



[Humanities Without Walls \(HWW\)](#) is in part a large-scale experiment in thinking about the nature and character of collaboration as a dynamic scholarly practice that has been generously supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation since 2014. A consortium linking 16 universities, HWW has developed a range of interdisciplinary research teams through nearly 40 unique **Research Challenge** awards, each of which operates on more than one partner campus.

HWW **Grand Research Challenges** have been designed to encourage multi-institutional cooperation around major research questions that require humanities- and arts-based collaborative approaches.

- The first **Grand Research Challenge** round (2015–2016) focused on the “[The Global Midwest](#).”
- The second **Grand Research Challenge** round (2017–2019) called for “[The Work of the Humanities in a Changing Climate](#).”
- HWW’s third **Grand Research Challenge** round (2020-2022) will require applicants to build a commitment to methodologies of **reciprocity and redistribution** into their project design that is clearly communicated in their proposal narratives, regardless of the research topic or theme they focus on.

Thinking Through Reciprocity and Redistribution

Reciprocity and redistribution are **methods** for engaging collaborators in genuinely equal and ethical partnerships – partnerships that are not one-directional (i.e., only from campus outward) or faculty-centered (i.e., hierarchical in ways that privilege presumptively white western scholarly expertise over other forms of knowing).

Reciprocity and redistribution are **strategies** for equity-based change *by design*. These strategies aim to challenge the academic status quo by enabling community partners to participate on their own terms; to co-design and co-create transformative projects; and to be equitably resourced for their time and contributions.

A commitment to **practices** of reciprocity and redistribution also opens up possibilities for new forms of collaboration between faculty and graduate students and staff; between HWW partner universities and regional and community colleges; between Predominantly White Institutions and Minority Serving Institutions, Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Tribal Colleges; and between each campus and its variety of public stakeholders.

*Through modes of research partnership that are **reciprocal and redistributive**, collaborators will demonstrate that “humanities without walls” is not only a metaphor but also a strategic commitment to imagining and doing academic work more inclusively -- with universal access, social equity and racial diversity always front of mind.*

Seeding the HWW Research Challenge Competitions for 2021 and 2022

Each HWW consortium partner institution has seed grant money which they can use to develop mechanisms for socializing these methodologies and helping prospective applicants design interdisciplinary, cross-institutional proposals that center **reciprocity and redistribution** as values and practices.

The first of two Call for Proposals in this round will be issued in March 2021. The deadline for proposals is November 15, 2021. For queries contact PI Antoinette Burton (aburton@illinois.edu) or Director of Operations Jason Mierek (hww-directorops@illinois.edu).