise together.*** We believe in the power of shared effort, mutual support, and collective impact. True progress happens when we center community, honor interdependence, and work toward a shared vision.
- **Joy – *A radical act of resilience.*** Joy is not just a feeling—it's a force. We embrace joy as a vital part of our work and a celebration of culture, connection, and the beauty of being in community together.
- **Racial Equity – *Justice at the center.*** We are committed to dismantling systemic racism and creating spaces where all racial, ethnic, and cultural identities are valued, uplifted, and empowered. Equity is foundational to our collective work.
- **Belonging – *A place for everyone.*** We strive to create spaces that go beyond being included. Let us reimagine and cultivate learning and community spaces where historically and institutionally marginalized communities are at the center of our design and implementation process.
- **Innovation & Curiosity – *Approach bold questions with open hearts and minds.*** We support and challenge each other to think differently, continue learning, and be open to exploring new possibilities. Our curiosity sparks discovery, and our shared spirit of innovation turns ideas into impact.

Join us as we navigate the intricate interplay between individual experiences, collective movements, and the overarching landscape of youth development. Together we will uncover strategies to cultivate, amplify, and harness these moments to catalyze a ripple effect of positive change.

Together We Rise

October 27-28 • Bellevue, Washington



What are examples of past workshop titles and descriptions?

Check out previous examples of Bridge workshops: <https://2024bridgeconference.sched.com/>

What are examples of topics that would fit into each of the Conference focus areas?

- **Race and Equity:** While we are seeking sessions across all focus areas that incorporate race and equity, this focus area is especially for sessions where topics of race and/or equity are the main content area. Examples include the intersections of race and _____ (e.g. class, disabilities, access to food and housing, adultism, racial literacy, white privilege, structural racism, social justice, or sex, gender, gender identity, or supporting specific populations such as immigrant and refugee youth and families).
- **Youth Development Programming:** What do high-quality out of school time programs for youth, especially low-income youth, and youth of color, look like? What practices, curriculum, and environments will provide the opportunities youth deserve in order to thrive? Examples include cultural responsiveness, social and emotional learning, trauma-informed and restorative practices, STEM, sense of belonging, relationships, identity development, creativity, safety and wellness, youth leadership and engagement, and program development.
- **Capacity and Systems Building:** What does it look like to invest in our staff and our field? How do we strengthen the formal systems (policies, institutional practices, and funding) and the informal and cultural systems (communities of practice, beliefs, and youth and family voice) to advance equity? Examples include practice and policy change that promotes racial equity within organizations; staff and volunteer development; leadership and management practices; grant writing; workforce development; advocacy; research and evaluation; assessment, planning, and improvement; and connections between family, school, and community.
- **Emerging Issues:** What does the future of youth development look like? Reflecting on the past couple of years and looking to the future, what are some topics our field should prioritize to meet the needs of youth? Examples include mental health, resilience, collective trauma, compassion fatigue, deepening investment in racial equity conversations and actions, youth activism, creative or restorative justice, and identity development for adults.
- **Multi-Sector Partnerships & Collaboration:** How can we build enduring partnerships in youth development and education? Which types of partnerships, and the way their members collaborate, can help create a more equitable and expansive learning environment? There are various examples, such as sharing power in cross-sector partnerships, managing the effects of turnover within relationships, developing genuine partnerships with youth and families, applying community-centric fundraising principles, and seeking funding for cross-sector collaborations.

Together We Rise

October 27-28 • Bellevue, Washington



- **Self and Collective Care:** We will have dedicated space to pause, breathe, and recharge. To return to our purpose and support young people, we must restore and replenish. Some examples may include workshops on self-care, affinity spaces, information on mutual aid, sound baths, labyrinth creation and creating mindfulness for young people.

What times are available to present a workshop?

When submitting a proposal, we will ask you to indicate which days you are available to present at the conference. Because there are a limited number of workshops in each Period, your availability may influence our decision-making as we finalize our menu of workshops. All sessions are 90 minutes.

- Monday, October 27, 10:30 AM-12:00 PM PST
- Monday, October 27, 1:15 PM-2:45 PM PST
- Monday, October 27, 3:00 PM-4:30 PM PST
- Tuesday, October 28, 9:15 AM-10:45 AM PST
- Tuesday, October 28, 11:00 AM-2:30 PM PST
- Tuesday, October 28, 3:00 PM-4:30 PM PST

How many people can I expect in my session and what will the room layout be?

The maximum number of people per room will vary, from about 34 to 120. We cannot estimate exactly how many people to expect in your assigned room, as so many factors influence how many people choose each session. Rooms may be set up with round tables, school room or theatre style.

What is the workshop selection criteria?

SOWA will prioritize the following criteria in the workshop selection process: high quality and compelling workshop (e.g. clarity of title, description, style and delivery), conference alignment and relevance (with event learning objectives), racial equity alignment, and providing a balanced, diverse program including a majority of presenters identifying as Black, Indigenous, and/or People of Color (BIPOC) and workshops from across Washington state, and an array of topics for attendees with different roles and levels of experience and expertise to choose from. English grammar is not part of our criteria.

What are SOWA's expectations of Presenters?

Required Presenter Orientation: If selected, all presenters are required to attend the Presenter Orientation meeting via Zoom on one of the following days/times:

- October 7, 2025, 4:30 PM-6:00 PM PST
- October 9, 2025, 10:00 AM-11:30 AM PST

Together We Rise

October 27-28 • Bellevue, Washington



Room Host & Pre-Workshop Check-In: Presenters must arrive 30 minutes prior to their workshop start time, check in at registration, and check in with the room host at the assigned room at least 20 minutes prior to session start time.

Complimentary Registration: We encourage you to attend the rest of the Bridge Conference and offer up to 2 complimentary registrations (value of \$650) to each presenting team selected through the RFP. Additional co-presenters are welcome to purchase a ticket if they wish to attend. If you are selected, you will receive information about how to register as a presenter and we strongly encourage you to register at that time in order to reserve your spot.

Products: We encourage you to share free resources, tools, curriculum, etc. in your workshop session. If you are interested in promoting a product or service that is not free or widely available to the public, we offer you the opportunity to become a sponsor or exhibitor for Bridge. Please see our current [Bridge website](#) for more information.

Photos & Video: School's Out Washington may take photos and video of the 2025 Bridge Conference, including speakers, attendees, and other activities to use in marketing and other materials. Conference attendees waive any rights and any claims regarding the taking and publishing of such photos, video, etc.

Important Dates & Timeline:

- The deadline for proposal submissions is **June 27, 2025**.
- All applicants will be notified of the status of their proposal by **August 29, 2025**.
- If selected to present, you will be required to confirm your plans to present **September 8, 2025**.

Who can I reach out to if I have more questions?

If you have specific questions related to the workshop proposal, please email our team at bridge@schoolsoutwashington.org or visit our current [Bridge website](#) for more information.

How do I apply and what questions do you ask in the Workshop Proposal form?

First, please view [this PDF](#) to review the full list of the questions we ask in the Proposal form. Then, complete the [Proposal form](#) by June 27, 2025.