



March 7–10, 2016  
Austin, Texas

### **SXSWedu® Releases Initial Programming for 2016 Event**

*Opening keynote, featured sessions, film screenings, Policy Forum, concurrent programming and professional development announced*

**Oct. 21, 2015, AUSTIN, Texas** – SXSWedu® revealed the first selection of programming for the 2016 Conference & Festival including a diverse lineup of voices, sessions, workshops, films and more.

This year's crowd-sourced PanelPicker® process saw unprecedented levels of community engagement with more than 1,300 ideas entered from the SXSWedu community around the world. Not only did public input result in record PanelPicker participation in applications and votes, but community feedback also helped shape the new selection of thematic tracks for this year's event. New areas of focus for 2016 include such topics as Learning Spaces, Arts, and a renewed focus on reaching and teaching students with special needs.

The 2016 opening keynote epitomizes the theme of inclusion in the education landscape for all learners through the celebration of Temple Grandin's work. Grandin, Professor of Livestock Behavior & Welfare at Colorado State University, is one of the most accomplished and well-known adults with autism in the world. Through her work on cattle handling and autism, Grandin serves as a powerful advocate for the diversity of minds and ways of thinking, as well as an inspiration to many educators.

"We're honored to have Temple Grandin join us," said Ron Reed, SXSWedu Executive Producer. "Her powerful work underscores the importance of reaching all learners, which has been a high priority for SXSWedu since our launch. As the SXSWedu community grows, we look to celebrate and welcome all perspectives into the conversations and collaborations happening at the event."

With more than 190 sessions selected in a variety of formats ranging from panels to summit programming, attendees can look forward to a rich and engaging event with more interactive learning opportunities and outcome-based approaches. Announced featured sessions further explore a variety of thematic issues including educational equality, social emotional learning and entrepreneurialism. Initially announced speakers include Connie Yowell (Collective Shift), Max Ventilla (AltSchool), David Coleman (The College Board), Bernadette Gray-Little (University of Kansas), Damon Williams (Boys & Girls Clubs of America) and Joseph Erardi (Newtown School District). More sessions and speakers will be announced as the event approaches.

The SXSWedu Film program is back with an initial line-up highlighting documentary and narrative features on educational issues, including "The Hunting Ground," "CODE: Debugging the Gender Gap," and "Tested." The SXSWedu Policy Forum, exploring critical topics in the policy arena impacting public and higher education, will return in an expanded programming format with preliminary sessions focusing on assessment, implementation and leadership.

In addition to dynamic programming, learning experiences and networking opportunities, for the first time educators will be able to earn continuing professional education credits when they attend SXSWedu through a partnership with the Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE). More information regarding accreditation will be available prior to the March event.

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For a full listing of announced programming and more information on ways to participate at SXSWedu 2016, please visit <http://sxswedu.com>.

### **About SXSWedu**

The SXSWedu Conference & Festival fosters innovation in learning by hosting a diverse and energetic community of stakeholders across a variety of backgrounds in education. The four-day event affords registrants open access to engaging sessions, interactive workshops, hands-on learning experiences, film screenings, early-stage startups and a host of networking opportunities. By providing a platform for collaboration, SXSWedu works to promote creativity and social change.

SXSWedu is a component of the South by Southwest® family of conferences and festivals that includes SXSW® Music, Film and Interactive; SXSW Eco® and SXSW V2V®. Internationally recognized as the convergence gathering for the creative arts, SXSWedu extends SXSW's support for the art of engagement beyond musicians, filmmakers and new media innovators to include society's true rock stars: educators.

Join the passionate and innovative community at SXSWedu, March 7-10, 2016 in Austin, Texas. For more information, please visit <http://sxswedu.com>.

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**Press Credentials:** If you are a member of the press and interested in attending, media accreditation for SXSWedu 2016 is now open. Please visit <http://sxswedu.com/press> for more information. 512-467-7979

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