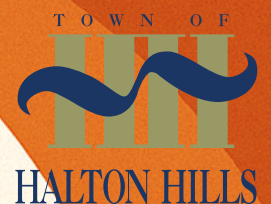


# CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

## Small Town, Big Ideas

Intersectional Paths to Equity in  
Urban and Rural Communities







Equity work is often shaped by place. The lived realities of people in small towns, suburban regions, and major urban centres differ in profound ways, from access to resources and services, to social networks, mobility, safety, and visibility. Yet across these varied landscapes, individuals and communities continue to navigate overlapping identities, systemic barriers, and evolving conversations about belonging.

This year's theme, Small Town, Big Ideas, explores how intersectionality can guide transformative equity efforts across diverse geographies. We are seeking presentations that illuminate how race, gender identity, disability, class, sexuality, language, and culture interact with place-based factors to shape experiences in both rural and urban communities.

We invite submissions that examine questions such as:

- How do marginalized communities build belonging in smaller or more isolated towns?
- What unique innovations or community-led practices have emerged outside major cities?
- How do equity challenges shift or intensify across urban/rural divides?
- What can large cities learn from small communities, and vice versa?
- How does intersectionality help us better understand these differences in context, power, and access?

Presenters are encouraged to think expansively and creatively, bridging research, storytelling, arts-based methods, community experience, and sector-specific insights. The goal is to cultivate a shared understanding of how equity work can be tailored, scaled, and sustained across all types of communities.

This theme is an invitation to push beyond traditional boundaries and showcase ideas that spark conversation, model courage, and illuminate new paths forward for inclusive and vibrant places, big or small.



## Presentation Formats

We encourage imaginative and engaging approaches. Examples include:

- TED-style talk
- Film screening and facilitated discussion
- Experiential workshop or interactive session
- Lecture or research presentation
- Forum or panel-style conversation
- Creative or arts-based workshop

**Presenters selected for the program will receive an honorarium of \$250.00**

## Abstract Submission Requirements

Please review all instructions carefully. Incomplete or incorrect submissions will not be considered.

### Submission Process:

1. All abstracts must be submitted online. The submission portal will close on **February 4, 2026 at 11:59 PM ET**. This deadline will not be extended.
2. Content Guidelines: Abstracts must not promote, endorse, or advertise any specific product or service.
3. Title Requirements: Proposed titles must be clear, concise, and accurately reflect the content of the presentation.
4. Co-Presenters: Co-presenters are welcome. Please ensure all presenter names and roles are included in your submission.

### Selection Criteria

Abstracts will be reviewed for:

- Relevance to the theme Small Town, Big Ideas
- Clarity and coherence of purpose
- Contribution to equity, anti-racism, accessibility, decolonization, or intersectional community building
- Creativity and quality of engagement strategies
- Suitability for a diverse and multidisciplinary audience

### Notification Timeline

All submitters will be notified of the status of their abstract by the end of March 2026. Please note that HEDR may request revisions to abstracts prior to final acceptance.

### Questions?

For inquiries about the submission process or event details, please contact [events@hedroundtable.com](mailto:events@hedroundtable.com).