

Speakers Bureau

Frequently Asked Questions

- **Who can request a speaker?**
 - For the 2025-2026 academic year, only clubs in the U.S. and Canada with [more than 2,000 alumni in their geographic area](#) can request in-person speakers; U.S. and Canada-based clubs with fewer than 2,000 alumni in their area may request a virtual speaker.
 - HAA Board of Directors, Appointed Directors for Clubs and SIGs may request a virtual speaker for their cohort, which is recommended for international clubs and Shared Interest Groups (SIGs). [International clubs](#) and [SIGs](#) interested in a speaker should work with their Appointed Director.
- **Can my club or cohort submit more than one request? How many speakers can I request for my event?**
 - Each domestic club and Appointed Director can submit one request annually. Each request includes three preferred faculty members to whom the HAA will send out one invitation at a time; if a faculty member declines, the HAA will ask the next one. Each request will result in one Speakers Bureau event per year.
- **Can I rank my preference for speakers?**
 - No, each preferred speaker will be considered with equal priority.
- **Are there registration minimums we need to adhere to?**
 - Yes, events are required to have at least 40 registrants. The HAA will reach out to confirm anticipated attendance in the weeks leading up to your event. If the minimum registration is not met, your event may be subject to rescheduling or cancellation.
- **How does the matching process work?**
 - The HAA reviews all requests and will then work to match them with speakers. Matches are based on the timing of the event, faculty speakers' availability, and their travel interests. Each request will only have one invitation extended at any given time.
- **If I submit a Speakers Bureau request, am I guaranteed a speaker?**
 - While the HAA strives to fulfill all requests, a faculty member is not guaranteed to accept the invitation. Should the HAA invite all three speakers and receive declines, you will be notified as soon as possible.
- **If all three of my requested faculty members decline, can I submit new names?**
 - The HAA will contact you if all three requested faculty members decline. Depending on availability and timing, they will provide you with recommendations for new requests or alternative solutions to consider.
- **My club wants an in-person speaker. Is there a way to ensure we get one?**
 - We cannot guarantee that a faculty member will accept an in-person invitation to your club. Flexibility with event dates, topics, and potential speakers can increase the likelihood of a faculty member agreeing to visit your city.

- **My club wants a specific faculty member not in the catalog. Will you contact them on our behalf?**
 - For the 2025-2026 academic year, the Speakers Bureau program is limited to the faculty members included on the roster and requests submitted through the online form.
 - If your club or cohort plans to host a speaker who is not listed on the roster, please notify the HAA (haa_speakersbureau@harvard.edu) of these arrangements. Events organized without prior notification to the HAA will not be eligible for faculty travel reimbursement.
- **Will the HAA coordinate more than one Speakers Bureau event for my organization annually?**
 - Due to the program's popularity, limited faculty availability, and budget, the HAA is unable to facilitate more than one event per organization annually.
 - If we hear of a faculty member traveling to your area and is open to an event, we will inform you of this opportunity.
- **I am a Clubs & SIGs Appointed Director. My cohort cannot agree on a speaker or event date. What do I do?**
 - We understand it is challenging to get several organizations, especially those spread across time zones, to reach a unanimous agreement quickly. We encourage Appointed Directors to use their best judgment when selecting a speaker and agreeing to the event date and time. Faculty schedules fill up quickly, and the HAA cannot guarantee that a proposed time will be available indefinitely.
- **We submitted our request. When will we know if we have a speaker?**
 - All Speakers Bureau requests are processed once the request form closes. Requests are evaluated and processed based on timing and faculty availability. For example, if you requested a faculty member unavailable in the fall or your event is in late spring, you may not receive an update from the HAA until the spring semester.
 - Faculty members often receive invitations for multiple events at once and are given three to six weeks to review them along with their schedules.
 - The HAA does its best to provide as much time as possible ahead of the event date; however, due to faculty members' busy schedules, we cannot guarantee confirmation months in advance. We appreciate your patience as we work to fulfill a high volume of requests.
- **A faculty member accepted our invitation! Can we get in touch with them directly or schedule a call to discuss the event details?**
 - Due to the popularity of the Speakers Bureau program and faculty speakers' busy schedules, we cannot put a hosting organization in touch with the faculty speaker until closer to the event. The HAA will work with your club or cohort to gather event details for the briefing and answer any questions you may have.
- **We are ready to market our event. Will the HAA provide the faculty bio, headshot, and talk description?**
 - We encourage you to use the information, photo, and faculty bio link in the Speakers Bureau Roster. Once your event and discussion topic are confirmed, the HAA will work with the faculty to provide a description. Please note that this may take several weeks during peak activity times for HAA and faculty.

- **We are hosting an in-person event. What expenses are we responsible for?**
 - Hosting clubs are responsible for event expenses and hotel accommodations for the speaker. If a meal is included as part of the event, such as an annual dinner or luncheon, clubs are responsible for providing a meal for the speaker. Please review the [Speakers Bureau In-Person Event Expectations & Best Practices](#) for more information.
- **We are hosting a virtual event. What are we responsible for?**
 - Hosting clubs or cohorts are responsible for creating and managing the Zoom for the event, marketing, and registration. Please review the [Speakers Bureau Virtual Event Expectations & Best Practices](#) for more information.
- **Who should I contact if I have questions throughout the process?**
 - Please email any questions to haa_speakersbureau@harvard.edu and include your club or cohort name in the subject line.