

National Council for Black Studies

51st Annual Conference Call for Papers

Conference Theme:

A Resilient Life-Affirming Pedagogy:
Black Studies as Truth-Telling and Transformative Practice

The National Council for Black Studies (NCBS) invites scholars, educators, students, artists, activists, and community practitioners to submit proposals for the **51st Annual NCBS Conference**, to be held **March 17–20, 2027, in Atlanta, Georgia, at the Courtland Grand Hotel**.

As the National Council for Black Studies enters its **second half-century**, we reaffirm and recommit ourselves to the foundational principles that gave rise to the discipline of Black Studies: the pursuit of truth, the advancement of liberation, and the unwavering belief that knowledge must serve the people. For more than fifty years, NCBS has championed Black Studies not only as an academic discipline, but also as a transformative intellectual, political, and community-based project dedicated to the study, preservation, and advancement of African-descended peoples worldwide.

The theme of the 51st Annual Conference, "**Resilient Pedagogy: Black Studies as Truth-Telling**," emerges at a critical moment in the history of education and public discourse. Across the United States, legislative actions, book bans, curricular restrictions, and political pressures have sought to sanitize, suppress, or altogether erase critical histories of race, resistance, and liberation. These efforts challenge not only what can be taught, but also who has the authority to define historical truth and shape public memory. As a result, this moment requires students of Black Studies as well as academicians, practitioners, and activists to engage in deep liberating thinking suitable to producing transformative change and results that sustained Black life.

In the face of these challenges, Black Studies remains an indispensable site of intellectual resistance and collective liberation. The discipline was born from struggle and sustained

through resourcefulness and resilience, grounded in the understanding that education is never neutral. Black Studies has long served as a vehicle for deep thinking, truth-telling, and transformative practice, empowering communities to confront injustice, preserve historical memory, and imagine and achieve liberatory futures.

The theme, **"A Resilient Life-Affirming Pedagogy: Black Studies as Truth-Telling and Transformative Practice,"** is inspired by the enduring tradition of **"education from us, for us, by us."** It is an educative project that cultivates and affirms critical, creative and ethical thinking, speaking truth to the people and to power and fostering and facilitating dignity-affirming, life-enhancing and liberative change. Moreover, it recognizes that Black education has never been confined solely to traditional academic institutions. Rather, Black intellectual traditions have been cultivated and sustained through family, freedom schools, independent Black institutions, churches, community organizations, grassroots movements, artistic and cultural production, and intergenerational networks of knowledge and resistance. These spaces have historically served—and continue to serve—as vital sites of deep thinking, truth-telling, political education, collective self-determination and other liberating and uplifting practices.

As Black history and critical examinations of race, power, and inequality are increasingly mischaracterized as "divisive," "controversial," or even "illegal," the 51st Annual NCBS Conference asks: **How do we sustain and advance the radical traditions of Black scholar-activists and community-engaged practitioners? How do we cultivate resilient, resourceful and resistance pedagogies capable of resisting erasure while fostering critical consciousness and liberation? What lessons can historical and contemporary movements for educational justice offer as we enter the next chapter of Black Studies?**

This conference invites participants to critically engage in the historical and contemporary role of Black Studies as a practice of deep thinking, truth-telling, resistance, and liberation. We particularly encourage proposals that address, but are not limited to, the following themes:

- Black Studies as an emancipatory educational and political project;
- The historical and contemporary significance of freedom schools and community-based education;
- Book bans, curricular restrictions, and the politics of educational censorship;
- Strategies for preserving and teaching Black history under conditions of political constraint;
- Black scholar-activism and traditions of public intellectual engagement;

- Culturally sustaining, Afrocentric, and Africana-centered pedagogies;
- The role of HBCUs, independent Black institutions, and community organizations in sustaining Black knowledge traditions;
- Archives, memory, and the preservation of Black historical consciousness;
- Black feminist, womanist, and queer approaches to pedagogy, resistance, and knowledge production;
- Artistic, literary, and performative practices as forms of truth-telling and liberation;
- Digital humanities, social media, and emerging technologies in Black education;
- Youth activism, intergenerational knowledge transmission, and movement-building;
- Public scholarship and community-engaged research;
- Global struggles for educational justice and liberation;
- The future of Black Studies in an era of political retrenchment and educational resistance.

While submissions aligned with the conference theme are strongly encouraged, the National Council for Black Studies welcomes scholarship, creative work, and community-based research across the broad spectrum of Black/Africana Studies. We invite submissions informed by diverse theoretical and methodological frameworks, including but not limited to Pan-Africanism, Afrocentricity, Womanism, Feminism, Kwaifada philosophy, Afrofuturism, Black radical traditions, critical race theory, cultural studies, sexuality studies, educational theory, political economy, and interdisciplinary approaches to the study of African-descended peoples.

As NCBS embarks upon its second half-century, we reaffirm our commitment to rigorous scholarship, transformative pedagogy, community engagement, and the ongoing struggle for liberation. We invite you to join us in Atlanta as we collectively examine how Black Studies continues to serve as an enduring practice of truth-telling, resistance, resilience, and freedom.

Submission Guidelines

The National Council for Black Studies welcomes submissions from scholars, educators, students, artists, activists, and community practitioners. Proposals should include:

- **All submissions must be submitted via [All Academic](#)**
- Title of the paper, panel, roundtable, workshop, media presentation, or other presentation format;
- Abstract or proposal description;

- Name(s) and title(s) of presenter(s);
- Institutional and/or organizational affiliation(s);
- Name of panel chair or facilitator, if applicable;
- Identification of presenters as professional, graduate student, or undergraduate student;
- Accurate capitalization of names, institutions, and presentation titles.

Submission Review Process

Submission Deadline: December 4, 2026

Individual abstracts and media presentations will be reviewed on a rolling basis. Early submissions are strongly encouraged.

Review of panel, roundtable, and workshop proposals will begin following the submission deadline. Due to the growing number of individual abstract submissions, the total number of accepted panel, roundtable, and workshop proposals combined will be capped at 24 to allow for the acceptance of a greater number of individual abstracts.

Panel, roundtable, and workshop proposals that engage directly with the conference theme are preferred. Priority consideration will be given to proposals submitted by current NCBS members.

We look forward to seeing you in Atlanta!