

# **2026 NAFME Biennial Music Research and Teacher Education National Conference**

## **Call for Research Proposals**

The Executive Committees of NAFME's **Society for Research in Music Education (SRME)** and **Society for Music Teacher Education (SMTE)** are excited to announce the call for research proposals for the **2026 NAFME Biennial Music Education Research and Teacher Education Conference, September 30–October 3, 2026, at the Hilton Hotel, in Long Beach, CA.**

Applicants are encouraged to submit proposals on topics related to music education and music teacher education.

*Please review carefully the call for proposals information below, as various requirements have changed from previous years.*

Please note the following:

- Proposals may be submitted in the formats listed below.
- All research paradigms and approaches to scholarship are acceptable.
- All research topics are welcome including, but not limited to, those related to [NAFME's Mission, Vision, and Belief Statement and Strategic Plan](#) and the [Blueprint for Strengthening the Music Teacher Profession](#).
- Submissions should not have been published prior to the conference and should comply with the [NAFME Research Publication/Presentation Code of Ethics](#).
- An individual may submit no more than four session proposals of any type (paper, poster, symposium, etc.), including co-authored submissions.
- If an individual exceeds the submission limit of four, only the earliest submissions will be reviewed.
- Each person may have up to four presentations accepted: no more than two spoken presentations and no more than two poster presentations. The only exception is for individuals invited by the conference organizers to contribute to a session.
- Conference organizers may further reduce presentation limits based on the total number of submissions received.

### **Key Proposal Submission Dates**

- Wednesday, August 13, 2025 – Call for submissions distributed
- Monday, January 19, 2026 – Online submissions open
- Monday, February 23, 2026 – Submissions deadline

## Submission Formats

1. **Research Paper (including empirical, philosophical, and historical)** – This format is for those interested in presenting original research that has not yet been published or presented in a similar forum. Presentations will be allotted 25 minutes total, including 20 minutes for the presentation and 5 minutes for questions and answers.

NOTE: On the submission form, applicants will be able to designate *presentation or poster* if they are willing to present their research as a poster if not accepted for a spoken session.

Submission requirements: *Research papers will be considered for spoken presentation only if preliminary data have been collected and analyzed by the conference submission deadline. Philosophical and historical papers should include a narrative summary of initial propositions (philosophical) or findings (historical) to relevant areas of inquiry by that time.* All items listed below must be included in the submission. The paper must contain no author identification.

1. Abstract of no more than 50 words (separate from the Research Paper Summary)
2. Research Paper Summary of 1000 words, which must summarize the following:
  - Introduction/Background
  - Purpose and/or Research Questions (empirical, philosophical, or historical)
  - Method (participants [if applicable], instrumentation/sources of data, implementation/procedures, validity/reliability/trustworthiness, philosophical inquiry, logical reasoning, historical analysis, etc.)
  - Findings/Results (need not be exhaustive at this point, but does need to provide evidence of preliminary data collection and analysis appropriate to the methodology, inquiry, or reasoning employed, e.g., descriptive data, statistical analysis, descriptions of themes/models, summary of narrative findings, a new definition, or argument and justification, etc.)
  - Conclusions/Implications (may be preliminary)
3. References cited in the proposal—will be included as a separate item in the submission system and not count toward word limit.
4. IRB approval is required for studies involving human participants. Authors will verify compliance on the submission form, as applicable. Submissions not involving human participants (e.g., philosophical, historical, meta-analyses) are welcome.
5. The content of Special Research Interest Groups (SRIG) sessions will be chosen from the research papers submitted. To be considered for presentation on a SRIG session, select from the SRIG keyword choices provided in the submission system. All papers, regardless of SRIG designation, will be considered for spoken presentation on the general program.
6. In selecting papers, conference organizers may combine two or three papers related to a common topic to create 60-minute symposia.
7. Authors may choose to submit a research paper for spoken presentation only, or for spoken *or* poster presentation.

2. **Research Poster** – Poster presentations will have designated time slots and presentation space assigned in the conference schedule. Poster sessions will not conflict with any other conference sessions. Poster presenters will attend to display and discuss their work during the time assigned.

Submission requirements: Completed studies and research in progress will be considered for poster presentation submissions. However, data must be collected/analyzed by the 2026 conference schedule confirmation deadline (summer 2026; exact date TBA). Authors will submit a proposal of up to 500 words and an abstract of no more than 50 words. References will not count against the word limit and will be submitted in a separate section.

3. **Special Topics in Research (presentation)** – This format is for those interested in presenting a session that focuses on the development and execution of research. A limited number of Special Topics sessions will be selected. These highly selective sessions might address (but are not limited to) topics such as research questions, methodology, building quality action research with practitioners, design, analysis, publication, or ethics of research methods and paradigms. Total time allocated for the presentation will be 60 minutes.

Submission requirements: Authors will submit (a) a 350-word general description of the session including its significance to the conference audience; (b) a detailed outline of the proposed session; (c) a 50-word abstract. References will not count against the word limit and will be submitted in a separate section.

4. **Special Topics in Music Teacher Education (presentation)** – This format is for those interested in presenting a session that focuses on issues concerning music teacher education. Topics should be informed by research and scholarship but need not represent an original study. Topics related to Areas for Strategic Planning and Action (ASPAs – see the list at <https://smte.us/aspas/>) are especially welcomed. Sessions might involve an individual presenter, co-presenters, or a panel discussion. A limited number of Special Topics sessions will be selected. Time allocated for these presentations may be 30 or 60 minutes, as requested by the presenter(s) as part of the submission process.

Submission requirements: Authors will submit (a) a 350-word general description of the session including its significance to the conference audience; (b) a detailed outline of the proposed session; (c) a 50-word abstract. References will not count against the word limit and will be submitted in a separate section.

## Submission Process

All proposals must be submitted for review through the **NAfME online submission portal**, which will be available through the NAfME website beginning **Monday, January 19, 2026**. Submissions should be written in ways that do not indicate the identity of the authors or the authors' institutions. **The submission deadline is Monday, February 23, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. Pacific Standard Time.** Extensions will not be granted.

When submitting a proposal, applicants will:

1. Designate a format (see formats and guidelines above)
2. Select and supply keywords that best represent the topic area of the presentation. For multi-authored proposals, all authors, including co-authors and co-presenters, must be members of NAfME at the time of submission and will be required to maintain their membership through the dates of the conference. Exceptions to the membership requirement may be made by the NAfME Executive Committee Governance for individuals whose areas of expertise are outside music education. Submitters whose presentations are accepted will confirm their acceptance and preregister for the conference.

Notification of acceptance will be sent to the primary proposal author on or before **Monday, May 11, 2026**. Specific information about presentations, posters, and other requirements will be communicated to authors following acceptance.

### Review

All submissions will be peer reviewed. Authors of the proposals will remain anonymous to the reviewers. Reviewers will be guided by the following criteria (see evaluation guide provided below):

- Clarity of purpose and alignment between the research question, literature, and methodology
- Quality and rigor of the method and analysis
- Quality of writing and organization
- Extent to which submission contributes to the field
- Special Topics Sessions: Demonstration of expert knowledge, format and organization, application to the field

### Additional Information

- To support all scholars in our community, conference organizers will make every effort to accommodate presenters requiring alternative forms of presentation.
- Periodic updates will be sent out with additional details about the conference as information becomes available.
- For questions or assistance, please contact John Donaldson, [johnnd@nafme.org](mailto:johnnd@nafme.org).

## Submission Evaluation Guide

Score	Descriptor	Criteria
5	Exceptional	<p><b>Research Presentation or Poster:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Research demonstrates exceptional clarity of purpose and strong alignment between the research question, literature, and methodology.</li> <li>- Design shows outstanding rigor.</li> <li>- Process for analysis is insightful, well-supported, and thoughtfully described.</li> <li>- Submission is excellently written, well-organized, and makes a significant contribution to the field.</li> <li>- Limitations are clearly addressed and potential implications are meaningfully explored.</li> </ul> <p><b>Special Topics Session:</b> The session demonstrates expert-level knowledge, dynamic delivery, and provides transformative insights with immediate, high-impact application.</p>
4	Strong	<p><b>Research Presentation or Poster:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Research is clearly articulated with a well-defined question(s) supported by relevant literature.</li> <li>- Methodology is appropriate and applied effectively.</li> <li>- Process for analysis is sound and adequately described.</li> <li>- Submission is well-written and logically organized.</li> <li>- Contribution to the field is clear and limitations are acknowledged.</li> </ul> <p><b>Special Topics Session:</b> The session is well-designed and engaging, offering clear, relevant content that effectively supports professional growth.</p>
3	Proficient	<p><b>Research Presentation or Poster:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Research purpose is present but may lack depth or strong alignment with literature and methodology.</li> <li>- Methodology is adequately described but may lack sufficient rigor.</li> <li>- Process for analysis is acceptable.</li> <li>- The submission shows potential, though its contribution to the field might be modest or unclear.</li> </ul> <p><b>Special Topics Session:</b> The session meets expectations with appropriate content and delivery, providing useful, though not highly innovative, information.</p>
2	Developing	<p><b>Research Presentation or Poster:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Research demonstrates a basic structure and some understanding of the topic.</li> <li>- Methodology may be weak, overly simplistic, or inconsistently applied.</li> <li>- Process for analysis might lack depth or clarity.</li> <li>- The work may contribute to the field to a limited extent but requires substantial improvement.</li> </ul> <p><b>Special Topics Session:</b> The session presents basic content with limited depth or engagement, offering minimal practical application.</p>

(continued)

1	Not acceptable	<b>Research Presentation or Poster:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Research lacks clarity, focus, or coherence.</li> <li>- Purpose is unclear or unsupported, with little to no engagement with relevant literature.</li> <li>- Methodology is inappropriate, missing, or critically flawed.</li> <li>- Process for analysis is absent, incorrect, or irrelevant.</li> <li>- The submission does not demonstrate a contribution to the field and may not qualify as research.</li> </ul> <b>Special Topics Session:</b> The session lacks clarity, relevance, or instructional value, and does not support meaningful professional learning.
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Has this submission attained IRB approval?

☐ Yes      ☐ No      ☐ IRB approval not required (not human subjects research)

Does this submission include data with results and conclusions? If historical or philosophical, does the submission summarize a completed study?

☐ Yes      ☐ No