

TED tailors 'ideas worth spreading' for TV

May 4 2013, by Glenn Chapman



PBS president and CEO Paula Kerger is shown in 2011 in Beverly Hills, California. TED conferences has teamed with the US Corporation for Public Broadcasting to create an education-focused version of its real-world conferences for a show set to air on PBS stations nationally on Tuesday and again on Thursday.

The prestigious TED gathering known for perspective-shifting presentations by the brilliant and famous is tailoring "ideas worth spreading" for a television audience. TED teamed with the US Corporation for Public Broadcasting to create an education-focused

version of its real-world conferences for a show set to air on PBS stations nationally on Tuesday and again on Thursday.

"Re-imagining education is the key to a more hopeful future," said TED curator Chris Anderson.

"What better time to gather some of the country's most respected and forward-thinking education advocates, and make this the theme of TED's first-ever original television broadcast special."

The program is hosted by Grammy-winning musician John Legend and features presentations by Microsoft co-founder turned philanthropist [Bill Gates](#) as well as by social activist Ken Robinson, the most watched speaker at Ted.com.

Online videos stemming from [TED conferences](#)—which are renowned for mind-bending mixes of creativity, passion and innovation—passed the billion-view milestone late last year.

The number continues to rocket, with more than a million TEDTalks watched daily, according to the organization behind the prestigious TED gatherings that give rise to the presentations made available free on the Internet.

The nonprofit Sapling Foundation behind the conferences began making its recordings of talks available online as podcasts in 2006, then began streaming videos free at a TED.com website the following year to reach a global audience.

The move to original television programming is another step on the path to reaching as many people as possible with ideas for making the world a better place.

"TED, at its core, is about spreading ideas," said Juliet Blake, who produced the "TED Talks Education" program.

"Public television reaches a huge audience," she continued. "I hope people who watch the show on PBS come graze more videos at the ted.com website."

The PBS broadcast will be the first of more [television programs](#) to come, and a project is already in the works in Europe, according to Blake.

"The plan is not necessarily to do a lot of television; but to do tough, provocative, exciting [television](#)," Blake said.

The TED program on PBS will live on at public broadcasting and TED websites, available to anyone in the world with Internet access.

Funding for the PBS program came from the Corporation for [Public Broadcasting](#), according to TED.

"This collaboration between PBS and TED is a natural fit as our organizations both aim to educate, engage and inspire," said PBS chief programming executive Beth Hoppe.

TED started in 1984 as a private gathering in California.

With Anderson as its "curator," [TED](#) has become renowned for 18-minute talks devoted to mind-bending perspectives on anything from music or dance to climate change or futuristic technology.

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