

Collaborative Exploration Grants

Spring 2024 Request for Proposals

The Division of Research and the College of Arts + Architecture are pleased to announce the spring 2024 ArtXSci request for proposals. This program promotes innovative interdisciplinary research and fosters collaborations between faculty in the College of Arts + Architecture (CoAA) and scholars in STEM fields. The goal of this program is to cultivate active/intensive exchange and sustained dialogue among those engaged in artistic and scientific inquiry within the University and the broader Charlotte region.

# **Award Focus**

ArtXSci provides opportunities for faculty from multiple domains to explore new modes of artistic, creative, and scientific inquiry. The project intentionally aims to break open conventional intellectual frameworks to transcend disciplinary boundaries and to chart unfamiliar territories. To do so, the project’s programs will foster groundbreaking collaborations with UNC Charlotte faculty in the arts, design, and sciences. These collaborative partnerships aim to critically engage faculty, students, staff, and the public through novel opportunities for art, design, science, and technology to thrive as interrelated modes of inquiry, discovery, and research. Collaborations may include partnerships between (but are not limited to): art, art history, astronomy and astrophysics; dance, biology, chemistry, and digital media studies; computer and information science, creative writing, and literature; mathematics, medicine, and music; engineering, physics, and theater; environmental science, architecture, and the visual arts.

Ideally, projects will include student engagement, public presentations, master classes, and/or participation in the regular curriculum. All projects must involve the development of new artistic and research-based work and should give visibility to UNC Charlotte as an innovator in collaborative research involving faculty from CoAA and other colleges, with an emphasis on STEM disciplines.

# **UNC Charlotte’s Research on the Rise**

ArtXSci supports our research excellence through the development of cross- disciplinary projects that integrate the arts, design, and the sciences for significant impacts on campus, in Charlotte and beyond. ArtXSci grants are intended to support and incentivize stronger collaborative relationships among researchers from different colleges, departments, and disciplines with the goal of increasing the university’s competitiveness in attracting extramural funding and research support. While we welcome projects of all types, AI and misinformation have become lively topics of conversations and so we hope to see some exciting proposals in this area. We also encourage projects that have community engagement at the core. As such, ArtXSci will support projects that may be difficult to fund through traditional sources and that will lead to creative works, significant research, and externally supported collaborations in the future. Proposers will need to fully describe how the research contributes to existing and emerging university research strengths. One expected outcome of the program is the submission of applications and proposals for significant funding and/or external recognition from a diversity of sources within the 22-month award period.

# **Award Amount and Duration**

Interdisciplinary teams can apply for one-time grants of up to $30,000 for up to 22 months. Facility and Administrative (F&A) costs are not required. We anticipate funding 2-3 awards in FY2025. Preliminary reports detailing the project activities and outcomes to date will be due on the anniversary date of the award. Final reports will be due 45 days after the end date of the project. The expected start date for FY2025 awards is August 1, 2024. The expected end date is May 31, 2026.

# **Who Can Serve as a PI?**

This ArtXSci Initiative is open to faculty and research staff from any UNC Charlotte department, lab, or center, regardless of discipline; however, all proposed project teams must include at least one member from the College of Arts + Architecture. Principal investigators (PIs) on ArtXSci proposals must be full- time, tenured/tenure-track faculty at UNC Charlotte. UNC Charlotte faculty (tenured/tenure-track, teaching, adjunct, and/or research faculty), instructors, post-docs, and staff are eligible to serve as senior personnel. There is no limit to the number of senior personnel on a project. A faculty member may serve as PI on only one proposal or active award.

# **Proposal Preparation Guidelines and Requirements**

Proposals must be uploaded as a single PDF file to Niner Research, UNC Charlotte’s electronic research administration portal. See [Appendix 1](#_heading=h.3rdcrjn) at the end of this document for instructions on submission of ArtXSci proposals in Niner Research.

ArtXSci application information is also available on the [Center for Research Excellence website.](https://research.charlotte.edu/departments/center-research-excellence-cre/locating-funding/internal-funding-programs/)

Proposals must contain the following sections in the order listed and with the headings indicated below (minimum 11-point font, single-spaced, minimum 1-inch margins):

1. **Cover Page** (one page) with the following: (1) project title (2) the names, departments, and institutional affiliations, and contact information of all participating personnel (only two faculty members can serve as PIs; remaining team members should be listed as senior personnel), (3) total amount requested, and (4) anticipated duration of the project.
2. **Project Summary:** A short (300 word) synopsis of the proposed partnership describing the nature of the collaboration, the theme of the proposed research, and the project's potential contribution to the research programs of the participating faculty/staff. The summary should be written for a general, non-technical audience.
3. **Project Description** (4 pages maximum) describing the goals and objectives of the project and the plan of work, including: activities aimed at facilitating and stimulating collaboration among team members; outline of the participants’ respective areas of expertise and anticipated contribution to the project; anticipated impacts of the project on the research and artistic work of the collaborators as well as impacts on the fields of inquiry involved; the proposed timing, duration and frequency of the artist's participation; impacts on audiences and on students; and steps that will be taken to assist the team in developing competitive applications for external funding.

Proposed activities may include public events (lectures, performances, exhibitions, etc.), workshops and planning sessions, stakeholder engagement meetings, collaborator workshops and conferences, team-building training sessions, pilot studies, travel to explore potential collaborations and establish new partnerships, travel to meet and interact with federal and state program officers, and engagement of consultants and grant writers. Projects that are highly interdisciplinary/multidisciplinary and include unusual and non-traditional combinations of participants from diverse disciplines and backgrounds are highly encouraged.

1. **Expected Outcomes and Planning Roadmap** (1-page maximum) that includes a projected schedule of activities and a list of anticipated milestones and deliverables during each phase of the award. This section should also include a detailed list and analysis of existing and anticipated external funding and/or dissemination opportunities that will be targeted by the team and a timeline (with due dates) for application. Professional documentation of the creative process and evolution of the project is an important component of ArtsXSci.

Each ArtXSci collaboration should include a pedagogical component (to be defined by the collaborative teams), such as (but not limited to) a for-credit course or seminar, workshop, studio, or lab (ideally for both graduate and undergraduate students). ArtXSci projects should also include a public component that models the innovative aspirations that characterize the ArtXSci initiative and the Road Map to Top Tier Research

Applicants are encouraged to think strategically and creatively about how the values, activities and pedagogical impacts of their proposal may be most effectively made visible and disseminated to the UNC Charlotte community and beyond. Sample outputs include video clips, sound recordings, photographs, data visualizations, interviews, web pages, peer-reviewed conference presentations (panels, posters, papers), regular blogging or social media presence.

1. **Biographical Sketches** (500 words maximum per participant) for the PI and all senior personnel listed on the cover page.
2. **Budget and Budget Justification** detailing how requested funds will be used to support the activities outlined in the Project Description. Please indicate any special requirements or materials that may be needed to complete the project. Budgets should be listed on a single page and formatted using the budget template available [here](https://research.charlotte.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/631/2024/03/ArtXSci-Budget-Template.xlsx). The Budget Justification is limited to 2 pages.

An award of $30,000 (maximum) per team to support program goals and may include a course release: 3 credit course release for 1 semester for one PI.

**Allowable Expenses:** Travel (including per diem), workshop and training materials and supplies, transportation, consulting services and fees, computing services, and other expendable materials and supplies (including production/performance/exhibition costs).

ArtXSci awards may be used for partial faculty/staff summer salary and/or for one-course release (3-credit course for 1 semester) for the PI. The course release should be budgeted at the cost of hiring a part-time, adjunct instructor to teach the course. Subawards are not permitted, but personnel external to the university can serve as consultants.

**Unallowable Expenses:** Equipment purchases

1. **References Cited and/or Relevant Links**
2. **Unit Leadership Approval**: The application should include an acknowledgment from each of the PI’s Unit Leaderships (Chair or Director) stating that they are aware of this proposal and will work to accommodate any course-releases needed to support the project. The contents of the letters should be limited to the following statement:

“*If the planning grant submitted by [insert name of the Principal Investigator] entitled [insert the proposal title] is selected for funding, it is my intent to support the activities detailed in the Project Description section of the proposal.”*

After completing all sections as outlined in the ArtXSci guidelines, compile all proposal sections in the order listed above and submit as a single pdf file.

* Check your documents to ensure that no errors were introduced in the conversion process.
* Upload your proposal as a single PDF file to the Niner Research portal by **5:00**

**p.m. on May 31, 2024.**

* Use the following file naming convention: Last name\_first name. If two PIs are proposed, use the last names of both faculty members.

Late and incomplete submissions will not be accepted. Proposals that do not conform to the guidelines will be returned without review.

# **Review Criteria and Evaluation**

Proposals will be reviewed using the criteria listed below, but special consideration will be given to projects that (1) include highly interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary teams and approaches, (2) complement existing areas of excellence and/or research strengths, and (3) align with areas and themes of state and national priority. Preference will also be given to projects that have the potential to enhance UNC Charlotte’s competitiveness for large-scale grants, including (but not limited to): Bloomberg Philanthropies grants, Ford Foundation grants, Guggenheim Memorial Foundation grants, Mellon Foundation grants, NEA grants, NEH grants, NIH grants, National Humanities Center grants, NSF Science and Technology Center (STC) grants, NSF Engineering Research Center (ERC) grants, NSF Materials Research Science Engineering Center (MRSEC) grants, NIH program project/center grants.

ArtXSci proposal evaluation criteria were adapted from NSF and NEA Review Criteria and include:

* + What is the potential for the proposed research to advance knowledge and understanding within the fields and disciplines represented in the project?
  + To what extent does the proposed research explore creative and original concepts?
  + What is the proposed extent, timing, duration and frequency of the artist's participation?
  + Is the plan for carrying out the proposed activities well-reasoned, well organized, and based on a sound rationale?
  + How well qualified is the team to conduct the proposed activities?
  + To what extent does the proposed project encourage new collaborative partnerships among university researchers?
  + Does the proposed research theme complement and enhance existing and/or emerging areas of research focus and distinction at UNC Charlotte?

# **Timeline for Review and Award**

April 1, 2024 Solicitation Released

May 31, 2024 Proposals Due, 5 p.m. ET Mid-July, 2024 Awards Announced August 1, 2024 Anticipated Start Date

# **Inquires**

Questions regarding this program announcement should be directed to Dr. LaVerne Ellerbe (lellerb1@charlotte.edu, or Kailey Hess ([khess10@charlotte.edu](mailto:khess10@charlotte.edu)) in the Division of Research/Center for Research Excellence

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# ***APPENDIX 1: Guide to Submitting ArtXSci Applications in Niner Research***

Log into [Niner Research](https://research.charlotte.edu/niner-research/) using your University login credentials

* From the *Home* screen select *Proposals*
* *Under* *Create New* click on *Proposal* and a new window will open titled *Create New Proposal*

**Create New Proposal:**

The PI Name field will default to the name of the person who logged in (i.e. you), so unless you are entering this information for a project in which someone else is the Lead PI (e.g. more than one PI), you should not need to change anything in that field. If you do need to change the name, start typing the last name and the system will provide options to choose from. Click on one of the system options to select it.

* Select *Create a New Proposal*
* *Click on* *Select from Grants.gov Opportunities* and then select *Set Up Proposal Manually*
* In the *Sponsor* field type in “ArtXSci” then select INTERNAL - ArtxScifrom the options that appear.
* For *Proposal Type*, select *Internal Funding* from the drop-down list Enter full proposal title
* Enter the proposed *Start* and *End* dates: *08/01/2024 to 05/31/2026*
* Under *Number of Project Periods* select “1” Click on *Create Proposal*

The system will process and take you to a new screen with several tabs/sections listed in a menu on the left side of the screen. You can click on the tab/section name to access it.

**Setup Questions Tab:**

Take note of the proposal number (IPF-2024-xxxx) in the upper right corner of the screen. This is your proposal record number and can be used to access it again after you log out.

* Enter ArtXSci deadline date – May 31, 2024
* Answer *General Proposal Properties* questions as relevant to your proposed project
* Associated Department will default to the PI’s home department. If any others need to be added, click on *Add* and search for a department by name in the pop-up window that appears by starting to type the name of the department. Select one from the options that appear by clicking on it. Then click on the *Select* button.
* Click on *Save and Continue* button at the bottom right side of the screen

**Personnel Tab:**

The PI’s name will automatically carry over and already be entered here

* To add another PI (for collaborative submissions), in the box that says *Begin typing to select Personnel Name* start typing last name of person to be added. Then select from the list of options by clicking on it. Select their role from the *Role* drop-down list as “Co-Pd/PI”. Then click on *Save* and their name will be added in the lower section of this screen (where the PI’s name appears).
* For Senior Personnel, start typing in name and click the role as “Other.” A box will pop up and type in “Senior Personnel” then hit save.
* Once you are done, click in the box next to *Completed* in the upper right corner

**Internal General Information Tab:**

The answers to some questions will carry over from the Setup Tab.

Please Enter the Following:

* *Lead PI Employee ID* (800 number)
* Enter *Rank*
* Enter *Academic Appointment* (9 or 12 month)

Select department the funds will be allocated to:

* Click on the pencil and the department list will pop up
* Begin typing the department name in the *Find Department* field
* Highlight the department, then click *Locate* (this will highlight the department in red on the list)
* Click on *Select*

Answer the compliance questions

* Once you have answered all questions, click on Save (top left corner) then click in the box next to Complete (top right corner)

**Budget:**

*Note: Your college-based research officer or the Office of Research Services can help you complete this section if needed*

* Click on *Budget* from the menu in the upper left
* If you are requesting a stipend, click the *Detail* button next to the Personnel Name. In the *Base Salary* field, enter the amount of the stipend to be paid in that budget period, then in the *Calendar* field, put the number 12 (no fringe benefits needed)
* Click on *Save and Close*
* Repeat this process if you are requesting a stipend for a Co-PI
* Under the section titled *Non-Personnel Costs* open the dropdown list in the *Select Budget Category* field to select other budget line items. Select the desired line item, (e.g., travel (domestic, foreign); publication costs; material supplies; consultant services;or other costs), then click *Add Item*. In the pop-up window enter the desired dollar amount for that line item in each budget period.
* Please do not enter any indirect costs
* Click on *Save and Continue*. Repeat for additional budget items.
* Once you have entered all line items for your budget, click on the *Complete Budget* button in the upper right corner.

**Compliance Tab:**

Answer the questions as appropriate to your project (some may already be answered based on your answers on previous tabs)

* Click on the box next to *Completed* in the upper right corner.

**Attachments Tab:**

Next to *Proposal Attachment (Proposal Documents)*, click on the Upload icon ()

* Browse your computer to select your proposal file (a single PDF file with all application components as described in the ArtxSci guidelines).
* Click the *Upload* button in the upper right corner of the pop-up window.
* Click the glasses icon next to *Proposal Attachment (Proposal Documents)* to view your file once uploaded.
* When finished, click in the box next to *Completed* in the upper right corner of the Attachments tab.

**Finalize Tab:**

Click on the *Build* button (if you go back to make updates after doing that already, click on *Build PDF/Form Pages* and then *Build*)

* Once you are finished and ready to submit your proposal. You will see either a thumbs up icon () or a link to submit. Follow the instructions to submit and complete the final review step.
* A new window will open showing who will be informed once you submit.
* Click on the *Submit* button in that window to confirm your decision to submit the proposal.

Once you submit, no changes can be made to your submission.