



SCIENCE EDUCATORS FOR EQUITY, DIVERSITY, & SOCIAL JUSTICE

***Disturbing Settled Expectations:
Re-imagining Science Education through Multiplicity***

In-Person Conference

Tucson, Arizona, USA

January 19–21, 2024

Deadline for submission extended to 11:59 PM (your local time zone) on July 7, 2023

[Submit Your Proposal Here](#)

In order to *submit* a proposal for the January 2024 conference, you must be a current SEEDS member.

In order to *attend* the January conference, you must be a 2024 SEEDS member.

[Click here to check and update your membership status.](#)

See the SEEDS website for further updates and conference logistics: seedsweb.org

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

SEEDS Vision: Science, technology, engineering and mathematics play important roles in our global, diverse, and increasingly technologically-dependent society. Education in these areas is thus an area of critical significance for all members of our global community. Researchers and educators with a long commitment to addressing equity and social justice, many of whom are scholars of color, have moved beyond mainstream or superficial ways of addressing “STEM” education and instead seek to tackle these issues directly and with transformative action. To this end, *Science Educators for Equity, Diversity, and Social Justice* (SEEDS) is an organization committed to researching, building, and sustaining transformative science education with all students through critical engagement. While primarily focusing on science education, SEEDS is committed to transdisciplinary scholarship and is interested in collaborations with educators and researchers from across the STEM/STEAM disciplines and beyond. As such, SEEDS brings together researchers, teachers, parents, administrators, and community members who envision transformative science education as involving: (1) the active participation of all students in culturally and socially meaningful and contextually authentic science learning, and (2) critical analyses of issues related to justice and power in science, science education, and science education research. SEEDS envisions science teaching and learning and science education research as endeavors that lead to increasing awareness of social and political contexts, the dismantling of traditional, colonizing understandings and practices of science and science education, and promoting collective responsibility for creating a just and equitable society.

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2024 International Conference Call for Proposals

2024 Theme: *Disturbing Settled Expectations: Re-imagining Science Education through Multiplicity*

This year's conference theme aligns with SEEDS's objective to disrupt patriarchal, traditional, and elitist practices through inviting a plurality of approaches to research, pedagogy, and teacher education. We seek to bring to the fore a multiplicity of tactics to understand, confront, and undo power relations that have built and maintained hierarchies of knowledge, language, and personhood. Our 2024 conference invites proposals that seek to identify and disturb what has become settled in science/STEM education. How can we collectively unlearn the commonsense of science education and its colonial logics? How can we dismantle the hierarchies that our research, pedagogies, or community-based practices inadvertently maintain? In unsettling the field's expectations—and, crucially, recognizing many have never subscribed to prevailing norms and objectives—what spaces open up for doing science/STEM education otherwise?

In re-affirming last conference's call—*Refusing a Return to 'Normal'*—SEEDS extends a commitment to name, interrogate and challenge settled expectations in science education and related STEM/STEAM fields. The phrase *settled expectations*, drawing on decolonial and critical race theorists, demands scrutinizing the taken-for-granted forms of knowledge and practices that continue to reinscribe social and environmental injustices (Bang et al., [2012](#); Warren et al., [2020](#)). These expectations have persistently elevated some ways of knowing, being, or languaging as scientific by diminishing others as obstacles, barriers, or mere stepping stones toward rarely questioned norms. Whether in informal learning environments, schooling, or STEM-related fields, these expectations have often made inclusion *conditional* on conforming to naturalized binaries and standards. Disturbing those expectations is to interrupt and interfere with an assimilationist and exclusionary status quo. It is also to re-imagine science education through multiplicity.

Multiplicity speaks to the strength we gather from tensions—an interweaving of difference that invites dissensus and refuses homogenized ideals. In attempting to disentangle our work from tightly woven premises of settler colonialism, white supremacy, and human supremacy, we embrace tensions arising in efforts to transform pedagogies, policies, and paradigms. The call is an invitation to simultaneously hold open what constitutes justice and what requires transformation, while actively working to embody and enact commitments to transformative justice in a multiplicity of ways.

Prior SEEDS gatherings have nurtured deliberation around the colonial, racial capitalist, and ableist foundations of school science, as well as exploring what might constitute equity, Indigenous pedagogies, Black joy, or disability justice. SEEDS members have shared poetics and sparked dialogue on how to decenter monolingual norms, how to co-construct anti-racist curricula, how to recognize the depth of students' scientific and ethico-political insights, and how to enact pedagogies that are more justice-oriented, intersectional, gender-inclusive, or *corazón*-centered. We envision our 2024 conference as a space to extend these conversations by sharing tools and tactics to unthink, unlearn, reimagine, and repurpose received curricular approaches, research paradigms, and institutional arrangements.

The 2024 conference theme is an open call for proposals (see varying formats below) that reflexively explore efforts to disturb or creatively rearrange settled expectations via classroom practice, research, teacher education, or activism. In what ways did those expectations become settled? For whom? With what effects and through what affects? PreK–20 educators, community partners, teacher educators,

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policymakers, and scholars are each uniquely positioned to sustain or constrain a multiplicity of modes of being, feeling, knowing, expressing, and acting that human and more-than-human persons bring to science/STEM education, broadly construed. We welcome proposals exploring these realities through critical analysis and/or taking definitive action for living, doing, or being otherwise. We invite a plurality of perspectives on how to resist, refuse, and reopen closed prescriptions of ‘normal,’ ‘standard,’ or ‘scientific’—a violent push for sameness in the name of preserving healthy nations or ensuring future success (e.g., Anglonormativity, cis-heteronormativity, ableist normativities). What would it take to eschew damage-centered accounts (Tuck, 2009) or to recognize and reclaim desires long dismissed and devalued across science/STEM education?

Further, in keeping with SEEDS’ commitment to moving toward more equitable and just knowledge production and sharing practices, we highly value the submissions of K-12 teachers of science, whose contributions we recognize as often excluded or marginalized within the traditional knowledge hierarchy. Our commitments are to generative and affirmative partnerships and community collaborations in these critical conversations and transformative practices.

Finally, we encourage all SEEDS members not only to submit proposals but to bring their perspectives to bear by engaging in our collective review process oriented to nurturing multiplicity and providing generative feedback for all submissions.

References

- Bang, M., Warren, B., Rosebery, A. S., & Medin, D. (2012). Desettling expectations in science education. *Human Development*, 56(5–6), 302–318. [Full text freely available [here](#).]
- Tuck, E. (2009). Suspending damage: A letter to communities. *Harvard Educational Review*, 79(3), 409–427.
- Warren, B., Vossoughi, S., Rosebery, A. S., Bang, M., & Taylor, E. V. (2020). Multiple ways of knowing: Re-imagining disciplinary learning. In N. S. Nasir, C. D. Lee, R. Pea, & M. McKinney de Royston (Eds.), *Handbook of the Cultural Foundations of Learning* (pp. 277–293). Taylor & Francis. [Full text freely available [here](#).]

Session Formats and Proposal Development Guidelines

There are four **session formats**:

- Scholarship Incubator - A manuscript of work seeking feedback
- Town Hall - A community question posed to a panel representing diverse perspectives
- Wondering - An idea or work you are pondering
- Workshop - An interactive presentation of a concept, activity, or pedagogical strategy

Word count: Each proposal should aim to be succinct and clearly written, with a maximum word count of **750 words**, excluding references.

Please find below the detailed descriptions and requirements for each session format.

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SCHOLARSHIP INCUBATOR - A manuscript of work seeking feedback.

This format is designed to ignite and engage new ideas and scholarly endeavors that aim at alternative perspectives and activities to engage education and community stakeholders in socially just practices, ways of thinking, and theoretical frameworks in/for science education. The SEEDS conference team will group similarly themed papers. Each presenter will have an allotment of time to present their manuscript followed by a period of questions and discussion.

Proposal Development Requirements: Scholarship Incubator Block

Proposals should not exceed 750 words and must contain the following sections:

1. Subject/problem
2. Design or procedure
3. Analysis and findings
4. Relevance

Each section should address the questions listed below:

Subject/Problem

1. What is your study about? Why is it important?
2. What conceptual or theoretical framing guides your study?
3. How are you defining equity, diversity and/or social justice in terms of your literature base and/or experiences?

Design or Procedure

1. What is your methodology? Describe how your methodology aligns with your research question(s) or problem.
2. Describe your design, study context, data collection, and analysis.
3. When relevant, describe how your positionality as a researcher is evident in your work.

Analyses and Findings

1. What are your findings? (These may be arguments in the case of conceptual papers.)
2. How did you establish reliability, validity, or trustworthiness (as relevant to your methodology)?
3. How well are your findings supported given your methodological approach and/or reference to existing literature?

Relevance

1. How does your study support and/or expand understandings and/or practices around equity, diversity and/or social justice in science education?
2. What new knowledge does this work contribute to the field?

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TOWN HALL - A panel representing diverse perspectives responding to a community question.

The town hall discussions are collective spaces to share our visions and dreams for science education as tools for social transformation. For this session, up to three questions are posed for a panel to consider regarding policy, practice, or activism around a particular issue. You may include as many as 12 participants in a town hall panel. We suggest that panelists represent diverse perspectives on the issue including positionalities such as educators, researchers, community members, community organizers, parents, students, etc.

Proposal Development Requirements: Town Hall Block

Proposals should address the following in 750 words or less:

1. What topic are you proposing to discuss?
2. How is this topic situated in the peer-reviewed literature?
3. What specific questions would panelists address? (Maximum of three main questions)
4. Who will be your panelists and why did you select them? (*Please make sure all invited panelists are aware you have nominated them.*)
5. How do you plan to make this town hall *dialogic*: to not only highlight the panelists but also to elicit the expertise and maximize the participation of all SEEDS attendees: teachers, community leaders, students, professors, etc.?

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WONDERING - An idea or work you are pondering.

What are you wondering about related to equity, diversity, and/or social justice in science education? For this session, your proposal should describe a “wondering” or issue of interest as well as a “venture” or possible response to the wondering. This might involve a conceptual, methodological, or other kind of issue in science education you are puzzled about and wish to bring to the community. This is a good venue for pushing the boundaries of our own theoretical and methodological frameworks and exploring ways to get out of our comfort zones. This is also a great space for teachers to share ideas for addressing issues about which they have been wondering. The conference teams will group together presenters who share similar threads of wonderings and/or ventures in relation to the conference theme. All wondering sessions are led by a facilitator and adhere to a tightly structured format¹ as follows:

- *Statement*: 10 minutes for the presenter to describe the Wondering (without interruption),
- *Clarify*: 5 minutes for participants to ask clarifying questions of the presenter,
- *Incubate*: 15 minutes for participants to discuss the presenter’s Wondering and Venture (while the presenter listens in without speaking), and finally,
- *Rejoin*: 5 minutes for the presenter to respond, ask questions, or summarize what they’ve heard.

Proposal Development Requirements: Wondering Block

Proposals should address the following in 750 words or less:

1. What are you wondering about?
2. What is your venture (your suggested response to this wondering)?
3. What conceptual or theoretical approaches inform your thinking?
4. Why is your wondering important to equity, diversity and/or social justice in science education?

¹ This format is an adaptation of a protocol originally developed by the National School Reform Faculty in 1992. See https://www.nsrffharmony.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Tuning-N_0.pdf for more details.

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WORKSHOP - Concepts, activities and/or pedagogical strategies

The intention of the workshop format is to engage the audience/participants through interactive practice and/or immersion in an experience involving the use of new methods, strategies, and/or ideas for active social justice work in their own settings. Proposals should include an explanation of how the work challenges the status quo and creates expanded spaces for equity, diversity, and/or social justice in science education.

Possible formats:

- *Activism Workshop*: Engages participants in practices and/or strategies for conducting activist work in educational contexts, including formal or informal learning contexts (e.g., critical participatory action research, environmental justice projects)
- *Research/Practice Workshop*: Engages participants in discussions and activities about how to apply frameworks, practices, and conceptual/methodological ideas in participants' local contexts (e.g., research writing, critical race theory, culturally sustaining pedagogy, cultural historical activity theory)
- *Performance*: Artistic expressions that provoke audiences to engage affectively with ideas, practices, etc. at the intersection of science education, equity, diversity and/or social justice (e.g., spoken word, dramatic performance, exhibit, video/multimedia)

Proposal Development Requirements: Workshop Block

Proposals should address the following in 750 words or less:

1. *Learning Goals*
 - What will you do in your workshop?
 - What will participants learn and/or experience?
2. *Design*
 - How will you engage participants? Please be specific.
 - Provide an agenda for your workshop with time allocated to various activities.
(Note: workshops are typically allotted 75 minutes during the conference)
3. *Audience*
 - Who should attend and why?
 - How will this workshop further define or address issues of equity, diversity and/or social justice in science education?

Proposal Submission Process

Document Preparation and Formatting

All submissions must adhere to the following:

1. APA style, 12 point, Times New Roman font, double spaced, numbered pages, with one inch margins. See APA Guidelines here: <https://apastyle.apa.org/>
2. Each proposal should contain:
 - a. Title
 - b. Proposal Body (maximum 750 words, references excluded): See individual format requirements above.
 - c. References (excluded from word count)
3. Prepare two PDF versions of your proposal: one blinded, and the other not blinded (including author identification).
4. When naming your proposal PDF files, please include the first few words of your session title, the session format, and blinded/not blinded. (For example, “Negotiating Social Justice Teaching_Scholarship Incubator_Blinded” for a Scholarship Incubator proposal with the session title of “Negotiating Social Justice Science Teaching Philosophies” and the file without identifying author information).
5. Prepare a separate abstract (summary) of your proposal (maximum: 120 words). You will be asked to paste this abstract directly into a field in the online submission portal.

Review Process

Submissions will be reviewed according to the following key components:

- Addresses overall conference theme, *explicitly* addressing equity, social justice, and/or diversity (25%)
- Well written, clear, well-supported (25%)
- Adheres to the guidelines for the specific session type (25%)
- Pushes boundaries in the field (25%)

See proposal reviewer rubric for more details: [Proposal Review Criteria](#)

Submission Deadline (extended): 11:59 PM (your local time zone) on **July 7, 2023**

Submission Portal: [Submit your proposals here](#)

If you have any questions about your submission, please send an email with the subject line “2024 Conference” to seedswebspace@gmail.com (kindly allowing 2–3 days for replies).

Volunteering to Review

Following the submission window, stay tuned for a SEEDS email inviting reviewers for conference proposals, plus further opportunities to participate in the SEEDS community.