

NAGC 2026 Network Program Focus Descriptions

Arts

The Arts Network welcomes proposals about educating those who are gifted and talented in the arts, connecting educational theory, research, and practice in arts disciplines such as creative writing, dance, media arts, music, theater, and visual arts. General examples of appropriate types of proposals include (1) strategies and resources for identification, teaching, counseling, coaching, and mentoring gifted and talented children and youth in the arts, (2) approaches that increase equity and access to advanced arts education opportunities for underrepresented groups, (3) arts integration models that include arts learning objectives and benefit the learners gifted in the arts, (4) talent development models and their application to the arts.

Computers & Technology

Network presentation should help teachers, schools, and parents leverage technology to create optimum environments and learning opportunities for gifted learners. The network would like to offer sessions that span the continuum of audience needs, from beginners to more technologically-savvy participants. Specifically, the network would like to receive proposals that address the following topics: (a) Cutting Edge Technologies (e.g. artificial intelligence, augmented reality, 3-D printing, major new trends), (b) technology for addressing Classic Problems of Practice in the field of gifted education (e.g., developing critical/creative thinking skills, modifying curriculum to adapt to modern learning environments, meeting the social and emotional needs of students), (c) Modern Challenges and Dilemmas that exist because of technology (e.g., digital citizenship, Fair Use within an increasingly digital world, best practices in online pedagogy, supporting students and families/caregivers through changing platforms), and (d) digital resources and tools to add to our collective Technology Toolbox (e.g., best apps, websites and AI to support advanced learning, tools for creating digital portfolios). Topics that do not fit neatly within these categories are also welcome.

Conceptual Foundations

Network proposals should focus on the theories, concepts and practices that define gifted education, seeking to invoke and clarify theory, philosophical foundations, trends, issues, future directions, and historical and contemporary perspectives from the ethical, social, economic, and political theories that inform our society.

Creativity

Creativity welcomes proposals that promote a) creativity as an aspect of giftedness, b) understanding creativity research, c) dissemination of practical strategies and activities that foster creative thinking and the creative process, d) creative talent development, and e) programs and/or models that initiate, develop, and implement practices and materials promoting creativity.

Curriculum Studies

Network proposals should focus on: a) curricular and instructional strategies that are a direct response to the learning needs of gifted learners; b) issues in curriculum and instruction for gifted learners; c) research that informs appropriate curriculum and instruction for gifted learners; and d) connections between best practices in gifted education and general education as they relate to gifted learners. Preference will be given to proposals that are clearly written, defensible based on current best practices, important to the field, and appropriately targeted to a specific audience.

Early Childhood

The NAGC Early Childhood Network promotes high quality, developmentally appropriate and differentiated learning for young children exhibiting giftedness from birth through age 8. This includes children from underserved populations, i.e. twice exceptional, cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and socioeconomic groups, who have high ability, advanced cognitive development, or the potential for advanced learning experiences and academic achievement.

GLBTQ+ (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Trans, Queer/Questioning +)

The LGBTQ+ Network welcomes proposals describing knowledge sets, practices, and policies supporting gifted sexual-minority and gender non-binary youth. Proposed sessions may enhance: 1) the knowledge base about gifted LGBTQ+ students and their allied peers, educators, parents / families, mentors, and communities; 2) the instructional, social-emotional, and advocacy practices employed with LGBTQ+ youth, 3) the curricula utilized in teaching them, 4) professional development packages intended to improve the educational environment of LGBTQ+ students, and 5) the school, community, and state and federal policies that affect gifted LGBTQ+ students' quality of life.

Gifted Coordinator

The network welcomes proposals designed to prepare and support gifted coordinators through a variety of activities, such as: a) sharing resources, plans and ideas that gifted coordinators can utilize to develop, implement and enhance gifted services; b) connecting research to practice and practice to research in ways that support gifted programs in the schools; c) creating collaborative exchanges wherein gifted coordinators can interact and learn from others' efforts in designing and implementing effective gifted programs and services.

Global Awareness

The mission of the Global Awareness network is to help gifted learners prepare for an increasingly global world by supporting them as emerging leaders, creators, and peacemakers. Global Awareness network responds to the concerns of gifted individuals about the future and the world in which they live by developing opportunities to grow personally, act internationally, become stewards of resources, and to appreciate and nurture diversity. Global Awareness network proposals should provide strategies to develop intellectual capacity for critical and creative thinking based in understanding the perspectives of others, applying empathy, dealing compassionately, seeking cooperation through consensus, developing civility, citizenship, and by supporting gifted individuals to be contributing members of a global family. The goal of the network is to discuss and to share experiences that may equip gifted children with a stronger sense of self that allows them to reach higher levels of spiritual, social and intellectual development impacting an interconnected and synergistic world.

***NEW:* Growing Talent in the Gen Ed Classroom**

Gifted children spend much of their time in general education classrooms where teachers often have little or no specialized training in identifying and serving students of high potential. This strand seeks to extend understanding of gifted education and gifted children to a specific audience: general education classroom teachers. Share strategies, practices, and pedagogies that teachers can employ in the classroom to ensure positive outcomes for all students.

Parent, Family & Community

The Parent, Family, & Community Network invites proposals that offer research-informed and evidence-based practices designed to empower families in supporting the whole gifted child. We particularly welcome sessions that strengthen home-school-community partnerships, promote effective advocacy, and build the capacity of local and state organizations dedicated to gifted education. Strong proposals will clearly align with the Network's mission and provide practical strategies, tools, or resources that enhance parent engagement and advocacy skills. Submissions addressing the needs of underserved and diverse populations, as well as families navigating public, private, or alternative schooling settings, are especially encouraged.

Professional Learning

Proposals should reflect the major areas of interest for the network: pre-service, in-service and staff development; leadership and administration; and professional standards. Proposals selected demonstrate knowledge of the research base and reflect best practices in administration and personnel preparation. The presentation itself must relate to professional learning, not a general topic that would be used in or for professional learning. Focus will be placed on sessions incorporating professional learning with topics impacting the current educational climate and that embed diversity, equity, inclusion, belongingness, and social justice.

Research & Evaluation - Empirical

Empirical proposals focus on research and evaluation studies pertaining to gifted education and/or talent development. Proposals encompassing issues related to methods, assessments, instrumentation, literature, syntheses, and theoretical as well as applied studies are welcome. The R & E Network allows submissions with research that is still in development, but completed research is preferred. Empirical proposals submitted to the Research & Evaluation Network must include the following details: theoretical rationale, sampling procedures, design, data gathering, data analysis, and results.

Research & Evaluation - Non-Empirical

Non-Empirical proposals are related to research and evaluation but are not necessarily new studies. Proposals encompassing issues related to methods, assessments, instrumentation, literature, syntheses, and theoretical as well as applied work are welcome. Submission of proposals for "How-To" and instructional sessions is also encouraged. The R & E Network allows submissions with research that is still in development, but completed research will get preference from the program chair. "How-to" proposals should include information on how new and/or innovative the idea/method is, and how the idea/method applies and contributes to the field.

Social & Emotional Development

The network welcomes proposals that focus on the affective, social, and psychological development and concerns of gifted children. Preference is given to innovative topics or those that make a contribution to the field. Previously, sessions in this strand have addressed initiatives to serve specific populations of children (i.e., boys, girls, underachievers, low-income, profoundly gifted, etc.), strategies for working with gifted individuals within classroom or counseling settings, strategies for working with various psychological disorders, and strategies to increase motivation, achievement, or social engagement.

Special Populations

The Special Populations Network invites proposals that promote equity and excellence for special populations of gifted students (i.e., historically under-represented racial minority groups or other underserved groups) whose unique needs and experiences require differentiated services for optimal development of potential. Network priorities for presentations emphasize: a) clearly articulated special population of gifted student; and b) exemplary programs, services, intervention models, and/or research based initiatives or issues that promote equity and excellence.

Special Schools & Programs

Special Schools & Programs Network welcomes proposals that reflect alternative, experimental, innovative, and effective ideas and practices within both established and newly developed schools and programs serving gifted and/or talented populations. Review criteria include the theoretical soundness of the concepts presented and significance and applicability of the ideas to promote the mission of the Special Schools and Programs Network.

STEM

If your proposal is concerned with issues relevant to STEM education, integrated STEM, or related specifically to any of the four STEM areas (science, technology, engineering, or mathematics), you may choose to submit your proposal for consideration to the STEM Network. Proposals that are deeply ensconced in theoretical and pragmatic concerns in STEM and Gifted Education typically receive the highest ratings."