

GALERIE

Université 
de Montréal



Call for Applications

Research-creation residency in responsible artificial intelligence with the Galerie de l'Université de Montréal and IVADO

Deadline: September 30, 2024, at 11:59 p.m.

1. Context

The Galerie de l'Université de Montréal invests in research-creation initiatives that take several forms, including artist residencies in the Université de Montréal's science facilities. A first residency took place in 2018 at the Observatoire du Mont-Mégantic, and a second one in 2022–23 at the Station de biologie des Laurentides.

For the exhibition *Les nouveaux états d'être* (2020), the Galerie de l'Université de Montréal presented work that emerged from interdisciplinary reflections resulting from exchanges between artists and bioethicists focused specifically on the application of artificial intelligence (AI) in healthcare. Ethical issues are also key to this new project, addressed from the point of view of a responsible and inclusive vision of AI. In partnership with IVADO, the Galerie de l'Université de Montréal is launching a call for submissions to professional visual and media artists to participate in a residency and exhibition project with guest curator Christelle Proulx. This research-creation residency project, the outcome of which will be presented in an exhibition in 2025–26, evolved out of a desire to see a collaboration between AI researchers and contemporary artists who want to reflect on the possibilities of production of responsible, inclusive, feminist and queer knowledges.

[IVADO](#) is piloted by the Université de Montréal with four partner universities (Polytechnique Montréal, HEC Montréal, Université Laval, and McGill University). The mission of this interdisciplinary and inter-sector consortium is to mobilize research, training, and knowledge to build and promote strong, mindful, and responsible AI. A variety of projects and courses are currently deployed within the IVADO community in groupings that involve the neurosciences, automatic natural language processing, responsible AI governance, the environment, molecules, healthcare systems, supply chains, and more.

Through the present call for submissions, a maximum of four professional artists will be chosen for residencies involving exchanges with automatic-learning scientists. During their stays, the

artists will have an opportunity to create documents (working, exploratory, or conceptual) or, if possible, artworks that apprehend various objects or practices associated with AI, such as data sets, generation, segmentation, detection, and recognition. The selected projects will be developed on the basis of equity, diversity and inclusion principles (EDI) of the [Montréal Declaration](#) and will be inspired by feminist intersectional and queer approaches to scientific study.

An information session will take place in a Teams webinar on August 29th, 12h to 13h PM, with the curator and project partners (IVADO) in attendance.

To register, [click here](#)

2. Curator's statement

This project, which places residencies deep within research laboratories, is driven by the desire to generate protean and exploratory artistic gestures rooted in the idea of responsible science, in relation with AI research in Montréal. It involves, above all, engaging visual and media artists in formulating conceptual proposals that will give shape to the perspectives developed in the residency in contact with past and present research work conducted in the hosting laboratories.

The importance attached to these particular residency sites extends the ideas promulgated by the philosopher of science Donna Haraway, who for several decades has advocated for the creation of situated scientific knowledge in order to understand and responsibly intervene in visual representations produced by the intelligent vision systems that are increasingly integrated with human life (Haraway 1988). The proposed positioning is therefore inspired by feminist and queer approaches to studying science and technologies that call for the production of responsible knowledge about the world. The tenets of data feminism (D'Ignazio and Klein 2020) are also possible anchor points for this dialogue-based project: examining the interplays and issues of power; situating and embodying knowledge production; rethinking our relationship with binarity (gender binaries, but also those between nature and culture, human and non-human, failure and success, and so on); and, given the hierarchies in data organization and the generation of representations, encouraging pluralism, taking account of the cultural context and the environmental emergency, and making human work visible.

In this respect, proposals that challenge one or more aspects of AI research through multiple axes of intersectional feminist thought, notably queer theories and subjectivities, as well as issues related to BIPOC people (Black, Indigenous, and people of colour) will be enthusiastically received. We are also interested in explorations of how the perspective of art can offer a gaze – at once attentive, affective, and alternative, even subversive – on and in the development of

automatic learning as an optical and statistical instrument. This instrument effectively serves the production of knowledge, which necessitates constant attention to the needs of underrepresented communities, especially in order to mitigate the reproduction of bias and discrimination, as well as experimentation with the possibilities that go beyond the paradigms of productive efficiency.

Given each artist's specific concerns and practice, the residency proposals chosen may thus explore, extend, challenge, or transform certain aspects, objects, or practices related to the AI research community in Montréal. Whether it is automated analysis of human emotions or behaviours, collection of biodiversity data, climate-change modelling, or approaches to social innovation, to name just these examples, the field of possibilities is particularly vast and thus encourages artistic proposals that are open and flexible. The exhibition of traces of the research process and of exchanges between artists and researchers is therefore strongly encouraged; the production of completed works is not the primary goal of the exhibition. Written or photographic documents, video explorations, 3D modelling, attempts to generate software models, explorations or partial reutilization of data or instruments encountered, performative iterations, and interactive devices are all avenues through which the projects may be materialized.

2. Preliminary schedule

Submission of applications: by September 30, 2024, at 11:59 p.m.

Interview with finalist artists: week of October 14

Response to artists: late October

Residencies: series of occasional encounters, as needed for the projects: November 2024 to February 2025

Production period and funding search, if necessary: March to October 2025

Exhibition planned at the Galerie de l'Université de Montréal from November 2025 to January 2026

4. Support to artists

Residency honorarium (\$4,000 per artist)

Production budget (\$1,000 per artist)

Access to infrastructures of participating AI laboratories, according to the terms and conditions agreed with the partners

Exhibition rights (complying with the CARFAC-RAAV rate schedules)

Guidance by the Galerie de l'Université de Montréal and IVADO (including for artists' funding search, if necessary)

5. Submission of applications

Elements required for presentation of the application:

A research intention for the residency (1 or 2 pages)

An artist statement (1 or 2 pages)

A curriculum vitae (maximum 3 pages)

A selection of 10 images or video links (current or past work)

The applications will be analyzed by a committee of peers from the partners (curator – Galerie de l'Université de Montréal – IVADO).

The finalists will be invited for a brief interview to assess the needs and feasibility of the proposed projects.

6. Conditions

Professional status in visual and media arts or applied arts

Availability during the residency, production, and exhibition period

Send the application to: informations@expo.umontreal.ca. The image files may be sent by WeTransfer

Applications that do not meet the requirements or the deadline will not be evaluated by the peer committee.

Curator's biography

Christelle Proulx, who holds a PhD in art history, specializes in research on digital culture through the prism of images, art, and vision. During her doctoral studies, Proulx received a scholarship in artificial intelligence in 2021 and an SSHRC grant for her dissertation, titled *Enquête sur la fabrique du visible du web: utopies, photographies et algorithmes à l'œuvre*, submitted in 2022, in which she analyzed the links woven between the visual, the ideological, and the algorithmic in Google, Facebook, and artificial vision. She was co-editor of the book *L'Agir en condition hyperconnectée: art et images à l'œuvre* (Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 2020). She is a lecturer in the Department of Art History, Film and Audiovisual Media at the Université de Montréal and has been a member of the research team for the "Art et site" project for ten years. She is currently working on a post-doctoral research project in which she links artificial vision to queer ecologies and generative art.