

THINGS YOU SHOULD DO AT YOUR FIRST FORD CONFERENCE

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The Conference of Ford Fellows provides an unparalleled opportunity for Fellows to share their research, to create and rejuvenate professional collaborations and personal friendships, and to re-immense themselves into an intellectually vibrant community. As a Ford Fellow, you become part of a family—a community of scholars whose commitment to one another obliterates the boundaries that too often divide those in academia (e.g. disciplinary focus, age, aesthetic and ascriptive identity, parental status, title, perceived pedigree of institution, and region of employment).

Here are some things you should consider doing at the conference—in addition to the Keynote Sessions:

Choose a Special Interest Session appropriate for your CURRENT situation or that matches your current set of interests.

Attending such a session will help you get a better sense of the landscape of your field and stage in your career.

Choose a Special Interest Session appropriate for your FUTURE situation or that matches your future set of interests.

The Conference of Ford Fellows is akin to a GPS (or global positioning system). It provides scholars of color with a system for navigating the traps, roadblocks, rough terrains, and asymmetrical highways of information that constitute academia. Attending a Special Interest Session appropriate for your FUTURE situation lets you know what is ahead and how to better prepare.

Meet your Regional Liaison and/or sign up for a one-on-one meeting with a senior Fellow.

Regional Liaisons are the sages of the conference, its institutional memory. Liaisons can connect you to other Fellows throughout the region, provide advice, and can be there to lend a friendly ear. (This can all be true of any of the senior Fellows. They are often happy to help, whether or not they are currently serving as liaisons.)

Attend an Academic Exchange Sessions

You never know when a great idea will hit you. Attending an Academic Exchange Session will enable you to find out new developments in your particular areas of study. You will hear innovative research about questions and topics at the center of your field. Not only will you hear innovative research, but you will also find out how your research intersects with that of others. You might even find a future collaborator!

Attend the Workshop that is most appropriate for your CURRENT stage in your career.

I promise, you will find confirmation that you are not crazy.

Meet with at least one representative from a publishing house.

Talk about your work. Ask which topics or questions most excite them. Listen to their advice. Take notes.

VOLUNTEER your services for the next conference.

The continuity and strength of the Ford Fellows depends upon you. Help us ensure that others like you—scholars committed to excelling in teaching and research, scholars committed to diversity, and scholars committed to building a stronger and more diverse pipeline from BA to PhD—receive the opportunity to experience Ford as you have.