



# **Beyond Boundaries 2026: A Lifelong Learning Symposium Call for Presenters**



## 2026 BEYOND BOUNDARIES CONFERENCE: OVERVIEW

**Lifelong Learning Origins:** Since 2021, Believe in Learning Norfolk has served as a hub for over 100 nonprofit, municipal, and for-profit organizations that are dedicated to providing Norfolk residents with opportunities for community involvement, accessing resources, and reaching personal and professional goals.

**Lifelong Learning Significance:** Lifelong Learning drives social, economic, cultural, and environmental development. Lifelong Learning is a tool, meant to improve equity for all groups in spite of obstacles like housing insecurity, poverty, and unemployment. Lifelong learning creates a self-sustaining environment.

**Lifelong Learning Impact:** We aim to create a consortium of 4-6 cities with a common goal, philosophy, and resource pool. This consortium will have the ability to significantly impact outcomes in socio-economic viability, employment rates, individual satisfaction, and literacy throughout the region.

“Tracks” refer to specific subject areas for workshops conducted during the conference. These are meant to provide a well-rounded experience for all attendees. There will be three tracks of workshops for the conference, which cover subjects pertaining to technology, practices in lifelong learning, and professional development for educators and practitioners.

**Track I:** Innovation and Technology in Lifelong Learning

**Track II:** Best Practices and Next Practices in Learning Across the Lifespan

**Track III:** When Teachers Learn: Professional Development for Educators and Practitioners

**Track IV:** Creating Lifelong Learners

## **2026 BEYOND BOUNDARIES CONFERENCE GOALS**

Hosted by the City of Norfolk, Prime Plus Senior Center, and the Norfolk Public Library, this conference explores the benefits and implementation of Lifelong Learning Practices. Here, attendees will attend a variety of workshops and breakout sessions in order to learn more about lifelong learning and its applications.

**Purpose:** for practitioners, educators, and service providers to gain new insight, share best and next practices, and build capacity.

The themes of Beyond Boundaries will build individual and organizational capacity for advancing learning across the lifespan by:



- Sourcing new ideas and opportunities from multiple industries and professional fields, and forging relationships and partnerships with community leaders and across sectors.
- Building from the collaborative nature of lifelong learning to discover and scale best practices and next practices— informed by evidence from evaluation and research—and to learn from failures.
- Influencing how communities and the world sees learning across the lifespan and demonstrating our ability to deliver societal value and impact.

### **KEY DATES (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)**

- Submission open: May 15, 2025
- Submission address: [lifelonglearning@norfolk.gov](mailto:lifelonglearning@norfolk.gov)
- Notifications: Early September 2025

## QUICK GUIDE TO SUBMITTING A SESSION PROPOSAL

The Beyond Boundaries Conference Planning Committee evaluates all proposals submitted for the conference. The information that you include in your submission will be used by the reviewers to understand your proposal and what the proposed session will offer attendees, help the City of Norfolk market your session, and help attendees find the sessions most relevant to them. Below is a brief outline of proposal-submission items.

- **Session Title:** A brief and descriptive explanation of your session.
- **Session Description:** A 250-word description of your session, including a summary of the topic and of the information, takeaways, benefits, or lessons that you expect conference participants to gain. This is the primary element of your proposal that the reviewers will use to evaluate your session. If your session is accepted, you will be asked to provide a refined 50-word summary for the conference program and marketing materials.
- **Session Leaders and Presenters:** The accurate names, titles, organizations, and contact information for the people organizing the session, presenting, and facilitating discussions. No one may lead or present in more than three sessions.
- **Diverse Perspectives:** A short description of the diverse range of perspectives present in the session, which will help reviewers understand the session makeup and will help us promote the full range of viewpoints being shared.
- **Conference Track:** One of five conference tracks that best describes the major content focus of your session and will be used to help conference participants find the content most relevant for them.
- **Topical Tags:** Up to three topical tags that provide additional information on the topics discussed within your session. Tags will be used by the reviewers in assessing the range of content across the program and will be searchable by attendees in finding sessions most relevant to them.



## TARGET AUDIENCE

Aimed at teaching and learning professionals, library professionals, individuals interested in lifelong learning, industry leaders, and those already serving in the field of lifelong learning.

## PRESENTER EXPECTATIONS

**Presenter Expectations** All presenters are responsible for their own travel and accommodation. Approved presenters will not be required to pay the conference registration fee.

## HELPFUL LINKS

- Resources for Writing Learning Objectives
  - [Otterbein University LibGuides: Writing Learning Objectives and Outcomes](#)
  - [International Accreditors for Continuing Education and Learning: A Primer on Learning Outcomes](#)

## EDUCATION FORMATS- WORKSHOPS AND BREAK OUT GROUPS

Beyond Boundaries emphasizes active and applied learning. Learning formats support a range of instructional methods that allow attendees to choose the content, materials, and methods that match their learning styles and professional development goals.

## NEXT PRACTICE EXCHANGES (30 MINUTES)

Peer-to-peer conversation on the topics that matter most to the lifelong learning community.

## LEARNING LAB (60 MINUTES)

Learning Lab (60 minutes) Action-based instruction that delves into specific methods, approaches, and opportunities.

## SHOPTALK (15-20 MINUTES)

Mini- presentation on hot topics and trends that includes practical knowledge, tips, and key tangible takeaways.

