

# Annual Report 2020 | 2021

**a<sup>2</sup>ru**  
ALLIANCE FOR THE ARTS  
IN RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES



**Front Cover:**  
Hasse Borup in "Artivism4Earth" at a2ru member  
institution, University of Utah.

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 Twitter: @a2ru\_news

 Facebook: @a2ru.org

 Instagram: @a2ru\_news

a2ruconnect@umich.edu  
[a2ru.org](http://a2ru.org)

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# Letter from the Executive Director

Dear a2ru Members and Allies:

A dramatically changed landscape forms the backdrop for our report this year, covering our operations in both 2020 and 2021. In late February 2020 we—along with everyone else—marched in a new, unanticipated direction. We took our operations exclusively online; sponsored a popular webinar series on remote teaching in the arts; and disseminated our network’s emerging strategies to cope with COVID and best support students. In October 2020, we held our first online annual meeting, “Land & Equity: The Art and Politics of Place,” in partnership with the University of Wisconsin-Madison, focusing on art as a form of resistance. Our Steps Towards Change track centered students and faculty from throughout our network challenging tokenism in the arts, reforming arts pedagogy through anti-racist education, and practical strategies for an anti-racist classroom, to name just a few. This invaluable series will be an ongoing part of our annual conferences moving forward.

2020 also saw the official launch of a2ru Ground Works, and its publications and projects highlight the possibilities of arts-integrated research. If you haven’t read through this open platform ([groundworks.io](https://groundworks.io)) I encourage you to do so and dream up new collaborative projects to engage in and submit.

**“If 2020 was a challenging transition year, 2021 was full of exciting new beginnings.”**

We launched a new, expanded membership model opening up the a2ru network to all higher education institutions, departments, and individuals for the first time; unveiled the redesigned [a2ru.org](https://a2ru.org) including our new Creative Placemaking Resource Hub; and launched two communities of practice in arts and health.

For our 2021 National Conference, we were prepared to go online again if necessary, and amid the Delta variant spike we did, presenting “Sharing Our Stories: The Case for Art” in November. This conference introduced a new storytelling presentation format for us that truly showcased the expressive possibilities of the arts. Our members featured research and programs through visual storytelling, poems, dance, and spoken narratives, in a way that was not only refreshing, but also presented a compelling case for the importance of art. These stories were presented in concert with workshops, student and pedagogy panels, and keynotes including University of Florida’s Performing Public Health team, the Music City program from the University of Orange, representatives of the Georgia Incarceration Project, and the Athens Hip Hop Harmonic Collective, among many others. The conference began with two guest-facilitated workshops on “Foundations of Equity and Dismantling Critique,” and it was informative and inspiring to witness and work together on centering equity in our work of teaching, practice and research in the arts.

We welcomed four new institutional members over the span of time that this report covers: York University in Toronto, Ontario (our first Canadian member); the Rhode Island School of Design (our first independent art & design school), as well as Rutgers University and Rowan University. We also welcomed our first departmental member, the Undergraduate Research Center—Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences from the University of California, Los Angeles.

I am especially grateful for our small but amazing staff who make our programming possible—Shannon Fitzsimons Moen, Veronica Stanich, and Charisse Willis— and our executive committee members whose experience and energy have guided our work.

And we’d like to thank all of you who generously support programming and contribute your energy and insights to our shared endeavor.

Maryrose Flanigan  
Executive Director



# Leadership

## Our Staff



**Maryrose Flanigan**  
Executive Director



**Shannon Fitzsimons Moen**  
Associate Director



**Veronica Stanich**  
Research Program Manager

**Charisse Willis**  
Conference Director/  
Program Coordinator

## Our Executive Committee



**Mary Lou Aleskie**  
Dartmouth College



**Jason Geary**  
Rutgers University  
New Brunswick



**Kevin Hamilton**  
University of Illinois  
Urbana-Champaign  
(Special Adviser for  
a2ru Ground Works)



**Kate Hewson**  
University of  
Wisconsin-Madison



**Yvonne Houy**  
University of Nevada,  
Las Vegas



**R. Benjamin Knapp**  
Virginia Tech  
(co-chair)



**Jennifer Krivickas**  
University of Cincinnati  
(co-chair)



**David Munson**  
Rochester Institute of  
Technology



**Susan Lakin**  
Rochester Institute  
of Technology



**Tom Martin**  
Virginia Tech  
(Special Adviser)



**Stephen Rush**  
University of Michigan



**Emily Ryan**  
University of Kansas



**Paul Shrivastava**  
The Pennsylvania  
State University



**Sherry Wagner-Henry**  
University of Wisconsin-Madison  
(co-chair)



**Harvey Young**  
Boston University



**Jason Corey**  
University of Michigan

## In Tribute

### Sherry Wagner-Henry

We were very saddened by the sudden loss of Sherry Wagner-Henry, a2ru Executive Committee co-chair and director of the University of Wisconsin-Madison’s Bolz Center, who passed away on May 30, 2020 following complications from surgery. Sherry was a dear friend for many of us in this network, and she embodied the knowledge-sharing and connection that a2ru is all about. Her service to a2ru is irreplaceable and she has been, and will be, greatly missed.

# New Institutional Members

We welcomed four new institutional members over the span of time that this report covers: York University in Toronto, Ontario (our first Canadian member); the Rhode Island School of Design (our first independent art & design school), as well as Rutgers University-New Brunswick and Rowan University.



# Our 2020-2021 Members

## Institutional Members

### \*Founding Partner

- Boston University
- \*Dartmouth College
- \*Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- Oregon State University
- \*Penn State
- Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile
- Princeton University
- Rhode Island School of Design (RISD)
- Rochester Institute of Technology
- Rowan University
- Rutgers University-New Brunswick
- \*Tufts University
- \*The University of Alabama
- \*The University of Alabama at Birmingham
- University of Arkansas
- University of California, Berkeley
- University of Cincinnati
- \*University of Colorado Boulder
- \*University of Florida
- University of Georgia
- University of Houston
- \*University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
- \*University of Iowa
- University of Kansas
- \*University of Maryland

- \*University of Michigan
- \*University of Nebraska-Lincoln
- University of Nevada, Las Vegas
- University of Utah
- University of Wisconsin-Madison
- \*Virginia Commonwealth University
- \*Virginia Tech
- York University

## Departmental Members

- University of California
- Los Angeles Undergraduate
- Research Center - Humanities, Arts,
- and Social Sciences

## Individual Members

- Andrea Bravo Mutllo
- Sinan C Goknur
- Guhapriya Ranganathan
- Sharon Reid-Kane
- Perrin Teal Sullivan
- Genevieve Tremblay

## a2ru Ground Works Advisory Board

The Advisory Board makes recommendations on matters that define Ground Works—inclusion, access, audience, editorial approach, and sustainability.

**Cheryl Ball**

Director of the Digital Publishing Collaborative  
Wayne State University Libraries

**Stephen David Beck**

Associate Vice President for Research & Economic Development  
Haymon Professor of Music  
Louisiana State University

**Julian Chambliss**

Val Berryman Curator of History at MSU Museum  
Core Faculty, Consortium for Critical Diversity in Digital Age Research (CEDAR)

**Shannon Criss**

Professor of Architecture  
School of Architecture and Design  
University of Kansas

**Kevin Hamilton**

Professor and Dean  
College of Fine and Applied Arts  
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

**Roger F. Malina**

Endowed Chair of Art and Technology and Professor of Physics  
University of Texas at Dallas  
Executive Editor of Leonardo Publications  
Founder of Leonardo/ISAST and Leonardo/OLATS

## a2ru Ground Works Editorial Board

The Editorial Board is tasked with balancing the rigor of a peer-reviewed journal with a mentoring, pedagogical approach. They review all Stage 1 submissions, in some cases oversee a project’s progress through Stage 2, and forge connections between Ground Works and their respective fields.

**Audrey G. Bennett**

University of Michigan

**Ivica Ico Bukvic**

Virginia Tech

**Rodrigo Cádiz**

Pontificia Universidad  
Católica de Chile

**Kyrie E. H. Caldwell**

University of Wisconsin-  
Madison

**J.R. Campbell**

Kent State University

**Edgar Cardenas**

Michigan State University

**Robin Cass**

Rochester Institute of  
Technology

**Oşubi Craig**

University of Florida

**Lake Douglas**

Louisiana State University

**Zach Duer**

Virginia Tech

**Cassandra Fraser**

University of Virginia

**Eric Handman**

University of Utah

**Alexandra Harbold**

University of Utah

**Shumaila Hemani**

University of Alberta

**Mihyun Kang**

The Pennsylvania  
State University

**Julian Kilker**

University of Nevada, Las Vegas

**Jinku Kim**

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

**Aaron D. Knochel**

Penn State University

**Samantha Lazar**

Dartmouth

**Amy Lorek**

Penn State University

**Olivia Lucas**

Louisiana State University

**Gerald Maa**

University of Georgia

**Mary Pat McGuire**

University of Illinois  
Urbana-Champaign

**Meridith Beck Mink**

University of Wisconsin-  
Madison

**Maria C. Olivares**

Boston University

**Kirsi Peltomäki**

Oregon State University

**María Isabel García Pérez  
de Arce**

Pontificia Universidad  
Católica de Chile

**Nathan Platte**

University of Iowa

**Julia M. Ritter**

Rutgers University-New  
Brunswick

**Rebecca Salzer**

University of Alabama

**Lourdes Santamaría-Wheeler**

University of Florida

**Garrett Schumann**

Independent Scholar

**Laura Shackelford**

Rochester Institute of  
Technology

**Stephen Taylor**

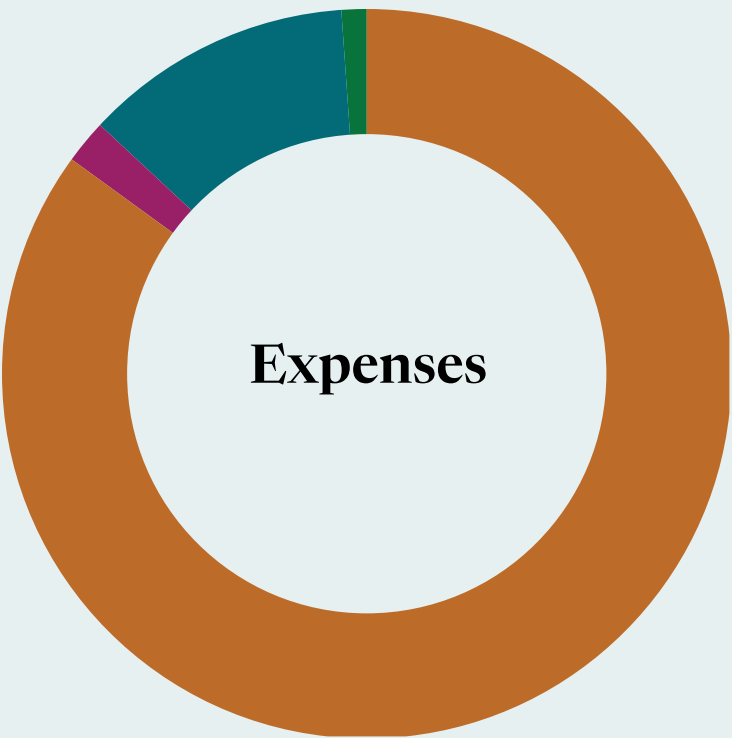
University of Illinois  
Urbana-Champaign

**Thomas Tucker**

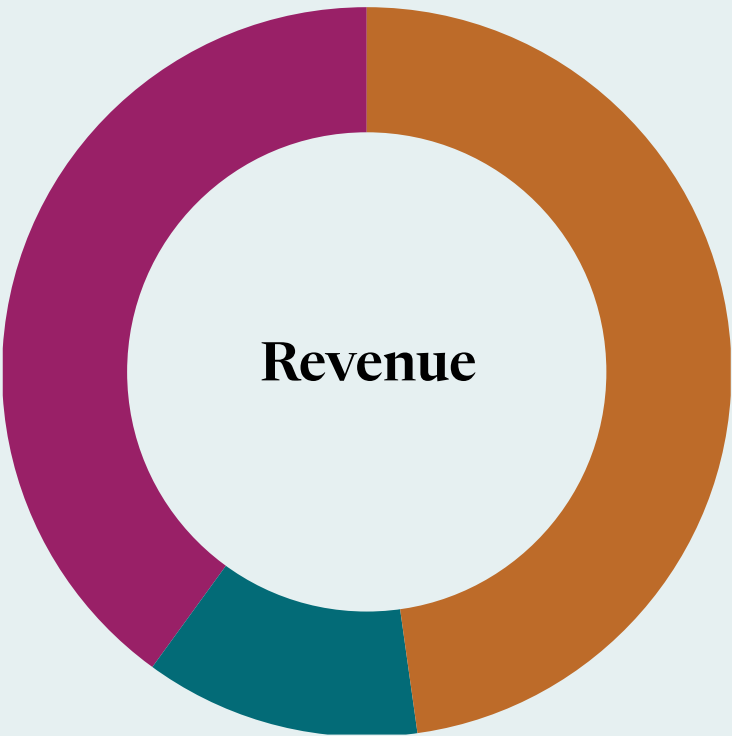
Virginia Tech

# Financial Snapshot

2020

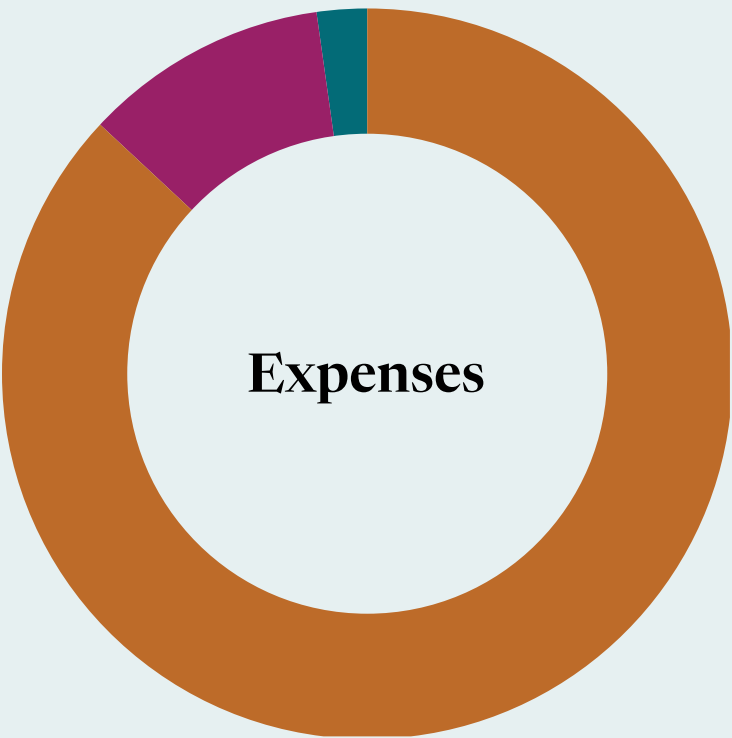


- Management, Research & General 85%
- Website, Marketing & Supplies 2%
- Convenings 12%
- Grants for Students & Faculty at Member Institutions 1%

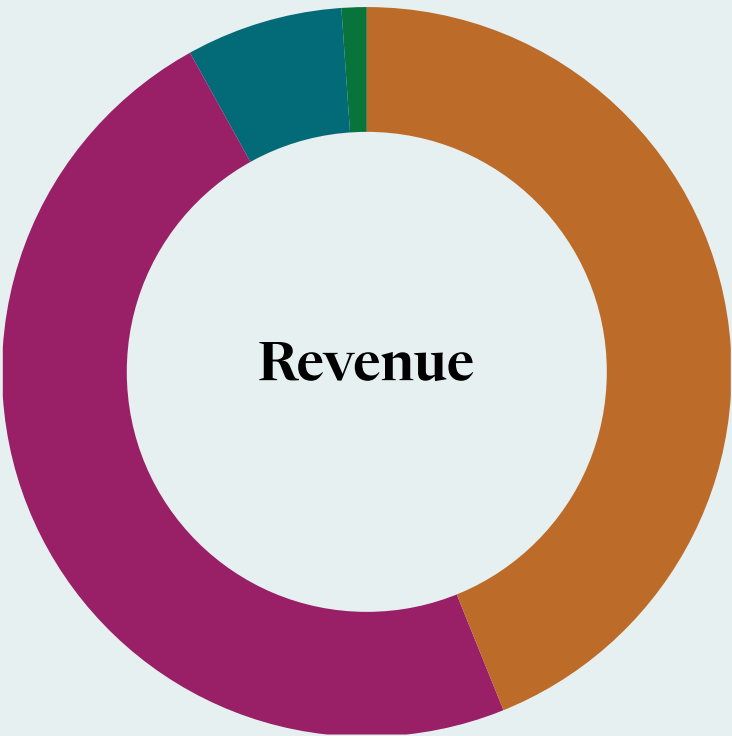


- Membership dues 48%
- Convenings 12%
- Sponsored Research/Projects 40%

2021



- Management, Research & General 87%
- Website, Marketing & Supplies 11%
- Convenings 2%



- Membership dues 44%
- Convenings 7%
- Sponsored Projects 48%
- Other earned revenue gifts 1%

★ with an online national conference and Emerging Creatives on hiatus, no travel grants were awarded in 2021.



# a2ru Debuts Expanded Membership Model

For a2ru’s first decade, membership was only available on an institutional basis to large, Research I and II universities. That’s no longer the case.

With the debut of our new website, we also unveiled a new membership model designed to be more flexible, more inclusive, and more accessible as we continue our mission to advance the arts and arts-integrative practices across higher education.

a2ru membership involves access to member-only content on a2ru.org; free access to our webinar and online conversation series; free or discounted registration to our annual conference and Emerging Creatives Student Summit; access to faculty and student grants; and discounts on job listings; event promotion; and a2ru print research materials.

## Key features of the new model include:

- Membership is now open to all higher education institutions—including art and design schools, liberal arts colleges, and community colleges—not just Research I and II universities.
- Institutional memberships can now have either a one- or three-year term.
- There are two different price levels for institutional memberships, for both four- and two-year institutions, to accommodate different financial resource levels.
- Academic departments, or groups of departments, can now become a2ru members if their institution as a whole is not an a2ru member.
- Individual memberships are now available to academic leaders, administrators, full-time faculty, adjuncts, retirees, independent scholars/artists, and students.

## Membership rates:

4-Year Colleges and Universities:  
**\$5,000-\$10,000/year**

Community Colleges and  
Technical Schools:  
**\$1000-2500/year**

Departments:  
**\$750-1500/year**

Individuals:  
**\$30-\$500/year**

Please see <https://a2ru.org/membership-levels/> for complete pricing and benefits details.

“We are thrilled to open a2ru membership up to better reflect and serve the full spectrum of higher education today. For years, we’ve heard from people who participated in our events and wanted to become a2ru members, but who didn’t fit into our old model. Now, we’re so happy to be able to welcome them into the network, and are grateful for the experience, perspective, and creativity that they will bring to this community.

“The COVID-19 era has also made us very sensitive to the economic realities being faced by both institutions and individuals, and we wanted to create a range of opportunities to work with us, in the hopes that membership is accessible to anyone who wants one.”

—Maryrose Flanigan, a2ru Executive Director



# Introducing the new a2ru.org

The redesigned a2ru.org launched in August 2021, after a nearly two-year process. We started working on the site redesign in late 2019; like so many projects, the events of 2020 would shift our plans and alter our priorities. The communities we serve in the arts and higher education felt especially strongly the historic impact of both the Covid-19 pandemic, which has kept us apart and out of our classrooms, studios, and concert halls, and the racial reckoning in the United States prompted by the murder of George Floyd and violent discrimination against Asian Americans.

As we moved through what became a completely remote design process, the a2ru team felt strongly that we wanted the site to feel like a gathering place: an online space where we could connect more deeply with the like-minded scholars, artists, students, and leaders who make our work possible. A place to find information, inspiration, and conversation with an ever-growing international community.

## Some of the major changes you'll find on the site include:

- We redesigned [our homepage](#) so you can see, at a glance, the latest news, events, research, and job postings from a2ru and around the network.
- We introduced the [Creative Placemaking Resource Hub](#), which builds upon the ArtPlace America archives and will continue to gather resources for creative place-making in higher education and beyond.
- We have expanded our [member profiles](#) for our institutional members to more dynamically capture the unique arts ecologies on each campus.
- Our [blog posts](#) have commenting enabled to encourage dialogue.
- Some of our content has become member-exclusive, particularly from our research and event archives.
- We've upgraded our navigation and search functionality to make it easier to find what you're looking for.

We want to say a special thank you to our web development and design team at [Phire Group](#) for their diligent and inspired work on this site, and to the team at [ArtPlace America](#) for their generous financial support, which has made both the Creative Placemaking Resource Hub and the a2ru.org site redesign possible.



## Advancing the Arts in Higher Education

The Alliance for the Arts in Research Universities (a2ru) fosters and champions the role of the arts, design, and arts integration in higher education. Our passionate and generous community shares insights, best practices, tools, experiences, and more. All meant to forward each of our institutions. And all of our work.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT US](#) [VIEW OUR RESEARCH](#)

## Welcome to the Creative Placemaking Resource Hub

As part of our website redesign, we launched the Creative Placemaking Resource Hub. With support from ArtPlace America, the Hub will archive ArtPlace's decade of path-breaking work and support the rapidly-growing field of creative placemaking pedagogy and practice in higher education and beyond.

Sarah Calderon, the Executive Director of Creatives Rebuild New York and previously the Managing Director of ArtPlace America, wrote in a blog introducing the Hub:

**“The Creative Placemaking Resource Hub provides a one-stop shop for those learning about or communicating about the work happening at the intersection of arts and equitable community development. The Hub guides educators on the key values of the work while also providing efficient access to the tools they need. The fact that there is now a place—one place—that can support educators from higher education and beyond as they structure their teaching is both exciting and necessary.**

**The Hub will house shareable curricula, syllabi, toolkits, videos, podcasts, scholarly articles, origin documents, case studies, and much more.**

**ArtPlace America funded a2ru to host the Hub because we believed that developing the next generation of leaders and establishing a knowledge base was work that higher education institutions, and those that work for these institutions, were uniquely qualified to do. We are so excited to see how this work bolsters the field, scales innovative teaching practices, and becomes a space for sharing with a strong community of practice.”**

# Conferences & Events

**2020 Emerging Creatives**

**20 - 21**

**2020 National Conference**

**22 - 23**

**Virtual Teaching Webinar Series**

**24 - 25**

**Arts and Health Mini-Symposium**

**26**

**Workshops**

**27**

**2021 National Conference**

**28 - 29**



# 2020 Emerging Creatives

Rise Up: Risk Something Real  
February 20-23, 2020

From the neighborhoods to its collective memory, civic unrest has shaped Cincinnati in many ways. As host of the 2020 a2ru Emerging Creatives Student Summit, the University of Cincinnati immersed students into Cincinnati’s long history of civic unrest and used their insights as a springboard to meaningful dialogue and the development of creative calls to action against social injustice and inequality. The UC Summit drew on UC’s strengths in the creative & performing arts, humanities, and science, technology, engineering, and medicine as well as its urban location to inform, inspire, and compel students around the nation to rise up in the name of peace and justice.

### Featured Speakers:

Chuck D, Rapper, Founder of Public Enemy  
Nikki Taylor, Professor and Department Chair of History at Howard University



Students shared their group projects on the final day of the Summit.

over  
**80**  
students  
from  
**20**  
research institutions  
attended  
the  
summit

we awarded  
**5**  
Travel Grants  
  
&  
  
**8**  
Scholar Awards



## Community Partner Organizations

### Starfire

Starfire is a visionary organization working to build better lives for people with disabilities. Working with one person at a time, Starfire connects people to relationships and uncovers a person’s talents and passions—so they can thrive in their communities alongside their neighbors.

### Contemporary Arts Center

The Contemporary Arts Center provides experiences through exhibitions and performances as well as educational and outreach programs, to engage and interact with the art, artists, and ideas of our time. Working with our regional community of visitors, patrons, and partners, and with our global community of artists and institutions, we explore and celebrate the unfolding landscape of art and expression.

### St. Vincent Depaul

The Cincinnati Poverty Simulation challenges participants to walk in the shoes of our neighbors in need—to explore poverty experientially. Their objective is to help people in the community better understand the realities of living in poverty, to grow in solidarity and to take action on behalf of their neighbors in need.

### Dayton Contemporary Dance Company

Rooted in the African American experience, the Dayton Contemporary Dance Company is a culturally diverse contemporary dance company committed to reaching the broadest audience through exceptional performance and arts-integrated education.

### Elementz

Where street art meets street smart, Elementz is an urban oasis of hope and a catalyst of change for Cincinnati’s inner-city youth. What began as a way to get kids off the streets in 2001 has transformed into a thriving Urban Arts Center that fosters talent, ignites potential, and inspires possibilities.

“At many research institutions, there are barriers to interdisciplinary work, & even barriers to meaningful engagement with scholars outside of your field...In those few days, I feel like I’ve talked to more students outside of my field than in my entire graduate career. As a Native student with a differing worldview based in interconnectedness & iterative processes, this was a very equitable, rewarding experience.”

—Alex Williams, University of Kansas



# 2020 National Conference

8th Annual National Conference

Land & Equity: The Art and Politics of Place

October 15 – 30, 2020 | Hosted by the University of Wisconsin-Madison

The eighth annual national Alliance for the Arts in Research Universities (a2ru) conference convened Thursday, October 15–Friday, October 30th, 2020. There were approximately 310 attendees from 85 institutions around the world. The conference was hosted by the University of Wisconsin-Madison and focused on how our art, research, and teaching is simultaneously defined by and impacts the land we inhabit. Throughout the 29 sessions held, we also focused on access, asking who has access to the land and its resources, as well as the academy and the knowledge within.

We were especially excited about our Steps Toward Change series. Nine current or recently graduated undergraduate and graduate students participated in the “Speaking of #BlackintheIvory: Amplifying the Black, Indigenous, and People of Color Experience at a2ru and on Our Campuses” panels, “Student Voices I: Reforming Arts Pedagogy Through Anti-racist Education” and “Student Voices II: Challenging Tokenism in the Arts” (moderated by Jason Geary (Rutgers University-New Brunswick). Their insights were invaluable and gave the a2ru community actionable tips for assisting our BIPOC students. Our “Art for Politics’ Sake” roundtable, moderated by Harvey Young (Boston University), with five discussants—three faculty members, one interdisciplinary artist, and one graduate student—brought up a number of important questions about equity in the academy and the role educators and researchers play in making knowledge accessible.



Michele Byrd-McPhee of the Ladies of Hip-Hop Festival delivers her keynote.



Kate Hewson from conference host U-W's Division of the Arts welcomes attendees.

## Keynotes:

*NSF's Broader Impacts: Fostering Connections to Expand the Societal Benefits of Basic Research (in partnership with the Wisconsin Science Festival)*

Fleming Crim, National Science Foundation

From its broader impacts funding category to its support of Advancing Research Impact on Society (ARIS), the National Science Foundation has increasingly prioritized situating its funded research in terms of its impact in improving large systemic societal problems. How is this funding fostering the participation of interdisciplinary individuals and institutions in the projects it supports? Where are they going next in reaching beyond STEM for expertise in its funded projects? This keynote addressed the evolving culture at NSF to better and more broadly impact society and address creative solutions to underlying problems, and what that can mean for the greater scientific community.

*Native Appropriations, Indigenous Social Media, and Responding to Racism*

Adrienne Keene, Brown University

Adrienne Keene addressed cultural appropriation and stereotyping, as well as the personal story behind her popular blog "Native Appropriations," and the journey of thinking about it as a space to challenge racism and for “consenting to learn in public.” She covered the 4 “C”s of the blog: Critical Lens, Contemporary Issues, Community, and Counter-narratives, and the ways each of these play out in the space of Native Appropriations. She also discussed and provided practical advice about handling the deluge of hate mail that can accompany being a woman of color on the internet, and the power of the space to create real change, as well as how a blog can work alongside an academic career path.

*Creating Racial Justice & Change Through the Arts and Why It's Important*

Michele Byrd-McPhee, Ladies of Hip-Hop Festival

Michele Byrd-McPhee founded the Ladies of Hip-Hop Festival as a safe space and a neutral zone for female hip-hop dancers, and as a way to counter the limited professional opportunities available to them. She wanted a space where “the art does not get lost or stifled because of complexities of male/female relationships” and women can define themselves, rather than let others define them. In her talk, Byrd-McPhee shared what she’d learned from her experience with Ladies of Hip-Hop, as well as her teaching and consulting work, about creating meaningful, authentic culture change around racial justice in the arts.

*There Grows the Neighborhood: The Case Against Imperial Knowledge*

Emmanuel Pratt, Sweet Water Foundation

Emmanuel Pratt’s work transforms vacant spaces and abandoned buildings into economically and ecologically productive and sustainable community assets that produce engaged youth, skilled workers, art, locally-grown food, and affordable housing. This keynote addressed how this former Charles Moore Visiting Professor at the University of Michigan’s Taubman School of Architecture and Urban Planning expanded his academic teaching and scholarship to community activism. Pratt also shared his insights on the democratization of research.



# Virtual Teaching Webinar Series

## Navigating Online Arts Instruction Webinar Series Summer 2020

As the Covid-19 pandemic took hold, the spring 2020 semester saw a swift, unexpected transition to remote arts instruction for many faculty. Amidst feelings of isolation and anxiety about the future, teachers and students had to adjust to a new way of learning and teaching. As humans so often do in times of crisis, our communities rose to the challenge. Teachers and students worked together to learn new technology; resources for remote teaching were shared throughout the arts community; and genuine efforts were made to maintain a sense of community despite the imposed social distance. As we looked towards the fall 2020 semester with continued remote instruction for many schools, arts instructors needed a space to hear others' experiences, and to share and gather resources on navigating online arts instruction. With the "Navigating Online Arts Instruction" webinar series, a2ru provided that space.

Recordings of most sessions are available at [a2ru.org](https://a2ru.org).

### Sessions:

#### Educating Through Visual Arts, Engaging Through Distance

**Moderator:**

**Susan Lakin**  
Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT)

**Panelists:**

**David Andree**  
University of Arkansas  
**Rébecca Bourgault**  
Boston University  
**J.R. Campbell**  
Kent State University  
**David Choberka**  
University of Michigan Museum of Art  
**Angela Johnson**  
University of Wisconsin-Madison  
**Catherine Rosamond**  
School of Visual Arts

#### Finding Harmony in the Midst of Chaos: A Conversation about Remote Music Instruction

**Moderator:**

**R. Benjamin Knapp**  
Virginia Tech

**Panelists:**

**Luvada Harrison**  
University of Alabama  
**Timothy Jones**  
University of Nevada, Las Vegas  
**Eric Lyon**  
Virginia Tech  
**Dr. Jean Martin-Williams**  
University of Georgia  
**Stephanie Tingler**  
University of Georgia

#### Thinking Outside the Classroom: Creative Approaches to Online Teaching Part I

**Moderator:**

**Carole Woodlock**  
Rochester Institute of Technology

**Panelists:**

**Lisa Conway**  
Clark College  
**Alex Lobos**  
Rochester Institute of Technology  
**David Schnuckel**  
Rochester Institute of Technology

#### Thinking Outside the Classroom: Creative Approaches to Online Teaching Part II

**Moderator:**

**Nicholas Allen**  
University of Georgia

**Panelists:**

**Stuart Candy**  
Carnegie Mellon  
**Keli DiRisio**  
Rochester Institute of Technology  
**Trent Hergenrader**  
Rochester Institute of Technology

#### Designing While Distancing: Teaching Architecture Remotely

**Moderator:**

**Julia McMorrough**  
University of Michigan

**Panelists:**

**Mallika Bose**  
Penn State  
**Nils Gore**  
University of Kansas  
**Eddy Man**  
Carnegie Mellon

#### Taking the Show Online: How We Teach the Performing Arts During Covid-19

**Moderator:**

**Anita Gonzalez**  
University of Michigan

**Panelists:**

**Felice Amato**  
Boston University  
**Raymond Kent**  
Cuyahoga Community College  
**Robert Morgan**  
Washington University in St. Louis  
**Stefanie Sertich**  
Laguardia Community College

#### Dancing in Isolation: Teaching Movement in a Virtual Setting

**Moderator:**

**Jennifer Salk**  
University of Washington

**Panelists:**

**Jennifer Salk**  
University of Washington  
**Stacey Alley**  
University of Alabama  
**Fenella Kennedy**  
University of Alabama  
**Crystal Michelle Perkins**  
Ohio State University  
**Susan Petry**  
Ohio State University  
**Maya Tillman-Rayton**  
University of Kansas

# Arts and Health Mini-Symposium

Arts in Public Health: Pedagogy, Practice, Research and Policy  
November 12, 2020

Thought and program innovators from across the country gathered in a mini-symposium to explore the burgeoning field of arts in public health. The discussion explored how the arts and culture can be leveraged in public health to improve lives in the Covid-19 era and beyond. This interactive event, hosted via Remo, explored the intersections of the arts and public health, presented programs at the cutting edge, and gave attendees a chance to connect with pedagogy, practice, research, and policy educators from across the country. An interactive session with all participants was facilitated by Rabbi Nancy Epstein from Drexel University.

This event was designed to launch a community of practice, hosted by a2ru, that will drive collaboration and action at the intersections of the arts and public health to advance health and health equity in the U.S.

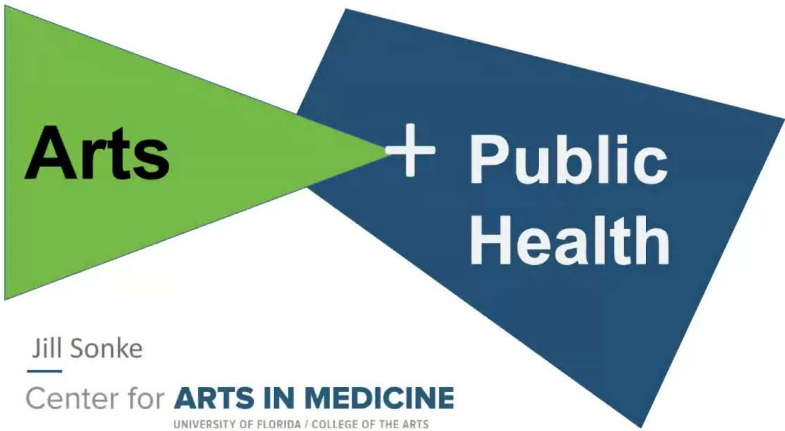
This event was hosted by Boston University’s Arts Initiative and planned in cooperation with Boston University’s School of Public Health, the University of Florida’s Center for Arts in Medicine, and Drexel University’s Dornsife School of Public Health, along with a2ru.

## Speakers:

- Sandro Galea**  
Dean, School of Public Health  
Boston University
- Jill Sonke**  
Director, Center for Arts in Medicine  
University of Florida
- Kendra Jones**  
Director for Health Equity, Arts & Culture  
Richmond Memorial Health Foundation
- Josh Miller**  
Co-founder/CEO, IDEAS xLab

## Moderators:

- Ty Furman**,  
Managing Director  
Arts Initiative, Boston University
- Jennifer Beard**  
Clinical Associate Professor of Global Health  
Boston University School of Public Health



# Workshops

## A2ru Pilots New Virtual and In-Person Faculty Workshops

In 2021, a2ru Research Program Manager Veronica Stanich piloted three new workshops with faculty at a2ru member Virginia Commonwealth University’s School of the Arts in Qatar and a2ru’s host institution, the University of Michigan.

In **March 2021**, Stanich offered two virtual workshops for faculty at the Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Qatar. One focused on how artists might understand their work as "research," the other on articulating the impacts of arts work. These sessions were designed to empower faculty to speak about and advocate for their work in funding, tenure/promotion, and interdisciplinary contexts. Participants generally had positive or very positive experiences, both with the programming and with the opportunity to connect to and get perspective from colleagues. A2ru was then invited to present these workshops in person in Doha as part of a two-day faculty retreat in **February 2022**.

In **October 2021**, Stanich debuted the workshop, “Using the Arts to Flip Understanding,” with collaborators Margot Greenlee of BodyWise Dance and Martina Jerant of the Center for RNA Biomedicine at the University of Michigan. The workshop asks: What do the practices and approaches of the arts have to offer researchers in non-arts fields? One answer to that question is new perspectives: engaging with other disciplines helps us see and understand even familiar content differently. Stanich, Greenlee, and Jerant designed a workshop that asks its participants to take on the artist’s practice of making, creating micro-works of art in movement, literary, and visual forms. Participants toggle between an artist’s open-ended, exploratory approach and a more critical one that seeks connections between the artworks they create and a stuck place in their current work or research.

Participants across disciplines and career stages had overwhelmingly positive experiences. Their experiences making micro-artworks in the workshop and analyzing them with a partner allow them to think about familiar things in unfamiliar ways, advance their thinking on a conundrum, gain valuable perspective from peers, and have fun.

These and other workshops are now available virtually and in person, for booking by a2ru member and non-member institutions.

Contact **Veronica Stanich** at [vstanich@umich.edu](mailto:vstanich@umich.edu) for more information.





# 2021 National Conference

Sharing Stories: The Case for Art  
November 3-5, 2021 | Hosted by the Alliance for the Arts in Research Universities

The 2021 conference focused on the power of the arts. Despite the challenges of teaching virtually, many art practitioners and researchers were able to renew their passion for their disciplines, discover new modes of learning and teaching, and form a community within their classrooms. The power of art was also highlighted in a variety of social justice issues inside and outside of the academy. The curriculum in numerous arts disciplines was challenged, with students and instructors rejecting the automatic inclusion of the Western Canon. Murals were a powerful form of expression for artists involved in anti-racism efforts. Art, as many sources over the last two years have pointed out, is important and especially so during a public health crisis.

Instead of giving a traditional PowerPoint, all presenters were asked to take on the role of storyteller and tell a story in 5-7 minutes (with more time allotted for groups). When asked about her vision for the 2021 annual meeting, a2ru Conference Director, Charisse Willis, commented: “As an arts organization advocating for students and faculty to have the opportunity to express their creativity in academic institutions, I felt that our conference should also be a place that allowed for and prompted creative expression. The format, especially the timing, was challenging, but storytellers rose to the occasion and the response to the conference has been quite positive. Ultimately, we achieved our goal for this year: to provide a space for participants to creatively explore the recent changes that have taken place both in the arts and our communities, and to make a case for the importance of their disciplines and the direction they should take.”

## Pre-Conference: Justice and Pedagogy

This year’s pre-conference was a two-part workshop on Justice and Pedagogy. Part I, “Foundations of Equity,” focused on reframing the arts and pedagogy. Courtnie Wolfgang challenged the attendees to “undo curriculum” and “radicalize their pedagogy.” Emily Sara focused on “cripping spaces,” reminding us that accessibility should be in every curriculum. She also discussed “queering research,” and asked the audience to question what counts as research and who gets to make the decision. In Part II, “Dismantling Critique,” Lily Cox-Richard and Wesley Taylor skillfully walked participants through an examination of critique. They explored what critique is; why, when, and how it is useful; how it is harmful, etc. It was a great investigation of a practice that affects so many of us.

## Steps Toward Change Rewriting the Story: Practical Strategies for an Anti-Racist Classroom

The discussants in 2020’s Art for Politics’ Sake pedagogy roundtable had a thought-provoking conversation about changes that needed to happen in the arts discipline, and this year’s roundtable was focused on establishing practical strategies for accomplishing some of those changes. Telling the BIPOC Story: Activism During Covid-19 The student panel featured four current and recently graduated students who, in some way, combined art and activism during the last two years.

Both workshops prompted a re-evaluation of what we accept as “standard” and provided a great start to this year’s unique conference.

## Keynotes:

### In the Circle of Sound

A team of artists, community organizers and educators from the University of Orange, a free school of restoration urbanism in Orange, New Jersey, shared how their Music City program both celebrates and amplifies the existing musical richness of the city and meets the expressed needs and desires of Orange residents for musical education and performance opportunities. The team included stories and media from their work, and described how their programming adapted to the limitations on live performance during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Athens Hip Hop Harmonic

The Athens Hip Hop Harmonic group, with members from the Athens hip hop community and University of Georgia music department, gave background on how their partnership began. Despite experiencing setbacks from the pandemic, the group was able to find a way to collaborate and record together. During their conference session, they premiered co-created, boundary-breaking works by three pairs of Hip Hop artists and UGA faculty composers.

### Staging Incarceration: Artmaking In & About U.S. Prisons

In this session, several artist-scholars shared their experiences making theatre with or about incarcerated individuals in the U.S. prison system, through personal stories, process narratives, and clips from rehearsals and performances. They described the unique challenges of working within the carceral system, and how these experiences have changed their personal and political understandings of time, justice, the ethics of incarceration, and what it means to be human.

### Performing Public Health Panel

Performing Public Health (PPH) was an initiative within the University of Florida Center for Arts in Medicine’s (UFCAM) Covid-19 Arts Response. The keynote was presented in an open conversational format, with teams commenting on each others’ work and sharing photos, videos, or PDFs as an expanded archive of the project.

### A Case for Creative Cultural Leadership

In his conversational-style keynote, Minneapolis College of Art and Design President Sanjit Sethi outlined his “case for creative cultural leadership,” which centered on shared power, resilience, and vulnerability as values for current and future leaders. He stressed that creative cultural leadership is based on critical inquiry and prompted the audience to deliberately examine the assumptions they make about higher education. Only then can we determine the necessary steps to transform these assumptions.

86

storytellers

from

32

different institutions

shared  
their  
work

133

attendees

represented

53

institutions

70

were students

# Research & Publications

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# Ground Works News and MICHR Collaboration

a2ru’s online journal Ground Works was awarded Honorable Mention for the Best New Journal of 2021 by the Council of Editors of Learned Journals (CELJ). In their citation, CELJ wrote: “Ground Works offers the professional credentials of peer-review to truly interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary work, with a submission process that honors non-textual knowledge. The editors understand the difficulty of reviewing interdisciplinary work, especially when it includes the arts or when it brings together practitioners from non-adjacent fields. The online, open access journal has an attractive, clean design with accessibility in mind.”

Ground Works Managing Editor Veronica Stanich remarks,

“I’m so happy to see Ground Works get this recognition, especially for platform developer Daragh Byrne and all the others who have put so much into it. And I remain grateful to our steadfast Advisors like Cheryl Ball who give us such invaluable guidance.”

## New Article: “Unfolding the Genome”

Authors: Gupi Ranganathan, Aiden Lab, Erez Lieberman Aiden

Ground Works published the new article “Unfolding the Genome” in November 2021. “Unfolding the Genome” recounts a visual artist and a research scientist’s collaboration that resulted in compelling artwork as well as advances in the scientific community’s understanding of how the human genome folds.

“I’m really excited about this addition to the *Ground Works* collection,” says Managing Editor Veronica Stanich. “The authors’ first-person account of their shared process adds so much to our understanding of how arts-integrated research gets done. And the images of artist Gupi Ranganathan’s work alongside images of evolving mathematical models tell a story of their own.”



Ranganathan, G. Unfolding: Sampling - Beyond Observation: Filling the Gaps (01-10) (2011). This series of mixed-media drawings suggest some of the many possibilities for the invisible dynamic structure as the genome folds and unfolds in each cell of our body throughout our lives.



Ranganathan, G. Unfolding: Synthesis I, IV & V (2011). In these paintings, lines from 120 Post-It drawings are layered to explore the complexity of representing the dynamic 3-dimensional structure of the folded genome in 2 dimensions.

## Ground Works Announces Collaboration with Leonardo/ISAST to Document CripTech Incubator



As part of a2ru’s ongoing partnership with Leonardo/ISAST, we are pleased to announce a collaboration between Ground Works and the CripTech Incubator. The [CripTech Incubator](#) is Leonardo/ISAST’s art-and-technology fellowship centered on disability innovation. In 2022-23, a cohort of six artists from the disability community will create and showcase innovative work in art and technology, engaging and remaking creative technologies through the lens of accessibility. In collaboration with the CripTech Incubator artists, Ground Works is documenting their creative, interdisciplinary processes.

Within disability culture, the term “crip” recognizes disability as a valued cultural and political identity. But “crip” also identifies an active practice whereby disabled makers and artists transform built environments or technologies to be more accessible.

This project will support the artists’ evolving practices, archive the experience to inform future iterations of the CripTech Incubator, and center diverse ways of knowing and instantiating knowledge. We aim to reshape the research community’s thinking about knowledge production, expertise, and community recognition and inclusion.

## Submitting to Ground Works

Ground Works has a rolling call for submissions, and the editorial staff is happy to consult one-on-one with potential submitters; email [a2ru-editorgw@umich.edu](mailto:a2ru-editorgw@umich.edu) to arrange a consultation.



# a2ru Collaborates with Michigan Institute for Clinical & Health Research (MICHR) to Study Artists on STEMM Research Teams

a2ru Research Program Manager Veronica Stanich, with contributing author Elizabeth LaPensée from Michigan Institute for Clinical & Health Research (MICHR), has completed a new study, “Supporting Artists on STEMM Research Teams: Why and How.”

Begun in 2019, the plan was to do an 18-month qualitative study tracking research teams that included not only scientists and clinicians but also artists and humanists. They asked: what are the mindsets, approaches, and practices associated with the arts and humanities, and how do they inform the work of interdisciplinary teams—especially those teams whose purpose is scientific or medical? How do widely differing disciplinary backgrounds inform team interaction, resulting in collaboration that is more effective, less effective, or different in some way altogether from collaborative research by a team composed of similar or related STEMM (the popular acronym for Science, Technology, Engineering, Math, and Medicine) disciplines? In short, understanding that different disciplines impart distinctive disciplinary approaches and practices to their members, they wanted to find out what happens when those different approaches and practices come together.

They realized they were not only looking at the unique dynamics of arts/STEMM research teams but also at the mechanisms that can support them, and an additional research question emerged: what sort of support do arts/STEMM research teams need, and what are the most effective mechanisms of that support?

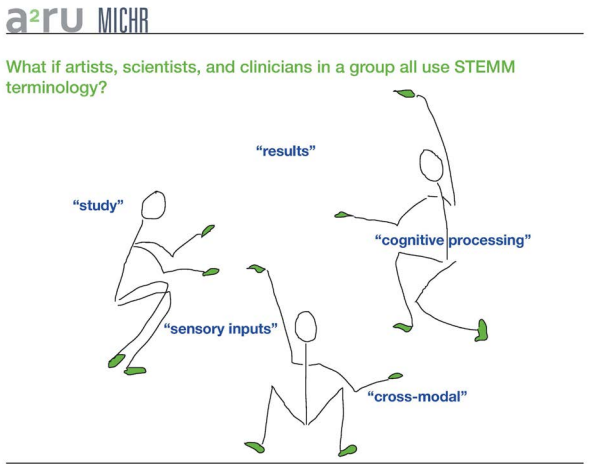
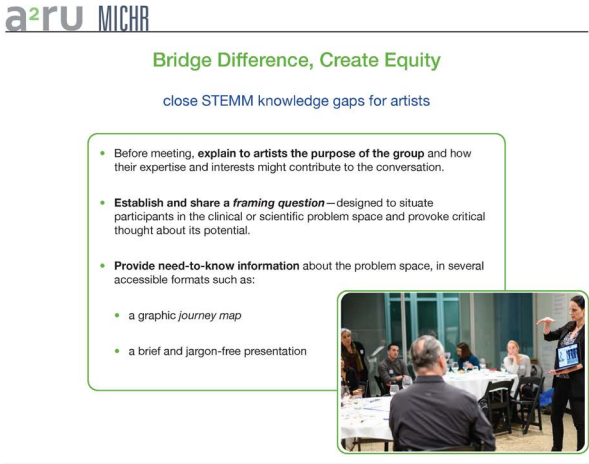
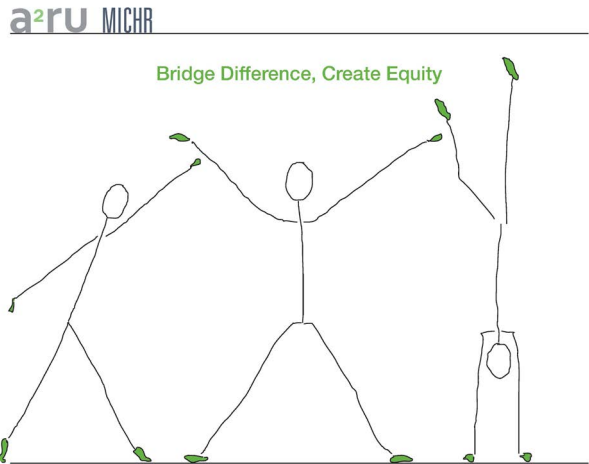
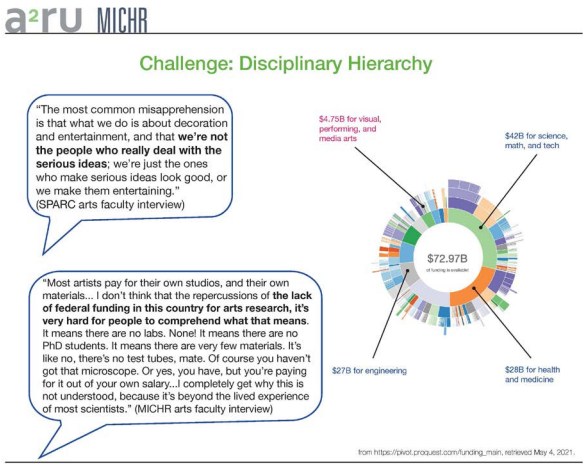
Pandemic circumstances dictated that the study did not unfold as planned. Nonetheless, the study yielded new information and provocative questions that we hope the Team Science and Arts Research communities will pursue.

## Key Takeaways include:

- Artists bring new perspective, tolerance for ambiguity, synthesis and translation, and a maker practice to the STEMM research space.
- While arts/STEMM teams face many of the same challenges as any interdisciplinary team, two challenges are particularly pronounced: the especially wide divide between STEMM and arts practices and epistemologies, and the perceived hierarchy of knowledge that places science and medicine above the arts.
- Numerous practices help arts/STEMM teams surmount these challenges, including bridging difference, promoting equity, building supportive structures, and creating a positive environment.
- Areas for further exploration include:
  - the original research questions of this study. The study was curtailed by the COVID-19 pandemic, so exploration of the research questions remains incomplete.
  - areas of understanding and experience that artists share with scientists and clinicians. This overlap positively impacts communication.
  - conceiving of scientific and clinical problem spaces in ways that create more entry points for artists and those from other disciplines.

Stanich presented preliminary findings at the 2021 Science of Team Science conference; her presentation, “Supporting an Expansive Interdisciplinarity: Artists on STEMM Research Teams,” was voted one of the conference’s top presentations.

The study will be released in full on [a2ru.org](https://a2ru.org) in summer 2022.



# Impact Books

**A2ru Releases Three New Books on Arts Impacts**  
In 2020, a2ru released three new short books on the impacts of arts in the university.

These books synthesize findings from a multi-year investigation. From 2012-2015 (as part of the Mellon-funded SPARC project), the a2ru research team interviewed upper-level administration, faculty, and students at 38 member institutions about the impact of their arts-integration initiatives, including teaching, research, and community projects. We asked about what impact they hoped for and what impact they actually saw, as well as how they measured impact. This initial research was supplemented with a literature review and data from a four-year longitudinal study of 4,000 undergraduates at the University of Michigan.

**A2ru members can download the books from [a2ru.org](https://a2ru.org); paper copies are also available to purchase on [Fulcrum](https://www.fulcrumbooks.com).**

These books are:

## *New Perspective, Understanding, Awareness*

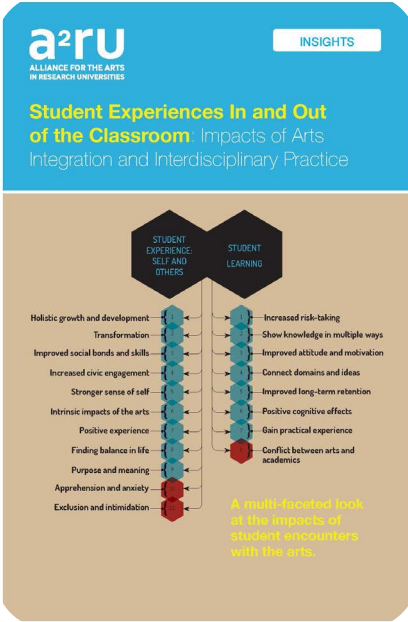
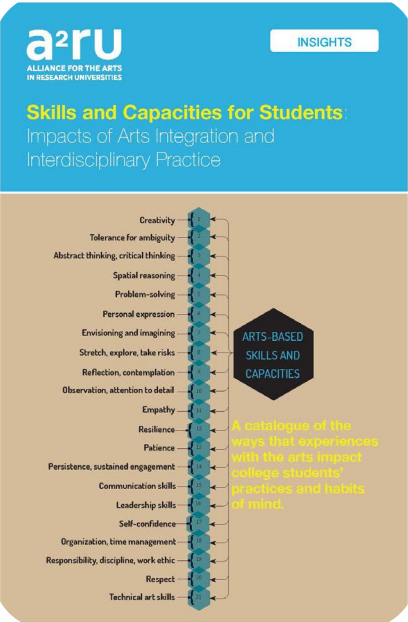
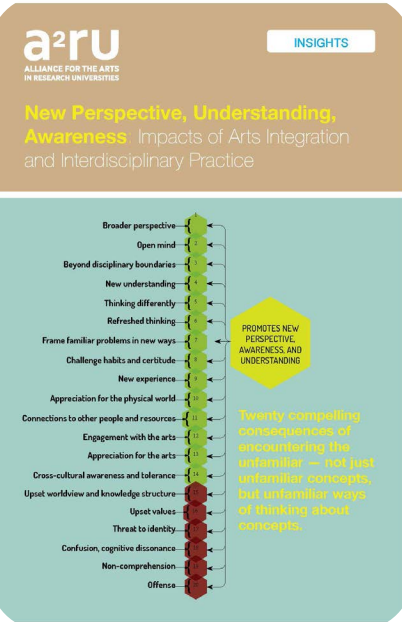
Arts-integrated teaching, research, and community engaged activities find people with expertise in the arts working together with those whose expertise is in other fields. As a result, everyone involved experiences the shared work from a new perspective. Those new perspectives, practically by definition, constitute fertile ground for learning; we re-examine what we thought we knew in light of the new, with the possibility that our understanding will need to be taken apart and rebuilt. The twenty sub-categories of New Perspective, Understanding, and Awareness explore related but distinct aspects of such encounters. They recur across the impacts landscape, affecting a wide range of people and practices, and amplifying learning and conceptual change writ large.

## *Skills and Capacities for Students*

University students are profoundly affected when they encounter the arts—whether the arts are happening in a studio, gallery, or theater, or integrated into their coursework, the faculty research they assist, or the campus environment. In addition to the inspiration and transformation inherent in the arts, students stand to acquire a range of arts-related skills and capacities that can serve their endeavors in many arenas. This book is a catalogue of those skills and capacities, and includes a discussion of two of the most often-mentioned arts-based capacities—creativity and tolerance for ambiguity.

## *Student Experiences In and Out of the Classroom*

While the arts are inherently inspirational and transformative, they also affect students’ learning, their growth and development, and their connections to others. Student Experiences in and out of the Classroom explores all of these “extra” impacts of the arts.



# Upcoming in 2022

## Ground Works Special Edition: *Vibrant Ecologies of Research* Summer 2022

This special edition of Ground Works, a2ru’s online journal for exemplary interdisciplinary research, focuses on deepening our understanding of institutional, social, and epistemological systems that effectively weave arts-based inquiry into the scholarly fabric of research. It calls attention to the complex and nuanced ways institutions, research groups, and organizations come together, and what elements allow them to thrive.

### The *Vibrant Ecologies of Research* special issue asks:

- What forms of leadership, resources, and institutional structures most effectively impact research agendas across disciplines?
- How might these ecosystems be analyzed or understood so that other institutions, scholars, and communities may benefit?
- How does disciplinarity operate in these ecosystems?
- How responsive are these ecologies so that they may remain vibrant, productive, and impactful in light of social and cultural upheaval?
- How may productive ecosystems respond to failure?
- How might vibrant ecologies of research provide leadership and vision in models of diversity, equity and inclusion?

### Credits:

**Designer:**  
Katie Raymond

**Editor:**  
Shannon Fitzsimons Moen

**Copy Editor:**  
Charisse Willis

## a2ru@10: What’s Next in Arts Integration June 9-11, 2022 University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

As a2ru marks its tenth anniversary, we are gathering leaders from our international network of institutional members, governmental funding organizations and foundation, and private industry. In this multi-day session of lightning talks, break-out sessions and creative provocations, we will assess how the role of the arts and arts integration in higher education has evolved in the past decade, and envision a bold shared agenda for our next decade of work.

## a2ru 2022 National Conference: *Exploring Artistic Research* November 3-5, 2022 University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

a2ru’s next national conference will take place from November 3-5, 2022, on the University of Michigan’s Ann Arbor campus. This will be an in-person conference, though we anticipate remote attendance will be an option for many sessions.

The 2022 conference will be hosted by the University of Michigan in partnership with Engaged Michigan, the University of Michigan Arts Initiative, ArtsEngine, and the University of Michigan School of Social Work. Additional sponsors and collaborators include the University of Kansas and the University of Houston. These partners will collaborate on this year’s theme, “Exploring Artistic Research.”

Visit <https://a2ru.org/event/2022-national-conference/> for more information, including the **Call for Proposals and registration**.

**Back Cover Caption:**  
"Body Full of Time" at the Institute for Creativity, Arts and Technology (ICAT) at a2ru member institution Virginia Tech.

Photo Credit: ICAT Staff.



