



ISC 2026 - Call for Proposals

The Alliance for Higher Education in Prison (“the Alliance”) is pleased to announce the third annual **Incarcerated Scholars Conference** (ISC) will be held virtually October 28–29, 2026. This virtual event is free and open to everyone. The theme that will frame this year’s conference is ***Learning in Motion***.

Eligibility:

- You must be a currently incarcerated student or a currently incarcerated alum of a higher education in prison (HEP) program
- You must have a proxy affiliated with a HEP program to assist with submission, coordination, and communication
- The Department of Corrections where the scholar resides must approve participation
- The facility where the scholar resides must have access to Zoom
- Presenters must be available either Wednesday, October 28 or Thursday, October 29 to present live via Zoom

(NOTE: Participants who are unable or unavailable to present via Zoom are encouraged to submit a Creative Submission instead, which does not require live participation at the conference.)

How to submit:

Proposals may be submitted using one of the following methods:

- Online through [this Google Form](#)
- Via email by completing this PDF form and emailing it to isc@higheredinprison.org

We cannot accept presentation proposals submitted via mail.

Important dates to remember:

- Submission deadline: **July 12, 2026.**
- Notification of decision (accept/decline) sent the week of: **August 10, 2026**
- Confirmation of Zoom accessibility and facility approval due: **September 1, 2026**
- ISC Conference: **October 28–29, 2026**

Presentation Proposal Guidelines

Be sure to read the following information and guidelines before you begin. We can only consider proposals that meet all the listed requirements.

Presentation Proposals: All ISC presentation sessions are 60 minutes long, with at least 30 minutes of presentation and some question and answer (Q&A) time at the end. Presentations can include one or more speakers. All presenters will be presenting live via Zoom in a webinar format. The Q&A session will be moderated by Alliance staff. We welcome submissions from across all academic disciplines. The tracks are offered as guiding themes to help organize the program. If your proposal does not neatly fit within one of these categories, we still encourage you to submit.

Facility Permission: Incarcerated scholars interested in presenting must work with their HEP proxy to reach out to administration/leadership at their facility as soon as they decide that they will be submitting a proposal. Facility permission will take time, and all scholars must confirm with their respective correctional facility's Public Information and/or Victim Services offices that they have permission to participate in advance and share that confirmation with the Alliance **by September 1, 2026**. Detailed instructions will be sent to those whose proposals are accepted.

Proxy Responsibilities: Timely communication is essential. The proxy is the primary liaison with the Alliance, DOC staff, and participating scholars throughout the conference process.

Recording Consent: Accepted sessions will be recorded. Recordings may be used for educational and non-commercial purposes such as classroom viewing, facility programming, training, and archival access. By submitting a proposal, presenters agree to recording if the proposal is accepted.

Eligibility Confirmation

Are you currently incarcerated?

If you are a proxy, is the person/group on whose behalf you are submitting this proposal currently incarcerated?

YES **NO** As noted in the presentation proposal guidelines, we only accept ISC presentation proposals from scholars who are currently incarcerated.

We sincerely appreciate your interest in participating! If you are not currently incarcerated, please keep an eye out for our Call for Proposals for the [National Conference on Higher Education in Prison \(NCHEP\)](#), which will be announced in late summer / early fall of 2026. NCHEP proposals are open to all people within the field of higher education in prison, including formerly incarcerated people.

Proxy Contact Information (REQUIRED)

Please note that proxies must be affiliated with an educational program currently in operation within the facility where the presenter(s) are located. If you are serving as a proxy for a currently incarcerated individual or group, include your information below.

If you are currently incarcerated and self-submitting this proposal, please include the contact information for a proxy affiliated with an educational program at your facility.

First name	
Last name	
Professional affiliation	
Professional title	
Email address	
Phone number	

Proxy Responsibility Acknowledgement

The proxy listed above serves as the primary liaison with the Alliance, Department of Corrections staff, and the participating scholar(s) throughout the conference process. This includes assisting with communication, coordination, and confirmation of facility approval and Zoom access. Proxies must be affiliated with an educational program currently in operation within the facility where the presenter(s) are located.

- I confirm that the proxy listed above is aware of and agrees to serve in this role.

- I confirm that the proxy listed above is affiliated with an educational program currently in operation within the facility where the presenter(s) are located.

Corrections Contact Information (REQUIRED)

Please provide contact information for a member of corrections staff at the facility. The Alliance will need to communicate directly with facility staff to confirm approval for the scholar to present via Zoom at the conference.

First name	
Last name	
Professional title	
Email address	
Phone number	

Accessibility and Availability

Using the schedule below, select all of the date and time blocks that the presenters prefer and/or are most likely to be available.

All session times below are in Eastern Time (ET). Please convert to your local time zone before selecting availability.

- Day 1 (Wednesday, Oct 28) - Session 1, 1:30-2:30pm ET
- Day 1 (Wednesday, Oct 28) - Session 2, 4:30-5:30pm ET
- Day 2 (Thursday, Oct 29) - Session 3, 12:00pm-1:00pm ET
- Day 2 (Thursday, Oct 29) - Session 4, 1:30pm-2:30pm ET

Are there special circumstances that we should know about the presenters' ability to access Zoom? If yes, please provide as many details as possible. **NOTE: Ability to participate in the conference via Zoom must be confirmed by September 1.**

Presentation Information

1. Title of proposed presentation:

2. Select **one** track from the options below that best fits the presentation:

- Learning Across Time and Community:** This track explores how intellectual growth unfolds over time and through relationships with others. Sessions may reflect on returning to education, changing perspectives, evolving interests, and the role learning plays across different stages of life. Presentations may also examine classroom culture, peer learning, mentorship, and other collaborative forms of study, as well as student perspectives on rigor, instruction, advising, and the academic environments that shape higher education in prison.
- Study as Inquiry:** This track celebrates curiosity and investigation. Sessions will explore questions that emerged from study, reading, observation, or experience. Presentations may feature disciplinary research, theoretical questions, philosophical arguments, or literary interpretation. Sessions can also consider how a text, argument, or idea can reshape how we see the world.
- Beyond the Classroom:** This track explores how learning takes shape outside traditional academic formats. Sessions may include creative work, applied projects, demonstrations, conversations, or other approaches that share how ideas are practiced, shared, or lived. Topics may also engage wellness, mental health, faith, or other forms of reflective practice as sites of learning. Formats that invite participation or take nontraditional approaches are welcome.
- Technology and the Incarcerated Scholar:** This track examines the role of technology and digital literacy in prison learning environments. Sessions may explore how students navigate limited technological access, the impact of restricted internet on research and coursework, and the importance of digital literacy for scholarship, communication, and professional development.
- Professional Pathways During Incarceration:** This track focuses on opportunities for students to engage in meaningful professional work during incarceration. Sessions may highlight models of remote employment, apprenticeships, work-based learning, and other pathways that allow students to apply academic knowledge in real-world contexts. Presentations may also examine relationships between prison education programs and employers, approaches to fair compensation for skilled work, and how professional experience supports skill development, career readiness, and financial stability prior to release.

3. Please provide a brief description of your proposed presentation (max. 500 words or 3,000 characters). See Proposal Guidance on pg. 11 for more information on what to include.

Presenter Information

NOTE: Presentations can include one or more speakers.

Presenter 1

First name	
Last name	
Academic affiliation Ex. BA student, x program; alum, y program	
Current location (name of facility, city, state)	
Email address (if applicable)	
Pseudonym (if applicable)	

Presenter 2

First name	
Last name	
Academic affiliation Ex. BA student, x program; alum, y program	
Current location (name of facility, city, state)	
Email address (if applicable)	
Pseudonym (if applicable)	

Presenter 3

First name	
Last name	
Academic affiliation Ex. BA student, x program; alum, y program	
Current location (name of facility, city, state)	
Email address (if applicable)	
Pseudonym (if applicable)	

Presenter 4

First name	
Last name	
Academic affiliation Ex. BA student, x program; alum, y program	
Current location (name of facility, city, state)	
Email address (if applicable)	
Pseudonym (if applicable)	

Presenter 5

First name	
Last name	
Academic affiliation Ex. BA student, x program; alum, y program	
Current location (name of facility, city, state)	
Email address (if applicable)	
Pseudonym (if applicable)	

Presenter 6

First name	
Last name	
Academic affiliation Ex. BA student, x program; alum, y program	
Current location (name of facility, city, state)	
Email address (if applicable)	
Pseudonym (if applicable)	

If there are more than 6 presenters, please include a blank page with the additional presenter information.

WHAT REVIEWERS WILL LOOK FOR

2026 Theme: **Learning in Motion**

Education is dynamic, evolving, and alive. Strong proposals give reviewers a clear understanding of the presentation's focus, its connection to the conference theme, and what the audience will take away from the session.

AUDIENCE ISC attendees include students, educators, higher education in prison program leaders, correctional partners, nonprofit leaders, workforce and reentry practitioners, policymakers, and community members.

FIVE CRITERIA

01

Clear presentation focus

Describe the central idea, question, argument, project, research, or experience. Reviewers should understand the session's purpose and the main ideas presenters plan to share.

02

Connection to the theme

Show how learning is active in your presentation — through growth, transformation, discovery, persistence, shifting identity, or new possibilities. The connection should be intentional and clear.

03

Connection to education

Help the audience understand how education shapes intellectual life, identity, purpose, civic leadership, or professional pathways. Move beyond description — explain what is at stake.

04

Audience takeaways

Explain what the audience will learn, consider, or carry away. Include a reflection question, call to action, practical insight, or another way the presentation invites engagement.

500 word limit — use it to cover all criteria above. Proposals should address focus, theme, education, and audience takeaways.