



# COMMON FIELD 2021 CONVENING OPEN CALL FOR SESSIONS GUIDELINES + CRITERIA

## KEY DATES & INFORMATION

<b>Guidelines and Application Online:</b>	May 4, 2021
<b>Deadline to Submit Proposals:</b>	June 11, 2021, 11:59PM PDT
<b>Proposal Status Notification:</b>	July 30, 2021
<b>Convening Dates:</b>	November 4 - 6 and Nov 12 & 13, 2021

### Link to Application Portal:

<http://bit.ly/CFopencall2021>

Common Field seeks proposals for engaging and interactive sessions that include workshops, future-oriented strategizing, and field reports that facilitate value-driven discussions, tools, and skill sharing. The Open Call for Session Proposals is free and open to all members of the Common Field Network.

## ABOUT COMMON FIELD

Common Field is a national network of independent visual arts organizations and cultural workers that connects, supports, and advocates for the artist-centered field. The Common Field Network has roughly 700 members across the U.S. Core programs include the Convening, grants, research, resources, forums, meet-ups, and advocacy. Our vision is to increase understanding, involvement, and knowledge of artist-oriented projects and their value, and to increase their capacity through national connectivity, dialogue, understanding, and support.

## ABOUT THE 2021 ONLINE CONVENING

The core goals of the Convening—offering opportunities for peer-to-peer learning, building local and national connectivity, sharing resources, and co-developing advocacy strategy—are and will continue to be north stars in developing a responsive and accessible virtual Convening for 2021. This process is also an opportunity to strengthen our commitments to a shifting field when many culture workers and organizations are facing uncertainty, loss, and reckoning with issues of systemic and interlocking oppressions. The Convening aims to support members of the field materially and developmentally, to facilitate exchange and growth, and to embark on greater field-wide advocacy and cross-sector coalition-building.

## 2021 THEME: SUSTAINING FUTURES

Oriented towards our work ahead, Common Field's 2021 Convening theme – **Sustaining Futures** – seeks to embrace a plurality of strategies, ideas, and expressions of how to sustain our values in practice while remaining responsive to local, national, and global shifts beyond the horizon of tomorrow.

Emerging in response to a need for reflection, solidarity, and sharing, this year's Convening theme

provides a framework for addressing where we've been and how we commit to our values today and in the future. In a time when our communities are faced with ongoing inequity, injustice, and violence, Common Field offers this year's Convening as a place to **build resilience** and **dream together**.

Sustainability requires a sense of collective purpose and responsibility. The emerging forms of our field depend on how we bring our minds and hearts together now. This year's Convening hopes to encourage connection and dialog around building a shared sense of purpose.

## **GUIDING QUESTIONS**

These questions, drawn from the Convening theme, are simply meant to provide inspiration and ideas for your session proposal. We welcome proposals that may or may not be linked to this year's theme.

- What can we learn from the experience of an ongoing health crisis and durational violence that speaks to the future of the creative field?
- What is our role or responsibility in addressing the inequities of our time for the future?
- What do we need to unlearn for our futures?
- How do we build mutual support for collective resilience?
- Where do our community's values align for a future-oriented practice?
- How do we move transformation work into an embedded, sustainable practice?
- What do we need to do our work? How can we gather the tools and resources we need for the road ahead?
- What does a future aligned with our values look like?
- What current work and practices address possibilities ahead?
- What can we learn from each other and together to map intersecting and mutually supportive futures?
- How do we dream together?

## **BECOME A MEMBER TO APPLY**

All proposals for the Open Call should be submitted by active Network members. This year, Common Field is proud to offer free membership for new members and free renewal for existing members. Follow the instructions at our [Network Membership page](#) to sign up or renew for free. If you have any issues signing up or renewing, email us at [hello@CommonField.org](mailto:hello@CommonField.org) and we'll update your account with free membership for 2021.

## **WHERE TO SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION**

Submit your session proposal through [our online submission form](#). Remember to review this Guidelines document in full before starting your application.

## **SESSION ORGANIZER ELIGIBILITY**

- You must be a current Common Field member in order to submit an application as a Session Organizer.
- Presenters who are not the Session Organizer in any proposed session do not have to be Common Field Network Members.
- All submissions are limited to up to 4 people as presenters, including the Session Organizer.
- Members can propose to organize sessions that they are not presenters in. They will be offered an honoraria, but will also be included in the total number of presenters (capped at 4 per session).
- You may submit or be included in more than one application; however, only one application per person or organization can be selected for the Convening. Presenters may only serve as a Presenter or Session Organizer in one session at the Convening.

## PROPOSAL FORMATS

Each proposal must be identified in one of the following formats outlined below. You will be asked to select one of these formats for your session as well as a preferred length of time (30, 60 or 90 minutes) in the application form.

- **Workshops:** In these skill-sharing sessions, attendees work with practitioners to learn or co-develop and discuss tools, gain hands-on experience, engage in specific types of training.
- **Working Group:** These collaborative and future-oriented sessions offer an opportunity to develop thinking, methods, and advocacy strategies for the field among peers on a focused topic or area of practice. These active working groups should be designed for peer-to-peer exchange where attendees are not an audience, but active participants, in these discussion-driven sessions.
- **Field In Practice:** These sessions are rooted in methods of practice, and should highlight localized activity, cultural worker projects, or organizations to ground methods, models, and lessons that can be adapted or otherwise inform the activities of participants in their home communities. These sessions share larger themes and ideas that give attendees a window into a specific area of practice, such as models of partnership or community engagement, programmatic or organizational structures, policy or advocacy work, etc.
- **Panels:** These moderated discussions feature a curated group of 2 to 4 presenters who share perspectives and experiences on a focused topic or theme, and include opportunities for questions and discussion with the audience. These discursive sessions are framed philosophically or ideologically to engage with the big ideas and issues that emerge in cultural and creative work.

## THINGS TO KNOW

- Collective proposals are welcomed and encouraged
- Every proposal must be submitted under the name of one lead contact person, the Session Organizer, and this person will be the primary point of contact for all further communication
- Though it's not required, confirmed presenters make a proposal stronger

- Due to the virtual nature of the Convening, robust attendance is expected, and as such, sessions will primarily be open to all attendees. Applicants may choose to apply for a limited capacity session if the content would most benefit from that format but should keep in mind there are limited slots available for these in the Convening program.
- Common Field will record each session as both an internal archive and for continued Network reference on our website, unless otherwise indicated in your application.
- Presenters are expected to bring their own computers / devices and prepare digital materials like brainstorming whiteboards (virtual), reading lists, slides, or other materials. Accepted proposal presenters will have the opportunity to make requests for technology funds to support their session after notifications are made in July.

## TECHNOLOGY

Common Field will supply the follow technical support and tools to all presenters for the Convening

1. Access and use of Main Technology Platform for Presenter Sessions, eg. Zoom
2. Digital Safety Plan and Technology User Guides
3. Virtual facilitation support and Accountability Processes
4. Technical dress rehearsal and day-of program tech support, eg. Zoom pilots
5. Support for third-party and other platforms as possible on request

## ACCESSIBILITY & COMMUNITY CARE AGREEMENTS

Please review Common Field's [Accessibility and Community Care Agreements](#), guiding principles for supporting both presenters and attendees, by clicking through the link.

Common Field will also provide a set of tools and guidelines to frame each session:

- CART (Communication Access Realtime Translation, or live captioning) and ASL (American Sign Language) interpretation will be a standard offering for all pre-programmed sessions
- Guidelines on sharing pathways for attendees and presenters to make additional accommodation requests and connect with interpreters
- Community Care Agreements
- Land Acknowledgement Guidelines

## REVIEW PROCESS

Each year, Open Call session proposals are reviewed by an invited jury made up of peers in the field. This jury follows the criteria listed in these guidelines to assess each proposal, while making additional considerations in order to select proposals from a balanced and broad group of voices. This year, Common Field will accept approximately 12 -18 session proposals for the Convening. All applicants will be notified of the status of their proposal by July 30, 2021.

## SESSION SELECTION CRITERIA

Your session proposal will be assessed based on the following weighted criteria. Your proposal can meet these criteria in a number of ways, and we encourage you to consider how your ideas can be further developed with these in mind.

→ **Clarity of Proposal and Focus:** Is your proposal clearly written and focused in its ideas?

→ **Engagement of Relevant Issues & Ideas:** Does your proposal address issues of our time? How is it relevant to our field of practice?

→ **Diversity of Perspectives:** Does the proposal offer a range of voices on the topic? (ex: generational, geographical, identity, and/or communities of practice)

→ **Presenter Relevance:** Are the presenters well suited to address the topic? Do they have the knowledge or experience to address these ideas deeply and thoughtfully?

→ **Highlight Network Member Activities:** Does the session highlight current and ongoing work in our field? Is the content presented related to building work in the field in some way?

→ **Focus on Dialogue and Exchange:** How effectively does the session engage attendees in an exchange around the proposed topic, theme or idea?

→ **Relationship to Convening theme** (not required but preferred): Is this proposal engaging with the Convening theme of *Sustaining Futures* in some way? How does the proposal relate to, explore, build from or perhaps even subvert the Convening theme?

These qualities are not core criteria, but will be considered as they are drawn directly from past attendee feedback.

- Sessions that facilitate resource co-development with attendees
- Sessions that offer new models and ideas for advocacy work

## **ATTENDANCE AND SCHEDULING**

Proposals selected from the Open Call will be scheduled to take place on Friday, November 5, Saturday, November 6, Friday, November 12, or Saturday, November 13, 2021. Although we will make every effort to accommodate timing requests, given the complex nature of session scheduling, presenters are required to present at the time assigned to them by Common Field. All presenters are encouraged to take part throughout the Convening beyond their own session.

## **COMPENSATION**

For participating as a presenter in the Convening, every individual named in an accepted session will receive:

- a \$250 honorarium
- Free registration for the Convening
- One-year free membership (individual or organizational) to Common Field

We hope this document provides you with a clear framework for this year's Convening Open Call. Thank you for taking time to consider submitting a proposal. You can reach us at [convening@commonfield.org](mailto:convening@commonfield.org) with any questions.