COMMUNITY COLLEGES OF APPALACHIA

Call for Proposals
33rd Annual Conference

June 7-9, 2026

Embassy Suites by Hilton-Asheville Downtown
192 Haywood Street
Asheville, NC 28801

"Pathways to Possibility: Creating Clear Routes to Careers, Credentials, and Community Impact"

The Community Colleges of Appalachia (CCA) invites session proposals for our 33rd Annual Conference, returning to our new home hotel in vibrant downtown Asheville. The Embassy Suites by Hilton–Asheville Downtown offers expanded meeting space and walkable access to the city's rich dining and cultural offerings—an ideal setting for collaboration, innovation, and shared learning.

CCA's greatest strength is the collective wisdom of our network. Each year, practitioners across the region bring forward replicable models, fresh ideas, and proven strategies that strengthen our colleges and the communities we serve. We welcome your proposals that align with this year's theme and contribute to meaningful dialogue across the Appalachian region.

Conference Theme

Pathways to Possibility: Creating Clear Routes to Careers, Credentials, and Community Impact

This year's theme highlights the essential role community colleges play in expanding opportunity, strengthening local economies, and improving quality of life across Appalachia. We invite proposals that illuminate promising practices, innovative partnerships, and scalable solutions.

Session Format

- Proposals must include a CCA member in the presentation
- 35-minute sessions, including time for Q&A
- Sessions may feature single presenters, co-presenters, or panel-style discussions

Conference Strands

Careers

Sessions in this strand may explore:

- New or redesigned career pathways aligned with regional workforce needs
- Employer partnerships that expand apprenticeships, internships, and work-based learning
- Strategies for engaging adult learners, career changers, and underrepresented populations
- Approaches to rural workforce development that address barriers such as transportation, childcare, or broadband
- Use of labor market data to inform advising, program design, and institutional strategy

Credentials

Sessions in this strand may highlight:

- Stackable credential pathways that lead to family-sustaining wages
- Micro-credentials and short-term training aligned with employer-validated competencies
- Credit for prior learning (CPL) models that accelerate completion
- Noncredit-to-credit alignment and quality assurance practices
- Credential-to-degree pathways that reduce duplication and improve transferability
- Embedding essential skills, digital literacy, and employability competencies into credential programs

Community Impact

Sessions in this strand may feature:

- College-led initiatives that strengthen local economies, health, and civic life
- Programs addressing regional challenges such as addiction recovery, housing, food insecurity, or mental health
- Community-engaged learning models connecting students with local nonprofits and public agencies
- Strategies for building trust and partnerships in rural communities
- Approaches to measuring and communicating institutional impact
- Examples of colleges serving as conveners for regional collaboration and resilience

Proposal Review Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated on:

- Relevance to the conference theme
- Replicability for other Appalachian institutions
- Engagement strategies that encourage interaction and discussion
- Impact on students, institutions, or communities

Submission Information

You may submit proposals through the form accessed at Home | Ccofapp.
The first presenter listed on your proposal will be notified of acceptance on or before March 13, 2026 and should forward that information to all presenters.

TIMELINE

Week of January 12	Call for Proposals distributed to CCA member institutions
February 20, 2026	Deadline for Submitting Proposals
February 24, 2026	Proposals Sent to Program Planning Committee
March 9, 2026	Planning Committee Selects Proposals
On or Before March 13, 2026	Presenters Notified

Questions can be addressed to Dr. Kevin Boys at kboys@ccofapp.org, or Brian Swords, at bswords@ccofapp.org.