



**Creative Administration Research Program
Frequently Asked Questions**

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Creative Administration Research Program

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the Creative Administration Research (CAR) program?

The Creative Administration Research program is intentionally designed to build a bridge between 20th century working knowledge and the 21st century dance ecosystem. Since 2020, the program has initiated five cohorts for a total of 19 Artist Teams from across the U.S. CAR Artists and Thought Partners participate in intensive virtual Investigative Retreats designed to reflect on their body of work, examine chronic pain points across their operations, and imagine multiple ways forward. NCCAkron believes there isn't one way of making dances, so there should not be one way of doing arts administration either.

2. How are CAR Artists selected?

Up until shifting to an Open Application, CAR Artists were curated based on having an already established relationship with NCCAkron and/or geographic strategy. NCCAkron develops all programming with the following curatorial values in mind:

NATIONAL IMPRINT

- *Reach geographically*
- *Identify and cultivate artists with significant promise*
- *Advocate for dance and the creative process as a more central part of U.S. culture*
- *Operate from abundance instead of scarcity*

RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

- *Foster dialogue*
- *Provide opportunities of proximity for dance stakeholders*
- *Disrupt systems and processes*
- *Aggregate resources*
- *Invest longitudinally*
- *Experiment*

The Open Application invites dance artists to submit for review by the Artist Selection Committee made up of current and alumni CAR Artists and Thought Partners.

Eligible artists are based in the United States. Artists operating under a variety of tax models such as 501c3 incorporation, fiscal sponsorship, LLC, etc are all welcome to apply.

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3. If I am selected for the CAR program, what activities are required?

- Virtual Orientation with new cohort of Artists/Thought Partners (December 2023/January 2024, est 2 synchronous hours)
- Virtual Investigative Retreat (est 8 synchronous hours, Winter/Spring 2024)
- 4 accountability meetings with curated Thought Partner throughout the contract period at mutually agreed upon dates/times, virtual or in-person.

4. What is an Investigative Retreat?

Including NCCAkron team members, the Artist Team, and curated Thought Partner, Investigative Retreats are held virtually at mutually agreed upon dates/times. These synchronous eight hours ideally over a single week, provide time and space to:

- Reflect on the Artist's body of work and project long-term artistic goals;
- Examine critical or chronic pain points across operations;
- Reconsider current habits and practices; and
- Identify possible administrative experiments.

5. What am I expected to produce as part of this program?

NCCAkron envisions this program to hold space and time for Artists to rigorously investigate their ongoing general operations and business practices. While there is no end-product expected from this work, Artists are expected to try short and long-term administrative experiments as well as building new administrative practices at their own discretion.

Artists are expected to complete all paperwork (Letter of Agreements, payment forms, email correspondence, provide input for Investigative Retreat agendas) and program survey requests in a timely manner. The amount of time and effort put into program participation directly correlates with benefits received.

6. Am I able to invite others to participate in these activities?

Artists are encouraged to include other stakeholders - board, advisors, dancers, contractors - from their administrative operations in this work. Some CAR Artists

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have found it most beneficial to utilize the provided stipend to compensate additional stakeholders to do this work.

7. What is a Thought Partner?

The Artist and Thought Partner relationship is envisioned to be reciprocal in nature, sharing information and learning. As Artists explore their creative administration practices, Thought Partners aim to meet Artists “where they are.” As an accountability buddy, Thought Partners participate in Investigative Retreat and Summit Convening activities, carrying those shared experiences forward as well as introducing and challenging the Artist’s thinking. Thought Partners are additional sounding boards to employ administrative experiments and continuous reflection on the Artist’s business practices. Current Thought Partners include arts administrators, artists, funders, presenters, and others who work inside as well as outside the dance field. When considering an ideal Thought Partner, we encourage you to consider the following including geographic location, identities, cultural backgrounds, and professional experiences that would best support your lines of inquiry.

8. How are Thought Partners selected?

Thought Partners are identified through participation in NCCAkron’s CAR Work-in-Process (WiP) Series of discussions to reflect and imagine a 21st century dance ecosystem. Artists are asked to recommend Thought Partners who are then invited to participate in the CAR WiP process. NCCAkron curates a selection of potential Thought Partners from the pool of participants for possible pairings relative to choreographers stated interests and desires. Artists make final selections from a short list of 3-4 names and bios. The paired Thought Partner provides additional accountability and acts as a sounding board in between Investigative Retreats. [*If you are interested in becoming a Thought Partner or would like to nominate someone, sign up to receive more information here.*](#)

9. Am I being compensated for CAR participation?

CAR Artist stipends are budgeted at \$8,750/year and will be made in two parts during FY24 (July-June). Separate funds have been set aside to compensate each Thought Partner.

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These funds should be considered general operating support. Artists may use them to pay themselves for time spent in CAR activities, other individuals under your employ/contract, or for operating expenses as part of your work (e.g. pay an additional \$1K to each of your contract team; contract a new addition to your operation, use funds to pay themselves for administrative activities; and/or purchase a computer or similar software/equipment for operational purposes).

We know most dance artists work on a project-to-project basis, grant-to-grant. CAR Artist Stipends are for use at Artists' discretion, but they are not intended to be a bailout to fill funding gaps for the Artists' latest creative production. NCCAkron hopes CAR Artists use the stipend to address costs associated with operating expenses (like paying oneself!).

10. Are there any in-person activities?

Moving forward in the program, there will be in-person opportunities and invitations presented to CAR Artist Alumni. For any travel and hospitality expenses related to CAR activities requiring in-person participation, NCCAkron will arrange and cover housing expenses directly with vendors on behalf of the Artist. The Artist will arrange their own travel, and receive funds from NCCAkron to subsidize these costs.

11. What experience or criteria would the Artist Selection committee like to see in an application?

CAR Artists show an openness to information sharing, learning, and challenging models. NCCAkron values the following in both Artists and Thought Partners:

- Present, open minded, and exploratory spirit
- Ongoing introspection, questioning, and research
- Generosity, openness to shifting norms
- Challenge with the hope of sparking new ideas
- Thoughtful listening and responsiveness
- Hyperagency (the creation of new standards and resources benefitting the individual and the field-at-large)
- Specificity of artistic vision/perspective as well as a demonstrable track record of making work towards said vision

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12. Where can I learn more about the CAR program?

For more information, visit nccakron.org/creativeadminresearch.

Email programs@nccakron.org with any questions about the program or the application. *Please allow at least two business days for a response. This means NCCAkron cannot guarantee a timely response before the October 5th deadline for any questions emailed after 5pm ET on Monday, October 2, and you should try to attend one of the remaining Office Hours.*

Attend one of offered Office Hours to speak with an NCCAkron team member in real time. Attendance is not required in order to apply, but advance registration is requested if you do wish to attend. Click on the date/time to RSVP.

Tuesday, [September 12, 2023 from 11am-12noon ET](#)

Thursday, [September 14, 2023 from 3-4pm ET](#)

Monday, [September 18, 2023 from 11am-12noon ET](#)

Wednesday, [September 20, 2023 from 6-7pm ET](#)

Tuesday, [October 3, 2023 from 11am-12noon ET](#)

Wednesday, [October 4, 2023 from 3-4pm ET](#)

Additionally, you can learn more about CAR from the following resources:

NCCAkron Press Releases

[*The National Center for Choreography – Akron Announces a \\$1 Million Multi-year Award From the Mellon Foundation to Continue and Evolve its Signature Creative Administration Research Program, August 2023*](#)

[*The National Center for Choreography at The University of Akron Receives \\$750,000 from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for Creative Administration Research: Exploring More Creative Practices in the Business of Dance, November 2020*](#)

Additional Media Coverage

[*Choreographers Make Their Own Kind of Administrative Dance – The New York Times, August 2023*](#)

[*Artist as Model for the New Socioeconomic Normal – CAR Summit Convening Opening Plenary, June 2022*](#)

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[*Money, Mindset, and Motivation: Where Artist Meets Enterprise – CAR Summit Convening Closing Plenary. June 2022*](#)

[*Let's Ditch "Best Practices" – Dance Magazine. September 2021*](#)

[*Olympic Dance, "Black Swan" at 10, and Christy Bolingbroke – The Dance Edit*](#)

[*Are Arts Administration "Best Practices" Really Working? – Dance Business Weekly. May 2021*](#)