

Questions from Antarctic Artists & Writers Webinar

Responses to consolidated Q&A from the webinar held on July 11, 2023. Answers to additional questions can also be found on the [FAQ](#) and [Application](#) pages of our website.

Administrative and Application questions

Q. There were multiple questions regarding submitting an application for a team of two, or with an assistant, or another collaborating artist/writer.

A. There is only one deployment slot for each application, so unfortunately a second collaborator or assistant would not be supported. However, it would be ok to submit a proposal that included another non-deploying collaborator or assistant.

Q. Are we able to submit multiple project proposals?

A. Each individual can submit one application that proposes one project. During the semi-finalist phase and for those selected as participants, it is common that the original scope of the proposal will be modified. However, at the application phase, only one project proposal should be submitted.

Q. How many applicants are there each year? How many people will be selected?

A. While the number of applications varies year to year, historically the program has received numerous applications annually. Up to four participants will be selected annually.

Q. In broad terms, could you describe what the selection panel might look like - the types of professionals or practitioners who will be making the selection?

A. The review panel is comprised of our Network of Experts, professional artists or curators, and arts/writing administrators. The review process includes an evaluation methodology that supports the goals of the program and is designed to limit bias. Personally identifiable and demographic information will not be visible to the review committee and is used for programmatic purposes only.

Q. Do you have to be 21 years old at the time of application submission or at the time of Antarctica residency?

A. 21 years old at the earliest date of this residency (August 1, 2024)

Q. Do artists deploy at the same time/together?

A. While there may be some overlap in time, each of the selected participants (up to 4) will have their own deployment schedule.

Q. If selected, would we have some say over the date we'd arrive/the duration of time in Antarctica?

A, Yes and no. Yes, we will discuss available dates with selected participants and there may be some options within those date ranges. However, there are also numerous logistical constraints the NSF is balancing, and your preferred dates might not be an option.

Q. I was a prior participant in the Antarctic Artists and Writers program. Am I eligible to apply again?

A. One of the goals of Polar STEAM is to broaden participation and engagement with polar research to new audiences and those traditionally underrepresented in polar sciences. It is unlikely we will have repeat participants in the program, however if there is a strong case for a proposal that meets the program goals, it would be considered.

Q. In terms of portfolio submissions: Does the "2-5 works" and "no more than 10 double-spaced pages of text" apply to fiction writers or others who use text as a primary artistic medium?

A. The portfolio submission requirements apply to all written works.

Creative Scope and Application Review

Q. For the portfolio of work samples in the application, are you looking for drafts of our proposed Antarctica project OR samples from our larger body of work which may not have to do with Antarctica?

A. For the application, please submit samples of your larger body of work.

Q. There were several questions regarding the creative type of work. E.g. Theatrical or performance work, podcasts, video game development, musicians, journalists, etc...

A. The program accepts applications from working artists, writers, and creative practitioners in a variety of genres, from traditional to experimental. This is only limited in that Polar STEAM is unable to support projects that propose a permanent installation in the Antarctic or performance-based works that occur only during the residency. Media-specific projects or journalists should contact the National Science Foundation regarding media work.

Q. Are emerging artists encouraged to apply, or are midcareer/established artists preferred?

A. There is no preference for established artists, and we welcome applications from emerging artists.

Q. Does the program provide support with exhibition opportunities or other networking after deployment? Are you only interested in working with Artists with a large reach, or will the program be able to help with outreach.

A. There is no preference for artists or writers with a large reach. One of the program goals is to broaden participation and engagement with polar research to new audiences and those traditionally underrepresented in polar science, however that does not necessarily mean a large audience. Additionally, there is mentorship during and following participation in Polar STEAM to develop exhibition and other opportunities to showcase your work.

Q. If we already have an outlet/publisher lined up for an ongoing project related to the Antarctic, is there a place to include that information in the application?

A. Yes, there is a place to include this in the application, however it is not a requirement (see previous question)

Q. Is it vital for successful proposals to focus exclusively on Antarctica, or can the Antarctica component and experience be integrated into a larger, long-term project that is intended for publication?

A. The Antarctic component should be clearly demonstrated in the application within the context of the larger creative work.

Q. My work intentionally walks the line between art and science, spanning into both areas. Would you recommend I submit only the artistic side or show the span?

A. Demonstrating the span of your work would be great, and focus the creative aspects of the application on the artistic component of your work.

Arts-Education Connections

Q. Love hearing K-12 being brought up! Does this mean that projects geared toward that young audience are accepted/encouraged?

A. Yes and yes. Some prior Antarctic Artists and Writers' work is focused on young audiences. You can see examples of prior work on the Antarctic [Artists & Writers Collective Website](#).

Q. At what stage during the AAW application process will you introduce AAWs applicants to educators and their focus/projects/classes?

A. This will happen during the annual cohort, which will commence after the Antarctic Artists & Writers have been selected for this season.

Q. If we fall within the artist category but also are an educator in a non-art's field, can/should we apply to both programs?

A. Yes. Applications are open for working artists & writers, so presuming you have a professional practice separate from your teaching role you would be eligible to apply for this program. As an educator, yes you would be eligible to apply for that program as well.

Antarctica, Vessels, and Logistics

Q. Is there a possibility of working between stations or between a station/vessel in one award period?

A. There is a possibility of working between Palmer Station and one of the vessels within one award period. If working at McMurdo Station, there is not an option of working between stations at this time due to construction and logistics constraints.

Q. Can you talk a bit more about research vessels?

A. Yes. The US Antarctic Program (USAP) currently has two research vessels, the ARSV Laurence M. Gould and the RVIB Nathaniel B. Palmer. Please note, as of right now the contract for the Gould is set to expire after the 2023/24 season. More information about these vessels can be found on the [USAP website](#).

Q. With respect to the logistics plan, can you give any idea of what sort of scope is possible in the program?

A. Yes, however first we want to emphasize that we hope you will not prematurely limit the creative scope of your proposal based only on logistics. We understand that it can be challenging to envision your creative idea within the scope of the remote Antarctic environment and will help semi-finalist refine that scope during the logistics plan. For the 2024/25 season, only McMurdo Station, Palmer Station, and research vessels (operating out of Palmer Station) are an option. Some of the available transport on-continent includes snowmachines, helicopters, zodiacs, and vehicles. It might also be helpful to peruse the [Antarctic Artists and Writers Collective website](#) to see examples of past work to envision the scope of what is possible.

Q. What's the difference between 'bringing luggage' and 'cargo space'?

A. Luggage will be subject to USAP limits, currently 85lbs. Cargo space could include additional cases required to transport approved equipment for use by the Artist & Writer participants. However, given significant space restrictions currently in place by the NSF, it would be prudent to consider what cargo is necessary.

Q. What are the NSF physical requirements for those deployed? Are there physical/health related constraints we should be aware of prior to considering the application? Is there financial support for the medical screening if necessary?

A. The NSF has a medical screening process that is required for all participants. The specific requirements are not publicly available. Generally, they use a risk-based model and consider each individual's medical history as it relates to working in the remote Antarctic environment. They also consider the potential need for medical evacuation, given the remote location.

Collaborating with Polar Researchers

Q. I'm curious about the scientists - is there a place where I can see an overview of their current projects and research?

A. Yes and no. NSF publishes an annual Science Planning Summary which can be viewed on the [USAP website](#). Please note, the 2024/25 science planning summary is not yet published. Reviewing the prior science planning summary can be useful in identifying the general types of scientific research conducted in Antarctica.

Q. Can we include research topics that the researchers will be working on as part of the proposal? Is there a way we'll know what researchers/projects will be happening? What is the best way to find researchers who will be on the ground during the 2024/2025 season and focus on a particular scientific area of interest?

A. Yes you may include research topics. The list of researchers who will be deploying in 2024/25 is not yet available. While it would be interesting to see the types of research your creative work might intersect with, Polar STEAM will help facilitate matches with scientists during the semi-finalist phase.

Q. Do you favor proposals that align with current projects and research?

A. No, there is no preference for proposals that align with current research. Artist & Writer applications can be focused on current research or on other aspects of the Antarctic environment or history.

Q. If we want to apply to be embedded with a research team, but don't have a specific one in mind, can you please provide guidance about how to describe a creative scope that is specific enough, but open to collaboration with a wide range of scientists? In terms of preparing an application that may involve collaboration with researchers, any advice on preparing a strong proposal when the exact details of the collaboration may not be possible to describe yet?

A. We recommend submitting your creative proposal and indicate a broad interest in working with a range of science disciplines. Polar STEAM will help facilitate matches with scientists during the semi-finalist phase. It is common for artists and writers to adjust their scope once the match with a research team has been made.