



CFP: Collaboratories at the Ahmanson Lab

The Ahmanson Lab at The Sidney Harman Academy for Polymathic Study seeks proposals from USC faculty to design and coordinate yearlong interdisciplinary research collaboratories that engage undergraduate students in critical making—activities that bridge critical thinking and digital fabrication. These collaboratories should be polymathic in nature, designed to engage students from a variety of disciplines. They should be organized around a theme, problem, or set of intellectual questions that is best explored via the hands-on design and production of a digital artifact or system. We are additionally interested in collaboratories that make use of USC Libraries' Digital Collections, Special Collections, datasets, or library resources, constructing artifacts that offer students imaginative ways to engage, showcase, analyze or visualize those materials.

In 2018-2019, the Ahmanson Lab supported three collaboratories: Mapping and App-ing Los Angeles, Terraforming Mars, and Futures of Democracy. Students in these collaboratories, created, respectively, an augmented reality app utilizing data from the L.A. Times to convey the story of the 2018 Camp Fire; a research-driven, annotated virtual reality experience of a terraformed Mars; and a series of games exploring democracy-related issues such as campaign finance, corruption, and political compromise. For examples of past collaboratories, see the Sidney Harman Academy's website at polymathic.usc.edu/ahmanson-lab.

Collaboratories can be led by one or more faculty member. During the academic year, faculty will be responsible for conducting regular team meetings with undergraduates and for organizing one public event that showcases the collaboratory's process and/or research outcomes. Teams will have access to technology at the Ahmanson Lab, including a 3D printer, a commercial-grade drone, a robotic arm, multiple VR systems, and microcontroller kits. Teams creating digitally-published outcomes such as online exhibits, digital books, or multimedia projects, will also have technical support from Ahmanson Lab and other Library staff. The Ahmanson Lab will assist faculty in generating a pool of student applicants for each collaboratory and will work together with faculty in the selection process. Each collaboratory will have four to six students who will receive a stipend from the Ahmanson Lab. A faculty stipend of \$5,000 (to be shared among faculty leads) will also be available for each collaboratory.

Submit your proposals by August 26, 2019 at tinyurl.com/ahmanson-lab-cfp.

Please send any questions to Curtis Fletcher, Director of the Ahmanson Lab, at cfletche@usc.edu.

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