



2027 CIVICS MATTERS ARIZONA SUMMIT BREAKOUT SESSION REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Civics Matters Arizona invites civic, community, education, and youth-serving organizations to propose an interactive, nonpartisan student breakout session or teacher professional development session for the 2027 Civics Matters Arizona Summit.

**JANUARY 26, 2027
STATE FARM STADIUM
ONE 45-MINUTE SESSION**

PROPOSALS DUE: OCTOBER 16, 2026

SESSION OPPORTUNITIES

STUDENT BREAKOUT SESSION

A 45-minute interactive experience for students in grades 6–8, grades 9–12, or both. Partners may propose a session for up to 200 students, up to 1,150 students, or either audience size.

Student breakout sessions should be participatory and should not function primarily as a presentation about the submitting organization or its programs.

TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SESSION

A 45-minute professional learning experience for an anticipated audience of 300–500 educators. Sessions should provide educators with practical knowledge, resources, strategies, or learning experiences they can apply in their classrooms, schools, or student programs.

Teacher professional development should be participatory and should not function primarily as a presentation about the submitting organization or its programs.

AUDIENCE AND SESSION FORMAT

Student breakout sessions may be held in spaces with fixed or lecture-style seating. Activities must be designed to work within that environment. Structured movement may be included when it can be safely and efficiently managed for the proposed audience size.

Technology and room configurations are subject to availability. Proposals should identify all anticipated technology, staffing, room setup, accessibility, and material needs.

THE EXPERIENCE COMES FIRST

Strong sessions draw on the submitting organization's knowledge, responsibilities, tools, and decision-making processes. Participants should have an opportunity to practice part of that work, respond to a realistic scenario, use an authentic resource, or make the kinds of decisions the organization encounters in its work.

Participants should be actively involved in the experience. A PowerPoint presentation followed by questions, occasional polling, or participation by only a few volunteers does not meet the standard for an interactive student breakout session or participatory teacher professional development session.

IMPORTANT DATES

SEPTEMBER 1, 2026
Call for proposals opens

OCTOBER 16, 2026
Proposals due

OCTOBER 30, 2026
Selected presenters notified

WHAT TO INCLUDE IN YOUR PROPOSAL

Upload one concise proposal document in PDF or Word format. The proposal must be specific enough for the Civics Matters team to clearly understand the complete 45-minute participant experience.

STUDENT BREAKOUT SESSION PROPOSALS

1. SESSION OVERVIEW

Session title and a brief description of the topic and overall experience.

2. STUDENT AUDIENCE AND SESSION SIZE

Grades 6–8, grades 9–12, or both, and whether the session is designed for up to 200 students, up to 1,150 students, or either size.

3. STUDENT OUTCOME

The knowledge, skill, product, decision, resource, or next step students will leave the session with.

4. 45-MINUTE RUN OF SHOW

A time-based outline showing what presenters and students will do from the opening through the conclusion.

5. INTERACTIVE EXPERIENCE

A detailed description of the central activity, including student instructions, materials, groupings, choices or actions, and the intended result.

6. PARTICIPATION AT SCALE

An explanation of how every student, or nearly every student, will meaningfully participate from lecture-style seating or through safely managed movement.

If movement is included, explain where students will move, how many students will move at one time, and how transitions will be managed.

7. PRESENTERS AND RESOURCES

Proposed presenters and their relevant experience facilitating activities for middle or high school students.

Include the anticipated number and roles of presenters, staff members, or organizational volunteers, along with all technology, staffing, room setup, accessibility, and material needs.

TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

1. SESSION OVERVIEW

Session title and a brief description of the topic and overall professional learning experience.

2. INTENDED EDUCATOR AUDIENCE

The grade levels, subject areas, roles, or levels of experience for which the session is most relevant.

3. EDUCATOR LEARNING OUTCOME

What educators will learn, understand, practice, create, or be prepared to implement after the session.

4. 45-MINUTE RUN OF SHOW

A time-based outline showing what presenters and educators will do from the opening through the conclusion.

5. PARTICIPATORY LEARNING EXPERIENCE

How educators will actively engage with the content through activities, protocols, scenarios, resources, collaborative work, or opportunities to practice applying the session content.

6. CLASSROOM OR SCHOOL APPLICATION

How educators can apply the session's content, strategies, or resources in their classrooms, schools, or student programs.

7. TAKE-HOME RESOURCES

The materials, tools, lesson resources, planning guides, or next steps educators will receive.

8. PRESENTERS AND RESOURCES

Proposed presenters and their relevant experience facilitating professional learning for educators.

Include the anticipated number and roles of presenters, staff members, or organizational volunteers, along with all technology, staffing, room setup, accessibility, and material needs.

WHAT STRONG STUDENT SESSIONS CAN LOOK LIKE

These examples illustrate the expected level of participation and specificity. Partners are not limited to these formats. Each proposed session should reflect the submitting organization's own expertise and the work it is uniquely positioned to share with students.

SESSIONS FOR UP TO 200 STUDENTS

FIRST AMENDMENT CASE LAB

Students receive a school-based speech, press, protest, or social media scenario modeled on a realistic legal question. From their seats, students review the facts with nearby peers, identify the rights and responsibilities involved, and reach an initial decision.

The partner introduces additional facts or relevant legal precedent. Students reconsider their reasoning and record a final decision. Every student participates in analyzing the case, applying legal principles, and determining whether the new information changes the outcome.

STUDENT VOTER-REGISTRATION DRIVE LAB

Students use authentic, nonpartisan election resources to develop a voter-registration drive plan for a school. They identify the eligible audience, choose outreach methods, address common registration barriers, and draft one piece of student-facing communication.

Students exchange plans with a nearby partner and evaluate them using a checklist provided by the organization. Each student leaves with a realistic first-step plan and official resources that could support a school-based registration effort.

PUBLIC DECISION-MAKING CHALLENGE

Students receive a realistic community proposal and information representing residents, public officials, businesses, and other affected groups. Working with students seated nearby, they review competing priorities and decide whether the proposal should be approved, rejected, or revised.

The organization introduces new public input or a practical constraint, requiring students to revisit their decision. Students experience how public officials gather information, weigh competing interests, and make decisions that affect a community.

IMPORTANT DATES

DECEMBER 18, 2026

Final presentation materials due

DATE TO BE ANNOUNCED

State Farm Stadium walkthrough

JANUARY 26, 2027

Civics Matters Arizona Summit

SESSIONS FOR UP TO 1,150 STUDENTS

BREAKING-NEWS VERIFICATION CHALLENGE

Students evaluate a developing news story containing a source, image, quotation, and social media claim. At several checkpoints, every student decides whether the information is ready to share, requires additional verification, or should not be used.

Students compare their reasoning with someone seated nearby and submit a response. The journalist reveals how each element would be verified in a newsroom and introduces new information that may change the room's judgment.

COMMUNITY BUDGET CHALLENGE

Every student receives the same fixed public budget and a menu of competing community needs. Students first allocate the funding individually and then work with students seated nearby to negotiate a shared recommendation.

Seating sections submit their final allocations to create a room-wide budget. The organization then introduces a funding reduction or urgent community need, requiring students to revise their choices and experience the tradeoffs involved in public budgeting.

FROM CONCERN TO ACTION

Students select a hypothetical community concern and use a structured planning guide to identify the appropriate decision-maker, establish a realistic goal, choose a responsible action, and draft a short message for the intended audience.

Students complete a feasibility check with someone seated nearby and revise one element of their plan. The organization connects the activity to its real community-engagement work while keeping the scenarios and instruction nonpartisan.

SUPPORTING TOOLS, NOT THE EXPERIENCE

Calling on volunteers, inviting a few students to the stage, asking occasional questions, or using audience polling may support a session, but these strategies do not demonstrate participation at scale by themselves.

The central activity should give every student, or nearly every student, something meaningful to consider, discuss, decide, practice, create, or submit.

IF SELECTED

Selected organizations will:

- Submit all final presentation materials by Friday, December 18, 2026.
- Participate in an in-person walkthrough of State Farm Stadium on a date provided by the Civics Matters team.
- Deliver one 45-minute session on January 26, 2027.
- Ensure that all content and materials remain nonpartisan, appropriate for the intended audience, and consistent with the approved proposal.
- Provide enough presenters, staff members, or organizational volunteers to facilitate the approved activity effectively.

HOW TO SUBMIT

Complete the online submission form and upload your proposal document by October 16, 2026.

Organizations proposing more than one session should submit a separate form and proposal document for each session.

Accepted formats: PDF or Word

Suggested filename: OrganizationName_SessionTitle