

History of Research Investments

The **Global Arts + Humanities Discovery Theme** has recommitted the university to the specific importance of the humanities and the arts to understanding, representing and addressing global concerns and pressing social issues and to creating a diverse, engaged research and learning community. In addition to the \$2.5 million commitment in one-time cash to support grants and programming for a five-year period (2015-2020), GAHDT has increased the percentage of its permanent, annual-rate funding of \$2.5 million earmarked for the hiring of tenure-track faculty and development of programming to fund several new open grants competitions and fellowship opportunities.

From the spring of 2015, when Provost Steinmetz first announced that he wanted to establish a new Discovery Theme in the liberal arts and appointed Vice Dean Susan Williams and Vice Provost Michael Boehm to start the planning for it, the Discovery Theme has distributed \$3.8 million toward cross-disciplinary research and creative practices and hired seven new **tenure-track faculty** and twelve **postdoctoral researchers**. Newly named the Global Arts + Humanities, the initiative is now entering its fifth phase of investment in cross-disciplinary research, experiential learning and community engagement.

PHASE ONE | The pilot projects

After the establishment of the scope of the Discovery Theme (that it would include arts as well as humanities; that it could support programming as well as faculty hires; that it would require cost sharing with units) and the innovative work of faculty fellows and faculty-led committees in 2016, the Discovery Theme entered funding phase one. In 2016, Vice Dean Williams and Vice Provost Boehm awarded a \$1.1 million non-recurring cash grant to the division to investment in the arts and humanities. Via a call for proposals, faculty in the Division of Arts and Humanities were invited to submit proposals for two-year pilot projects. The faculty steering committee discussed and evaluated 34 proposals, and Dean Hahn allocated the \$1.1 million in available funding to 11 projects.

PHASE TWO | Connections across pilot projects

In spring 2017, Dean Hahn requested proposals from the Pilot Grant Principal Investigators that reflected new, scaled-up collaborations. These proposals constituted phase two. Six collaborative proposals were received. The steering committee recommended the **Migration, Mobility and Immobility Project** as the first area for investment. In spring 2018, in consultation with leadership and the new faculty director, Wendy S. Hesford, two additional proposals — **Livable Futures** and **Public Narrative Collaborative** — were identified as meriting investment in that they envisioned new, cross-disciplinary collaborations and meaningful student engagement and amplified how the arts and humanities shape human-decision making and action.

PHASE THREE | Faculty-driven identification of new areas for investment

Based on the recommendations of external reviewers (March 2018) and an extensive consultative process — including a division-wide faculty retreat (April 2018), the convening of faculty working groups and consultations with faculty across the disciplines — three additional areas for future investment were identified: **Community, Livability** and the **Methods and Practices Amplifier**. The fourth area was subsequently renamed **Im/Mobility**. Two project directors were hired to produce institutional scans of research and creative practices in these areas. Several new grants programs were developed in this phase, including **Arts Creation Grants, Discovery Field School Grants** and **Graduate Team Fellowships**.

PHASE FOUR | Broadening faculty, student and community engagement

In addition to our continued support for arts creation grants, ongoing investment in undergraduate experiential learning through our Discovery Field School grants, and Graduate Team Fellowships, phase four (2019-2020) included the development of several new grants programs to support centers and individuals in conducting cross-disciplinary collaborations and community-based research. We also launched two special grants initiatives: Indigenous Arts and Humanities; and Race, Ethnicity and Social Justice. Both grants competitions supported cross-disciplinary research and creative projects that explored a wide range of social issues linked to structural injustices and cultural and political forms of expression and resistance. Finally, our leadership team generated new pedagogical tools for qualitatively capturing and assessing the value and social impact of integrated arts and humanities research and creative practices.

(CURRENTLY) PHASE FIVE | Building distinction and institutional capacity

Robust developments in programming, support for individual faculty research and undergraduate and graduate student research characterize this phase. In 2020, we launched a new signature **Society of Fellows** program, which brings faculty and students across the disciplines together to explore a common theme. In addition to our rapid-response **COVID-19 special grants competition** in the summer of 2020, we offered a new **matching grants program** to support the university's Call for Action on Racial Justice to fund projects that foreground arts and humanities interventions. In addition to existing student programming, we are now directing our energies toward cultivating diversity and building distinction by developing new partnerships with the public schools (like our **Difficult Subjects: K-12 Teaching Institute**) and community organizations. We are developing new qualitative assessment frameworks and tools that enable us to capture the value, diversity and social impact of integrated arts and humanities research and creative practices. GAHDT has intensified its efforts to raise extramural funds to build institutional capacity and sustainability as we transition to a university-level institute.

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