



Call for Proposals

Global Followership Conferences 2026

THEME: Exploring Followership Contexts

DATES & PLACES:

- Global Followership Conference 2026 (Asia-Pacific): April 1st-2nd, 2026
Meanjin/Brisbane, Australia. Queensland University of Technology
- Global Followership Conference 2026 (North America): July 9th-11th, 2026 Indiana, USA
– Indiana Wesleyan University
- Additional Conferences: TBD

SUBMISSION DEADLINE:

- Asia-Pacific: January 31, 2026
- North America: February 28, 2026
- [SUBMISSION FORM](#)

ABOUT THE THEME:

[What is followership?](#) What does it mean to follow well? What does it mean in different contexts?

Although research and practice are beginning to identify some common behaviors of effective following, frequently the answer to the question of what it means to follow and how best to do it is: "It depends." It depends on the cultural context – global, regional, national, local, organizational – in which leading and following occurs. It depends on the purpose that brings

people together. It depends on implicit theories about leadership and followership held by organizational, social, or political members. It depends on the industry or sector. It might even depend on what is meant by the term leadership or followership, and even if such a word exists in a specific language or culture.

While the theme for 2026 is Exploring Followership Contexts, it does not mean all proposals need to be on the topic: we want to encourage diversity and innovation, and this is still a young discipline! If you are passionate about a followership topic, send in a proposal.

If you do want to embrace the theme, here are some areas of context to consider (even more examples are provided in the Appendix):

- Followership and Indigenous Knowledges
- Followership and Culture
- Effective Followership in an Industry or Sector
- Faith and Followership
- Managing Toxic Followership
- Challenging Destructive Leadership
- Followership Training & Development
- Followership Research
- Leadership-Followership Systems
- Followership in Disguise
- Teaching Leadership/Followership
- Inclusive Followership

We are eager to hear from people with expertise in specific sectors and verticals such as Government, Not-for-profits, Engineering, Accounting, Military, etc. What does effective followership look like in your context?

Again, these are only meant to be ideas to get the juices flowing. If you already have something to share, and something to say, do so. We want to hear from you.

WHO THESE CONFERENCES ARE FOR

These are “pracademic” conferences where important questions can be asked and discussed with engaged and passionate colleagues. The emphasis will be on creating new knowledge, improving practice, engaging in inquiry and personal discovery, developing connections, and building community.

As a result, we are looking for submissions that will appeal to different audiences including:

- Academics
- OD practitioners, L&D professionals, and HR partners
- Organizational Trainers
- Teachers (at all levels but particularly university-level)
- Business and organization executives
- Consultants
- and Students

SUBMISSION TYPES

Five types of submissions are encouraged. Multiple submissions are allowed. When you submit, you can choose which conference or conferences you are submitting for. One submission can be used to present at both the Australasia and GFC 5 conferences, if you wish.

Click on the links below for details of what is required for each submission:

- [Organization/Business/Practice talk or workshop](#). An interactive demonstration or experiential session rooted in participation and active learning. Examples include programmatic development in business, government, military, or other settings; case studies; followership pedagogy; how to add followership to a leadership development program; how to talk to people (executives and others) about followership; etc. We are actively seeking people willing to share their training methods, new skill development, or teaching techniques. Sessions can be 30-60 minutes long. Occasionally, we will accept longer workshops so let us know in your submission if this is the case.
- [Lightning talks](#). Do you have a quick story to share? A short presentation on a topic? Or just a brief update on your latest research project? We will have a time slot for you to present in a fun, fast-paced and always popular session. Lightning talks are 5-minute, timed presentations and **all** followership-related ideas will be accepted. The purpose here is to allow for all voices to be heard. **Every year, this is one of the most highly rated sessions at the conference!**
- [Facilitated session \(including panels\)](#). The purpose of facilitated sessions is to spark new ideas and conversations, to bring people together to uncover new ideas, develop new streams of research and explore important or controversial applications of followership. Facilitated sessions must be at least 80% participant discussion or activity-based, though panels can be less, and your submission will need to convince the programming committee of that. Facilitated sessions may be 15 to 90 minutes in length, depending on the topic you choose and the format of the session. Some facilitated sessions might be grouped together to create a World Café.
- [Research presentation](#). Empirical and theoretical talks on followership are strongly encouraged. Possible submission types include qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods studies, experimental results, case studies, theory development and critique, survey development, model building, and historical and cultural analyses. Submissions may be grouped by theme, with each participant having 10-15 minutes to present or, in a small number of cases, a longer slot.
- [Poster](#). Posters are a way to spark discussion as much as convey information. Poster sessions allow participants to quickly find topics of interest and engage directly with the creator. It is a way to share information that is more two-way than a typical research talk. We particularly want to invite people who have not presented at a conference before, including graduate students starting out on their research journey, to consider submitting a poster.

If you have never submitted a proposal before and want some help or advice on how to do it, contact us at: programming@globalfollowership.com.

SUBMIT YOUR PROPOSAL

The deadline for all proposals is either **Jan. 31, 2026, 11:59 PM QLD AEST (Asia-Pacific)**, or **Feb. 28, 2026, 11:59 PM EST (North America)**. All proposals should use the submission form: [SUBMISSION FORM](#). [Let us know](#) if you need an earlier decision for your proposal to obtain funding to attend one of the conferences.

For assistance or questions about the CFP: programming@globalfollowership.com.

FOUNDATIONAL BELIEFS, VISION, & MISSION OF THE CONFERENCE

[The Global Followership Network](#) fosters research and practice that goes beyond top-down, leader-focused approaches to embrace healthy, productive relationships where people work with and value each other regardless of formal position or title.

Our foundational beliefs are:

- Discussions of leadership and followership are incomplete without considering both as important;
- An over-focus on leadership has impaired research, stunted practical interventions, and contributed to narcissistic leadership, disengagement, and a lack of accountability by those in positions of formal power;
- Leadership, considered as the only agentic role in a relationship, is rarely true, logically inconsistent, and dangerous.

Our vision is to have a research-backed understanding of leadership **with** followership that includes practical applications for how people join together in work, play, community building, and family.

Our mission is to champion the powerful and often overlooked force of followership—essential to thriving teams, organizations, and communities. We want to elevate followership as a vital compliment to leadership, one that unlocks performance, fosters collaboration, and strengthens impact across every sector.

CONFERENCE GOALS & OBJECTIVES

- Create a safe, respectful yet exciting space for knowledge sharing and discovery about followership, from the followership-curious to skill-building to research to bringing followership into your practice or organization;
- Highlight different cultural practices surrounding followership;
- Celebrate followership successes through case studies, storytelling, and sharing sessions;
- Develop new knowledge about theory, research, and practice on topics that promote creative and critical ideas;
- Share practical takeaways – fresh ideas, effective strategies, and field-tested approaches that can be applied to develop the leadership-followership dynamic;
- Train with the best followership trainers in the world. This conference will provide a unique experience for executives, OD professionals, students, trainers, teachers, leaders, L&D professionals, and researchers to learn new skills;
- Make a significant, positive contribution to the host institution and surrounding community;

- Continue to evolve the conference by using the learnings from each conference to make the next conference even better;
- Grow followership.

GENERAL INFORMATION & REQUIREMENTS

If your proposal is accepted, each listed presenter must register for the conference(s) the proposal was submitted for. All presenters are required to register and pay published conference fees.

Registration fees are usually kept **very affordable**, thanks to our partners and sponsors, with a discount available for full-time students and early registration. More details about fees will be available in December.

AFFILIATION LISTINGS

The names, titles, and affiliations (i.e., title, department or organization, other affiliation) of all scheduled presenters, co-authors, and chairs will be listed in the online program. By submitting your proposal, you agree to this information appearing online and in conference publications.

CONFIRM PRESENTERS

Proposals must have approval from all participants listed in the proposal prior to submission. It is the responsibility of the person submitting the proposal to adhere to this rule for all co-presenters.

APPENDIX

- **Followership and Indigenous Knowledges**
 - How is followership conceptualised and practiced within Indigenous contexts? How might this disrupt and inform dominant paradigms of leadership and followership? How might it inform pedagogy and andragogy?
 - In what ways can Indigenous practices of followership strengthen relationships and foster inclusion across communities and organisations?
 - How have Indigenous communities practiced forms of followership as acts of resistance, resilience, or renewal? How might this impact colonial power structures and contexts?
 - How can Indigenous followership practices serve as catalysts for transformative social, cultural, and political change?
- **Followership and Culture**
 - In what ways do culture and context influence the perceptions and implementation of followership?
 - How does society at large perceive followership and followers and how is this influencing movements across the globe?
 - How do we see effective followers/followership in action, even when those terms are not present (or accepted) in a culture or context?
 - What can we do to increase the value and perception of followers and followership both universally and contextually?
- **Effective Followership in an Industry or Sector**
 - How does valuing the role of follower(s) enhance (or inhibit) a group's/organization's/business's success?
 - Are there successful examples of organizations with a focus on followership that have clearly impacted metrics such as profitability, satisfaction, engagement, turnover, etc.?
 - What are the unique applications of follower/followership within a specific industry, sector, or vertical?
- **Faith and Followership**
 - What is the history of followership within various faith traditions?
 - How do the faith implications of followership impact both leading and following?
 - How might the unique perspective of faith-based followership inform other organizations, politics, or social media?
- **Managing Toxic Followership/Toxic Leadership**
 - What responsibility do followers have in ensuring leaders act ethically?
 - When have followers failed at holding a leader accountable?
 - What is toxic followership?
- **Challenging Destructive Leadership**
 - How do you recognise destructive leadership?
 - How do you challenge destructive leadership?
 - How do followers contribute to destructive leadership?
- **Followership Training & Development**
 - What evidence supports followership education, training, and development?

- o What is the history of education, training, and development?
- o In what ways can we increase followership training as part of development programs/classes that traditionally only focus on leader and leadership?
- o What are some case studies of effective followership development?
- o What best practices are there for organizational training and development of followership?
- **Followership Research**
 - o What is the history of followership research?
 - o What have we learned about followership that influences how we view leadership today?
 - o What have you learned about followership that has changed how you approach a task/project/opportunity/role?
 - o Where might followership be hiding or in disguise in other areas of leadership study that could provide greater insights and visibility?
 - o What are the current areas where followership research is needed or occurring?
- **Leadership/Followership Systems**
 - o In what ways is followership distinct from leadership? What is the difference and importance in delineating roles of follower(s) and leader(s)?
 - o How should we understand leaders/followers and leadership/followership as a system?
 - o In what ways might leadership/followership systems differ depending upon context?
 - o How is social media understanding of influencers and followers impacting other contexts?
- **Followership in Disguise**
 - o From a historical perspective, where have works and research been talking about followership but not using the term?
 - o Where are some current opportunities to leverage scholarship and practice to connect to followership (e.g., teams, team leadership, shared leadership)?
 - o What are some of the dangers in those related topics for extending the myth or romance of leadership?
 - o Where do opportunities exist to reverse the lens in these topics?
- **Teaching Leadership/Followership**
 - o What leadership development programs or academic institutions are incorporating followership into their curriculum?
 - o Why is academic emphasis on followership valuable and how is it changing overall leader and follower effectiveness?
 - o How can the premise of “Exploring Followership” influence the academic study and application of leadership studies?
- **Inclusive Followership**
 - o How does focusing on followership help address inequities and power differentials?
 - o In what ways can followership promote greater inclusivity and community?
 - o How does followership help us see and correct diversity and inclusion issues that a focus on leadership alone might miss or get out of balance?