

CWA

78th Annual

Conference on World Affairs

April 13-16, 2026

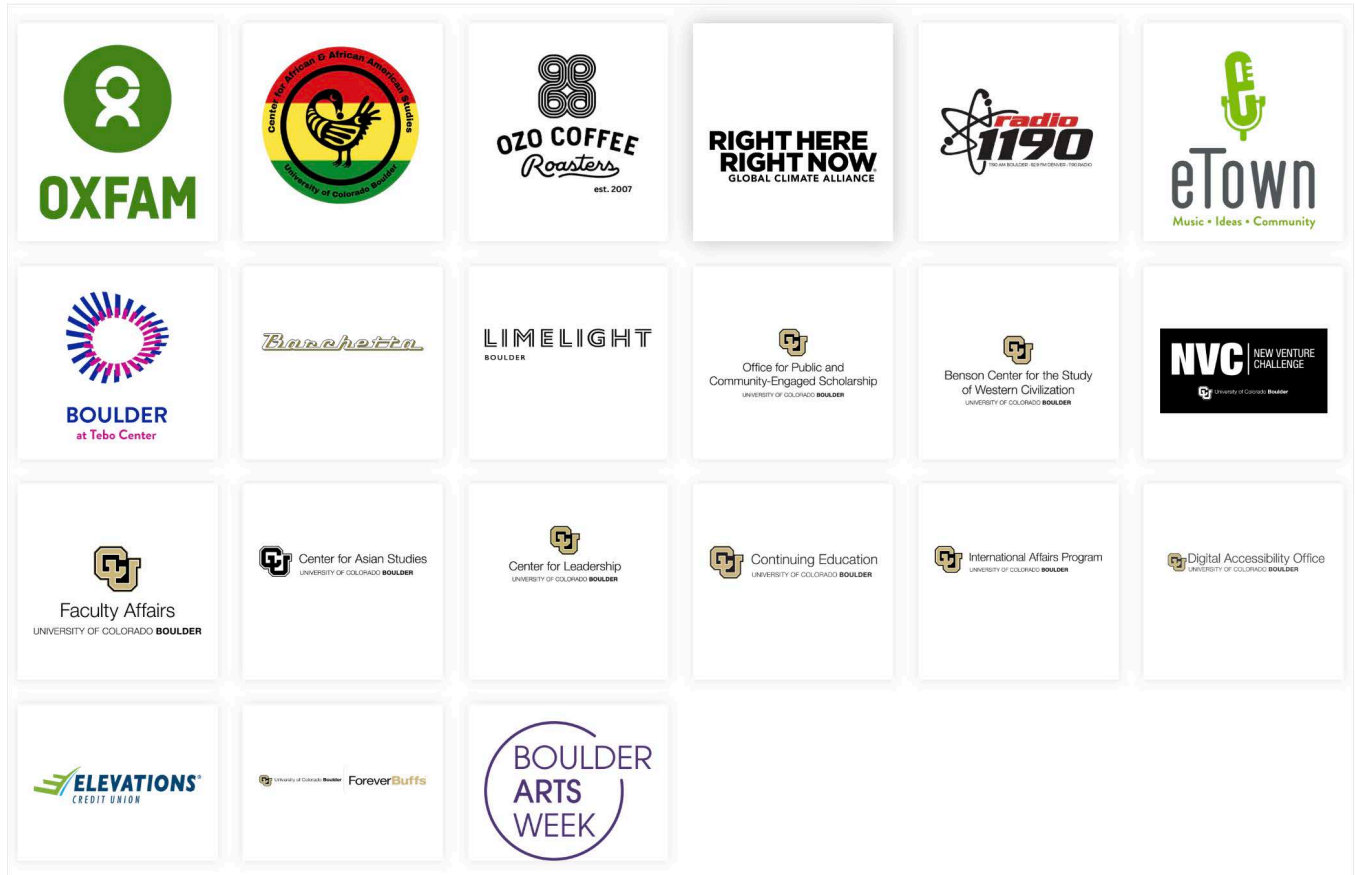
University of Colorado Boulder

Program as of April 12, 2026. Details are subject to change.



University of Colorado **Boulder**

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CU Boulder 150th: The University of Colorado’s Forgotten Land-grant Origins and the Future of Public Impact

Location: UMC 235, 9:00 AM-10:10 AM

Explore our land grant origins, the transformative role of extension service, and what they teach us about the future of our public mission.

Benny Shendo
David Meens
Patricia Limerick

Moderator: Gregor MacGregor

CU Boulder 150th: Higher Education and Democracy: Past, Present and Future

Location: Limelight Flatiron 2, 1:00 PM-2:10 PM

How universities—and CU Boulder—sustain democracy, from civic engagement and free inquiry to the challenges facing higher education today.

Martin Carcasson
Ann Stevens
Joe Neguse
Lolita Buckner Inniss

Moderator: Elias Sacks

The Colorado River Crisis: Where Do We Go From Here?

Location: UMC 235, 2:30 PM-3:40 PM

Discuss the challenges facing the Colorado River, the solutions taking shape, and the role each of us can play in securing its future

Nancy Smith
Lorelei Cloud
Robert Sakata
Becky Mitchell
Andy Mueller

Moderator: Carlos Fernandez

Ebert Uninterruptus

Location: CASE Chancellor’s Auditorium, 3:00 PM-7:00 PM

Ebert Uninterruptus shows a film along with in-depth analysis. This year’s edition of will feature Namibia: Struggle for Liberation

Charles Burnett

Moderator: Skinner Myers

Under Pressure: Defending America’s Public Lands

Location: UMC 235, 4:00 PM-5:10 PM

Why public lands matter so deeply to communities, economies, and ecosystems, and what it will take to ensure public lands stay in public hands.

Madeleine West
Heidi Sherk
Lori Weigel
Erin Karney Spaur
Connor Hall

Moderator: Carlos Fernandez

Kickoff Evening Event: Steamboat Institute Campus Liberty Tour

Location: Glenn Miller Room, 7:00 PM-8:30 PM

John Bolton and Susan Rice, national security experts with deep foreign policy experience, will debate U.S. superpower status.

John Bolton
Susan Rice

Moderator: Carine Hajjar

Power, Protest and the Digital Battlefield

Location: Limelight Flatiron 1, 9:30 AM-10:40 AM

How can activists harness digital tools to resist oppression and drive meaningful, lasting change?

Srdja Popovic
John Heffernan
Aboubakr Jamaï Berraoui
Elena Gaby

Moderator: Scott Ritner

The Climate Path Forward: Politics & Policy

Location: Limelight Flatiron 2, 9:30 AM-10:40 AM

How political realities and economic tradeoffs shape what climate action is actually possible- and what paths forward can gain support.

Roger Pielke
Ernesto Araujo
KC Becker

Moderator: Dennis Ojima

Neurodiversity in the Workplace: Creating Opportunity for All

Location: Limelight Flatiron 3, 9:30 AM-10:40 AM

A discussion about what the workplace is like today for neurodiverse adults

Kerry Magro
Ty Tashiro
Laura I. Harder

Moderator: Jenny Kessem

From Earth to Expression: Using Nature as Material and Inspiration

Location: Limelight Flatiron 4, 9:30 AM-10:40 AM

Explore how artists use the environment physically, symbolically and emotionally to create work that reflects our relationship with the planet.

Asher Jay
Nalini Nadkarni
Seth Shafer

Moderator: David Dadone

Show Me the Money: The Business of Sports

Location: Limelight Flatiron 2, 11:00 AM-12:10 PM

From college athletes cashing in on their names to the sports betting gold rush, how the sports world is transforming.

Carl Quintanilla
Diana Moss
Fernando Lovo

Moderator: Aaron Brockett

Constitutional Crisis: The Presidency and the Rule of Law

Location: Limelight Flatiron 1, 11:00 AM-12:10 PM

The current administration is stretching the Constitutional limits of presidential authority. Can our government maintain the balance of power?

Joshua A. Levy
Patrick J. Deneen
Joe Cirincione
Lorraine Voles

Moderator: Violeta Chapin

Into the Unknown: How Risk, Discovery and Storytelling Bring Science to Life

Location: Limelight Flatiron 4, 11:00 AM-12:10 PM

From remote field sites to unexpected breakthroughs, these stories reveal the human experiences that turn data into understanding.

Nalini Nadkarni
Paul Bierman
Laura Lindenfeld

Moderator: Lisa Marshall

Seeing Story through the Lens of Oscar-winning Director Charles Burnett

Location: Limelight Flatiron 3, 11:00 AM-12:10 PM

We spotlight the filmmaking vision and cultural impact of Charles Burnett

Charles Burnett
Maya S. Cade

Moderator: Leah Aldridge

CU Boulder 150th: From the Flatirons to the Final Frontier: Past, Present, and Future of Aerospace at CU Boulder

Location: Limelight Flatiron 2, 12:30 PM-1:40 PM

Trace our role in space exploration and celebrate the people who turned curiosity into discovery—and shaped our understanding of the cosmos.

Moderator: Matt Benjamin

CU Boulder 150th: Generations of CWA: How One Professor’s Big Idea Became a Boulder Tradition

Location: Limelight Flatiron 3, 12:30 PM-1:40 PM

Howard Higman’s original vision shaped generations and helped CWA grow into one of CU Boulder’s most enduring and influential traditions.

Charlotte Andresen
Tom Mayer
Oakleigh Thorne

Moderator: Alphonse Keasley

Satire as Resistance: The Molly Ivins Tribute

Location: Limelight Flatiron 1, 12:30 PM-1:40 PM

Tribute to Molly Ivins spirit of “Raise Hell, Fight Hard, Have Fun!” using humor to raise awareness of complex issues and maintain sanity.

Kate Schatz
Srdja Popovic
Lisa Graves

Moderator: John Tayer

Extra, Extra, Read All About It: Do Billionaires Control the News?

Location: Limelight Flatiron 1, 2:00 PM-3:10 PM

As billionaires buy out newsrooms and audiences scroll past headlines, journalism is being reshaped from the inside out.

Carl Quintanilla
Carine Hajjar
Laura Lindenfeld
Diana Moss

Moderator: Kyle Clark

You're Saying There's a Chance: Building a Brighter Future for the World

Location: Limelight Flatiron 2, 2:00 PM-3:10 PM

What can the human race do to save ourselves from war, climate change, population decline and AI?

Kevin Kuruc
Scott Sherman
Azi Khalili

Moderator:

Pop Girlies are Singing what Gen Z is Feeling

Location: Limelight Flatiron 3, 2:00 PM-3:10 PM

A fear of rejection as vocalized in today's pop music

Ty Tashiro
Lisa Graves
Asher Jay
Moderator: Helen Forster

Innovation at Risk: How Science Funding Cuts are Impacting Progress and Research

Location: Limelight Flatiron 4, 2:00 PM-3:10 PM

What is the impact of federal science funding cuts and how should the international and private sector respond?

Roger Pielke
Ling Xin
János Zoltán Csák
Noah Finkelstein

Moderator: Bryn Rees

The Climate Path Forward: Science & Innovation

Location: Limelight Flatiron 3, 3:30 PM-4:40 PM

What the latest science tells us about climate risks and trajectories and how innovation can realistically deliver solutions.

Michael Mann
Nalini Nadkarni
Paul Bierman
Lisa Dilling
Moderator: Dennis Ojima

How to Lose a Democracy in 10 Days

Location: Limelight Flatiron 2, 3:30 PM-4:40 PM

An analysis of the processes enabling global democratic backsliding, modern authoritarianism and what can be done to stop it.

Srdja Popovic
John Heffernan
Ellen Weintraub
Joshua A. Levy

Moderator: Leah Sprain

CU Boulder 150: Chancellors and Presidents—Leadership Across Eras

Location: Limelight Flatiron 1, 3:30 PM-5:00 PM

Join former CU Presidents and CU Boulder Chancellors for 'A Look Back' as they explore opportunities and challenges through the university.

Alexander Bracken
Elizabeth Hoffman
Philip P. DiStefano
Moderator: Albert Ramirez

From Imposter Syndrome to Shattering the Glass Ceiling

Location: Limelight Flatiron 4, 3:30 PM-4:40 PM

Four women who have broken through in male-dominated spaces share their strategies, setbacks and successes.

Gavriella Schuster

Azi Khalili

Sheila Warren

Parker Hamilton Poling

Moderator: Kimbirly Orr

150th: The America of Folk Music

Location: E-Town, 6:15 PM-10:15 PM

A musical conversation exploring America's history and identity through folk music.

Joseph Bottum

Robert George

Wilfred M. McClay

Lauren Weiner

David Howley

Group performance to follow

Art in the Open: A Catalyst for Community

Location: Limelight Flatiron 3, 9:00 AM-10:10 AM

How public art can foster connection and spark dialogue.

Lynn Warshafsky
Seth Shafer
Guillermo Galena Galindo
Moderator: Melissa Fathman

Flags, Borders and Belonging: The Politics of Nationalism

Location: Limelight Flatiron 1, 9:00 AM-10:10 AM

How are countries protecting their national identity in an increasingly globalized world?

Ernesto Araujo
Natasha Lindstaedt
Joe Cirincione
Ruth Alminas
Moderator: Luca Scuriatti

CU Boulder 150th: From Cadet Corps to Space Force: CU Boulder's Military Legacy

Location: Limelight Flatiron 4, 9:00 AM-10:10 AM

From cadet training to connections with the U.S. Space Force, our military legacy has influenced campus life and generations of Buffs who have served.

David S. Nahom
Daniel Vancil III
Stew Elliott
Jorge Cervantes
Moderator: Nicole Schmoll

Africa: Opportunity in the World's Richest Continent

Location: Limelight Flatiron 2, 9:00 AM-10:10 AM

How is the world of international business reshaping the African continent?

Luvuyo Rani
Aboubakr Jamai Berraoui
Azi Khalili
Lizzy Shackelford
Moderator: Marcia Kwaramba

Population Decline: Crisis or Cure?

Location: Limelight Flatiron 3, 11:15 AM-12:25 PM

How will plummeting birth rates impact the future of human society?

Kevin Kuruc
Nalini Nadkarni
Lizzy Shackelford
Leslie Root(8)
Moderator: Jane Menken

Occupied States of America: Balancing Power and Civil Liberties

Location: Limelight Flatiron 2, 11:15 AM-12:25 PM

When domestic tranquility becomes state-sanctioned chaos, what do para-military and military presence in cities cost the American people?

Charlotte Clymer
Robert Latiff
Natasha Lindstaedt
Benjamin Teitelbaum(8)
Moderator: Georgia Butcher

Trad Wives and the Conservative Movement

Location: Limelight Flatiron 4, 11:15 AM-12:25 PM

Women’s perspectives on rising conservatism and how it’s shaping feminism

Cynthia James
Hadar Harris
Hadley Manning

Moderator: Soledad Diaz

AI Wild West – Who is in Charge?

Location: Limelight Flatiron 1, 11:15 AM-12:25 PM

Examine who holds AI responsibility and how policy, institutions and public trust are evolving as the rules continue to take shape.

Sofia Romansky
Sheila Warren
Ling Xin
Asher Jay

Moderator: Kaleb Bishop

New World, New Arsenal

Location: Limelight Flatiron 1, 1:00 PM-2:10 PM

How new defense technology is redefining the future of conflict, who holds power and what else is at stake for humanity.

Robert Latiff
Sofia Romansky
Joe Cirincione
Ken Liu

Moderator: Ariel Conn

Why We Need to Preserve Independent Cinema

Location: Limelight Flatiron 3, 1:00 PM-2:10 PM

A discussion with leading curators and archivists on the challenges of saving indie films and the social and historical benefits for doing so.

Sandra Schulberg
Maya S. Cade

Moderator: Andy Uhrich

From Rubble to Reconstruction: What Comes Next?

Location: Limelight Flatiron 4, 2:30 PM-3:40 PM

How societies coming out of a period of violent conflict can recover and rebuild successful governments

Meghna Guhathakurta
Luvuyo Rani
John Heffernan
Laura I. Harder

Moderator: Ruth Alminas

Buy Now, Pay Forever: The Financial Traps Facing Young People

Location: Limelight Flatiron 1, 2:30 PM-3:40 PM

From buy-now-pay-later and crypto to sports betting and prediction markets, what is the impact of modern financial traps targeting young people?

Diana Moss
Kyla Scanlon
Diane Hirschhorn

Moderator: Dennis Paul

Empowering Citizens: Civic Education, Information and YOU

Location: Limelight Flatiron 2, 2:30 PM-3:40 PM

How do we equip citizens to understand, assert and defend their rights in a divided, anti-intellectual era?

Jaisal Noor
Ellen Weintraub
Devon Gray
Hadar Harris

Moderator: Jan Burton

Rewriting the Historical Narrative with Artifacts in Art

Location: Limelight Flatiron 3, 2:30 PM-3:40 PM

How have artists used and transformed cultural objects from the past and present to tell powerful, visual stories?

Pushpamala Narasingarao
Guillermo Galena Galindo

Moderator: Sonja Gandert

CU Boulder 150th: Shaping a Sustainable World: How Buffs Have Enabled Global Impact

Location: Limelight Flatiron 4, 4:00 PM-5:10 PM

Buffs have built a strong foundation for a more sustainable future and continue to drive global impact and lead what comes next.

Will Toor
Phaedra C. Pezzullo
Sean Benjamin

Moderator: Andrew Mayock

Young, Wild & Free: How to Find your Niche and Build your Career

Location: Limelight Flatiron 2, 4:00 PM-5:10 PM

How younger generations can create new opportunities for themselves and make a difference in the world.

Alexa Mohsenzadeh
Scott Sherman
Asher Jay
Devon Gray

Moderator: Jessi Follet

From Headlines to Hashtags: Who gets to be a Journalist?

Location: Limelight Flatiron 3, 4:00 PM-5:10 PM

In an age when everyone can have a platform, how can audiences separate fact from viral spectacle?

Charlotte Clymer
Jaisal Noor
Carine Hajjar
Kyla Scanlon

Moderator: Matt Duncan

Risk-y Business: The Strategic Game of Geopolitical Conquests

Location: Limelight Flatiron 1, 4:00 PM-5:10 PM

Examine how shifting global power dynamics affect security, economies and everyday life, and why it matters now more than ever.

János Zoltán Csák
Meghna Guhathakurta
Ernesto Araujo
Paul Bierman

Moderator:

**Colorado Matters: The Future of Film in
Colorado, in partnership with CU Boulder
Cinema Studies & Moving Image Arts**

Location: Limelight Flatiron 1, 5:30 PM-6:30 PM

A talk with Sundance Film Festival and independent
storytellers, with producer / Sundance Institute board member
Gigi Pritzker and filmmaker LuLu Wang

Gigi Pritzker

Lulu Wang

Kate Yezzi

Moderator: Ryan Warner

The Podcast Revolution: From Basement Mic to Business Empire

Location: Limelight Flatiron 3, 9:30 AM-10:40 AM

How podcasting has turned into a viable career and changed the media landscape.

Gavriella Schuster
Pushpamala Narasingarao
Kyla Scanlon

Moderator: Pratt Hunter

The Demise of the Free Press

Location: Limelight Flatiron 1, 9:30 AM-10:40 AM

In these unprecedented times, how do we protect the freedom of the press as the crucial fourth pillar of a stable democracy?

Joshua A. Levy
Carine Hajjar
Aboubakr Jamaï Berraoui
Lorraine Voles

Moderator: Vicky Sama

Beyond Digital Isolationism: Reclaiming Human Connection

Location: Limelight Flatiron 2, 9:30 AM-10:40 AM

How do we make better interpersonal connections in a world run by social media?

Ty Tashiro
Cynthia James
Sheila Warren
Scott Sherman

Moderator: Aquiles La Grave

AI: The Price of Progress

Location: Boulder High School, 10:45 AM-11:55 AM

This panel will focus on AI’s potential to drive growth and solve problems along with its potential to cause harm.

Sofia Romansky
Robert Latiff
Laura I. Harder
Charlotte Clymer(9)

Moderator: BHS Representative

The World’s Last Group Project: Are Intergovernmental Organizations Still Relevant?

Location: Limelight Flatiron 1, 11:00 AM-12:10 PM

Exploring the ways power politics are reshaping international interactions in the 21st century.

János Zoltán Csák
Lorraine Voles
Lizzy Shackelford

Moderator: Eliza Woolson

If Not Roe then Joe: Control, Accountability, and Equity in Reproductive Policy

Location: Limelight Flatiron 2, 11:00 AM-12:10 PM

Can regulation of men’s bodies yield better outcomes in sex, health and safety, and reproductive freedom?

Lisa Graves
Kate Schatz
Parker Hamilton Poling

Moderator: Jennifer Hendricks

Is Anyone Out There: Are Non-Profits Facing Extinction?

Location: Limelight Flatiron 4, 11:00 AM-12:10 PM

Roundtable: When the government retreats and the community falters, can the nonprofit safety net catch us?

Alexa Mohsenzadeh

Devon Gray

Kerry Magro

Lynn Warshafsky

Luvuyo Rani

Moderator: Devon Gray

ART(ificial Intelligence)

Location: Limelight Flatiron 3, 11:00 AM-12:10 PM

The Artist in the age of AI— a discussion about what it means to create in today’s world.

Ken Liu

Seth Shafer

Elena Gaby

Moderator: Mark Gross

The Midterms and Beyond: Will they be Free and Fair?

Location: Limelight Flatiron 1, 12:30 PM-1:40 PM

The current administration is running a multi-pronged attack on voting rights, our most sacred democratic institution. What can Americans do?

Ellen Weintraub

Parker Hamilton Poling

Devon Gray

Natasha Lindstaedt

Moderator: Sarah Horbacewicz

Humanity and Innovation: Navigating Life in the Age of AI

Location: Limelight Flatiron 2, 2:00 PM-3:10 PM

What it means to be human in a world where AI increasingly dominates how we engage socially, environmentally and professionally.

Gavriella Schuster

Ken Liu

Sheila Warren

Moderator: Melissa Reeve

Pretty, Palatable or Political?

Location: Limelight Flatiron 3, 2:00 PM-3:10 PM

An exploration of how aesthetics and appearance shape perceptions of feminism within contemporary visual culture.

Kate Schatz

Cynthia James

Ty Tashiro

Pushpamala Narasingarao

Moderator: Holly Oberle

Buying Up the Board: Are We in a Game of Monopoly?

Location: Limelight Flatiron 4, 2:00 PM-3:10 PM

From Big Tech to major mergers, how does rising market concentration shape competition, consumer choice and the rules of the economy?

Diana Moss

Kyla Scanlon

Ellen Weintraub

Carl Quintanilla

Moderator: Alexander Scholpp

Shifting World Order: Geopolitics in a New Era

Location: Boulder High School, 2:45 PM-3:55 PM

This panel will address how international relations and alliances are being redefined in a time of rapid change and global conflict.

Patrick J. Deneen
Natasha Lindstaedt
Aboubakr Jamaï Berraoui
Paul Bierman
Moderator: BHS Representative

Science Under Siege: A Crisis of Trust and Credibility

Location: Limelight Flatiron 2, 3:30 PM-4:40 PM

Exploring why science is under attack and how knowledge survives in a polarized, media-driven world.

Laura Lindenfeld
Michael Mann
Ernesto Araujo
Nalini Nadkarni
Moderator: Cathy Bradley

New Venture Challenge: NVC Documentary Premiere and Audience Choice Award

Location: Limelight Flatiron 1, 3:30 PM-5:30 PM

See the top teams of the New Venture Challenge pitch and vote for who gets the audience choice award.

Moderator: Stan Hickory

People Before Papers: Embracing the Stories of Migration

Location: Limelight Flatiron 4, 3:30 PM-4:40 PM

A conversation exploring how creativity, advocacy and lived experience can humanize immigrant stories.

Guillermo Galena Galindo
Elena Gaby
Hadar Harris
Jaisal Noor
Moderator: Gabrielle Cabrera

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