

Canadian Society for the Study of Higher Education

Call for Proposals for the 2026 Annual Conference

Virtual Segment
May 24, 2026

Winnipeg, Manitoba
May 31–June 3, 2026



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Contents

1. [Conference Overview & Theme](#) 3
2. [Session Formats](#) 3
3. [Conference Tracks](#) 5
4. [Eligibility Requirements](#) 7
5. [Submission Process](#) 8
6. [Review Process](#) 11
7. [Important Dates](#) 12
8. [Calls to Action](#) 12

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[visit the event site.](#)

1. *Conference Overview & Theme*

The [Canadian Society for the Study of Higher Education \(CSSHE\)](#) invites you to participate in its next annual conference, to be held in Winnipeg, Manitoba **from May 31 to June 3, 2026**. We invite proposals from researchers, practitioners, administrators, students, activists, and policymakers in higher education and related disciplines.

The conference theme *Centering Human Rights and Equity in Higher Education: Advancing Dialogue and Strengthening Relationships* asks us to consider the connections between the ways we learn, the knowledges we create, the practices we enact, and to what ends these connections can achieve. The theme encourages us to gather and share perspectives based on our different identities, locations, and positionalities within or in relation to Canadian higher education. Doing so allows us to clarify our roles and responsibilities in the face of interesting times and wicked problems.

In 2026, in addition to our in-person programming, we will offer a virtual segment to make the conference experience more accessible. This virtual segment, set for **May 24, 2026**, is designed with graduate students and early-career scholars in mind to showcase their ongoing research. We believe this approach will increase the capacity of scholars and practitioners to engage in dialogue with each other.

The Conference Committee invites you to review the details of our call for proposal, and to submit your proposals by **December 15, 2025 at 11:59 PM (Central/Winnipeg)**.

2. *Session Formats*

Proposals are accepted for six session formats.

2.1 **Individual Presentation**

The submission of a paper proposal on original piece of research by an author(s), which will be grouped by the Conference Committee into a

session of three presentations based on a common topic or theme. Each presentation is set for 15 minutes, and typically involves slides or other visuals to present a summary of the scholarly work. Each presentation is then given five minutes for Q&A, discussion, and feedback. This format is available in both the virtual segment and the in-person program.

2.2 Self-organized Panel Session

Similar to the Individual Presentation format, except the three presentations are proposed together by a session organizer. This allows the involved author(s) to coordinate between their presentations, to highlight commonalities in questions, themes, or problems related to research or practice.

The person submitting the proposal will become the session chair. They are expected to follow and implement the time-keeping parameters of 45 minutes of presented material and 15 minutes of audience interaction. This format is available in both the virtual segment and the in-person program.

2.3 Roundtable

Less formal than the paper presentations described above, a roundtable session allows authors to exchange ideas around topical issues or to gather feedback on works in progress. The author(s) of an accepted roundtable presentation is given 15 minutes to discuss their work and ask the audience questions for input. This format is available only in the in-person program.

2.4 Workshop

Workshops, led by facilitators with expertise, allow participants to engage in hands-on learning on a topic relevant to higher education. Each workshop is set for 60 minutes. This format is available only in the in-person program.

2.5 Interactive Poster Presentation

This format is new for the conference in 2026, and builds on the poster presentations component in past conferences. Inspired by the Two-Minute Thesis, PechaKucha, and Ignite talks, these presentations challenge scholars and practitioners to present their ideas effectively, combining clarity, concision, and persuasion.

Presenters are given the constraint of five minutes and five slides; no physical poster is required. Following each presentation, the audience will have time to ask questions or provide feedback (on content or delivery) to the presenter. Given the creative constraints, this format only accepts single-author proposals.

Whether you are a graduate student, an early-career scholar, or even a full professor, this is a way to practice effective academic communication or experiment with story-telling. Practitioners are also invited to describe approaches used to solve a problem(s) in their work. This format is available only in the in-person program.

2.6 Book Launch

This format is new for the conference in 2026, and is designed to showcase different books published in 2023 or later on a topic related to higher education. Authors are given time to introduce their book, and to participate in a panel discussion with the audience on the process and challenges of academic publishing. This format is available only in the in-person program.

3. *Conference Tracks*

In recognition of higher education's various disciplines and approaches to problem-defining and problem-solving, the tracks for the 2026 conference are listed below. When submitting a proposal, authors are in the ideal position to describe their ideas, and they should select the track that best reflects the substance of their work.

- **Assessment & Evaluation**
Explores the procedures and techniques related to assessing performance, practices, program outcomes, metrics, and rankings.
- **Community Colleges & CÉGEPs**
Examines the institutional cultures, practices, and procedures of these organizations.
- **Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Decolonization & Indigeneity**
Explores the problems of higher education through the critical lenses of EDID and/or Indigenous Ways of Knowing.
- **Governance & Administration in Higher Education**
Examines higher education organizations with respect to administrators, leadership, and governing boards.
- **Higher Education Policy & Finance**
Explores policy development and implementation, as well as financial matters, in higher education.
- **History & Foundations of Higher Education**
Examines the historical development of the field, its subsystems, and individual institutions, and their practices, values, and philosophies.
- **International & Comparative Higher Education**
Compares and contrasts international higher education systems to uncover similarities, differences, and implications.
- **Research Methodologies**
Explores prevailing and emerging paradigms in conducting scholarly research, including the development of theoretical frameworks.
- **Student Affairs**
Examines the practices in cultivating student development, access, and success, while addressing the challenges in supporting students.
- **Teaching & Learning**
Explores the nuances in curriculum design and development, and the experiences of instructors and learners in the classroom.
- **Technology in Higher Education**
Examines emerging issues in the integration of technology (e.g., AI) in higher education, both as a learning and as an administrative tool.

4. *Eligibility Requirements*

These requirements reflect the CSSHE's standards for scholarship and knowledge dissemination. Proposals are rejected if the requirements are unmet. Accepted proposals are also subject to removal from the program if the requirements are later found to be unmet.

4.1 Before Submitting a Proposal

- i. All paper presentation proposals should be original work, not previously presented at a conference nor published in any outlet (e.g., newspaper, scholarly journal, etc.);
- ii. Authors can submit a paper presentation proposal to either the in-person program or the virtual segment; however, the same proposal may not be submitted to both;
- iii. The virtual segment will only accept paper presentations (described in sections 2.1 and 2.2 under [Session Formats](#));
- iv. The in-person program will not accept the same proposal submitted to more than one session format and/or conference track;
- v. An individual may present up to two formal paper presentations (see sections 2.1 and 2.2) throughout the conference (both virtual and in-person); however, they may be listed in the program as a co-author without restriction; and
- vi. An individual may present up to two times in all other session formats (see sections 2.3–2.6).

4.2 After Submitting a Proposal

- i. All presenters accepted into the program must register for the conference by **April 30, 2026**;
- ii. All presenters accepted into the program must have current [CSSHE membership](#) during **May 31–June 3, 2026**; and

- iii. All presenters agree to be available across the conference dates that they propose for (**May 24 and/or May 31–June 3, 2026**) as accepted sessions will be scheduled by the Conference Committee to ensure balanced programming.

5. *Submission Process*

Submissions for all formats (with the exception of Book Launch proposals) will go through an anonymized peer review process. Proposals can be submitted **October 10–December 15, 2025 (closing at 11:59 PM Central/Winnipeg)**. This is a 66-day window for submissions. Please regard it as a firm deadline to support timely reviews and decisions for all proposals.

5.1 Fourwaves

Proposal submissions are made via [Fourwaves](#). Please note:

- i. Fourwaves makes a distinction between the submitter, author(s), and presenter(s);
- ii. The information regarding names, titles, and institutional affiliations entered by the submitting author will be used in the published conference program, if a proposal is accepted;
- iii. The email address(es) submitted will be used for correspondence regarding the proposal submission and peer review assignments—we suggest including the email addresses of co-authors and co-presenters to ensure up-to-date communication; and
- iv. Fourwaves accepts uploads in either .docx or .pdf format.

5.2 Core Requirements

Please prepare your proposal document in [APA style \(7th edition\)](#). Proposals for all session formats have the following requirements:

- i. A selected conference track that best describes the focus of the work;
- ii. A title for the session (up to 15 words, used in the program to identify the session, if accepted);
- iii. An abstract (up to 50 words, used in the program to describe the session, if accepted);
- iv. Word-limited and format-specific content (see section 5.3); and
- v. References, tables, charts, graphs, images, and figures—placed at the end of the document (no word limit applies).

5.3 Format-specific Requirements

This portion of a proposal is uploaded in a document. To support the masked review process, no information that could identify the author(s) should appear in this document, including its headers, footers, and file name.

5.3.1 *Individual Presentation*

A description, limited to 500 words, of:

- i. The purpose or goals of the research;
- ii. Its theoretical/conceptual foundation;
- iii. Its methodology;
- iv. Its expected, preliminary, or full findings; and
- v. Its theoretical/practical significance and implications.

5.3.2 *Self-organized Panel Session*

- i. A description, limited to 500 words, of the session's objectives in the context of the chosen topic, the research questions, and the relevance to higher education; and
- ii. A description as per 5.3.1 for each of the required three presentations forming the session (i.e., up to 500 words to describe each project).

5.3.3 *Roundtable*

The Conference Committee recognizes that works in progress vary in what is known and unknown. When proposing a roundtable presentation, please describe, within 500 words, what is known of:

- i. The purpose or goals of the research;
- ii. Its theoretical/conceptual foundation;
- iii. Its methodology;
- iv. Its expected, preliminary, or full findings;
- v. Its theoretical/practical significance and implications; and
- vi. The feedback sought (e.g., clarifying the research problem, refining methods, interpreting findings, discerning significance, etc.).

5.3.4 *Workshop*

A description, limited to 500 words, of:

- i. The purpose or goals of the workshop;
- ii. Its learning objectives;
- iii. Its delivery plan (activities, tools, worksheets, etc.);
- iv. Non-identifying information about the subject matter expertise of the facilitator(s); and
- v. Any requirements for technology, accessibility, or pre-requisite knowledge of participants.

5.3.5 *Interactive Poster Presentation*

Either:

- i. For a research-based talk, the requirements of [5.3.1](#) (i.e., up to 500 words to describe the project); or

- ii. For a practice-based talk, a description limited to 500 words of the problem; the implemented solution; the outcome(s); and implications for professional practice.

5.3.6 *Book Launch*

Within 750 words:

- i. A citation of the book in APA format;
- ii. A description of the book, including the problem(s) it addresses and the contribution(s) that it makes to higher education; and
- iii. Optionally, up to three quotes that endorse the book.

6. *Review Process*

By **December 19, 2025**, all authors will be assigned up to two proposals for each proposal they submitted (and in the language submitted) to peer review. Reviews are due **January 27, 2026 at 11:59 PM (Central/Winnipeg)**. This is an anonymized process that provides feedback to all proposal types (except for Book Launch proposals, which are reviewed by the Conference Committee) and helps the Conference Committee determine what to accept into the program.

By **February 10, 2026**, authors will be notified of the decisions for proposals. The Conference Committee will select submissions that are rigorous in quality and have the potential to contribute to knowledge and practice. To that end, the Conference Committee may reassign proposals to a different track or session format (but not conference type) to create a balanced conference program. In such cases, the author(s) will be notified when decisions are communicated.

7. *Important Dates*

October 10, 2025 · Call for proposals is made

December 15, 2025 · Call for proposals is closed at 11:59 PM (Central/Winnipeg)

December 19, 2025 · All review assignments are made

January 27, 2026 · Reviews are due at 11:59 PM (Central/Winnipeg)

February 10, 2026 · By this date, authors are notified of the decision for proposals

April 30, 2026 · Registration deadline for inclusion in finalized conference program

May 24, 2026 · Virtual segment of conference

May 31–June 3, 2026 · In-person program of conference

8. *Calls to Action*

To begin the proposal process, visit [the Fourwaves platform](#). Meanwhile, we invite you to support the planning of the conference in other ways.

8.1 **Inform Our Accessibility Design**

The Conference Committee strives to create an accessible and inclusive environment and experience for all participants. Best efforts will be made to accommodate both virtual and in-person accessibility needs. Accessibility needs and requests can be made at the time of conference

registration, and we welcome general input via this form: <https://forms.gle/3LGx8YXqNDmDTteYA>.

8.2 Volunteer to Support the Conference

The Conference Committee is also seeking volunteers to support activities. These range from aiding in the peer review process (a commitment of approximately two weeks in January 2026) to providing technical support and posting signage during the in-person program. Express your interest here: <https://forms.gle/a7v6FRWRJyCruK4f8>.

8.3 Contact Us with Comments or Questions

The Conference Co-Chairs for 2026 are Christos Orfanidis and Jessy Cheung. They can be reached at cssheconference@gmail.com.

