



SXSW ANNOUNCES THIRD ROUND OF KEYNOTE SPEAKERS AND FEATURED SESSIONS FOR THE 2026 CONFERENCE

New Keynotes Include Rana el Kaliouby and Bob Safian on Human Centric AI, and Tom Sachs on His Creative Process

Featured Speakers Announced Include Andrew Ross Sorkin, Case Kenny, Casey Lewis, David Pogue, Garry Tan, Gabby Fowler, Gustav Söderström, Henry Coutinho-Mason, Jonah Peretti, Jillian Turecki, Kim Gallagher, Lucy Blakiston, Rachel Karten, Tarek Monsour, Tasia Filippatos, and Yung Pueblo

Vox Media Returns For Official Podcast Stage For Third Year

January 20, 2026 | Austin, Texas – South by Southwest® (SXSW®) has announced its latest round of Keynote Speakers and Featured Sessions for the SXSW Innovation Conferences.

From March 12-18, the 2026 SXSW Innovation Conference features hundreds of sessions organized into 12 programming tracks, including Brand & Marketing, Cities & Climate, Creator Economy, Culture, Design, Health, Startups, Sports & Gaming, Tech & AI, and Workplace, all exploring the latest in technology, business and culture. With formats ranging from fireside chats and presentations to workshops and mentor sessions, the Innovation Conference is where deeper learning and discovery thrives. Keynotes and Featured Sessions are open to all attendees with Platinum, Innovation, Music, and Film & TV badges.

“With SXSW 2026 just two months away, I am incredibly energized by the program our team has built. From deep dives into the enduring success of global leaders, to the groundbreaking potential of upstarts and innovators, this year’s sessions offer a roadmap for navigating a rapidly shifting world,” said Greg Rosenbaum, SVP of Programming for SXSW. “We’re bringing together some of the world’s biggest and brightest thinkers to explore how we can innovate with intention and build deeper, more meaningful connections across every industry.”

Keynotes

SXSW has added the following Keynote Sessions to the Conference program:

- ***Why the Future of AI Must be Human Centric***—AI scientist and entrepreneur **Dr. Rana el Kaliouby** joins journalist **Bob Safian** to discuss the essential need to keep humanity at the center of the rapidly evolving AI revolution. In this conversation, she demonstrates how to navigate the massive economic opportunities of AI while ensuring

technology is leveraged to unlock human potential and solve our most challenging problems.

- **Tom Sachs: Show The Work, Tell The Story**—From his multidisciplinary New York studio, internationally acclaimed artist **Tom Sachs** transforms everyday materials into visionary works ranging from his iconic Space Program to industrial design. In his keynote, the world-renowned artist will share the rituals that drive his creative process and explain his latest conceptual project, I.S.R.U.—and how you can be part of it.

Featured Sessions

SXSW has added the following Featured Sessions to the Conference program:

- **The Culture Layer of Financial Markets**—Kalshi Co-Founder and CEO **Tarek Monsour** will discuss how his platform transforms cultural events like the Oscars and video game releases into liquid financial markets where individuals can profit from their passions. He will explore the utility of these odds for business decision-makers and outline Kalshi's ambitious plans to scale culture-based markets from a billion to a trillion dollars.
- **A Conversation With Spotify's New Co-CEO About The Past, Present And Future Of Delivering Creativity To The World**—Exploring the future of audio entertainment, **Gustav Söderström**, Co-President and CTO of Spotify, will discuss how technological transformation across music, podcasts, and audiobooks is reshaping the industry. He will examine the intersection of user control and creator innovation, detailing how thoughtful technology continues to reconnect artists and fans in an evolving digital landscape.
- **Enough with the Bullsh*T: BuzzFeed Founder Shares His Plan to Make the Internet Fun Again**—**Jonah Peretti** reveals his vision for a digital reset, sharing a behind-the-scenes look at how BuzzFeed's AI incubator is building a better alternative to algorithmic doomscrolling. Peretti will explore how AI-powered experiences can foster shared cultural moments and human connection to maximize creativity and growth.
- **The Three Laws of a Healthy Relationship**—Authors and relationship experts **Yung Pueblo**, **Jillian Turecki**, and **Case Kenny** will break down the three laws of a healthy relationship through the lenses of self-awareness and communication. A powerful, grounded session for anyone ready to strengthen how they love and how they show up in partnership, that blends self-awareness, communication, and what it truly means to love someone.
- **A Conversation with Garry Tan**—Hear from the President & CEO of Y Combinator. In addition to his Featured Session, **Garry Tan** will co-emcee the SXSW Pitch 2026 Award Ceremony alongside **Josephine Chen** of Sequoia Capital.
- **Multiplayer Futures: Co-Creating a Vision of SXSW 2030: Live**—What if the future isn't predicted by one speaker, but imagined by thousands? In this participatory session, you won't just hear from author and futurist **Henry Coutinho-Mason**—you'll co-create one. Sketch your vision of SXSW 2030, and watch your idea become part of a map of the room's collective imagination and intelligence. Together you will explore its signals, themes and provocations, and leave with a clearer lens to navigate the rest of the week.

- ***Shit You Should Care About: Live***—Tracing the journey from a university group chat to a global media empire, **Lucy Blakiston**, CEO and Co-Founder of Shit You Should Care About, explores the evolution of her platform through internet reckonings and behind-the-scenes drama. This live show offers a raw, humorous look at the "fangirl-to-SHE-EO pipeline" and the realities of maintaining authenticity while navigating life in front of a massive digital audience.
- ***A Conversation with Andrew Ross Sorkin***—Following the release of his latest book last Fall—*1929: Inside the Greatest Crash in Wall Street History--and How It Shattered a Nation*—award-winning journalist **Andrew Ross Sorkin** will sit down for a one-on-one conversation to discuss what we can all learn from that moment in our history.
- ***David Pogue on Apple's First 50 Years***—As Apple enters its second half-century, author **David Pogue** ("Apple: The First 50 Years") explores the throughlines of Apple's astonishing success: simplicity, beauty, elegant design, making the whole widget, focus on very few products, and a deep commitment to the customer experience. He'll be joined by a special guest to share stories and insights from their decades of launching iconic products.
- ***Shaping Brand Relevance for a New Generation***—Drawing on compelling real-world case studies that blend commerce with creativity, **Tasia Filippatos**, President of Disney Consumer Products, shares how brands can remain culturally relevant and resilient in a rapidly changing global market. This session provides forward-looking strategies for driving growth and ensuring organizations remain meaningful for future generations.
- ***From Meme to Meaning: Making the Most of Accidental Virality***—Exploring the unpredictable nature of online virality, **Kim Gallagher**, Executive Director, Marketing & Customer Success for Nuuly; **Rachel Karten**, social media consultant and author of the industry newsletter Link in Bio; **Gabby Fowler**, Senior Manager of Social Media and Influencer for Graza; and **Casey Lewis**, trend expert and founder of After School, will present the modern playbook for turning unintended viral attention into opportunities for growth and deeper audience connection.

Crossover Day Sessions

Crossover Day (March 12) marks both the final day of SXSW EDU and the first day of SXSW, providing special access and co-programming opportunities for attendees of both events.

Recently announced Crossover Day sessions include:

- ***How to Support Resilient Youth in an AI World***—As generative AI reshapes youth development, this panel explores how to ensure these technologies strengthen children's capacity to think, relate, and thrive. The discussion features **Rebecca Winthrop**, Director of the Center for Universal Education at Brookings; **Maureen Polo**, CEO of Hello Sunshine; and **Martin McKay**, Executive Chair and Founder of Everway sharing insights from a 50-country report on supporting resilient youth.
- ***Social Health Trends & Predictions: Connection is the New Frontier***—Building on her bold 2025 SXSW presentation, expert **Kasley Killam** returns to reveal the latest breakthroughs and trends shaping the movement to transform society through connection. As the author of *The Art and Science of Connection*, Killam shares global

research and an inspiring vision for the future of social health, longevity, and human thriving.

Vox Media Podcast Stage

Announced today, the Vox Media Podcast Stage, sponsored by Odoo, will return for SXSW 2026. The third annual podcast stage will feature [Pivot](#) (hosted by journalist **Kara Swisher** and entrepreneur **Scott Galloway**), [On with Kara Swisher](#) (hosted by Swisher), [Prof G Markets](#) (hosted by Galloway and research analyst **Ed Elson**), [Waveform: The MKBHD Podcast](#) (hosted by tech reviewers **Marques Brownlee**, **Andrew Manganelli**, and **David Imel**), [Where Should We Begin?](#) (hosted by psychotherapist **Esther Perel**), [Networth & Chill](#) (hosted by Your Rich BFF **Vivian Tu**), [Tefi Talks](#) (hosted by comedian and content creator **Tefi Pessoa**), **Brené Brown**, and more, with special guests announced in the coming weeks. The Vox Media Podcast Stage will be hosted at the Hilton Austin from March 13-15.

SXSW GO App

SXSW GO, presented by Paramount+, the official mobile app for SXSW, is now updated for the 2026 Conferences & Festivals. With the SXSW GO mobile app, browse the continuously updated lineup of programming to build your SXSW Schedule directly on your mobile device. Plus, get schedule recommendations, helpful event navigation information, and discover new music, films, sessions and more. For more on the SXSW GO app, see [here](#).

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, comedy 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.

SXSW 2026 Driven by Rivian.

Media accreditation is now open for SXSW 2026 through February 13, 2026. Please visit our [press center](#) to submit your application.

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