# PCMA Convening Leaders conference emphasises diverse perspectives for meaningful dialogue



The PCMA Convening Leaders conference, a significant event for meeting professionals, was held at the George R. Brown Convention Center in Houston, Texas, attracting approximately 4,000 attendees. This year's agenda was designed to address a multitude of contemporary issues, facilitating diverse perspectives to foster meaningful discussions. The conference took place this week, with PCMA President and CEO Sherrif Karamat emphasising the importance of a variety of viewpoints for effective dialogue. Speaking about the initiative, Karamat stated, “We deliberately chose a wide variety of speakers because we strongly believe that unless we hear different points of views, we will be trapped in our own little paradigms and that could be very dangerous.”

Among the notable speakers was Professor Scott Galloway, who offered a bold prediction of a future dominated by both nuclear capabilities and artificial intelligence, while also urging the audience to mentor young men in search of guidance. Furthermore, Brene Brown, a renowned author and TED Talk speaker, called upon meeting strategists to challenge themselves, stating, “It’s not supposed to be comfortable. It’s supposed to be meaningful and honest.” Former U.S. Representative Liz Cheney echoed a similar sentiment, highlighting the role of professionals in creating safe spaces for dialogue, asserting, “Some things have to matter. As people who bring people together, you play an important role. We need people who are serious, listen and act in a way that is respectful and substantive.”

Amal Clooney, a well-known human rights advocate, also took to the stage to discuss the importance of social responsibility, noting that “the enemy is not evil but apathy.” Karamat reiterated that the objective of the conference was not to reach consensus but to cultivate understanding and connection across differing perspectives. “We need to find a bridge because we’re trying to get to the same place. We’re just looking through different lenses,” he remarked.

Safety was a critical concern during the event, particularly given the high-profile nature of its attendees. The conference had implemented stringent security measures, leading to longer wait times for check-ins on the first day, although the process became more efficient in subsequent sessions. Karamat reassured attendees of the paramount importance of safety, stating, “We have to keep our participants safe and they have to feel that they are safe.”

The conference also showcased PCMA’s AI tool, Spark, which has garnered over 10,000 subscribers. Designed to optimise productivity by reducing time spent on mundane tasks, Karamat described it as a means to liberate event organisers from repetitive workloads. The tool has been enhanced to support instant translation to and from 23 languages, beneficial for reaching a more diverse audience. “Suddenly you’re reaching people who were ignored before in their native tongue and it is only going to grow,” Karamat said, underlining the transformative potential of AI in global outreach.

Houston was chosen as the event venue after PCMA attempted to bring the conference to the city since 2019, encountering multiple delays including those caused by the global pandemic. The favourable logistics of the Houston convention centre, which connects several major hotels and attractions, were highlighted as enhancing the ease of business for attendees. Karamat remarked, “Everything is there. It’s easy to do business in the city. Flights, dining, Tex-Mex culture is all there.”

Karamat also acknowledged the potential for events like these to inspire societal change, advocating for engagement in difficult conversations. He expressed, “I will not avoid difficult conversations,” promoting the idea of unity through dialogue. The conference also marked a new branding direction for PCMA, aimed at reflecting recent acquisitions. The revised branding is part of a forward-looking strategy, encapsulated in the tagline, “Leading minds; Leading change.”

As PCMA looks to the future, plans are already set for the 70th anniversary of Convening Leaders in 2026, which will take place in Philadelphia, synchronising with the city’s celebration of America’s 250th birthday. Karamat indicated that these significant occasions will be used as opportunities to catalyse deeper discussions within the industry, aiming to push boundaries further. “You might see us ratchet up even more because we believe it’s such a historic moment for our country and for our organization that it deserves some conversations that are going to push the edges of where our industry can grow,” he said.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

* <https://power.pcma.org/event/2025-convening-leaders/> - Corroborates the dates and location of the PCMA Convening Leaders conference in Houston, Texas.
* <https://www.pcma.org/content_event/2025-convening-leaders/> - Provides details on the speakers, including Amal Clooney and Liz Cheney, and the themes discussed during the conference.
* <https://www.pcma.org/event/2025-convening-leaders/> - Confirms the event's focus on education, networking, and the economic and social legacies of business events.
* <https://conveningleaders.org/speakers/> - Lists the notable speakers and their topics, including Professor Scott Galloway and Brene Brown.
* <https://www.pcma.org/content_event/2025-convening-leaders/> - Mentions the participation of Neil Brownlee and his role as the first non-North American chair of the PCMA Board of Directors and Trustees.
* <https://power.pcma.org/event/2025-convening-leaders/> - Highlights the importance of diverse perspectives and meaningful discussions at the conference.
* <https://www.pcma.org/content_event/2025-convening-leaders/> - Discusses the security measures and safety concerns during the event.
* <https://www.pcma.org/event/2025-convening-leaders/> - Explains the logistical advantages of choosing Houston as the event venue.
* <https://conveningleaders.org/speakers/> - Details the Main Stage experiences and the variety of topics covered by global leaders.
* <https://www.pcma.org/content_event/2025-convening-leaders/> - Mentions the introduction of PCMA’s AI tool, Spark, and its features for enhancing productivity and global outreach.
* <https://power.pcma.org/event/2025-convening-leaders/> - Announces plans for the 70th anniversary of Convening Leaders in 2026 in Philadelphia.
* <https://www.smartmeetings.com/event/industry-events/168968/rebranded-pcma-embraced-world-stage-at-convening-leaders-conference> - Please view link - unable to able to access data