

WORKING WITH US

Partnering with the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts

Updated July 2023



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Thank you for your interest in working with the faculty, staff, and students of the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts at Washington University in St. Louis. We are a community of architects, artists, and designers committed to applying the tools of our fields to positive social change.

Working with partners and collaborators in the community, particularly in the St. Louis region, is an essential part of our research, teaching, and practice. This packet provides background information for partners new and old about engagement with the School. Partnerships are supported by the Office for Socially Engaged Practice:
samfoxschool.wustl.edu/engage

WHAT

is the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Art?

The Sam Fox School consists of the College and Graduate School of Architecture & Urban Design, the College and Graduate School of Art, and the Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum. It combines a rigorous education in architecture, art, and design with the outstanding collection of a world-class art museum and the unparalleled resources of a leading research university. The Sam Fox School is one of the seven schools within Washington University in St. Louis (WashU). WashU's mission is to discover and disseminate knowledge, and protect the freedom of inquiry through research, teaching, and learning.

Who attends the Sam Fox School?

Our students come from all over the world. About 490 undergraduate students and 180 graduate students are completing programs of study between 1 and 4 years in length.

How does the Sam Fox School work with the community?

Collaborations between students, faculty, and the community occur most frequently through classes or independent projects, which may be formatted in the following ways. You can examples of see recent initiatives here:

samfoxschool.wustl.edu/node/10395

COURSES

- + **Studios or studio classes:** the core format of education in the Sam Fox School. Studios can be 3-6 credits, and typically provide rigorous experiences for students to make some product in their discipline. Students may spend between 20 and 60 hours a week on their studio work.
- + **Seminars:** typically a 3-credit course that is meant to supplement studio work with theory, history, policy, research, or particular skills.

PROJECTS

- + **Research or Practice Projects:** typically led by faculty to pursue a particular question, research topic, or solution. End goal for faculty will be to disseminate the work via publication, exhibition, or presentation. Typically involves funding. Duration may vary.
- + **Independent Projects:** led by faculty or students, independent projects represent a particular relationship, goal, or interest. Could be volunteer or funded. Goals and outcomes will vary.

WHY

work with the Sam Fox School?



Why does the Sam Fox School work with the community?

It is our responsibility to connect with our neighbors and community, and we believe that students learn best when their efforts are connected to real people and challenges.

Why should I work with the Sam Fox School?

Many individuals, groups, and organizations seek out the Sam Fox School because they are looking for support on a particular creative project, such as imagining a new building or natural space, understanding the history of their built environment, or developing print material or art installations. It is rare for the final product of a class or student project to be something that you can directly use. Our collaborators report that the most successful part of collaborations is seeing the students work (68%), but only 24% report that the outputs of the collaboration are directly useful.

For partners, the best ways for the Sam Fox School to add value include:

- Pushing the limits of possibility with new ideas and out-of-the-box thinking
- Creating work, events, or materials that bring attention to an issue or organization
- Testing out ideas in a shorter time or lower cost
- Introducing students and faculty to local organizations for long-term involvement, including through other collaborations, internships, or even future career paths.

You can see examples of recent initiatives and projects here:

samfoxschool.wustl.edu/node/10395.

HOW

should I work with the Sam Fox School?

We recommend an intentional process of relationship development with faculty, staff, or students at the Sam Fox School. These steps will help you shape and execute a collaboration together.

- 1 **DEFINE**
- 2 **EVALUATE**
- 3 **BUILD**
- 4 **SET EXPECTATIONS**
- 5 **EXECUTE**
- 6 **COLLECT**
- 7 **REVIEW**

1. DEFINE YOUR PARTNERSHIP

When connecting with a potential WashU partner, ensure that you understand which type of partnership they expect, and which you're prepared to participate in.



2. EVALUATE YOUR POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIP

You'll want to thoroughly evaluate whether working together is a good fit. Consider these questions:

If you need assistance evaluating your potential partnership, please contact the Office for Socially Engaged Practice or the Gephardt Institute (page 10).

PARTNERSHIP

- How does the initiative address an issue or priority for you, your organization, or community?
- What is your role as a partner?
- How will the relationship be reciprocal? What is each party getting and giving?
- Is flexibility part of the process, including the content of student work?
- Will you and/or your community be able to provide feedback and critique?
- Do you represent or have a plan for engaging the impacted community?
- Is there sufficient time to plan the partnership?
- How will you be held accountable for your obligations in the partnership?
- How will your WashU partner be held accountable?
- Is there a possibility for long-term collaboration?

LOGISTICS

- How does initiative address an issue or priority for you, your organization, or community?
- What is your role as a partner?
- How will the relationship be reciprocal? What is each party getting and giving?
- Is flexibility part of the process, including the content of student work?
- Will you and/or your community be able to provide feedback and critique?

CURRICULAR/RESEARCH

- Does this partnership meet the learning and curricular objectives for a course?
- Are you interested in being part of this course?
- What are the expected deliverables, including format, content, etc.?
- Will the ownership model of the final product benefit the students, faculty, and you?

RESOURCES GOALS AND IMPACT

- Is someone in the community asking for this? Is this needed?
- Will the work have a measurable impact on you or your work?
- Do you understand the expertise required to complete this project? Do you have this expertise?
- Could this initiative be realized? Are you able to execute and maintain the completed project?
- What resources are needed to execute this initiative? Do you have these resources?
- Are you receiving funding for this initiative?

3. BUILD ON PRIOR WORK

We understand our partners and sites have often worked with others to address their challenges and we want to build on these experiences. Tell your WashU contact:

- What do you already know about this topic?
How did you learn that information?
- What prior reports or research have been completed on this topic?
- What questions did the previous work raise for you or your organization?
- How did the prior project work? What went well, and what would you change?

The University does not currently keep a directory of prior community projects. However, you may be able to find more information by contacting the Office for Socially Engaged Practice (details on page 10).

Be sure to share your other WashU partnerships: schools within the University operate separately from one another and your partners may not be aware of each other's efforts.



4. SET EXPECTATIONS AND MAKE AN AGREEMENT

Successful partnerships are built on clear expectations and agreements around working together, including communication, time commitment, and deliverables.

It's important to spend time with your WashU partner to learn about their intentions, approaches, and language. If possible, it can be helpful to share your organizational goals, provide a tour of your facilities, and discuss your approach to your work.

Your WashU partner should provide a written description of the expectations you have set together. They may use the Partnership Agreement template, available at insidesamfox.wustl.edu/facultystaff/engagement-2/engagement-forms/.

It can be helpful to identify specific dates for meetings and check-ins in advance, so you can ensure they are held in everyone's calendar. Whenever possible, ask for examples of what your expected deliverables may look like. Confirm the process of review and approval within your organization, and share this with your WashU partner.



5. EXECUTE THE PROJECT AND ASK QUESTIONS

Throughout the partnership, be sure to ask questions. Provide constant feedback on how the collaboration is going, particularly related to communication, expectations, and language. When needed, ask for clarification or seek deeper understanding. Similarly, it is okay to say no to a request from a WashU partner. If you need assistance in conversations or responses, contact the Office for Socially Engaged Practice (details on page 10).

6. COLLECT DELIVERABLES

Hopefully, you will have learned something useful and new from working with your partner. Based on your established agreement, you'll receive your final deliverables. Ensure that you have confirmed the copyright limitations with your WashU partner.

7. PARTICIPATE IN REVIEWS

You may be invited to give feedback on student work or participate in reviews, presentations, or critiques. This is an opportunity to give your input. Clarify with your WashU partner what your role should be in this setting. Confirm your time commitment and the location.



WHEN

can I work with the Sam Fox School?

Planning a partnership and project takes time, and there are better and worse times to work with students and faculty. The annual schedule for 2022-2023 is below. Generally, planning for a partnership in a course should begin 3-6 months in advance of the semester, depending on the complexity of the partnership. The sooner you begin the conversation, the easier it will be to ensure a successful collaboration.

General requests are reviewed at the beginning of each semester for the following semester. If you have potential needs or project ideas, you may reach out to the Office for Socially Engaged Practice for more information.

Dates for other years are available here: registrar.wustl.edu/academic-calendars/

FALL 2023

August 28	First day of classes
October 3	Review community partner proposals for spring
September 26	Spring course list available
Nov 22-24	Thanksgiving Break
Late November	Busy time begins
December 14-18	Final Reviews
December 8	Last day of classes
December 11-21	Reading period and exams
Mid-December	Students and faculty depart

SPRING 2024

January 16	First day of classes
February 9	Review community partner proposals for fall
February 20	Fall course list available
March 11-15	Spring Break
Early April	Busy time begins
April 26	Last day of classes
April 29 - May 1	Reading period, exams, and final reviews
Mid-May	Students and faculty depart for the summer
May 13	Commencement

SUMMER 2024

May 20	First Summer Session begins
August 15	Last Session Ends



RESOURCES

MEETINGS AND CONVERSATION

The Office for Socially Engaged Practice is available to attend and assist for the duration of your collaboration.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

If you have concerns or conflicts with your WashU partner, please reach out to the Office for Socially Engaged Practice or the Gephardt Institute.

TRANSPORTATION & GETTING TO CAMPUS

We understand that parking and transportation to the WashU campus can be difficult. Parking validation may be available, or we can help arrange off-campus meeting locations that are accessible to both WashU and community partners. Contact the Office for Socially Engaged Practice.

BLUE PAGES

We offer a series of guides for faculty and students to help inform best practices.

These guides are available online at:

<https://insidesamfox.wustl.edu/facultystaff/engagement-2/>.

AFTER THE PROJECT ENDS

We are interested in your ongoing needs; please be in touch to discuss. We do not offer funding to partners to implement projects. However, students may be able to access funding to complete a project or take on an internship; encourage enthusiastic students to contact us. You may also receive a link to an annual collaborators survey in late spring; your feedback is helpful in developing stronger partnerships going forward.



Contact us to access additional support and resources.

OFFICE FOR SOCIALLY ENGAGED PRACTICE

Provides resources and support to faculty in the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts.

samfoxschool.wustl.edu/engage

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GEPHARDT INSTITUTE FOR CIVIC & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Cultivates informed and actively engaged citizens.

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THE MILDRED LANE KEMPER ART MUSEUM

Offers a range of public programs and tours designed around the permanent collection and special exhibition galleries.

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