

Call for Proposals

Lands to Travel Through

August 5 – 8, 2020

Alberta, Canada

Deadline to submit proposals: November 18, 2019

Notification of results: January 27, 2020

In August 2020, the Alberta Association of Artist-run Centres ([AAARC](#)) will partner with Artist-Run Centres and Collectives Conference ([ARCA](#)) to host a transnational gathering of artists and artist-run organizations in Calgary on Treaty 7 territory. Titled *Lands to Travel Through*, this four-day event will centre practices of care, reciprocity and resource-sharing as critical responses to our current social and political climate, presenting the opportunity to come together, and continue to design models for how to be, otherwise.

AAARC is seeking proposals from artists, writers, critics, collectives, arts administrators, artist-run centres, curators, and others interested in:

- Sharing performances or other artworks
- Hosting meals or workshops
- Facilitating group conversations
- Presenting their research
- Discussing specific experiences or challenges they've faced
- Showcasing practical strategies and new ways of working
- Altering or intervening upon existing spaces
- Making space for fun, reflection, and decompression

Proposals will be reviewed by AAARC's curatorial committee. Invited artists and presenters will receive a professional fee (above [CARFAC minimum](#)) and travel and accommodation support.

Lands to Travel Through will seek to create an open and inclusive environment in which all participants feel safe taking risks, connecting with peers and engaging in critical discussion. We recognize the need for safer and braver space making in all forms of organizing, and we are committed to these ideals as a part of our work.

Programs will be presented in French and English, with ASL interpretation available, and venues for the gathering will be wheelchair accessible with appropriate seating and gender-neutral washrooms. We aim to offer a number of travel and registration subsidies, and much of the gathering's artistic programming will be made free and open to the public.

THEMATIC

As the repercussions of social and ecological injustice come increasingly to the fore, renegotiating our relationships to land is increasingly urgent. Reflecting Alberta's particular context and considering it critically, each day of the gathering will subvert the vocabulary used by extractive industries—relating practices of care, reciprocity, respect, and resource sharing to concepts of groundwater, bedrock, recoverable resources, and remediation.

In addressing the thematic of land and our movement through it, we aim to honour the Indigenous people from the five treaty regions of Alberta throughout the gathering. *Lands to Travel Through* will occur on Treaty 7 Territory, the traditional lands of the Niitsitapi (inclusive of the Siksika, Piikani, and Kainai First Nations), the Tsuut'ina First Nation, and the Iyarhe Nakoda (including the Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Wesley First Nations). Mohkinstsis/Calgary is also home to the Métis Nation of Alberta, Region III.

These lands are what sustain us, so how might we re-orient our practices to reflect this reality? How do we build more resilient and sustainable relationships with the land—relationships that acknowledge how the land cares for us? And as we all reckon with complex economic, ecological and cultural structures, what does meaningful institutional change look like? What futures we can imagine? *Lands to Travel Through* will take up these questions and conversations.

FURTHER QUESTIONS

While artist-run organizational models allow for artistic programming to be agile and adaptive, they also require creativity in the context of limited resources. What can we learn from each other about resource sharing, and respect for resources, in contrast to the typical approach to natural resources, namely that they are there to be extracted, owned, sold, and burned?

If we acknowledge community care, self-care and emotional labour as the foundations of artist-centred work, how might we hold our work, ourselves and other human and non-human beings with greater care? How is care exchanged between artists and within our organizations? Will building a better understanding of care-work help to align our organizations with larger social movements, working towards equity and positive societal change? And if our evaluations of professionalism and artistic merit are inherently bound up in Western structures of colonial power, what changes are needed to build a new grammar for contemporary art?

PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

Send proposals to admin@aaarc.ca by 11:59PM MST on Monday, November 18, 2019. Please include your name(s), preferred pronouns, and contact information in your email.

If communicating in writing doesn't suit your needs, you are welcome to share your ideas with us in a video or audio recording.

Otherwise, please send a single PDF or Word document with:

- a one-page project proposal
- a short bio

If you wish, you may also include:

- your project's budget and technical needs
- your access needs
- support material (images, video, audio, cv)
- a brief artist statement, or information about your organization
- links to your website(s) or social media

Questions? Get in touch with AAARC staff sophia bartholomew at sophia@aaarc.ca.