



OPEN CALL FOR PROPOSALS: 2020 HOUSTON COMMON FIELD CONVENING

April 23 - 26, 2020

Houston, Texas

KEY DATES

Guidelines and Application Online: August 15, 2019

Deadline to Submit Proposals: Monday, October 28, 2019, 11:59PM PST

Proposal Status Notification: December 19, 2019

Convening Dates: April 23 - 26, 2020

Link to Application: commonfield.submittable.com

Download a PDF for reference.

ABOUT THE COMMON FIELD 2020 CONVENING: Houston, Texas

The Common Field Convening brings together over 500 visual arts organizers for a four-day gathering to share resources, ideas, and methods for artist-centered spaces, projects and practices. The Convening is a place for practical and social exchanges exploring the current state of the artist-centered field. Common Field seeks proposals for workshops, conversations, panels, and other forms that facilitate value-driven discussions as well as tool and skill sharing.

The goal of the Convening is to develop local and national peer connectivity, build knowledge from the field, and create a growing set of resources to share broadly. The Convening connects and incorporates the interests, themes, and issues of the national Common Field Network with the issues, contexts, and conditions specific to the host location.

The Common Field Convening (originally titled Hand-in-Glove) was founded in Chicago in 2011, and has since been hosted in New Orleans (2013), Minneapolis (2015), Miami (2016), Los Angeles (2017), Philadelphia (2019) and will take place in Houston in 2020 with the help of many invaluable local partners in each location.

NETWORK MEMBERS ARE INVITED TO PROPOSE CONVENING PROGRAMMING

This Open Call for Proposals is free and open to all members of the Common Field Network. Common Field is a national network of independent visual arts organizations and organizers that connects, supports, and advocates for the artist-centered field. Common Field's network includes contemporary, experimental, noncommercial artist-centric organizations and organizers including alternative art spaces, publications, digital exhibition venues, residencies, platforms, collectives, collaboratives, and individual organizers. The network provides an online, year-round platform for organizations and organizers to connect with one another and share resources, insights, and opportunities. Our members stimulate ideas, imagination, and innovation in their communities.

JOIN THE NETWORK - [BECOME A COMMON FIELD NETWORK MEMBER TODAY!](https://commonfield.org/join)

All current members (organizations and organizers) are eligible to apply. To learn more about how to join, visit commonfield.org/join. Scholarships are simple to request and available to offset the

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cost of membership. Be sure to request a scholarship at least 10 days before the deadline so we can accommodate your request.

ABOUT COMMON FIELD

Common Field is a national network of independent visual arts organizations and organizers that connects, supports, and advocates for the artist-centered field. The Common Field network has nearly 700 members across the US. Core programs include the Convening, a growing national Network and year-round Projects. Our vision is to increase understanding, involvement and knowledge of artists organizations and their value, and increase their capacity through national connectivity, dialogue, understanding and support.

**EVERYONE IS WELCOME TO ATTEND THE CONVENING!
PUBLIC REGISTRATION WILL OPEN IN FEBRUARY 2020.**

GUIDELINES

DEADLINE

The 2020 Open Call for Convening Proposals will close at **11:59PM PST on Monday, October 28, 2019.**

APPLICATION

Submit your session proposal through our online [Submittable form](#) and carefully review the Guidelines before starting your application.

DOWNLOAD A PDF

Download a PDF version of the Guidelines and Applications here.

ELIGIBILITY

- **You must be a current Common Field member in order to submit an application.** All current members (organizations and organizers) are eligible to apply. To learn more about how to join, visit commonfield.org/join. Scholarships are available to offset the cost of membership.
- Presenters in any proposed session do not have to be Common Field Members, and will be awarded one year of complimentary membership if selected to participate.
- Members can propose to organize sessions that they are not presenters in. Please note that Common Field is unable to support session organizers who are not presenting in their sessions with honoraria and travel support.
- You may submit more than one application; however, only one application per organizer or organization can be selected for the Convening.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Collective proposals are welcomed and encouraged.
- Every proposal must be submitted under the name of one lead contact person, and this person will be the primary point of contact for all further communication.
- Please designate if individual presenters' participation is confirmed or proposed. We recommend being in communication with potential presenters in advance of submitting an application – confirmed presenters make a proposal stronger.

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- We recommend you prepare your application in a separate word processing program. When you are done, please copy and paste your responses into the submission form.
- Common Field will supply basic materials for sessions; breakout rooms will be equipped with a projector, microphones and speakers, notecards, pens, and large paper. We are unable to provide any other materials or supplies, and presenters are expected to bring their own computers and dongles.
- Common Field will document each session with detailed notes transcribed by writers will be in attendance at every session. Notes will be shared with session organizers and presenters as a resource and will also be published online as part of the Convening archive.

ACCESSIBILITY

Common Field is striving to create an accessible space for all attendees. We prioritize working with venues that are ADA compliant and offer gender-neutral restrooms. During the registration process, we ask each presenter and attendee to detail any accessibility requests, and we will do our best to meet them. If you have questions or requests, please contact Crystal Baxley, Convening Program Director, at 626-566-8984 or convening@commonfield.org.

PROPOSAL CATEGORIES

Each proposal must be identified in one of the following categories. Please read below for more information about each category so that you may select the one that best suits your proposal. All sessions (with the exception of Projects/Tours) last 90 minutes.

Across each of these categories, Common Field seeks to prioritize sessions that spend significant time directly engaging with attendees.

Conversations: Conversation sessions offer an opportunity to explore practical and theoretical topics through intimate group conversation. These sessions are designed to begin with very short introductions by presenters, who then facilitate group dialogue, engagement, and conversation with session attendees.

Up to 4 potential/confirmed presenters

Dialogues: These sessions feature two speakers in an intimate conversation, with time for discussion/questions from the audience.

2 confirmed presenters

Panels: These moderated discussions feature a curated group of 3 to 4 speakers who share perspectives and experiences, and include opportunity for questions/discussion with the audience.

Up to 4 potential/confirmed presenters (including moderator)

Reports from the Field: These presentations should highlight localized activity, organizers, or organizations, and share larger themes and ideas that give Convening attendees a window into a specific geographic focus, project, or topic.

Up to 4 potential/confirmed presenters

Workshops: In these small, skill-sharing sessions (~30 participants), attendees work with practitioners to develop and discuss tools, gain hands on experience, engage in specific types of training and exchange tactics.

Up to 2 potential/confirmed presenters

Projects & Tours: Artist projects can take the form of archiving projects, performances, tours, publications, book signings, and tables at the Convening site and in adjacent neighborhoods. These should occur during the Convening's main hours: Friday and Saturday from 10am - 6pm.

Up to 3 potential/confirmed organizers

REVIEW PROCESS AND SELECTION CRITERIA

- Applicants will be notified on the status of their proposal by December 19, 2019.
- Proposals received through the open call are reviewed by a selection committee comprised of national and local partners.
- Common Field has the capacity to select approximately 25 to 30 proposals from the Open Call.

Applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- General strength and vision of proposed idea
- Timeliness of proposed topic as a current and pressing concern for organizers in the field
- Potential to build and share knowledge among convening attendees
- Supports a diverse range of presenters and organizers to participate in the Convening
- Values difference and supports diversity in all its forms
- Capacity of the applicant(s) to realize the proposal

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

- Every individual presenter will receive a \$200 honorarium
- Presenters register for the Convening for free (\$125 value)
- If traveling from out of town, presenters will receive a travel stipend of between \$400 and \$600 (to be determined by December 2019) to help offset the cost of travel and accommodations.
- All presenters will receive a free one-year Network Membership

ATTENDANCE AND SCHEDULING

Proposals selected from the Open Call will be scheduled to take place on Friday, April 24, 2020 or Saturday, April 25, 2020. Selected presenters are required to present at the time and location assigned to them by Common Field, and are expected to be active participants throughout the Convening beyond their own session.

NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS

If your proposal is not accepted through the open call process, Common Field has a national scholarship program you are welcome to apply for. The deadline to apply is January 14, 2020. Up to 25 scholarships are available. The total value of each scholarship is up to \$1,000, and includes a free one-year membership to Common Field, one membership level convening ticket (\$125 value), and up to \$800 reimbursement for round-trip travel and accommodations.

COMMON FIELD CORE VALUES & PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY CARE

The organizers of the Common Field Convening strive to create an open and inclusive environment in which participants feel safe to take risks and engage in critical discussions. We see the need for safer spaces in all organizing and are committed to it as part of our work. We encourage our attendees to learn how to create such spaces in each of our gatherings and adopt such practices

pertinent to their own organizing. It is very important that presenters, as well as participants, understand and agree to our values and vision for creating a safe and equitable Convening.

CORE VALUES:

- We are a network of artists' organizations and organizers who embrace interwoven roles as artists, curators, administrators, and organizers. We build from the rigor, experimentation, risk-taking, and responsiveness of contemporary artistic practices.
- We challenge dominant discourses and offer alternatives to the status quo. We put difficult ideas and imaginaries into the world. We support practices and projects that emerge from the ground up.
- We organize as a field in order to strengthen one another through collective action, shared information, and mutual support. We demonstrate equitable pay, self-determination, and healthy work environments.
- We value difference in all its forms. We create structures, build platforms, and advance thinking that support diversity in identity, geography, history, orientation, perspective, and circumstance.
- We support organizing that generates new contexts for creation, circulation, and critique. We engage with changing social, political, and economic conditions, prioritizing the role of art organizing within these broader concerns.
- We use sharing, open communication, and problem solving as a way of modeling new forms of equity and power. We are transparent in our governance, decision making, communication, goals, and finances.
- We foster a culture of collaboration. We are equally committed to listening, to self-critique, to feedback, and to modification and calibration as part of our collective evolution.

[Learn more about these working Values on our website](#)

PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY CARE:

The organizers of the Common Field Convening strive to create an open and inclusive environment in which participants feel safe to take risks, and engage in challenging discussions. We see the need for safer spaces in all organizing and are committed to it as a part of our work. We encourage our attendees to learn how to create such spaces in each of our gatherings and adopt such practices pertinent to their own organizing. Below are some principles that guide our commitment to collective practice:

• Hold ourselves accountable first

Enter each space with a humble heart and loving criticality. Center care in our interactions with others and in representing our own needs.

• Recognize that inequity is systematic

In order to grow a common field that is truly intersectional and inclusive, we need to recognize that inequity is systematic.

• Be honest about our own privileges and power

Before entering each organizing space, take a moment to acknowledge our own differences and be honest about our own privileges and power. Make a conscious effort to resist ableism, racism, classism, ageism, sexism, homophobia, and transphobia in our language, imagery, and behavior.

• Prioritize listening

Prioritizing listening is essential in creating inclusive space. When we listen, center the voices of people with disability, trans & queer, black & brown, low-income, non-English speaking or other

non-white folks. Silence can be helpful especially when it means we are actively listening and processing.

- **Give space for discomfort and mistakes**

Rather than reacting to one's immediate need to manage disagreement or achieve perfection, give space for discomfort, mistakes, vulnerability and non-closure. It is often through mistakes and discomfort that we grow.

- **Respect privacy and personal boundaries**

Respect each other's privacy and personal boundaries, including confidentiality. Understand that safety, accessibility and personal boundaries mean different things for different people. The way to create a safer and more accessible space for everyone is to ask respectfully and learn from one another interpersonally.

- **Have fun**

Have fun. Take breaks. Allow space for yourself and others to enter and leave according to their needs.

The planning of our Convening is always a collaborative and learning effort with many different parties involved. We welcome any suggestions and feedback that will help us to take better care of each other intentionally and creatively throughout the Convening and beyond.

To learn more about safer space and other facilitation tools, please consult "Safe Space: a tool for allowing deep and consensual dialogue" by Berkeley Student Cooperative (goo.gl/2TVTKE), and "Participants Agreements," by Allied Media Conference (goo.gl/tfbq56).

APPLICATION

- To propose a session for the Common Field 2020 Convening in Philadelphia, please complete your application in our online [Submittable application form](#).
- DEADLINE: The 2020 Open Call for Common Field Convening Proposals will close at 11:59PM PST on **Monday, October 28, 2019**.
- Please review the Guidelines before completing your proposal
- We welcome questions. Get in touch with Crystal Baxley, Convening Program Director, through convening@commonfield.org
- If submitting these documents electronically poses an accessibility barrier, please contact Crystal for assistance at: 626-566-8984 or convening@commonfield.org.

[Please review FAQs here](#)

HERE IS A SUMMARY OF THE APPLICATION FORM FOR YOUR REFERENCE AND TO HELP YOU PREPARE YOUR PROPOSAL:

- SECTION 1: MEMBER/SESSION ORGANIZER INFORMATION**
- SECTION 2: SESSION/PROJECT PROPOSAL**
- SECTION 3: PRESENTERS**
- SECTION 4: OPTIONAL SUPPORT MATERIALS**

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SECTION 5: SESSION ORGANIZER ADDITIONAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

SECTION 1: MEMBER/SESSION ORGANIZER INFORMATION

* indicates required question

An active Common Field membership is required to apply. If you have questions about your membership, please contact hello@commonfield.org. If you would like to join the Common Field Network, please visit <https://www.commonfield.org/join>.

The Session Organizer is the person who submits the proposal and acts as the primary point of contact for Common Field.

Link to Common Field Member Profile*

Please visit commonfield.org/network/all/list/ and click on the public profile of yourself/your organization, then copy that URL here.

Session Organizer First Name*

All correspondence regarding your application will be sent to this one designated contact.

Session Organizer Last Name*

All correspondence regarding your application will be sent to this one designated contact.

Organizational Affiliations

If applicable, please list any organizations or projects you are involved with, including the name of the organization/project and your title/role.

Collaborative/Group Name

If this proposal is authored by a collaborative/group, please list that name here.

Session Organizer Email*

Session Organizer Residential City, State *

example: Los Angeles, CA

Session Organizer Phone Number*

Session Organizer Website

Session Organizer Bio*

150 word limit

Session Organizer Social Media Handles

Additional Proposal Organizer(s)

If there are additional people (besides presenters, who will be listed below) that are involved with organizing this session, please provide their names and a brief biography.

SECTION 2: SESSION/PROJECT PROPOSAL

Please be sure to thoroughly review our Guidelines and be mindful of word limits.

Session/Project Title *

Please enter a title for your session or project.

Session Format*

Conversation, Dialogue, Panel, Project/Tour, Reports from the Field, Workshop

Session Description* (300 word limit)

Please describe your session or project in 300 words or less.

How many attendees can you comfortably facilitate in your session or project?*

Any size group

Small Group: up to 30
Medium Group: up to 60
Large Group: 60+
Other

How many attendees can you comfortably facilitate in this session? (Write In)

Audience Engagement* (100 word limit)

Please describe how you will engage attendees during your session or project (100 maximum words).

A/V Needs

Projector
External Speaker
Microphone
Oversized Paper Pad & Markers
Notecards

SECTION 3: PRESENTERS

Presenters produce and deliver the content of sessions. Each session type (Panel, Conversation, etc.) has a maximum number of presenters outlined in the guidelines. Please designate if individual presenters' participation is confirmed or proposed. If a potential presenter has confirmed their interest and availability if selected, choose Confirmed. If there is potential for their participation, select Proposed. We recommend being in communication with potential presenters in advance of submitting an application – confirmed presenters make a proposal stronger.

Will the Session Organizer be a presenter in this session?

Yes
No

Presenters 1 - 4

Please complete this information for each individual that will present as part of this proposed session/project.

Name

Confirmed or Proposed

Link to Common Field Organizational/Organizer Profile

If applicable, please link to their individual or organizational Common Field profile.

Organizational Affiliations

If applicable; please include the name of the organization and title/role.

Bio/Website

Please provide a short bio and/or URL for this co-presenter. 150 word limit.

Location (City, State)

Do any organizers or presenters have requests for accessibility accommodations during the Convening?*

Yes

Please let us know what is needed and we will do our best to provide it:

No

SECTION 4: OPTIONAL SUPPORT MATERIALS

You may include up to two forms of support materials with your application. You will be prompted to upload digital files or type in URLs. Please include a short description of each image, video, URL or piece of writing. Upload your image description list as a single PDF document.

Support Materials are Optional.

Uploads:

- Short description list (formatted as a PDF)
- Images: You may submit up to 6 digital images – formatted as JPG, GIF, TIFF, or PNG files (not to exceed 800 x 600 pixels, 180 dpi).
- Writing: You may submit up to two pieces of writing – formatted as PDF(s).

Links: Please add a list of your links to the Support Materials URL text box.

- Video: You may submit up to two videos or three excerpts of videos. We will view up to FIVE minutes in total. Please submit URLs to Vimeo, Youtube, or a personal portfolio website.
- Web-based Projects: You may submit a list of up to 2 URL

SECTION 4: PRIMARY CONTACT ADDITIONAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Please enter the information for the one person who will serve as the point of contact for this application.

In order to better understand who our audiences are, we have compiled a list of self-selecting identifying questions. You can choose not to answer, and we will never share or sell your personal information.

At this point we are only asking these questions of the primary contact; each individual who is invited to present will have an opportunity to answer these questions for themselves during the Convening registration process.

Have you attended a previous Common Field Convening?*

If so, which year(s) did you attend?

Have you presented at a previous Common Field Convening?*

If so, which year(s)?

Have you participated in other Common Field projects such as Field Perspectives, Meet-Ups, Field Conversations, Field Grants, or Field Conversations.*

If so, which one and when?

Are you a Houston or surrounding area resident?*

If so, what neighborhood do you live in?

Are you a student?*

If so, what kind of program are you enrolled in?

I identify as (select as many as apply):*

- Black, Afro-Caribbean, or African American
- Latinx
- East Asian
- South Asian or Indian
- Southeast Asian
- Middle Eastern or Arab
- Native American, Alaskan Native, or First Nations
- Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- Non-Hispanic White or Euro-American
- Unlisted
- Prefer not to answer

I identify my gender as (select as many as apply):*

- Agender
- Bi-Gender
- Female
- Gender-fluid
- Genderless
- Genderqueer
- Gender Neutral
- Male
- Non-binary
- Trans
- Third Gender
- Two-Spirit
- Unlisted
- Prefer not to answer

My pronouns are (select as many as apply):*

- She/Her
- He/Him
- They/Them
- Ze
- Unlisted
- Prefer not to answer

I identify as LGBTQIA*

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to answer

Age

Write In; Optional