

# CALL FOR COLLABORATORIES

UWM'S Center for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Studies

Funding to support interdisciplinary and inventive projects

## Application Deadlines:

**Friday, March 28, 2025** (for funding to be used July 1, 2025 - June 1, 2026)

## Virtual Information Session:

Friday, February 28, 9:00-10:00 AM | Register at [tinyurl.com/c21collabinfo26](https://tinyurl.com/c21collabinfo26)

View this information on our website at [uwm.edu/c21/opportunities/faculty-and-staff/c21-collaboratory/](https://uwm.edu/c21/opportunities/faculty-and-staff/c21-collaboratory/).

## Overview

C21 believes that the complex challenges we face in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are best met through collaborations across areas of expertise and experience, and that the humanities are a vital part of addressing these challenges.

Collaborative project funding provides an opportunity to bring together teams of scholars across disciplines, across university and community partnerships, and across emerging and established scholars (students / staff / faculty) to generate new ideas and knowledge.

C21 Collaboratories provide opportunities to bring new, humanities-informed ideas and knowledge to many different audiences both on and off campus. Collaboratories are also foundational to the Center's annual programming.

## Questions?

**C21 strongly encourages questions and inquiries in advance of proposals.** Please contact C21 Managing Director Katie Waddell with questions at [waddelke@uwm.edu](mailto:waddelke@uwm.edu).

**C21 Director Jennifer Johung will host a virtual information session on Friday, February 28, 9:00 AM**

- This session will cover information on the Slow Care theme, tips on writing a strong application, and frequently asked questions.
- Attending the information session is not required to apply but is highly encouraged.
- *Registration is required.* Register at [tinyurl.com/c21collabinfo26](https://tinyurl.com/c21collabinfo26).

# Funding Tiers: Collaboratories and Working Groups

C21 offers two distinct funding tiers for collaborative research projects:

## 1) Collaboratories

These are collaborative projects devised with a specific project or public outcome in mind. These collaboratives are eligible for up to \$10,000 in funding, though most projects receive around \$5,000. Awarded funds can be used as seed funding to establish proof-of-concept or complete research legwork to find additional funding or sustainable support structures. Funds can support short-term research projects that include a specific public programming component or culminate in a public presentation of some form.

In addition to funding, C21 staff can provide in-kind support in arranging talks, making connections, and communicating about the project and any public events, and limited graphic design support. Any major public events hosted by the Collaboratory will be included in C21's event calendar and promoted as a C21-supported program. C21 can also provide a dedicated working space for Collaboratory endeavors, which may include private office space and/or access to one of three reservable meeting spaces.

Preference will be given to project proposals that 1) address the pressing issues of our time and correlate with C21's annual theme of **Slow Care\*\*** for the granting period, 2) include team members with expertise in disciplines outside of the humanities, 3) experiment with new formats for presenting, conveying, or disseminating humanities research, 4) demonstrate potential for longevity beyond the grant period, and/or 5) engage the public in meaningful ways. All project proposals MUST include a public-facing component or other tangible final deliverable. Funded Collaboratories will be required to submit a brief final report at the end of the grant cycle.

Tangible deliverables for Collaboratories might include:

- Series of community-driven and/or publicly engaged events
- Designing/Holding a symposium or series of academic events
- Researching/Writing an interdisciplinary grant project/proposal
- Conducting a pilot project to support a long-term research or creative project
- Producing a digital humanities project, such as a short documentary, multimedia publication, or online archive

**\*\*C21's theme for 2025-2026 is Slow Care.** *Across health, climate, labor, technology and more, we ask how pacing affects the institutions, policies, cultural infrastructures, and social and political processes that support or disassemble an ethic of care. We welcome multiple interpretations of this open topic, including explorations of time, pace, and speed as they relate to pressing issues of our time and/or work inside and outside the university. Methodological, pedagogical, and research topical interests are all welcome in relation to this theme.*

## 2) Working Groups

These are groups that gather for ongoing discussions, networking, and idea generation. They may be newly formed or pre-existing groups with an ongoing dialogic process or collaborative project. They do not necessarily have to have a fully formed project plan with a final deliverable in mind, nor must their proposed project cohere with C21's annual theme. Working Group funding presents an opportunity to build momentum towards a Collaboratory project proposal or an externally funded project.

While no public component is required, groups are encouraged to work with C21 to communicate about the work they are doing and will be required to submit a brief final report at the end of the grant cycle.

For FY26, C21 will fund a **maximum of three proposals** from **returning Working Groups** (Working Groups that have received Collaboratory funding from C21 in the past) and **two proposals** from **new Working Groups** (groups that have never before received Collaboratory funding from C21).

Working Groups receive \$500, which might be used to support:

- Books/supplies
- A speaker
- A consultant or workshop facilitator
- Subscription services or software (in accordance with UW purchasing policy)
- Offsetting costs associated with site visits
- Other costs conducive to Working Group activity, provided they comply with UW purchasing policy

## Eligibility/Requirements for Collaboratories *and* Working Groups

- All collaborative groups **must include researchers from more than one unit** (i.e., department, division, or college) and at least one person from the humanities.
- All collaborative groups **are encouraged to pursue a broad diversity in their membership**, including students, academic staff, and community members.
- All collaborative groups will be expected to **meet at least once a month**. C21 has multiple spaces that can be reserved on the 9th floor of Curtin Hall.
- All collaborative groups are expected to write **reports on all activities at the end of the year**. A report template will be provided by C21.
- Collaborative group funding is implementation **funding to be used within the year it is granted**.
- The **principal investigator(s)** of the collaborative group **must meet with C21** staff at the beginning of the award period to discuss expectations, needs, projected outcomes, and other details.
- **The principal investigator(s)** of the collaborative group **must sign a written agreement** at the beginning of the award period stating that the group agrees to commit to the above actions and to provide documentation of the group's activities at the end of the award period. *Failure to comply with the terms of the agreement will render all group members ineligible to apply for future C21 Collaboratory/Working Group funding and research fellowship opportunities for a period of up to three years.*

## Eligibility/Requirements for Collaboratories *only*

- Collaboratories **must apply for at least one external or internal grant per year**. C21 and the Office of Research will assist as needed with grant preparation.
- Collaboratories are expected to organize public programs in alignment with C21's schedule of events and to **communicate with C21 about public activities and events** with generous prior notice for inclusion in C21 communications.
- While an academic outcome (essays, articles, books, exhibits etc) might be a goal of a Collaboratory, **teams are expected to tell the story of their efforts to a broad audience**. This might be through newsletters, podcasts, public presentations. A

minimum of one publicly accessible deliverable must be produced by the end of the grant period.

## How to Apply

### Collaboratories

Proposals, which should not exceed 1250 words, should answer the following questions:

1. What question or challenge is the group addressing?
2. How does this align with C21's 2025-2026 theme of Slow Care?
3. What public-facing programs, projects, accessible publications, and/or events will the Collaboratory members pursue and when (timeline)?
4. What are the anticipated outcomes of the Collaboratory's project and how will success be measured?
5. What is the organizing logic for the composition of the group's members (e.g., why these members?)\* Do you intend to recruit additional members during the grant period?
6. How does the group plan to make its story/progress of their known to a broad audience?
7. Which grants (names / descriptions) will the Collaboratory endeavor to procure?
8. What are the estimated costs? (Use this space to explain the purposes of any expenses listed in your attached budget.)
9. What administrative and/or programmatic support might the Collaboratory need from C21 staff?

Proposals should also include a title/name for the Collaboratory and (a) short bio(s) for the group's Principal Investigator (PI).

*\*\* Each Collaboratory team should identify a lead, UWM principal investigator (PI), who will be responsible for receiving and disbursing funds (from their home department) and for reporting on the group's activities. Please indicate the Collaboratory's PI when addressing question 5.*

#### **Required attachments:**

- Project budget (XLS, DOC, or PDF; 1 MB max)

#### **Optional attachments:**

- Relevant work samples (no more than **three** work samples *total*, between links and attachments)
  - These can include images (JPG, PNG, or PDF), video (MP4, MOV), sound files (MP3, WAV), text (DOC or PDF), or presentations (PPT, PPTX, KEY, PDF)

- Maximum 1 MB *per file*
- Please contact Katie Waddell at [waddelke@uwm.edu](mailto:waddelke@uwm.edu) if you have work sample attachments that cannot be shared in one of the listed file formats.
- CV or resume for Collaboratory PI(s) (DOC or PDF, 1 MB max)

**Optional links:**

- Relevant work samples (no more than **three** work samples *total*, between links and attachments)
- Professional or project website

## Working Groups

Proposals, which should not exceed 750 words, should answer the following questions:

- 1) What question or challenge is the group addressing?
- 2) What is the organizing logic for the composition of the group's members (e.g., why these members?)\* Do you intend to recruit additional members during the grant period?
- 3) What activities will the Working Group pursue and when (timeline)?
- 4) How do you plan to spend the \$500?
- 5) Have you been a C21 working group previously? If so:
  - a. Please list past years, activities, and how funds were allocated?
  - b. Any outcomes from previous years' activities?
  - c. How will this year differ from previous years?
  - d. Why continue? What value is this group providing, and for whom?

Proposals should also include a title/name for the Working Group and (a) short bio(s) for the group's Principal Investigator (PI).

*\*\*Each Working Group should identify a lead, UWM principal investigator (PI), who will be responsible for receiving and disbursing funds (from their home department) and for reporting on the group's activities. Please indicate the PI when addressing question 2.*

**Optional attachments and/or links:**

- You have the option of attaching **up to three** total links and/or documents that may support your application.
- Attachments may not exceed 1 MB.