



ALLIANCE FOR THE ARTS
IN RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

2017 a2ru National Conference

Arts in the Public Sphere: Civility, Advocacy, and Engagement

November 1 – 4, 2017 • Boston, MA

Proposals should be submitted online [HERE](#)

Deadline for submission is April 7, 2017; notification by June 1, 2017.

The Alliance for the Arts in Research Universities (a2ru) invites proposals for the 2017 a2ru national conference, *Arts in the Public Sphere: Civility, Advocacy, and Engagement*, to take place at Northeastern University in Boston, November 1 – 4, 2017.

a2ru advances the full range of arts-integrative research, curricula, programs, and creative practice to acknowledge, articulate, and expand the vital role of higher education in our global society. a2ru envisions a world in which universities - students, faculty, and leaders - acknowledge, deeply embed, and seamlessly integrate the arts in the pursuit of basic knowledge and in everyday practice. As an organization, a2ru values the arts as core to higher education, deep disciplinary knowledge and applied research in the arts, interdisciplinary creativity, durable collaboration, diverse community, and the research university as a driver toward a better world.

HOSTS

The 2017 conference will be hosted by a2ru partner, Northeastern University, with additional conference events and pre-conference sessions at partner campuses, Boston University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Tufts University.

THEME

Arts in the Public Sphere: Civility, Advocacy, and Engagement will use the city of Boston as a starting point for discussion and engagement. As a 21st century global city, Boston embodies many of the issues that drive diverse contemporary cultural contexts. It supports a rich and continually evolving sense of civic realms, and is home to leading arts, educational, medical, industrial and corporate entities invested in innovative modes of research, practice and civic participation. There is also clear recognition that the 'public sphere' is not confined to large metropolitan regions. Creating dynamic communities that engage and extend beyond traditional boundaries—in both virtual and material ways—remains a growing challenge and the work before us.

CALL

a2ru invites proposals from researchers, field leaders, and practitioners investigating the intersections, synergies, and interfaces of arts in the public sphere and their influence on civility, advocacy, and engagement. We seek proposals from: university-level faculty, administrators, and students, as well as civic leaders and representatives from industry, private enterprise, sectors outside the arts that incorporate the arts and design in their work, and

public/private arts, culture, and civic organizations. While we invite proposals that address any issue relevant to the mission of a2ru, for our 2017 national conference we are particularly interested in proposals from researchers, field leaders, and practitioners around the following questions:

CORE AREAS OF INTEREST

1. By working collaboratively across disciplines and sectors, with a collective impact model, what can the arts and design fields in research universities contribute to address core issues of civil discourse, access, and equity?
2. How do the fields of arts and design in higher education interact with other sectors such as public health, housing, and transit to create cities that are healthy, just, and resilient?
3. How do the tools and methods of creativity- and humanities-driven process, production, experimentation and experience shape approaches and outcomes for the social, economic, and environmental challenges facing today's communities?
4. How are distinct modes of the arts within higher education - such as: arts-led research; creative practice; curricular/co-curricular development and pedagogy; administrative leadership - activated in relation to internal and external partnerships across campuses and communities?
5. In what ways do new technologies provide tools or challenges to the creation of public engagement in a civic space that is virtual, as well as, or instead of, material?
6. What models of integration of arts and design within higher education (such as S.E.A.D. —science, engineering, arts and design efforts) best serve diverse constituencies and forward the most pressing needs of public citizens?
7. How do emerging areas such as creative placemaking – using the arts and creative action to improve a community – leverage or challenge town/gown relationships?

FORMATS FOR PARTICIPATION

- **Papers or alternative equivalents** such as performances or time-based media presentations. 3-4 papers/performances/presentations will be grouped by the selection committee into 90-minute sessions around common themes.
- **Discussion panels.** Panels should focus around a conference-themed topic and include a moderator and at least 3 panelists; each panelist is encouraged to offer a brief position paper or introductory presentation to uniquely enhance audience discussion. Panels should build in a direct dialog interface with attendees within an overall 90-minute session.
- **Working groups.** Groups provide opportunity for immersive work sessions that participants sign up for in advance of the conference. Proposals should include a focus topic in relation to the conference themes as well as the intended working methods and outcomes of the group process.

Proposals will be reviewed and accepted through a blind peer review process by a2ru partner scholars, practitioners, and researchers.

REQUIREMENTS FOR SUBMITTAL

All session proposals for a2ru's 2017 national conference require (1) clear and concise titles and abstracts, (2)

well-developed objectives, and (3) a detailed outline of your planned content delivery.

▪ **Papers/Performances/Presentations**

1. Title and presenter's name
2. Abstract
3. Participant Bio(s)
4. Learning Outcomes

▪ **Discussion Panels – no fewer than 3 panelists**

1. Title and panelists'/moderator's names
2. Abstract(s)
3. Participant Bio(s)

▪ **Working Groups**

1. Title, topic and leader's name
2. Summary/Expected Outcomes
3. Participant Bio(s)
4. Submit a summary about your contribution to this work and what you hope to achieve with the session.

CRITERIA FOR REVIEW

1. What can you bring to the national discussion that is new?
2. How can your topic translate or be applied across other areas and universities?
3. What are the broader implications of your work or findings?
4. The selection committee seeks projects that:
 - Explore, speculate, or research new pathways;
 - Use collaboration as a core feature;
 - Explicitly broaden participation;
 - Introduce exciting new forms, formats, or outcomes;
 - Expand existing programs;
 - Foster media literacy;
 - Highlight new institutional and artistic coordination mechanisms.

Please note that presentations are made on a voluntary basis at the expense of the presenter. Presenters are encouraged to attend the conference and in doing so are required to pay the conference registration fee and travel-related expenses.

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For questions or more information, contact Maryrose Flanigan at flanigam@umich.edu.