

ARTIST IN RESIDENCE PROGRAM

Guidelines

- EMPAC has a wide range of venues and resources. More information on the available spaces and resources are found on the “Resources” pages that follows.
- The scope and intent of residencies at EMPAC can vary. Residencies at EMPAC can either be short-term or part of a longer term development process. A residency may be used to develop a part of a project: to explore a concept, to research artistic and technical feasibility of a certain idea, to develop computer programs or specific hardware, to bring an audio-visual work through post-production, to rehearse, or to test a work at full production scale.
- EMPAC encourages projects that may require an interdisciplinary team, potentially including staff, faculty, and students. The initialization of such a team is project-dependent and content-driven, and is part of the project’s development. If a project taps into resources, schools and departments of Rensselaer, EMPAC may be able to link the project to appropriate people.
- EMPAC’s mission is also to foster the development of new technologies for project-based needs. Projects, which leverage recent scientific and engineering research directions within the scope of the creative process, are particularly encouraged to apply.
- Rensselaer has many schools, departments, and research centers which work closely with EMPAC, such as Architecture, Humanities Arts and Social Sciences, Lighting Research, Acoustics, and Engineering. Artists in residence may elect to share their process with classes, and to offer works-in-progress showings for the campus and wider community. Guest teaching may be a part of the residency if appropriate.
- Each project will have its own specific model for the financial structure necessary to support the residencies, research, production and potential presentations or performances. EMPAC may provide accommodation for artists, and have a limited budget available for stipends and to support residencies. EMPAC may collaborate with co-producers, commissioners, presenters, grant agencies and foundations to secure funding.
- EMPAC's residency program can take many forms, as evidenced above. Most often EMPAC’s major contribution is time and space. In this scenario the residency primarily supports the development of a performance or installation in a focused environment for a few weeks to a month with feedback from the curatorial staff, if desired.
- It is not necessarily the case that a project developed as part of an EMPAC residency will also be performed or premiered at EMPAC. In general, the decision to include the project in EMPAC’s performance programming is made separately from the decision to award a residency.
- An EMPAC residency is not a commission. A commission entails further funding towards the concept of the project. Commissions are initiated by EMPAC.
- Projects that are geared towards a commercial entertainment enterprise where the production must create a monetary profit for artists or third-party investors cannot be supported. Such projects may inquire about consulting services by EMPAC, technology development in the context of a research university, or test phases at EMPAC studios.

Resources

While there will be work produced at EMPAC that does not utilize “high-tech tools,” EMPAC especially encourages projects which take advantage of EMPAC’s unique capacities and infrastructure.

All venues are designed to be extraordinarily quiet (a maximum noise floor of 15dB) and are all structurally decoupled from each other. The spaces have reverberation times ranging from 2.8 seconds in the Concert Hall to 0.5 in Studio 1. Both Studios and the Concert Hall have adjustable, acoustically absorptive banners to tune the reverberation time.

Each venue has its own separate control room and machine room. There is a dedicated audio and a dedicated video network building-wide. All venues can be connected to a centralized audio and video production suite, each other, and many other locations within the building. The audio matrix (LAWO) can accommodate more than 5000x5000 channels. The video matrix (Harris) handles up to 162 inputs x190 outputs video channels of raw video stream.

Research, Production, and Performance Venues

Concert Hall: 1180 fixed seats and 120 loose seat hall (some removable seating), 60’ projection screen with digital cinema projector (30k lumen, 2048x1080), 40 chain hoists in ceiling for hanging truss, screens, etc. Full lighting package, follow-spot booth, multichannel audio and video infrastructure. Adjustable acoustical banners.

Theater: 400 fixed seats, 40’x80’ stage, resilient flooring, 60’ flytower, computer-controlled rigging: 21 line sets, 8 spotline winches, orchestra pit. 468 sine wave dimmers, digital cinema projector (30k lumen, 2048x1080), 50’x30’ projection screen, multichannel audio and video infrastructure.

Studio 1 - Goodman: No fixed seating or staging. 66’x51’ floor area. Walkable grid at 31.5’, 8 spotline winches, additional chain hoists possible. 192 sine wave dimmers, multichannel audio and video infrastructure.

Studio 2: No fixed seating or staging. 44’x55’ floor area. Walkable grid at 18’, 8 chain hoists. 192 sine wave dimmers, multichannel audio and video infrastructure.

Production and Research Support Spaces

Audio and Video Production Rooms: While both the audio and video systems run on a matrix-based fiber-optic network, there is both an audio and video production room that is ideal for all manner of production, post-production, and even broadcast. If you need more detailed information on our audio or video systems in order to propose your project, please be in touch.

Residency Studios: EMPAC has three acoustically isolated spaces that become dedicated to a particular artist or researcher while in residence at EMPAC. They are ideal as a study, office, work, or rehearsal space, or for contained work using computers for audio or video. Each studio has an equipment closet to house noisy electronics. There are shared kitchen facilities for the Residency Studios.

Equipment: Audio, Video, and Theater Technologies

EMPAC has some of the highest end audio and video equipment available including HD video cameras, projectors, an array of small and large projection screens, an extensive collection of microphones, a large pool of loudspeakers, and many other pieces of production equipment. We also have a wood shop, welding capacity, and other possibilities for fabrication. Spanning all venues we have an extensive lighting inventory. Studio 1 and the Theater have Stage Technologies spotwinches that can be controlled via the OSC protocol. EMPAC also has four grand pianos with different characters (Fazioli, Bosendorfer, Yamaha Disklavier Pro, Hamburg Steinway).

In addition to the two 2k projectors indicated, a Sony 4k projector with 10,000 ANSI Lumens is also available.

Staff

EMPAC has a staff of experts: audio/video engineers, lighting specialists, rigger/carpenter, curatorial team, and research engineers to support projects. We encourage applicants to bring their own teams of experts and also to utilize our staff in support of their work.

EMPAC, as part of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, can connect artists with faculty, staff, and students at the Institute who may be interested in becoming involved with artists while in residence at EMPAC. Similarly, If community involvement is integral to the artist's work, we can work together to create a situation appropriate for the work. Often, as part of a residency, we will connect an artist with a class to whom they can talk about their work or hold a public discussion where the larger community is invited.

Residencies may just use one of the three Residency Studios. These spaces can accommodate one or several artists (in case of a group project). They may be used for developing work, programming, editing, thinking – basically like a project studio. Their infrastructure is configured specific to a residency. These studios are dedicated to one project at a time.

Use of the larger venues can be either part of a residency that spans inception to completion or can be for a residency needing the venue for the whole duration. This will have to be considered when discussing the residency. We intend to make the larger venues equally available 24/7 dedicated to a specific phase of a project.

Support

EMPAC may support residencies with stipends and accommodation in the EMPAC artist residency housing, a building with four apartments. Artists may have a commission from another institution or other sources of funding to realize a project and want to develop the project during a residency. The joint development of the financial plan for a residency is part of the residency review process.

Eligibility

EMPAC does not accept residency applications from full-time students. In addition, faculty and students of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute are not eligible to apply.

How to Apply

EMPAC programs, commissions and residencies are developed internally by the curators in collaboration with the director. There is no formal application process for applying for a residency, and applications may be sent in at any time. Commissions are by solicitation only.

The selection process includes a first screening with possible subsequent meetings, interviews, reviews, feasibility studies and planning of all aspects of the project including content, technology, budget, time-line and overall resources. The review process will be conducted by EMPAC and may include peer reviews as well as technical review by experts internal or external to Rensselaer.

If you are interested in submitting a residency proposal, please send us a packet with appropriate materials to introduce your work and concept. A proposal *could* include the following information:

- A letter of intent, which includes contact information
- Project or residency description and supporting material that might help describe the project more fully (visuals, sketches, diagrams, scores, algorithms, etc.)
- Supporting materials: including a CV and work samples, press kit, DVD, CD, urls, or quicktimes of past work
- Information on upcoming performances or shows
- A self-addressed stamped envelope if you would like your materials returned

Materials may be sent in by mail or email to:

EMPAC Artist in Residence Program
EMPAC Building — Administrative Offices
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
110 8th Street
Troy, NY 12180

EMPAC_AIR@RPI.EDU

We make every effort to review proposals in a timely way. We will notify you by email once we have received your materials, and response can be expected in 3 – 4 months.

Although EMPAC does not select its performances and commissions through this application process, it is a valuable way to get to know artists who we might not yet know, and with whom we might partner in the future. If you would like to send in a performance notice and have already sent in materials, please note that on the invitation or performance announcement.