



2025-2026
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Call for Proposals

Scholars, researchers, educators, practitioners, and advocates are invited to submit proposals to present at the 2026 ACEDHH Conference, taking place **January 29-31, 2026**, at The Curtis Denver - a DoubleTree Hotel. CFP is due on **September 8th, 2025**.

We welcome presentations that share your latest innovations and research in deaf education, aligned with our conference theme:

Advancing Deaf Education: Transformative and Innovative Approaches Grounded in Research

Together, we aim to create more equitable learning opportunities for students who are Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, Late-Deafened, and Hard of Hearing in K-12 education.

Conference Theme Explanation

For decades, we have recognized ongoing challenges in deaf education, yet systemic progress remains difficult to achieve. These challenges span multiple levels of the educational system such as teacher preparation programs, current teachers, school structures, and the experiences of deaf students themselves. They are present across a range of program types - whether bilingual, simultaneous communication, cued speech, or spoken language approaches.

While these issues are well-documented and frequently discussed at our conferences, our field is ready to move beyond identifying barriers toward implementing transformative and innovative approaches grounded in research that push for real change. We invite you to submit a presentation proposal that answers at least one of the following guiding questions.

1. Teacher Preparation Programs

Teacher preparation programs face ongoing challenges, including low enrollment, a shortage of deaf faculty and faculty of color, and limited pathways to recruit and retain highly qualified candidates. These gaps directly affect the quality, expertise, and diversity of future teachers. At the same time, higher education faculty are grappling with how to design and teach coursework that is culturally responsive, grounded in current research, and aligned with the complex realities of today's deaf education landscape.

Guiding Question: What research-driven solutions are strengthening teacher preparation programs, course design, and faculty development and how are these efforts expanding the pipeline of skilled, well-prepared teachers?

2. Current Teachers

A shortage of fluent signing teachers, a lack of teachers of color, and underprepared teachers entering the field remain pressing concerns. Many teachers lack ongoing systemic support to address the needs of deaf students, especially those who experience language deprivation or come from multilingual backgrounds.

Guiding Question: Which research-driven professional development models, mentoring systems, or instructional strategies are proving successful in supporting, retaining, and improving the quality of teachers?

3. Educational Systems

Deaf schools are seeing declining enrollment, while most deaf students are mainstreamed, often as the only deaf student in their school. Self-contained classrooms are disappearing, sign language interpreter quality is inconsistent, and itinerant teachers, who see students only a few times a week, often serve as the primary source of deaf education. It is well-documented that many deaf students are struggling to thrive in these circumstances.

Guiding Question: How can research-driven systems-level reforms improve existing educational systems that serve deaf students, especially in the areas of policy and trends?

4. Deaf Students' Experiences

Language deprivation remains prevalent, even among deaf students with cochlear implants. Many deaf students continue to face academic and social-emotional struggles due to multiple factors, including limited access to multilingual and multicultural environments that incorporate sign language, as well as a lack of diverse role models, peers, and teachers.

Guiding Question: Which research-driven approaches effectively address language and multilingual development, academic achievement, and social-emotional well-being for deaf students?

5. Partnerships and Collaborations

Many researchers, teacher educators, and practitioners in deaf education report working in silos with limited cross-institutional support or collaboration. There is growing interest in building sustainable partnerships across universities, schools, communities, and disciplines to pool resources, coordinate efforts, and drive innovation in teacher preparation and instructional practice.

Guiding Question: Which research-driven models of collaboration are expanding capacity, improving impact, and creating more sustainable networks in deaf education?

6. Graduate Programs

Graduate students often enter the field with bold ideas, fresh perspectives, and a commitment to language access and innovation. Yet, they may face limited mentorship, unclear career pathways, or institutional barriers to advancing their work. Supporting and elevating emerging scholars is essential for the future of deaf education.

Guiding Question: What research-driven structures, mentorship models, and institutional supports are helping graduate students contribute meaningfully to the field, and what research-driven approaches are graduate students envisioning for the next chapter of deaf education?

Submission Guidelines

We welcome proposals that use different research methodologies, including but not limited to:

- Empirical studies (quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods)
- Theoretical discussions
- Case studies
- Action research
- Community-based projects

Presentation Formats

1. Research Presentation (45 minutes)

Share findings from a completed or ongoing research project.

Format: 30-minute presentation + 15-minute Q&A

2. *Exploratory Talk (30 minutes)***

Present early-stage ideas for an upcoming research project. This format is ideal for receiving feedback on specific components of a developing study, such as research questions, theoretical frameworks, methods, or intervention materials, and for identifying potential collaborators or consultants. Exploratory talk may also focus on highlighting gaps in the literature to inspire new directions for future research

Format: Free form - to be determined by the presenter

***For the 2026 conference, we are introducing a new presentation format: the Exploratory Talk, which will replace the traditional roundtable.*

3. *Poster Presentation (1.5 hours)*

Engage with individual attendees in a visual, interactive discussion of your work through posters.

Format: Poster presentation

Proposal Submission: [Click here](#) to submit your proposal

Submission Timeline

- Proposal Due date: August 25, 2025
- Notification of Acceptance: October 17, 2025
- Early Bird Registration Ends: November 21, 2025
- Conference Date: January 29-31, 2026

For any questions, please contact Dr. Leala Holcomb (President-Elect) at lholcom5@utk.edu and Dr. Scott Cohen (Conference Chair) at scohen1@lamar.edu