

[2023 Summer Institute: “Archipelagic Asias” Call for Applications](#)

Discussion published by Robert Nguyen on Saturday, December 3, 2022



Submission Deadline: March 3, 2023

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The Pennsylvania State University invites applicants for its annual Global Asias Summer Institute, to be held June 19–23, 2023. SI2023, co-directed by Nicolai Volland (Penn State) and Leo Ching (Duke), will focus on the topic of “Archipelagic Asias.”

Institute participants spend a week reading and thinking about the annual theme, as well as significant time workshoping their work in progress. Particularly strong work will be considered for publication in an upcoming special issue of the award-winning journal, *Verge: Studies in Global Asias* (<https://www.upress.umn.edu/journal-division/journals/verge-studies-in-global-asias>).

Penn State will cover housing and meals, and offer an honorarium to help defray travel costs (USD 450 from the East Coast, 650 from the Midwest, 850 from the West Coast; USD 1050 from Europe; USD 1400 from Asia). **Applicants must have completed their PhDs no earlier than June 2018, or be advanced graduate students who are completing their dissertations.**

ON THE THEME:

The study of Asia(s) remains fragmented along the lines of nations, histories, ethnicities, languages, and disciplines—all concepts that are rooted, epistemologically and pragmatically, on terra firma, on the supposedly sound conceptual ground of a continental Enlightenment tradition. What happens, however, when we shift our point of view, and instead adopt an oceanic perspective? How do our understandings of Asia(s) change when viewed from ashore? And how can engagement with and thinking through the ocean help us reconceive our critical and conceptual vocabulary and our approaches to the study of Asia?

Groundbreaking work from oceanic studies, archipelagic studies, and the “blue humanities” has inserted critical acumen into a range of fields including Asian American Studies and Indigenous Studies, and is beginning to reinvigorate the study of Asia, a traditionally “landed” discipline. In doing so, the archipelagic and the oceanic have opened space for critical inquiry, realigning and converging with other decolonial and decontinental movements from various disciplines and fields of inquiry. These emerging approaches harbor the potential not only to rethink Asian/area studies, but also to create new alliances with other fields and disciplines.

This year’s Summer Institute seeks to bring together a diverse cohort of scholars working on projects that reconsider the disciplinary practices of Global Asias from the perspective of the archipelagic and oceanic. We are interested in proposals that consider the ocean not as peripheral, but as central—as constitutive to the making of Global Asias. Oceans connect as much as they separate; they provide

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<https://networks.h-net.org/node/24508/discussions/11913496/2023-summer-institute-%E2%80%9Carchipelagic-asias%E2%80%9D-call-applications>

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space for movement and mobility, in the physical and the metaphorical sense, and for comparison and relational thinking; and they challenge rigidly drawn disciplinary boundaries. By proposing the archipelagic—in its expansive understanding—as a critical lens, we aim to foreground the ocean as an alternative space for thought; push back against dominant epistemologies; reconsider the critical vocabulary and methodological approaches to the study of Global Asia(s); and celebrate the minor, peripheral, and marginal.

We welcome proposals that reconsider East Asian, Southeast Asian, South Asian, Inter-Asian, Transpacific, Asian American, and Asian diasporic experiences from oceanic and archipelagic perspectives, from a range of humanistic and related social science disciplines, and across time periods. How can a maritime perspective help to unsettle and reconstitute the field? How can Global Asian/s literatures, histories, societies, cultures, cultural production, as well as gender, race, and identity, be reconceived in oceanic terms? How can oceans help us think across disciplinary boundaries? And how can our approaches to archipelagic Asias in turn be linked to, and intervene in, current critical conversations such as the Anthropocene, decoloniality, indigeneity, and the Global South?

APPLICATION PROCESS:

Graduate students are required to have a letter from their principle advisor regarding the advanced status of their work sent to gai@psu.edu.

All applicants: please submit the following documents to <https://bit.ly/3h7Snss> by March 3, 2023 as a **single PDF file**:

1. An abstract of 1500 words outlining research project and clarifying its connection to the Institute theme.
2. A sample of current work.
3. A current c.v. (no longer than 2 pp).

Decisions will be made by early April 2023. Inquiries regarding the Summer Institute may be directed to GAI director Tina Chen (tina.chen@psu.edu) or SI2023 co-director Nicolai Volland (nmv10@psu.edu).

Related date:

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