The Syracuse University Humanities Center invites proposals for Syracuse Symposium, our annual public events series that engages wider publics with innovative work in the humanities by renowned scholars, artists, filmmakers, authors, and performers.

In 2023-2024, the series will focus on “LANDSCAPES”:
- Proposals should connect to the theme and illustrate the humanities’ wide relevance.
- Submit applications, via our online form, by noon on Friday March 3, 2023.
- For widened accessibility and inclusion, we continue to encourage submissions with remote or hybrid forms of audience engagement with proposed activities.
- Questions? Reference the “FAQs” following the CFP below.

Syracuse Symposium invites you to propose events/activities that meaningfully engage the many facets of our 2023-24 theme:

LANDSCAPES evoke ideas about nature, the natural world, and artifice. Landscapes are both “real” and “contrived,” and this is so whether we mean scenery, terrain, territory, or topography ... or being situated viewers or makers of those landscapes, with an emphasis on perspective, viewpoint, or outlook. Landscapes thus reference visual, aesthetic, spatial and social imaginaries more broadly, and the varied kinds of environs we might inhabit or create, e.g., cityscapes, soundscapes, dreamscapes, or mindscapes.

Artforms tied to landscapes are myriad, as are artistic interventions and innovations in and on the land. Relatedly, landscapes are deeply affective—they hold memory, evoke feelings and places—and their representation/creation is contextual (linked to particular histories, social conditions, and peoples). Diverse politics and histories imbue the landscapes that surround and shape us (and which we, in turn, shape). Landscapes have been portrayed or rendered in ways to help rationalize settler colonialism, slavery, and war. In turn, landscapes and their re-presentation have been engaged as sites of counter-memory, evoking histories of resistance and viewpoints that contest dominant perspectives and portrayals.

Finally, we are at present inhabiting a natural world in crisis—whether we are talking about water (rising tides, algal blooms, drought), loss of arboreal forests, world-wide deforestation, accelerating loss of biodiversity, melting ice caps and glaciers, and more. These rapid changes and their impacts are being lived and experienced unequally around the globe, playing out in particular ways in and on different landscapes and peoples.

Whether in the arts, the environment, or the imagination, landscapes are saturated with meaning, politics, and possibility. We invite proposals for Syracuse Symposium 2023-2024 that showcase how and why the humanities and arts are essential to these and other questions evoked by the concept, “Landscapes.”
Application FAQs

Syracuse Symposium applications are reviewed by committee. If your proposal is accepted, a Commitment Letter will outline important next steps, including key planning and publicity deadlines. Review all below, then contact humcenter@syr.edu with questions.

About the Proposers: Provide names and contact info for each collaborator executing the proposed event(s).

About the Proposal: Describe your event, your guest scholar / artist / performer / author and how your vision supports the theme. Identify connections to humanities research and teaching. Discuss how the event illustrates the humanities’ broad relevance. Identify when the event(s) could take place. For increased accessibility and inclusivity, we encourage some form of remote-format engagement as part of your proposal (e.g., offering a simultaneous zoom link to a live gathering; a recording posted later for those unable to participate in real-time, etc.).

Budget Worksheet: The application includes a menu of potential expenses to consider.

- Tabulate each projected expense relevant to your proposal and tally your total budget estimate.
- On a separate line, identify the funding amount requested from the Humanities Center.
  ⇒ Symposium awards may range from $2,000-3,000 on up to $6,000 -7,000, depending on the scale and profile of your proposed event and/or invited guest(s). Provide a realistic budget and strong rationale.
- Be prepared to solicit other funds to cover expenses: collective support also boosts engagement.
- Accessible format event planning is required: all public Syracuse Symposium events must include CART (live event captioning) or ASL (American Sign Language) as accommodations. Note: Zoom’s automatic captions are not ADA compliant. Visit the Accessible SU website for more info / resources.
  ⇒ CART is generally more inclusive, but ASL can be a fitting option in certain settings.
  ⇒ For a smaller activity -- where it’s possible to communicate with registered participants in advance -- you can arrange accommodations upon request; publicity an “RSVP” date by which requests may be made.
  ⇒ CART costs vary by duration, format (in-person vs. remote), and how tech-ready a space is. Labor/equipment costs rise if a venue doesn’t have all necessary equipment. For in-person activities, on average, the cost of a 2-hour event ranges from $350 (CART-ready room) to $780 (un-equipped room). Remote-format (e.g., on Zoom) costs $115/hour.

Q: Who can apply for Syracuse Symposium funding awards? All Syracuse University units (faculty or staff) interested in meaningfully engaging with the theme, the humanities, and demonstrating their broad relevance are welcome to apply. Community organizations with strong ties to the humanities and to University programs, students, and faculty may also apply, providing specifics about campus collaborations.

Q: Should my desired guest speaker(s) be confirmed before I submit? Ideally, yes. At a minimum, conversations should be underway to determine availability, build an accurate budget, and submit a persuasive proposal.

Q: When can Symposium events take place? Syracuse Symposium events span Fall and Spring semesters. While some activities must naturally happen on weekends or evenings, events that complement class times or occur at the end of a workday tend to have better attendance. We avoid overlaps with large campus-wide events (Orange Central, Family Weekend), major holidays, and existing Humanities Center commitments. Proposals with some scheduling flexibility allow us to fund more potential partners and create balance across the series.

NOTE: Post-COVID, many partners have continued to rely on virtual formats (either fully or hybrid, as an attendance choice) as an accessible, inclusive, cost-efficient way to expand audience engagement with your topic.

Q: When will we hear back? Following committee review, we aim to issue decision letters by early April!