



Q21.

Q1. Name

# ICS

**BGSU** | Institute for the Study of  
**CULTURE and SOCIETY**  
BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY

Q2. Pronouns

Q3. Unit

Q4. Academic Rank

Q5. Office Phone

Q6. Mobile Phone

Q7. Email

Q8. Please indicate your availability for residency

- Fall Term  
 Spring Term

Q10.

## Characteristics of the Award Program

Each year up to four BGSU faculty members may receive Institute awards to pursue research or creative work for one team. During the award period, Institute Scholars and Artists are freed from teaching and service responsibilities so that they may devote unimpeded time to their projects

Q11.

## Conditions

1. Each Fellow will present on their funded project in a public, general-audience lecture sponsored by the ICS in the semester of the fellowship period. Additional community engagement activities may be required as developed in consultation with the Fellow, the Director, and the ICS Executive Board.
2. Fellows are expected to participate actively in the intellectual community at ICS, through attendance at meetings of the ICS Fellows, Fellows talks, and other ICS-sponsored events.
3. ICS Fellows are requested to acknowledge the role of the Institute in publications/creative projects that result from their residency. We ask that you submit a copy of the final product (book, article, exhibition catalog, video, etc.) to ICS upon publication/exhibition.
4. If you anticipate taking a one-semester Faculty Improvement Leave, you may also apply for a semester-long ICS fellowship. However, those applying for full-year FIL should NOT expect to be able to switch to a semester FIL if awarded an ICS fellowship. These are separate awards with different timelines and processes; ICS cannot intervene in FIL matters.
5. ICS Fellows remain on regular academic-year salary throughout the award period. Funding for the Fellowship program comes from the College of Arts and Sciences, which provides compensation to instructional units to offset the costs of the release time. (Units must agree to make up the difference.) Replacement costs are capped at \$5,000 for a one-semester residency and are contingent upon fulfillment of ICS obligations.

Q12.

## Eligibility

All full-time faculty who have successfully completed one Enhanced Performance Review are eligible to apply for a fellowship. Awards to untenured (probationary or nontenured-track) faculty are contingent upon

reappointment.

Faculty who have previously received an ICS Fellowship must wait at least five years before reapplying. No more than two faculty members from one department or program may be in residence at ICS in any given academic year.

Q19.

## Review Criteria

- The intellectual significance and public relevance of the project, including the major ideas, themes, and questions to be explored
- The ways in which the project will enrich the university and broader communities through meaningful collaboration
- The significance of the project to a broader or more nuanced understanding of culture and society by building on and advancing existing disciplinary knowledge through interdisciplinary methods
- The clarity and conceptual coherence of the project
- The originality, importance, or substance of the applicant's proposal
- The probability that the project will lead to a tangible research/creative outcome (e.g., scholarly article, artwork, book chapter, etc.)
- The degree to which the project is sufficiently well conceived to be completed in a timely manner
- The potential for the project to serve the public good

Q20.

## Proposal Evaluation Procedures

Applications are reviewed by the ICS Executive Board and the ICS Director.

Award recommendations are forwarded for approval to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and the Vice-Provost for Research.

Q13. Project Title

Q14. Project Abstract (250 words maximum)

Q15.

### Proposed Community Engagement Activity (100 words maximum)

Describe a new community engagement activity that you might develop during an ICS residency in order to connect your project to other publics. What non-BGSU constituency could you reach out to for collaboration (such as a high-school, hospital, or particular community service organization)? How would this audience advance your work and/or increase its impact on the world? Think carefully about the kind of event or activity that would be appropriate and relevant to your project. You may wish to consult with the ICS Director in advance of your application.

Q16.

## **Additional Application Materials to be Emailed**

- Project Narrative (1000 words maximum): The project description should be written in a clear, jargon-free style intelligible to colleagues outside the applicant's area of expertise.
  - Provide a concise overview articulating:
    - the central ideas, problems, or questions examined in the research/creative project being pursued
    - the intellectual significance of the project, including how you will complement, challenge, or expand existing scholarship and public perceptions of the topic
    - the social relevance to and impact on university and area communities
    - potential audiences for the work, including those on-campus as well as in the wider community
    - the longer-term goals for the project, what you plan to accomplish during the leave semester, and the form the final product will take
- Curriculum Vitae
  - Please attach in BGSU format
- Please use Times New Roman, 12-point font, one-inch margins
- In addition to the written project descriptions, artists may submit supplementary materials, such as digital files (photos, audio, videos) with their application packet.
- Submit additional application materials through email to [ics@bgsu.edu](mailto:ics@bgsu.edu)

Q17. Please include the name and email for your Unit Chair/Director. Please ensure to type in the name and email correctly, they will receive an email requesting their signature as part of your application for the ICS Faculty Fellowship.

*This question was not displayed to the respondent*

Q18. Please include the name and email for your College Dean. Please ensure to type in the name and email correctly, they will receive an email requesting their signature as part of your application for the ICS Faculty Fellowship.

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I have read and understand the ICS Faculty Fellowship Program guidelines, and agree to its conditions:  
Applicant Signature:

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Q13. Project Title

Places, Please: Stage Managers, Gender, and Invisible Labor

Q14. Project Abstract (250 words maximum)

I propose to use the ICS fellowship period to develop a journal article related to my book-length project on backstage labor. The book-length project, called Places, Please: Stage Managers, Gender, and Invisible Labor, examines the role of stage managers in live performing arts contexts using ethnographic methods of data collection. Stage managers, like other backstage or crew workers, are essential to the operations of live performance, yet they are rarely seen by audiences or studied by scholars. These positions are typically filled by women (around 70%), and job duties are often articulated in highly gendered language. To date, there are no existing academic studies that place stage management in a critical framework; existing books on the topic consist of memoirs, manuals, and textbooks designed for training stage managers. This project brings two interdisciplinary fields, Performance Studies and Labor Studies, into conversation in a multi-sited ethnographic study that examines the multiple and varied performance contexts in which stage managers work. Further, because stage management is a sector of the performing arts dominated by women, I engage these questions through a gender studies lens. This study investigates stage managers' relationships to the hierarchies and power dynamics of their working lives, including but not limited to gender roles, unions and the range of workplace cultures in which they labor. These insights will expand and complicate received histories of both the theater industry and labor politics.

Q15.

## Proposed Community Engagement Activity (100 words maximum)

Describe a new community engagement activity that you might develop during an ICS residency in order to connect your project to other publics. What non-BGSU constituency could you reach out to for collaboration (such as a high-school, hospital, or particular community service organization)? How would this audience advance your work and/or increase its impact on the world? Think carefully about the kind of event or activity that would be appropriate and relevant to your project. You may wish to consult with the ICS Director in advance of your application.

I propose to reach out to IATSE (International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees) Local 24 in Toledo, and local Actors' Equity (professional actors' and stage managers' union) to organize a roundtable discussion (in-person or webinar) about how nationally-publicized labor issues in the theatre industry are affecting local theatre communities. An audience of area theatre practitioners and arts patrons may benefit from recognizing and better understanding labor equity issues in the arts (and viewing the arts as work). Working with both backstage and performers' unions will help me better understand the links between the local and national contexts for my project.

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Unit Chair/Director Name

Unit Chair/Director Email

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College Dean Name

College Dean Email

Q16.

I have read and understand the ICS Faculty Fellowship Program guidelines, and agree to its conditions:

Applicant Signature:





**Location Data**

**Location:** [Redacted]

**Source:** GeoIP Estimation



### **Project Description**

I propose to use the ICS fellowship period to develop a journal article related to my book-length project on backstage labor. The book-length project, called *Places, Please: Stage Managers, Gender, and Invisible Labor*, examines the role of stage managers in live performing arts contexts using ethnographic methods of data collection. Stage managers, like other backstage or crew workers, are essential to the operations of live performance, yet they are rarely seen by audiences or studied by scholars. These positions are typically filled by women (around 70%), and job duties are often articulated in highly gendered language. Academic studies of backstage labor are rare, Christin Essin's new *Working Backstage: A Cultural History and Ethnography of Technical Theater Labor* (2021) being one recent exception, and stage management does not fall under her study's purview. To date, there are no existing academic studies that place stage management in a critical framework; existing books on the topic consist of memoirs, manuals, and textbooks designed for training stage managers. My project joins Essin's in highlighting the essential yet unseen theatrical labor that happens off stage. *Places, Please* is a multi-sited ethnographic project that focuses on the local, national, and possibly international live performance contexts in which stage managers work.

This project brings two interdisciplinary fields, Performance Studies and Labor Studies, into conversation. The field of Labor Studies draws on economics, the social sciences, and the humanities, but less often on arts disciplines; recently, performance scholars have taken up Labor Studies frameworks to highlight theatrical labor—so often viewed as leisure or “labors of love”—as work. These performance scholars have largely focused attention on performers (actors and dancers) as laborers, whereas backstage labor has, until quite recently, remained largely unattended. Theatre scholars who write about labor have mostly theorized the emotional or affective work of actors in the moment of performance (McKelvey 2019, Ridout 2015, Solga 2013). Stage managers engage in emotional labor differently, perhaps in ways analogous to the flight attendants Arlie Hochschild studies in her famous ethnography, *The Managed Heart* (1983), in that they manage the relationship among public-facing performers, authority-wielding directors, and the often-invisible backstage workers of the theatre industry.

Because stage management is a sector of the performing arts dominated by women (66-70%, according to one survey by McGraw, 2019), I examine these questions through a gender studies lens. One recent stage management manual states that a stage manager functions as a “personal secretary” to the production and as a “confidant” and “shoulder to cry on” for actors, listing qualities like compassion, poise, and discretion—all roles and qualities typically associated with women (Roth, Allender-Zivic, McGlaughlin, 2017). How do the actual lived experiences of stage managers (of all genders) confirm, complicate, and/or illuminate the gender dynamics inscribed in manuals? This study investigates stage managers' relationships to the hierarchies and power dynamics of their working lives, including but not limited to gender roles, unions and the range of workplace cultures in which they labor.

The journal article has the potential to reach theatre faculty at university programs who train stage managers. My hope is that the article and community engagement activity will contribute

to theatre practitioners (especially stage managers themselves) and arts patrons better understanding labor equity issues in the arts, both at BGSU and in performing arts organizations in the region. The article (and eventually the book) will also highlight for Labor Studies scholars the importance of understanding the arts as work. In this way, the project will expand and complicate received histories of both the theater/live performance industry and labor politics.

This project requires me to conduct time-intensive ethnographic research over a number of years, as well as to deepen my knowledge of secondary literature in the field of Labor Studies. I have proposed the initial stage of this project for a Faculty Improvement Leave in Fall 2022, and I propose to continue that work with an ICS Fellowship in Spring 2023. I have submitted my IRB application for the project and expect to re-submit with the small number of requested modifications by November 15, 2021.

Within the ICS Fellowship period, I intend to use data collected during my summer and fall fieldwork to draft a journal article that outlines the theoretical and methodological frameworks for what will eventually become the book. Below I outline how the FIL and ICS activities would work together.

#### **Proposed FIL activities (Summer 2022 – Fall 2022)**

Summer – Fall 2022: Reading in Labor Studies.

September – December 2022: Ethnographic research in Minneapolis (September), Chicago (October), and Detroit (November).

By the end of the FIL semester, I hope to have conducted and transcribed 8-12 interviews and engaged in participant-observation and developed a preliminary book proposal draft.

#### **Proposed ICS Fellowship activities (Spring 2023)**

I will use the ICS fellowship semester to develop and draft a journal article, with plans to submit by July 2023. This article will focus on stage managers, gender, and invisible labor in the Midwestern cities of Minneapolis, Chicago, and Detroit, and will be developed with the flagship journal *Theatre Survey* as the target publication venue.

January: Read & analyze data from interviews and field work

February: Build theoretical framework, outline article

March : Draft article and send to writing group/reader

April: Revise, hold community engagement activity

May: Revise article in light of outreach activity reflections and reader feedback

July 2023: Submit article

\*Should the FIL not be awarded, I expect to be able to carry out at least the Detroit portion of my research in summer and fall, since it would not require major travel from my home in Toledo. In that case, I would continue with my plan to draft a journal article, with a narrower geographical scope.

The FIL and ICS research activities will move this project forward significantly. With time allocated for intensive research, I will be able to launch fieldwork and work out theoretical and methodological nuances. This will, in turn, provide a strong basis for securing funding to continue the project.