NERA NORTHEASTERN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

Call for Proposals – <u>DEADLINE EXTENDED TO MONDAY, JUNE 14TH AT 11:59 PM EDT</u>

52nd Annual NERA Conference - October 13-15, 2021

Trumbull Marriott Shelton, Trumbull, CT <u>OR</u> Virtual

<u>**Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all presenters will be allowed to present virtually OR in person (if we go hybrid). We hope this allows everyone interested to submit proposals.**</u>

As a regional affiliate of the American Educational Research Association, NERA invites proposals for our annual conference that span all areas of educational research. We welcome proposals from new and experienced researchers and will consider both completed and in-progress research.

Below you will find the conference theme and general requirements for NERA proposals as well as specific guidelines corresponding to the four session formats. For more information about the conference, including FAQs about NERA proposals, visit www.nera-education.org.

Conference Theme: "Using Data to Solve Education's Challenges"

Every form of educational activity in this age generates valuable data readily available at our fingertips. Whether quantitative, qualitative, or anything in between, this data possesses inherent power and potential to improve teaching and learning, inform important instructional decisions, and to ultimately drive student success and substantive societal change.

Technological advances have given birth to vast quantities of user interaction data as supplements to the more familiar test scores and survey measures. A new frontier of innovative possibilities in data utilization now exists. Successfully harnessing the deep data footprints now accessible to more people than ever before can create endless and invaluable opportunities for exploration by a collective and collaborative research community such as ours. Through effective design and collection, insightful analysis, and thoughtful interpretation of all this new information, researchers and the school community can truly partner to face and solve education's challenges.

When considering your proposal submission, there are 9 broad content strands to choose from, demonstrating the broad application of the conference theme in the field of educational research. These are meant to be general descriptions of the topics that may fit into the specific content strands. Although we *STRONGLY* encourage session proposals related to one or more of the areas expressed in the conference theme, this is not a requirement for submissions. The section below outlines each content strand in more detail.

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1. Solving Educational Policy Challenges (EP)

The 2020 NERA conference featured a coordinated session discussing stakeholder responses to challenges posed by the pandemic. As these have persisted into 2021, social culture has been impacted by how the digital divide, the ability to re-open schools, assessment of student learning and accountability, and the inherent impacts on students, teachers, administrators, and parents cut across geographic and demographic lines. Submissions are encouraged regarding current research into ongoing and future challenges on these topics and how existing or needed data collections might inform education policy.

2. Innovations in Quantitative Research Methods & Resources (QMR)

The ongoing expansion of the data science and AI movements, increases in computing power and programmer skills, and local, state, and federal data dashboards, repositories, and both analysis and visualization tools contribute greatly to enabling researchers to investigate a variety of issues related to education and educational measurement. Submissions are encouraged regarding applications of established analytic and psychometric methods (e.g. predictive modeling, quasi-experimental designs), programs (e.g. R, Mplus), databases (e.g. IPEDS, NCES surveys), and innovative approaches (e.g. data mining, machine learning, use of Python, use of AERA-ICPSR PEERS database).

3. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

The recent surge in advocacy for social justice reform presents an opportunity to educate ourselves in how we recognize, value, and respect differences in people and learners on many levels. This could be based on personal characteristics (e.g. gender, race/ethnicity, age, religion, language, immigration status, disability, sexual orientation), geographic characteristics (e.g. states, regions), economic characteristics (e.g. household income), or institutional characteristics (e.g. R1, HBCU), among others. Submissions are encouraged around applying best practices particularly in test design and analysis, but more broadly in educational research, related to diversity, equity, and inclusion in this social context, including emerging data repositories related to civil rights and other relevant issues.

4. Higher Education (HE)

Higher education has been transformed because of the pandemic and emerging questions related to the value of and access to a postsecondary experience. This has been reflected recently along social lines in the reconceptualization of campus life, along economic lines in how institutions may be struggling to stay afloat, and along instructional lines through distance learning. More prominently, there has been substantive change with the massive increase of colleges and universities adopting test optional policies and how this may affect the demographic profile of future incoming undergraduate and graduate student classes. Submissions are encouraged around data related to general student and institutional research in higher education, particularly concerning issues related to the pandemic.

5. Global Education (GE)

Even in the face of a pandemic, the global economy continues to rely on incorporating new insights about culture, communication, and citizenship in order to evolve. For all students, this allows for opening doors to explore perspectives and ideas on a world scale in preparation for adult life and the workforce. College students best exemplify this by spending time studying abroad and immersing themselves in all that life in a different country can offer academically and personally. Additionally, educational researchers have many well-established data tools at their disposal to understand education on a global scale. As part of this new area of focus for NERA, submissions are encouraged depicting evaluations of study abroad or global education programs or insights from large-scale survey programs such as PISA, PIAAC, and TIMSS.

6. Alternative Research Methods (ARM)

Education research methodologies are far from being limited to those that are purely quantitative in nature and/or emphasize educational measurement. Historically, the broader research community has welcomed and benefited from the contributions of those representing the qualitative, mixed methods, and evaluation disciplines. More recently, there has been further expansion to include scholars from those in cognitive science, neuroscience, industrial and organizational psychology, and economics. All of these perspectives together allow for the production of quality research regardless of the number of subjects being studied. Submissions are encouraged focusing on nuanced methods for analyzing data and educational research issues.

7. P-12 Educators as Researchers (EAR)

Educators offer a great deal to the research community through their work, especially when currently facing challenges, requiring flexibility and creativity to provide students with the best possible educational experience and opportunities for classroom learning, whether in-person, hybrid, or virtual. On behalf of the Educator-as-Researcher Committee, this is an invitation for teacher researchers, practitioners, community members, school administrators, and education researchers to submit proposals on research projects that address issues such as equity and inclusion, culturally responsive teaching, deeper learning and rigor for all students, multi-tier systems for student support, social and emotional learning, instructional leadership, and inside- and outside-of-school learning.

8. Developing the Education and Educational Research Workforce (ERW)

At a time when data is so rich and related job prospects are thriving, people more than ever are engaged with acquiring statistics and data science skills to help attain their future educational and professional goals in the contexts of education and educational research. This requires strong consideration in particular from high schools and the higher education community to provide appropriate development pathways for students across the age spectrum to pursue these types of interests. Submissions are encouraged highlighting both existing and emerging programs and initiatives aimed to grow the pipeline of educational research professionals that incorporate any or all of data science, educational measurement, educational assessment, educational leadership, and educational policy.

9. Miscellaneous (MSC)

While hopefully this year's theme greatly appeals to you, NERA has an honored tradition of welcoming submissions to the annual conference that may not necessarily relate to the primary topic, but are relevant to the field and to those attending the conference. Please be assured that submissions on miscellaneous topics will be evaluated according to the same benchmarks as all those under the other strands so that these viewpoints can hopefully also be shared with the NERA conference community.

Submission Requirements

- Complete information for author(s) including affiliation(s)
- Descriptive title (maximum: 15 words)
- Three content strands
- Description of paper to appear in conference program (maximum: 50 words)
- Proposal, NOT including tables, figures, and references (maximum: 1000 words)
- Your proposal should include study purpose, theoretical framework, methodology, research questions, results, conclusions, and educational implications

Warning: Proposals with more than 1000 words will not be accepted.

Submission Format

The proposal submission form will be online and accessible on the NERA website in early May 2021. At the time of submission, authors will be required to select from a list of content strands to categorize their proposal.

Submission Review Process

• Proposals must be submitted electronically by **Monday, June 14th, 2021 at 11:59 pm EDT**.

• 2 to 3 NERA volunteers will conduct a blind review of each proposal.

• Each proposal will be judged according to the following criteria: educational or scholarly significance, perspective or theoretical framework, appropriateness of methodology, clarity of expression, and appeal to NERA membership.

• Proposal decisions will be emailed to first authors in mid-August. Details about session dates and times will follow after the program has been finalized.

• It is critical to meet the June 14th deadline, which will allow us time to have reviewers review each proposal, inform authors of proposal decisions, and finalize the program.

Session-Specific Guidelines – 2021 NERA Conference

When submitting your proposal, you will be asked to indicate which of the following session formats you prefer for your research. Regardless of the session you choose, your paper will be subjected to rigorous peer review by NERA volunteers. As each format provides a medium for contributing your research to the field, all session formats are equally important. We hope to maintain a variety of sessions this year to maximize the educational experience for NERA conference attendees.

1. Individual Presentations

a. Individual Paper: Proposals should describe completed or nearly completed research to be presented in 10-15 minutes. Sessions will be organized so that 3-5 individual presentations will be grouped according to similar research areas. In most paper sessions, a discussant will be assigned to read the set of papers in advance and present a 10 –15 minute synthesis, critique, or analysis of the set of papers to spur discussion.

b. Roundtable: Roundtable sessions allow maximum interaction among presenters and attendees, putting greater emphasis on the discussion. Each table will have 3-5 researchers with accepted papers organized around shared interests. Each session will have a designated chair knowledgeable of the research area to facilitate interaction and participation. When appropriate, a discussant will be assigned to a roundtable session as well.

c. Individual Poster: Poster proposals should describe a research project, either completed or nearly completed, that lends itself to a visual display and would benefit from informal individualized discussion and feedback. Similar to the individual paper presentations, each poster will have a discussant. Specific directions for the size of the poster will be posted on the NERA Conference website and are available in the FAQs.

2. Theme-Based Paper Session/Symposium

Proposals for this format should describe a set of 3-5 presentations organized around a common theme. The chair and discussant for this session format must be identified in the proposal. The format and procedure for these sessions are identical to the *Individual Paper Presentation* sessions.

Call for conference proposal reviewers!

NERA is a volunteer-based organization. If you want to help the conference as a proposal reviewer please go here: https://www.viethconsulting.com/members/form.php?orgcode=NERA&fid=4042055.

If you have any questions, please contact the conference chairs at NERA.CoChairs@gmail.com.

Thank you,

Hank Johnson, Haifa Matos, Elisabeth Spratto, and Jonathan Steinberg

NERA 2021 Conference Co-Chairs