

**Call for Proposals**  
**Disability, Theatre, and Performance (DTaP)**  
**2026 Association for Theatre in Higher Education Conference**  
**Baltimore, Maryland, July 22-26, 2026**

**DTaP Deadline: November 30, 2025**

**ATHE Deadline: Portal closes on December 12, 2025 at midnight Eastern Time**

The Disability, Theatre and Performance (DTaP) focus group of the Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE) invites paper and session proposals for ATHE's 2026 annual meeting in Baltimore. Proposals will be welcomed in many formats—e.g. individual papers, scholarly panels, seminars, roundtables, performance-based presentations, working groups, and other innovative, alternative-session structures—as well as on all theatre- and performance-related topics, particularly those that address the 2026 ATHE conference theme of “**Activating Imagination in/and Community**” ([Read full conference theme here.](#))

DTaP aims to provide a vital space that prioritizes the scholarship, lived experiences, and bodyminds of disabled, mad, crip, chronically ill, and neurodiverse people engaging in the theory, scholarship, teaching, and practice of theatre and the performing arts. As we reflect on the call to think deeply and courageously about the role of theatre and performance in shaping our shared presents and collective futures, with attention to imagination and community, we invite you to consider these questions as a starting point for proposals:

- **Whose community are we activating?** Looking to Mia Mingus's notion of access and forced intimacies and Ellen Samuels' *Fantasies of Identification*, among others, what are the costs and barriers to accessing and being legible within a community, and how can harmful barriers and gatekeeping be dismantled to foster equity and inclusion?
- **How can we understand imagination not as escapism but as an embodied, political, and collective practice?** How do artistic communities such as Sins Invalid and Krip Hop Nation exemplify imagination as method and movement? How can imagination serve as an act of survival, resistance, and collective creation?
- **Whose imaginations have been historically excluded?** How does crip futurism enable envisioning futures without paternalism or curative narratives? In what ways do

communities rooted in disability justice, Black and Brown liberation, queer futures, mad studies, and artistic practice dream and act those dreams into being?

- **How might care be an imaginative act?** How are models such as Rayna Rapp, Faye Ginsburg's kinship imaginaries, and Arseli Documaci's activist affordances activating ideas of crip community? What is the visible and hidden labor of community building?
- **How do non-normative bodyminds disrupt traditional hierarchies?** How do they hold space for multiple truths and conflicting needs?
- **What can today's theatre practitioners and activists learn from disabled communities' solidarity and shared purpose in response to crises?** How can performance activate imagination and community in meaningful, transformative ways?
- **How do we consider interrelations of marginality more broadly to include distinctions like illness vs. disability, acquired vs. congenital?**
- **What is the visible and invisible labor necessary to sustain community, in sites both in person and online, and how do we stay accountable to navigate harm?** How can we support and strengthen local crip theatres and arts communities, particularly in Baltimore?

**Please submit proposals by November 30, 2025 to [dtap.submissions@gmail.com](mailto:dtap.submissions@gmail.com) with your session/presentation title in the subject line.**

Proposals should include:

1. The names, email addresses, institutional affiliations (if applicable), and presentation titles (if applicable) of each presenter, facilitator, and/or moderator.
2. An abstract describing the purpose, format (paper, panel, roundtable, working group, workshop, performance, something else?), and intended audience for your presentation. Abstracts may be submitted in written or audio format (200-300 words or 2-3 minutes).
3. Estimated length of the activity/presentation. Note: conference sessions at ATHE are 90 minutes long; in order to make the most of opportunities for scholars within this timeframe, the maximum permitted time allotted per presenter will be 20 minutes.
4. Any A/V equipment requests or accessibility needs.

Notes on the submission and selection process:

DTaP has set an early deadline to allow time to curate panels and coordinate potential co-sponsored sessions with other ATHE focus groups. The conference planners will curate panels from individual proposals and coordinate with other ATHE focus groups to submit proposals for co-sponsored sessions when relevant. The conference submission platform closes on Dec. 12, 2025. You will be notified of acceptance by the end of the week of February 23, 2026. Beginning on March 9, ATHE will have a second round of submissions for accepted sessions seeking additional participants.

**Questions? Contact DTap Conference Planners Gabrielle Sinclair Compton and Dave Osmundsen at [dtap.submissions@gmail.com](mailto:dtap.submissions@gmail.com).**

**Links to Additional information:**

[FAQs for folks new to ATHE](#)

[Conference Dates and Deadlines Overview](#)

[ATHE Submission and Selection Process FAQs](#)

[ATHE submission form required fields full description](#)