

Who is this conference for?

This conference is for adult (18+) BIPOC adoptees only. We want Black, Indigenous [Native], and People of Color to feel free to explore their adoptee identities and experiences out from under the white gaze. We have been directly harmed by white supremacy culture, often inside our own families. And many of us have been culturally conditioned to be automatically sensitive to and to respond to the words, feelings, and power of white people. (See “[Why People of Color Need Spaces Without White People](#)” by Kelsey Blackwell. Also read about [ideology v. biology](#).)

We intend for this conference to be a space where BIPOC adoptees are seen, safe, and heard. This is a movement building space, a healing space, and we want folks to be able to bring their whole selves.

*To be explicit: Bi-racial, multi-racial, and/or white-presenting adoptees are fully welcome! We will not tolerate colorism or gatekeeping. In addition, adult BIPOC children of adoptees are also welcome in the space.

How much does the conference cost?

All our events are FREE for BIPOC adoptees. For the conference, you just need to register and show up! We are a unique, hard-to-find community, and you should not have to pay for access. Our relationship with you is not transactional. We are not asking for an exchange. You do not have to barter one resource for another.

However, if you would like and are able to redistribute funds to support our programming, we will gladly accept it – but it is our deep intention that no community member feels pressure to donate. One of our deepest values is BIPOC adoptee agency and autonomy. We trust that you know your own resources and situations best. We hold space for everyone with no questions asked, no judgment. You can donate when you register for the event, or you can donate later through [our website](#).

Where is the conference?

Portland State University, 1825 SW Broadway, Portland, OR 97201 - The conference will be held in the first, second, and third floors of the [Smith Memorial Student Union building](#) on the [Portland State University](#) (PSU) campus in Portland, OR, where our organization, [VOICES, a BIPOC Adoptee Community](#) is headquartered. This event is indoors. PSU adheres to standard ADA requirements such as accessible entrances, ramps, elevators, and restrooms and has designated nursing rooms available. PSU campus is located in the SW part of downtown Portland on the beautiful [South Park Blocks](#), close to the Willamette River waterfront, [Pioneer Courthouse Square](#), the [Portland Art Museum](#), and other notable landmarks.

What accommodations are available?

As a community committed to inclusivity and intersectionality, VOICES prioritizes accessibility for all, including those with disabilities. Our grassroots nonprofit is dedicated to aligning our events with ADA guidelines and beyond. To better ensure inclusivity, we are collaborating with [The BIPOC Disability Collective](#), an affiliate nonprofit of the Michigan Disability Rights Coalition. [Learn more here.](#)

We believe transparency is a way to build trust, show respect, and to break down barriers. Therefore, it is important for us to note that, as a newly formed grassroots nonprofit, we have limited resources and are in the process of building toward better accessibility.

Click the [BIPOC Adoptees VOICES Conference General Accommodations.pdf](#) to view and download our initiatives for this inaugural BIPOC Adoptees Conference.

What is your COVID-19 policy?

We continue to monitor COVID-19 in relation to our events. We use guidance from Multnomah County and the Center for Disease Control (CDC). Please make your own informed choices about masking, travel, on-site behavior, and community engagement. Please center the overall health and wellness of our community. Do not attend if you are feeling unwell, testing positive for COVID, or are recovering from COVID and still testing positive, even if you no longer have symptoms. KN95 masks will be available throughout the conference venue to anyone who wants one. We believe it is the just, compassionate, socially responsible, and ethical choice to be vaccinated and boosted against COVID-19 (unless you have a medical exception).

I can't attend. Is there a virtual component?

Though we are not technically offering our own virtual workshops, we are partnering with some trusted and beloved members of our BIPOC adoptee community who will be offering sessions of their own during this time. They will be offering two great sessions!

1) SATURDAY WORKSHOP

Visualizing Adoption Abolition: A Community Building Workshop facilitated by [Lina Vanegas](#) + [Mila Konomos](#), who have been consistently pour their insight, perspectives, wisdom, humor, art, and joy into the BIPOC adoptee movement for abolition and liberation.

- Saturday, July 27th from 3pm-4:30pm ET USA
- Online via Zoom
- Pay what you can
- RSVP [HERE](#).

Bring your crafting + writing supplies, and join them as they create a tangible vision of what a world without family separation looks and feels like! Pay what you can.

Virtual component cont...

2) SUNDAY WORKSHOP

Sun Mee Martin will be offering a virtual session through her coaching practice [Numaru](#). Sun Mee's mission is to help fellow adoptees liberate their adoptee emotions, overcome identity struggles, and reclaim their wholeness. Join her online session "Rooted Resilience: Nurturing Self and Community Care in BIPOC Adoptee Communities" - for adult BIPOC adoptees (18+).

- Sunday, July 28 from 10am-11:15am PST / 1pm EST / 7pm GMT+2 (Berlin)
- FREE (donations gladly accepted)
- Virtual on Zoom. RSVP [HERE](#).

And stay tuned, we are partnering with Tiffany HyeonBrooks to offer an online workshop on adoption as a reproductive justice issue following the conference on August 11 from 10am-12pm PST. Save the date!

(If you are a skilled tech person and want to lead this for next year, hit us up!)

Will you be taking photos, video, or anything else that might capture my image and voice in media?

Yes. By entering this event, you are entering an area where photography, audio, and video recording will occur - by event organizers and/or other conference attendees. Your entry and presence on the event premises constitutes your consent to be photographed and/or filmed in connection to VOICES and its initiatives, including, by way of example only, use on our website, in social media, and marketing/promotion. Attendees will likely be taking photos and footage. However, your safety is important to us. Let us know if you are uncomfortable with us photographing and filming, and we will work with you to find ways to keep you safe.

What are you doing for emotional safety?

As BIPOC adoptees ourselves, we're right there with you. VOICES prioritizes safety and wellbeing. We use a Container of Care framework at our events. While our organizers aren't mental health professionals, we collaborate with BIPOC adoptees advocates trained in mental health and other care. On-site mental health support will be provided, including structured support groups and informal affinity groups. A separate, dedicated deactivation space is also available for self-care. Our approach is community-based, not professional therapy, focusing on mutual aid and support. VOICES does not provide professional services for crises but offers assistance if needed. Click [here](#) to view and download the Container of Care details.

Will food and beverages be provided?

There will be continental breakfast on Saturday and Sunday. There will be unlimited popcorn and sodas available on Sunday only in the Viking Game Room, but all attendees will be expected to provide their own meals, snacks, and beverages through the three day event. Overall, attendees are responsible for managing their own dietary requirements.

There are numerous places to purchase food and drink around campus, such as the student store on the first floor, the Farmers Market on Saturday, and the restaurants and food carts near campus. Portland is known for great food! We hope you can check out what the city has to offer!

Can you suggest places to stay?

Thank you to those who are coming from out of town! Whether you are driving, flying, taking off work, etc, we know that it is costly. We are thrilled you can join us. We have put together a flyer with suggested lodging, some at a discounted rate. Access that [HERE](#).

Any suggestions on transportation and how to get around?

Our public transit system is called [Tri-Met](#) and includes buses, street cars, and the MAX light rail system. The city offers some [accessible transportation support](#). Stay tuned for more details!

What else can I do while I'm in Portland?

We have put together a resource list of things to do in Portland! View them [HERE](#).

This is awesome! How can I help?

The best way to help is to come and bring your warm, generous energy to contribute to our collective care in the conference space! We're all about agency and self-empowerment, so reach out to other adoptees to help coordinate ride sharing, meals together, shared accommodations, etc.

Another way to help is to share our content to make sure other BIPOC adoptees know about the conference. Share our Instagram content [@bipocadoptees](#) and our website [bipocadoptees.com](#).

And finally, we're still looking for sponsors. Our work is for us, by us. We are a small grassroots nonprofit team who currently does this work in a mutual aid framework. This is all volunteer labor. If you are (or know of someone) open to sponsoring this conference, please get in touch. We are working towards a sustainable future and as we grow, sponsors and donations help make this happen! Our events are free to our community, and this is intentional. Removing barriers for us to connect is vital. Donations are tax deductible.

We thank you ahead of time for your patience and support as we build this first conference and navigate our learning curve.