

2026 National Conference Agenda—Musicians

All times below are Eastern Time. Agenda subject to change.

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The following agenda describes sessions specifically designed for the above-mentioned constituents. For a full listing of Conference events and larger sessions, please visit <https://leagueconference.org/full-schedule>.

Monday, June 1, 2026

1:00pm-2:30pm **Constituency Meeting Block 1**

1:00pm-1:15pm **Welcome and Introductions**

Welcome to the League's National Conference 2026! We will begin our Constituency time with a brief welcome and group introductions.

1:15pm-2:30pm **Collective Composition as a Vehicle to Build Community and Reimagine Orchestral Repertoire**

This presentation explores collective composition as a collaborative approach to music-making, where ensembles and communities co-create works by blending individual ideas into a shared artistic vision. By breaking down traditional hierarchies, it fosters an environment where musicians, teachers, and students listen to and learn from one another. Emphasizing process over individual authorship, it highlights strategies such as improvisation, creative games, technology, and trust-building to build connection, creativity, and community engagement.

*Speakers: **Dan Trahey**, Founder and Director, Tuned In @ The Peabody Conservatory; **Pete Tashjian**, Founder and Artistic Director, Collective Conservatory; **Samantha Flores**, Program Manager, OrchKids; **Nakayla Robinson**, Student, Tuned In and OrchKids; **Bayden Campbell**, Student, Tuned In and OrchKids*

Tuesday, June 2, 2026

3:00pm-5:00pm **Constituency Meeting Block 2: When the Culture Feels "Not Okay": Small Steps Musicians Can Take**

Many musicians know the feeling that something about the workplace culture just isn't quite right. Things can feel frustrating, unfair, unsafe, or stuck and it's not always clear why.

In this session we'll talk honestly about some of the patterns that show up in orchestras and freelance music spaces: assumptions about roles, communication breakdowns, traditions that may not serve us anymore, and the tension that can grow between musicians and the organizations we work in.

We'll also explore why musicians can sometimes feel they have little influence over the systems around them. We will also explore how the expectations placed on musicians within the profession can shape the way we respond to difficult situations.

Rather than focusing on blame, we'll look at how these dynamics develop and what musicians can realistically do within them.

Participants will leave with new ways to make sense of difficult situations and a few small, practical steps that can help shift culture in healthier directions.

*Facilitators: **Catherine Beeson**, Arts Leader, Assistant Principal Viola, Colorado Symphony and President and Artistic Director, Loon Lake Live; **Susan Eldridge**, Orchestra Culture Consultant specializing in workplace culture and relationships, Notable Values*

Wednesday, June 3, 2026

11:15am-12:45pm Constituency Meeting Block 3

11:15am-12:00pm Policy Advocacy for and by Musicians

Rapid changes in policies are unfolding at the local, state, federal, and even international levels. Learn more about how the League is partnering across the arts sector to advance the interests of musicians and what you can do to adapt to new policies and how to speak up to help shape them.

*Speakers: **Heather Noonan**, Vice President for Advocacy, League of American Orchestras; **Ben Kessler**, Director of Government Affairs, American Federation of Musicians*

12:00pm-12:45pm Conference Debrief and Wrap-Up

In the remainder of our last session together, we will have some time to look back on Conference, share feedback and ideas for future constituency time, and connect with peers.

*Moderator: **Sam Andrew**, Manager, Inclusion and Learning, League of American Orchestras*

Notice: It is important to keep in mind antitrust rules governing competition that apply to this group discussion. While the agenda for this group includes discussion of a variety of issues that are crucial

to orchestras' planning and strategies, the goal is not to agree on a single approach to these issues. With the benefit of analysis and discussion, each orchestra will be able to decide independently what course of action is best for its own organization. We ask you to avoid comments that relate to your orchestra's current or future plans for ticket or event pricing (actual ticket prices, discount amounts), bargaining (including collective bargaining agreements or with vendors), or compensation. Please consult the [League one-page Antitrust Overview](#) for more information, available at www.americanorchestras.org.