



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**SXSW EDU® ANNOUNCES LAUNCH COMPETITION FINALISTS AND FINAL FEATURED SESSION FOR THE 2021 ONLINE EVENT**

**More than 70 sessions available for continuing professional education credits**

**February 24, 2021, AUSTIN, Texas** - In the lead up to the 2021 online event, [SXSW EDU](#) is releasing the list of the five [Launch](#) startup competition finalists, as well as the details for this year's final Featured session, "Educator Leadership for Equity & Justice," a conversation between **Carlos Moreno**, co-executive director of Big Picture Learning and **Elisa Villanueva Beard**, chief executive officer of Teach for America. The online event will be held Tuesday, March 9 through Thursday, March 11, 2021 at [online.sxswedu.com](http://online.sxswedu.com).

Now in its tenth year, Launch is a competition for early-stage startups to pitch leaders across the business, investment and learning sectors, and gain feedback and knowledge about how to take their company to the next stage of growth. Launch celebrates emerging innovations in learning. This year's startups are selected from across the nation and address education needs from tutoring and storytelling, to instruction and STEM. Each company will have the opportunity to pitch a select group of judges at the upcoming online event. This year's competition will be hosted by **Tony Wan**, co-founder and managing editor of EdSurge and judged by **Andrew Grauer**, co-founder and CEO of Course Hero; **Nasir Qadree**, founding managing partner of Zeal Capital Partners; and **Shanna Peeples**, author, high school English teacher, and 2015 National Teacher of the Year. Coaches for this year's competition include **Susan Badger**, education consultant, strategic advisor, and board member, and **Matthew Cohen**, founder and managing director of Cohen Strategy Group, LLC. The Competition is presented by Walton Family Foundation.

This year's top five finalists are:

[Composer](#) // New Orleans, LA

[Everydae](#) // Los Angeles, CA

[FabuLingua](#) // Austin, TX

[Inspirit](#) // Atlanta, GA

[PolyUp](#) // Saratoga, CA

“We are thrilled to present another cohort of innovators in education at the tenth Launch competition. These companies are not only pushing the field forward and making a significant impact, but they are doing so at a time when creative approaches are needed more than ever,” said **Greg Rosenbaum**, Head of SXSW EDU.

Completing the robust featured program at SXSW EDU Online is a session with **Carlos Moreno**, co-executive director of Big Picture Learning and **Elisa Villanueva Beard**, chief executive officer of Teach for America. They plan to explore the topic of “Educator Leadership for Equity & Justice.” During the session, Moreno and Beard will discuss how education practitioners and administrators can meet the variety of talents that a diverse student body has to offer with equity, and how do we instill that equity in the mission of current and future education leaders.

As is core to SXSW EDU, the conference has worked with the **Association of Texas Professional Educators** for several years to provide conference attendees with continuing professional education (CPE) credits. This year, over 70 sessions at SXSW EDU Online are accredited. To view the accredited sessions, please visit this [page](#).

For more information on SXSW EDU Online, please visit the [SXSW EDU website](#).

**Press Credentials:**

To register, please go to [sxswedu.com/press](https://sxswedu.com/press).

**About SXSW EDU:**

The SXSW EDU® Conference & Festival cultivates and empowers a community of engaged stakeholders to advance teaching and learning. The annual event affords registrants open access to engaging sessions, immersive workshops, interactive learning experiences, film screenings, early-stage startups, business opportunities, and networking. SXSW EDU is a component of the South by Southwest® family of conferences and festivals that has grown from 800 to over 8,000 registrants in the last decade. Join the passionate and innovative community at SXSW EDU Online, March 9-11, 2021. For more information, please visit [sxswedu.com](https://sxswedu.com).

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