Call for Proposals
Umoja Conference XIX| November 2 - 4, 2023

The Umoja XIX Conference is currently accepting proposals for indaba (workshop) sessions that further Umoja's mission of enhancing the cultural and educational experiences of African American students and others. We seek proposals that motivate, inspire, provide insight and resources for students to deepen their development individually, academically, and professionally.

Proposal submissions may only be submitted via the online submission form.
INDABA PROPOSAL SUBMISSION LINK

Background
Become an integral part of the Umoja XVIII Conference. The success of this Umoja Community Education Foundation annual event relies on you and organizations such as yours to provide the platform for insightful and empowering discussions and collaboration between students, counselors, educators, and community members. We welcome proposals from Umoja Scholars, Coordinators, Faculty, and Community members at large.

Umoja serves:
   •   As a leader in providing equity-focused training for students, faculty, and staff across California and beyond.
   •   As a program for under-resourced students to achieve their dreams of higher education attainment.
   •   As a partner with other institutions to provide a defined academic pathway for students to transfer from community college to four-year institutions.
   •   As an avenue for discovery and exploration of African American cultural manifestations in higher education.

Conference Details
Date: November 2-4, 2023
Location: Hyatt Regency San Francisco Airport
Expected Conference Attendees: 800+

Conference Goals:

- *Community Building/ Communal Intelligence:* In Umoja, we are unified by our intelligence, and we seek opportunities to fellowship through scholarship, leadership, critical dialogue, reflection, and action. At the conference, we will cultivate and harvest the intellectual, social, and cultural capital within our Umoja Community as students, practitioners, and community members lead critical conversations and indabas (workshops).

- *Acceleration:* The African proverb reads that "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." In Umoja, we are seeking new ideas and methods that will allow us to go farther and faster, *together*. At the conference, we will examine ways to positively impact student success in their college and dream careers.

- *Intentional and Deliberate:* "In Umoja we deeply value intentional and deliberate purposefulness." The theme of this year's conference encourages us to take an active role in constructing our future. Every

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aspect of our conference, including discussions around student activism, career pathways, data storytelling, and identity, intentionally connects to our theme as we take a deliberate hand in crafting our future.

- ***Tapping African American Intellectual, Spiritual and Artistic Voices:*** In Umoja, we practice the fine art of reaching back to retrieve ideas and foundations gifted by diverse thinkers, leaders, and artists of the African diaspora, and fusing them with new ideas that will grow our foundations and move us forward. We know this fine art as *Sankofa*, and we'll refer to it as we map out our future.

Session types:
The presenter can determine the presentation format; however, we encourage you to choose a presentation that engages and educates the participants. As you create your session content, consider the 8 Effective Practices for Creating Engaging and Inclusive Workshops/Indabas.   We are accepting proposals in the following format:

INDABA (WORKSHOP) PROPOSAL SUBMISSIONS
The purpose of the proposal submission process is to identify presenters with interest, passion, and expertise on a selected topic. Sessions that focus on organizing, connecting, motivating, or guiding students in professional, cultural, academic, or personal development are highly encouraged!

All are welcome to submit a proposal for an Indaba Session

For your submission you will select one of the following formats.

- **90-minutes interactive indaba**. Bring on the evidence-based findings and the transformational programming ideas! The 90 minutes interactive workshop should be layered with engagement and information, and the content should have key takeaways that participants can apply to their own context and setting.
- **60-minutes Critical Idea Talks.** Critically examine and deliberate on pathways to emancipatory education. Share your findings in a brief yet powerful and creative presentation that inspires and transforms.

UMOJA STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP SUBMISSIONS
It is important for our Umoja Scholars to develop their academic, civic, and leadership competencies to support their lifetime goals and outcomes. The Umoja community recognizes the importance of identifying, supporting, and uplifting scholarly activities shared by Umoja scholars. Umoja Scholars are invited to present their academic, professional, or community-based work to accelerate their skills and confidence as an Umoja Practitioner. Umoja Students that plan to present their scholarship should identify a mentor or Jegna to support them as they prepare for their presentation or facilitation.

Umoja Student Scholarship Submissions are limited to current and alum Umoja Scholars.

For your submission you will select one of the following formats.

- **30-minutes Share outs.** The 30-minute engaging talks should inform and provide reflections on your academic, professional, or community-based participation and how it has/will impact your goals.

- **Community Poster Session.** Do you have an idea or research topic you want to present to the community for feedback or exploration? Share your voice in a brief yet powerful and creative poster presentation that inspires and transforms.

Fee: There will be no honorarium or reimbursement for the presentation. The selected presenters will receive a discounted registration rate. All presenters must register for the conference. We encourage you to register now.

Important Dates

Call for Proposal	Monday, May 1, 2023
Proposal Submission Deadline	Friday, September 29, 2023
Notification of Status	Friday, October 6, 2023
Presenter Acceptance and Email Confirmation	Friday, October 13, 2023
Presenter Training Opportunities	Wednesday, October 18, 2023 Friday, October 20, 2023
Final Presentation Document Submission Deadline	Monday, October 27, 2023

Questions: For questions regarding the proposal submission process, please contact info@umojacommunity.org

Proposal Submission Details

Indaba Proposal Submissions

The purpose of the proposal submission process is to identify presenters with interest, passion, and expertise on a selected topic. Sessions that focus on student professional development, effective practices that uplift cultural pedagogy responsive to the legacy of the African diasporas, increasing access and transferring to 4-year institutions, exploration of career and technical careers, and sharing the impact of the Umoja program and community are encouraged.

All proposals will be evaluated by our program committee based on content, level of engagement, and relevancy to one of the workshop strands below. Proposal submissions will only be accepted by submitting through this link. **PROPOSAL SUBMISSION LINK**

You will need the following information to submit a proposal:

1. Lead presenter name
2. Lead presenter biographical information that briefly highlights their expertise.
   a. For Student Scholars biographical information that highlight academic and career successes and aspirations.
3. *(For Student Scholars Track provide mentor/Jegna Information)* Co-present(s) name
4. *(For Student Scholars Track provide mentor/Jegna Information)* Co- presenter biographical information that briefly highlights their expertise.
5. Company/college affiliation
6. Contact information (email and telephone)
7. Indaba Strands (must align with one of the indaba strands)
8. Select your Session type (90-minute workshop; 60- minute critical talk; 30 minute Share out; Community Poster Session)
9. Presentation Title (should excite and inspire the audience in under 15 words)
10. Session Description: (max 200 words) that includes a short statement on how your session is aligned to the Umoja Practices   Read the Umoja Practices
11. List 2 key learning objectives: What will the audience learn? How will they be transformed?
12. Summarize the qualitative and/or quantitative data that informs and supports your presentation?

SESSION STRANDS

Indabas, in traditional African culture, are gatherings to discuss issues that affect us all. Indabas are where everyone is invited to the table and has a voice. It is where the experiences and stories told encourage us to share and act when we walk away from the gathering and back to our communities. **All proposals should uplift the Umoja mission and vision by being aligned with one of the three Indaba Strands for this year's conference:**

Student Leadership, Development, and Activism

The Umoja Community integrates leadership training and opportunities for our students. Programs across the state support student leadership groups. The student leaders of the Umoja Community consistently enact a broad range of initiatives and activities on their campuses to build community and foster student success. These indabas will focus on how student leaders are developing themselves and the activities and strategies they are using to make an impact on their campuses and in their communities.

Indabas examples include:
- Uplifting student voices to inform campus, community, state, national, and global decision making
- Student-led campus projects and initiatives that support and strengthen the community

- Student research proposals that look critically at the complex intersections of gender, race, and culture and its impact on Black student success.
- Leadership experiences that support spaces for students to grow, learn, and build community

Umoja Student Scholarship examples include:
- Getting into leadership positions on campus
- Participating in community-based initiatives
- Recommending a strategy or resolution for an identified campus or community concern.

Critical Conversations: Gender, Race, and Identity as Routes and/or Roadblocks to Achievement

African American/Black students often endure challenges because of being seen only through a stereotypical lens of their multiple identities of race, gender, and culture. Umoja strives to shatter the misconceptions of Black student scholarship by utilizing cultural imperatives that highlight excellence through African centered practices. This grounding provides a cultural safety net that allows students to flourish. Critical conversation workshops should highlight the ways in which one's multi-faceted identity may be different yet can be reimagined and internalized as a catapult for student success. Critical conversation workshops may also raise policy, classroom and environmental strategies that must be addressed to advance, sustain, and uplift academic engagement and achievement.

Indabas examples include:
- Strategies that helped campus leaders respond to opportunities and challenges due to the global pandemic
- Programs, services, and strategies that assist students with basic needs to keep them in school or help them return to school
- Programs that address the needs of student populations within the Umoja Community, for example former foster students and formerly incarcerated students

Umoja Student Scholarship examples include:
- Proposing research around race, gender, and identity
- Interpreting and summarizing work (book, video, movies, music) informing your view of race, gender, and identity

Career Pathways, Academic Transfer, and Life Success

Umoja programming is holistic and aims to prepare students for success in life regardless of major or academic goal. Today's workforce is global, dependent upon technology and is innovating at a speed that surpasses most of our educational systems. In these sessions, presenters will engage participants in the connection between academic majors and career preparation and will explore the many variations of success. Innovators, visionaries, and community leaders, as well as career technical and workforce development practitioners, are invited to apply to this strand to help Umoja Community and Umoja students prepare for tomorrow.

Indabas examples include:
- Academic programs for K-12 students and recent high school graduates, such as dual or concurrent enrollment efforts, middle/early college programs, career and college planning initiatives, bridge programs, etc.
- Intersegmental partnerships with baccalaureate-level institutions, including the California State University (CSU), University of California (UC) systems, and/or Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) that have a shared responsibility for increasing transfer and providing support for transferred Umoja students

- Career Tech Education (CTE) programs and initiatives that connect students to employers as well as career exploration and experiential learning opportunities for workforce development and academic pathways to certificates, degrees, and/or transfer
- Partnerships with community organizations aligned to Umoja's mission and vision
- Integrated planning efforts that connect Umoja's work to the Vision for Success and other statewide and/or campus initiatives

Umoja Student Scholarship examples include:
- Navigating university life as a transfer
- Integrating Umoja practices into your academic, career, and life activities
- Sharing of internship/career/entrepreneurial experiences
- Sharing information about your academic experience in a CTE program

Proposal will only be accepted via this link: PROPOSAL SUBMISSION LINK

Proposal Evaluation Criteria

The following criteria are used by the Umoja Conference Curriculum Committee to evaluate proposals for each Indaba track. Successful proposals strive for demonstrated excellence under all the criteria. During the review of proposals, committee members will score proposals on a 1-10 ranking in each of these 5 categories. Proposals are graded with both a total score and a score for each section. Committee members can also share comments/questions on the proposals. These scores greatly influence but are not used exclusively to make decisions on proposals.

Evaluation Criteria

1. **Umoja as a Power Base: Umoja Alignment**
   Proposal demonstrates a connection to the mission, core values, and practices of Umoja. Alignment is intentional and clearly stated. *Examples of ways to connect include demonstrating, exploring, remembering, advancing, critiquing, etc.*

2. **Intentional and Deliberate: Learning Outcomes**
   Proposal has clearly defined learning outcomes that can be understood by non-experts. The way objectives are stated makes them easily measurable. Objectives can reasonably be achieved within the available timeline. *Write your outcomes by answering the question: "What will participants be able to do once they attend the session?"*

3. **Community Building Communal Intelligence: Best and Promising Practices and Strategies**
   The proposal highlights best and promising practices, innovative techniques and/or effective methods for promoting engaged student learning in higher education settings. Rationale for the proposal is clearly explained and aligns with the learning outcomes. *Provide your rationale by answering the question: What could be the impact of implement the practices and strategies?*

4. **Live - Learning: Participant Engagement**
   The proposed method for engaging audience participants is thoughtful, intentional, and appropriate for the session type. The proposed presentation includes approaches and strategies that can be implemented across disciplines, institutions, and/or communities. *Examples of ways to engage in live learning include discussions, small group activities, role playing, games, demonstrations, practice activities, reflections, etc.*

5. **Language as Power: Written Clarity of Proposal**
   The proposal abstract (which will be included in the conference program) is well written. The clarity of the proposal is an indicator of presentation quality. *It is recommended that you write out and review your submission elements before submitting on the website.*

8 Effective Practices
For Creating Engaging and Inclusive Workshops/Indabas
Umoja Community Education Foundation

The Umoja Community continuously seeks to elevate the voices, experiences, and perspectives of marginalized communities in thought as well as practice. Informed by this charge, our aim is to offset traditional modes of education by infusing the Umoja Practices of Live-Learning and Community-Building Communal Intelligence to create relevant educational experiences for students, staff, faculty, administration & the community (Freire, 1970; Karenga, 2010).

What Does This Have to Do with Umoja Conference XVIII?
By choosing to participate in the Umoja Conference as a workshop presenter, YOU will also be charged with the task of creating an engaging, inclusive, and live-learning atmosphere for participants. We understand that the word "engaging" can be interpreted in a myriad of ways, so we would like to share 8 Effective Practices for Creating Engaging and Inclusive Workshops/Indabas.

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1. Engage The 5 Senses
In Umoja, a workshop/Indaba begins from the moment that participants walk into the room. Sight, sound, scent, taste, and touch can be incorporated in meaningful ways to set the stage for participants. In practice, this might include, for example (1) bringing an African-Centered altar, (2) placing diverse posters/pictures, (3) playing meaningful music, (4) altering room set-up for a more inclusive atmosphere.

2. Utilize Various Teaching Tools for Different Learning Styles
Participants have different learning styles. Some are visual, while others are auditory and/or kinesthetic. Make sure to incorporate at least 2 if not all 3 into your workshop/Indaba. In practice this could look like (1) providing hand-outs in addition to showing PowerPoint presentations, (2) taking time to let participants practice skills on their own, (3) having participants draw pictures or write answers in addition to speech, (4) encouraging participants to "do" by writing on the board/poster or engaging with others.

3. Ask Open Ended Questions
Avoid questions that require a single word answer (yes/no) or are leading. It is important to ask open ended questions so that participants can engage in their own way! For example, instead of "What do you like/dislike about your campus?" you might ask, "Tell me about your campus experience?"

LIVE LEARNING

Live learning is risky; it is freewheeling and open. The instructor yields control of meaning and understanding in the classroom while keeping a keen eye on learning as it is emerging. Live learning implies that the learning experience is generative and performative. In a live learning situation, the exact content and learning experience are not known before the class session begins. Surprise and original language burst out all over the classroom; the instructor facilitates and culls the learning that is happening. This is a way of having an open discussion that really flies, while capturing and focusing the insight, so the discussion does not disappear after the students leave the class session. It is democratic and analytically rigorous at the same time. Live learning demonstrates to the students through their own words that language is powerful, ideas and texts are rich and can be made their own. Most importantly live learning demonstrates to the students that they are smart, deep.

4. Ask Probing Questions

In addition to asking open ended questions, probing questions are essential to privileging participant expression. One cannot assume that they know the participants' definition or intent based on participants' statements alone. Instead ask probing questions like, "Tell me more about….," "What I heard you say was….," "What do you mean when you say….," "How does that impact you?".

5. Encourage Movement & Reflection

Experiences should encourage performance by all. Movement works wonders! Have participants stand, walk, act-out what's been said and discussed. Activity keeps the creative juices flowing!

6. Foster Small Group Discussion

In Umoja the student-teacher relationship is reciprocal. An instructor one moment becomes a student the next. In this way, all participants can be seen as "experts," in their own right and can learn from each other. In addition, fostering small-group discussion creates an atmosphere where more participant voices are heard, and meaningful connections made.

7. Take Space & More Importantly Make Space

Meant to be more of a ground-rule than an effective practice; *Take Space & Make Space* helps participants remain accountable for their presence in the room. The amount of space that a person "takes," through speech, volunteerism or action, then becomes the same amount of space that the person must "create" for someone who hasn't had the chance to speak, volunteer or act. This way, we get to hear all voices, not just those of the most visible, privileged, or assertive.

COMMUNITY BUILDING – BUILDING COMMUNAL INTELLIGENCE

Community is absolutely fundamental to an Umoja learning experience, for the students, the faculty, and the staff. Umoja practitioners intentionally call out and support students' talents in an effort to build community and self-esteem. By tapping the intellectual and social capital represented by our students, we build community and greatly enhance the meaning of our classrooms/offices. Beyond helping keep our students in school, building community causes students to be accountable to each other's' learning. Communal intelligence implies that we teach a willingness to see your own suffering and that of your sisters and brothers and taking responsibility for it. Community transcends our courses and services and reaches into the "I am, because you are."

8. Use Diverse and Inclusive Language and Examples

Finally, being a welcoming and inclusive community means consciously working to find ways to name, honor, and value experiences and identities that are usually minimized or devalued. It means uncovering our unconscious assumptions about what's "normal", who is present in our community, and opening ourselves to the possibility of greater diversity. Increasing the inclusiveness of our language means striving to understand the ways that language often unconsciously makes assumptions about people and unintentionally reinforces dominant norms around gender, sexual orientation, race, class, ability/disability, age, and other identities and experiences," (uua.org, 2019). Please see the following link for examples on how to use more inclusive language: https://www.uua.org/lgbtq/welcoming/ways/200008.shtml