



## SXSW AND SXSW EDU 2026 TO TRANSFORM DOWNTOWN AUSTIN INTO THE ULTIMATE EXPERIENTIAL VILLAGE FOR GLOBAL CREATIVES

### *Music Festival Adds A Full Day, PanelPicker Opens, Key Art Collaboration Shared*

**Austin, Texas, Tuesday, June 24, 2025** – Today, South by Southwest® (SXSW®) unveiled its new 2026 vision: bringing music, film & TV, and innovation programming together for seven concurrent days in downtown Austin, while honoring four decades of creative discovery and connection that has defined the event.

March 12-18, 2026, SXSW will run all programming simultaneously for the first time, creating deeper opportunities for the creative exchange between industries that has been SXSW's signature since 1987. The Music Festival expands to seven nights, and SXSW Interactive becomes SXSW Innovation, a change that reflects the broader scope of industries that now call SXSW home. SXSW EDU will run March 9-12, with March 12 as a full crossover day between the events.

The transformation comes as downtown Austin itself evolves, with the Austin Convention Center undergoing major redevelopment. SXSW 2026 will expand throughout the city center, creating themed neighborhoods that give each creative community a dedicated space while expanding the spontaneous encounters that have launched careers and sparked creative and business collaborations each year.

“The next four years present an incredible opportunity for SXSW,” said Jenny Connelly, Director in Charge of SXSW. “With the Austin Convention Center under construction, we’ve embraced the chance to reimagine the event and explore new, exciting possibilities. Our creative community is eager for impactful, immersive experiences, and we’re thrilled to bring them to life across Austin this March.”

"SXSW is a meeting place for creatives, and serves as a point of inspiration and meaningful insights that will define how we work, play, and connect," said Peter Lewis, Chief of Partnerships and Strategy. "We are excited about curating even more touchpoints and pathways for impactful collaboration amongst our partners and the extraordinary SXSW audiences." Applications are now open for PanelPicker® conference proposals, Music Festival

showcasing artists, SXSW Pitch, and SXSW Innovation Awards. Film & TV Festival submissions will open in July.

“SXSW showcases the biggest ideas set to impact the next wave of creativity and innovation across technology, design, film, TV, music, education, and business,” said Greg Rosenbaum, VP of programming for SXSW and co-founder of SXSW EDU. “The voice of the community remains the beating heart of SXSW and the launch of our applications is an open call to participate in our programming process.”

The reimaged SXSW 2026 creates badge-specific neighborhoods throughout downtown Austin, supporting focused engagement and exploration:

- Music Festival & Conference badges access showcases and music industry programming.
- Film & TV Festival & Conference badges unlock screening venues and industry sessions.
- Innovation badges provide access to tech & innovation programming and community spaces.
- Platinum badges offer complete access to all three creative communities.

All badges include access to keynotes, featured sessions, exhibitions, and citywide experiences.

The concurrent format and community homebases deliver to attendees a way to experience the full spectrum of SXSW, but also experience the distinct identity and depth each community values. The evolution from “interactive” to “innovation” acknowledges the growth of SXSW’s technology programming beyond its 1990s digital roots to encompass healthcare advancements, sustainable business practices, marketing evolution, and startup culture across industries.

Additionally, the Music Festival’s expansion to seven consecutive nights creates additional showcase opportunities. For the past several years, SXSW Music has focused on curating more opportunities for participating acts, audiences and industry to connect with each other. The festival will maintain a similar venue footprint to recent years while optimizing the experience for artist development, industry and fans.

“SXSW Music is leveling up in 2026 and beyond,” said Brian Hobbs, VP of Music Festival Programming. “Seven nights of showcases means more opportunities for artists to get their moment, and for music lovers to experience breakthrough performances throughout the event.”

Today, SXSW also unveiled the first glimpse of its 2026 key art, created in partnership with Austin-based design firm Overstory and Taiwanese-American illustrator Josh Cochran. The vibrant illustration depicts diverse creatives gathering in Austin’s reimaged downtown landscape, embodying the festival’s “All Together Now” spirit.



## Participation and Access

**[PanelPicker® session proposals](#)** PanelPicker® is the official SXSW user-generated session proposal platform. This easy, two-step online process allows the SXSW community to have a voice in what sessions are programmed at SXSW.

Entry period: June 24–July 27, 2025 - Voting period: August 5–24, 2025

**[Music Festival](#)** Seven nights to showcase your sound in Austin's most popular venues with an audience from around the globe. Don't miss your chance to turn your career up a notch.

<https://www.sxsw.com/apply/showcase-applications/>

**[SXSW Pitch](#)** showcases innovative new technology to a panel of industry experts, high-profile media professionals, venture capital investors, and angel investors.

**[Innovation Awards](#)** recognize the most exciting creative developments and cutting-edge technological achievements in the connected world.

**[Film & TV Festival](#)** premieres your film, TV or XR project in front of press, industry and enthusiastic audiences at the SXSW Film & TV Festival. Applications open July 29.

Badge details and pricing will be announced when SXSW opens for business on October 1, 2025. Learn about [group rates](#) and [student and early career discounts](#).

## **About SXSW**

SXSW dedicates itself to helping creative people achieve their goals. Founded in 1987 in Austin, Texas, SXSW is known worldwide for conferences and festivals that celebrate the convergence of technology, film and television, music, education, and culture. The annual event serves global professionals through sessions, showcases, screenings, exhibitions, and networking that consistently generates unexpected discoveries when diverse communities come

together. SXSW 2026 runs March 12-18 in downtown Austin, preceded by SXSW EDU March 9-12. Learn more at [sxsw.com](https://sxsw.com).

SXSW's expansion into the Asia Pacific region, with SXSW Sydney starting in 2023 and Europe with SXSW London in 2025, provides new possibilities at this iconic experience. These events, each with their own distinct flavor, make South By an indispensable three-stop tour for the global creative community.

SXSW 2026 Driven by Rivian

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Editor's Note: Media Registration for SXSW opens in October. Please visit our [press center](#) for image or interview requests.

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