

Call for Presenters

2026 MCAEL Adult ESOL Professional Development Conference 2026

Beyond Barriers: Support. Connect. Advance.

Hello, fellow adult ESOL professionals!

We're excited to announce that we are now accepting presentation proposals for the MCAEL Adult ESOL Professional Development Conference. The conference will be held on Saturday, October 24, 2026 at the BlackRock Center for the Arts in Germantown, MD. All presentations will be in person.

This year's conference theme is **Beyond Barriers**.

As adult ESOL instructors, volunteers, program administrators, and community partners, we know that barriers impact our learners, classrooms, and programs. While we may not be able to eliminate every challenge, we can leverage the collective knowledge, experience, and creativity of our coalition to find better ways to navigate them, reduce their impact, and create opportunities beyond them.

We invite you to share a practical strategy, approach, resource, partnership, lesson learned, or experience that has helped you address a challenge, navigate a barrier, or create an opportunity in your work.

Whether you're a seasoned professional or relatively new to adult ESOL, we want to hear from you. Read on to learn more about the goals of the conference and what we're looking for in presenter proposals.

The deadline for submitting [proposals](#) is 11:59pm on August 30, 2026.

Conference Goals

The MCAEL Adult ESOL Professional Development Conference is an opportunity to learn from one another, strengthen relationships across our network, and discover practical approaches that can be applied in our classrooms, programs, and communities.

Our goals are to:

- Build the knowledge, skills, and capacity of adult ESOL professionals.
- Strengthen connections and collaboration across the MCAEL network.
- Share practical approaches that participants can apply in their work.
- Explore new possibilities for supporting, connecting, and advancing adult ESOL learners, educators, and programs.

Who We're Looking For

All Are Welcome

All are welcome to submit a proposal. You may even team up with a colleague for a joint presentation.

You do not need to be an expert to present. If you have a strategy, experience, lesson learned, challenge navigated, we want to hear from you.

If you need help refining your idea, submit your proposal and we will help.

Mix of Roles and Perspectives

We aim to include a wide range of perspectives and welcome proposals from adult ESOL practitioners representing different program types, roles, and experiences.

Presentations from instructors, volunteers, tutors, program administrators, community partners, TESOL-certified and non-TESOL-certified professionals are all valued.

Diverse Group of Presenters

We aim to feature a diverse group of presenters and especially welcome proposals from underrepresented voices within the adult ESOL community, including BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) and non-native English-speaking adult ESOL professionals.

What We're Looking For

Practical and Actionable Ideas

We want attendees to leave with ideas they can use.

Please provide concrete strategies, approaches, tools, resources, partnerships, or lessons learned that participants can apply in their own work.

Interactive and Engaging Sessions

This conference is designed as an interactive learning experience. One of the greatest strengths of our coalition is the knowledge and experience that exists within it.

We encourage proposals that create opportunities for participants to learn from one another and actively engage through discussion, reflection, demonstration, collaboration, practice, problem-solving, or other participatory approaches.

Presentations may take a variety of formats, including:

- Interactive workshops
- Demonstrations
- Facilitated conversations
- Other participatory learning experiences

Audience Awareness

Attendees will represent a variety of roles, experience levels, and program types.

When crafting your proposal, please consider who will benefit most from your session. If your presentation is intended for a specific audience (such as tutors, low-literacy instructors, program administrators, or a particular program model), please make this clear in your title and description.

Suggested Topic Areas

We welcome proposals related to this year's conference strands:

Support

Topics related to helping learners, educators, and programs succeed.

Examples:

- Learner engagement
- Instructional strategies
- Technology integration
- Learner persistence and retention
- Volunteer management
- Program operations
- Learner support services
- Classroom practices
- Access

Connect

Topics related to strengthening relationships, belonging, and collaboration.

Examples:

- Culturally responsive teaching
- Community building in the classroom
- Inclusive learning environments
- Learner input and leadership
- Partnerships
- Cross-program collaboration
- Educator peer learning

Advance

Topics related to expanding opportunities and impact.

Examples:

- Workforce pathways
- Advocacy
- Leadership development
- Innovation
- Civic engagement
- Program growth and sustainability
- Emerging practices in adult ESOL

Selection Process

A panel of proposal reviewers will reflect the diversity of programs and professionals we aim to represent at the conference.

Selected presenters will be notified by September 7, 2026.

Presentation Support

All selected presenters will receive support from MCAEL in preparing for the conference.

We will schedule a session with each presenter to help refine content, strengthen participant engagement, and ensure presentations align with the conference goals and learning experience.

Presentation Format

Sessions should be designed for approximately 40 - 60 minutes, allowing time for transitions, Q&A, and closing.

Speaker Benefits

A presenter honorarium will be offered to all selected presenters.

Submit Your Proposal

Please submit your proposal here: [2026 MCAEL Adult ESOL Professional Development Conference Call for Presenters – Fill out form](#)

If you have questions, please contact Tiffani Ross, Manager of Network Learning and Development, at tross@mcael.org.