



naea

# RESEARCH AGENDA

**Teaching and learning** in the visual arts in PreK-16 classrooms, art museums, and community programs are strengthened by knowledge gained through research. The National Art Education Association, a respected leader in educational research and the hub of a global research knowledge network, created the NAEA Research Commission to build and sustain a culture of inquiry and research. In pursuing its mission, a task of this Commission includes setting a timely Research Agenda.\*

The NAEA Research Agenda is designed to encourage and disseminate research communicating the value of visual arts education and its collective impact on students, schools, communities, and society.

All art educators have a common desire to advance the field of art education. Our mission is to justify and strengthen a case for art education through rigorous and timely support of research conducted at all levels of professional practice. To achieve this goal, the Research Commission consulted with the NAEA membership to identify its research needs. Three themes emerged from the analysis:

1. The need for professional learning to support research literacy.
2. Four research factors that include content, student, educator, and setting.
3. Specific topics or issues to be explored through research.

## PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

In the area of professional learning, NAEA members across all divisions indicated a need for greater understanding of research methodologies and application of these methodologies for their own teaching and research. Professional learning about research supports understanding of implications of research for practice and developing capacities for conducting research.

## FOUR RESEARCH FACTORS

Art education research is a community of discourse that specifically focuses on art education as a teaching/learning experience in art. Thus the factors of content, student, educator, and setting can be established as constants in an agenda that utilizes and values research as a means for improving art education theory, practice, advocacy, and policy. From this point of view, the factors that should be included in such a research agenda would be Student/Learning, Art Educator/Teaching, Content/Disciplines of Art and Art Education, and the Educational Context/Setting in which art learning takes place.

### Student/Learning

Student learning in the visual arts focuses on aspects such as student readiness; levels of development; cultural contexts; motivation; and engagement in art and design education.

### Art Educator/Teaching

Art educators' teaching and learning focuses on experiences with varieties of art content, professional roles, tasks, teaching methodologies, and backgrounds related to creative and innovative art and design education. This learning begins with pre-service education, and continues through advanced degree programs and ongoing professional development.

### Content/Disciplines of Art and Art Education

Content can include, but is not limited to, research about knowledge in the field of art education, such as art education theory, art curricula as courses of study, standards, and theory and practice of art and art education including creativity and innovation, media arts, and design education. Knowledge that arises from art education research is generative, so new content is continually constructed and subject to further research.

### Educational Context/Setting

The educational settings in which art teaching and learning can take place are situated in a wide variety of environments, for example a classroom, museum, community center, on the Internet, etc. The setting also includes the administrative climate, support or destabilizing mechanisms of an environment, and the immediate physical environment that includes materials, equipment, or other resources.

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Through content analysis in 2013 of members' responses to a Research Commission survey, the Research Commission identified research topics that garnered the highest level of interest and aligned with each of the four content research factors. These topics are:

#### Assessment/Evaluation

Assessment/Evaluation focuses on improvement and accountability of processes and products. Assessment is a form of research used to provide feedback for improvement of educational activities and contexts, such as in teaching and learning in a range of settings, the effectiveness of curricula and standards, or the safety of facilities. Evaluation is a systematic process of determining the quality of teacher performance or student achievement for purposes of grading and reporting, or for deciding whether a program, curriculum, product, procedure, or policy has met intended expectations. Formative and summative assessments/evaluations emphasize findings that support interpretations and judgments about both quality and quantity of outcomes.

#### Social Justice

Social justice is a broad topic which includes, but is not limited to, equity of access to and opportunity for quality visual arts education for all learners in school, museum and community settings. In this context learners include diverse populations of students with regard to special needs, cultural identity, sexual orientation, religion, age, and socio-economic status. Social justice issues also encompass a diversified teaching force and often focus on the development of ethics and appreciation for diversity in a global community.

#### Emerging Technology

The study and practice of art and design education incorporates the use of technology tools, processes, and resources in a variety of educational settings, and local, global, and international contexts, that include creativity, innovation, and media arts as well as interdisciplinary initiatives such as arts integration and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics).

#### Demographic Data

Demographic research is often used to describe information about groups of people, including environmental and economic conditions, educational experiences and values or perceptions within a group. Its purpose is to discover the nature and quality of existing conditions and practices and it can assist in establishing baseline data and/or in setting benchmarks to guide the direction and focus of future art education practice and policy.

#### Listing of Research Topics and Questions

These topics are by no means an exclusive listing of research questions. They are being offered here for pragmatic purposes and will be considered for a limited period of time so that new topics can be explored in the future.

The research questions, generated for inclusion in the cells in the grid at the intersections of the content research factors and the research topics, were generated in large part from an NAEA member survey and are examples of the kinds of research questions that might be relevant. The questions are presented in a general format and are not intended to be used verbatim as questions for specific research projects. Research is encouraged that applies rigorous methodology and demonstrates a collective impact across a variety of communities.

Research questions should determine the kind of methodologies and methods that will be used in a particular inquiry. Although research methodologies and methods are used to investigate a variety of topics in art education, the Research Commission recognizes the need for studies that examine the nature of research and knowledge in the field through critical examination of evolving methodologies and practices. In the last quarter of the 20th century, in educational research, there was a shift of interest in research methodologies and methods from quantitative studies based on scientific inquiry to more qualitative studies focusing on unique social settings. Currently, there is a growing awareness of advantages in using both inductive (qualitative) and deductive (quantitative) methods in the same inquiry (mixed methods). Both within and apart from more traditional historical, descriptive, experimental, and philosophical categories of art research, there are emerging a variety of newer and innovative methodologies, such as arts-based inquiry; ethnologies; phenomenological investigations; program evaluations; participatory media studies; policy reviews; trend analyses; and educational criticism, critical theory, semiotics, post-modern and post-structural critiques.

### POLICY INITIATIVES

Educational practice, including practice in art education, is continually impacted by educational research, theory, and policy. Current national reform, focused on educator preparation in many states, includes a Teacher Performance Assessment (edTPA) as a certification requirement. National Core Arts Standards, Common Core, and/or State and Local Standards, Value Added Models, Student Growth and Learning Objectives, Teacher Evaluation Systems created as a result of Race to the Top, and other federal and state legislation are wide spread educational initiatives impacting local district policy and classrooms nationally. Ramifications of educational policies add another dimension to investigation and research in art education. Depending on the focus of a study, research questions regarding the impact of current educational policy on the practice of art education easily fit into any of the Research Agenda categories. Researchers are encouraged to consider current educational policies and influences on art education when developing a research project and questions for investigation.

### USING THE RESEARCH AGENDA

All art educators can use the NAEA Research Agenda as a guide for improving and advocating for art and museum education. PreK-16 art educators will find opportunities to apply research to practice and conduct their own inquiries that can contribute to knowledge about art and design education. University professors, who introduce students to research questions and methods, can employ the Research Agenda as a model of research-based best practices. Academic researchers and graduate students can apply the Research Agenda when focusing on conversations with other researchers and funding agencies. In support of art education programs, school administrators can refer to the Research Agenda to identify factors, themes, and questions used by researchers to investigate and strengthen claims about the importance of visual arts education. For arts advocates, museum staff, and members of community centers and cultural institutions, the Research Agenda provides an accessible means of identifying research topics and trends for improving the design of arts education programs across local, national, and international contexts.

# ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION

STUDENT	EDUCATOR	CONTEXT	CONTENT
<p>What relationships can be found between scores on standardized tests and scores on art and design assessment procedures?</p> <p>Which types of assessment procedures demonstrate the capacity of students to participate in a diverse, global, and just society?</p> <p>How is student learning measured when instruction is focused on studio art practices, visual culture, design education, and aesthetic experiences with original works of art; taught as discipline-based visual arts education; or integrated with other subjects?</p> <p>How might student creativity be successfully and authentically assessed in art and design education?</p>	<p>How do art educators resolve conflicting values between prescribed assessment procedures and their individual values about students and their visual arts learning?</p> <p>How do art educators go about constructing and using assessment procedures as part of their daily work?</p> <p>Which procedures are the most effective and appropriate procedures for assessing/evaluating art educators' competencies?</p> <p>What are effects of pre-service teacher assessment and teacher evaluation on art teaching and learning in the United States?</p> <p>What are the core competencies art educators need to possess to deliver instruction at a skilled proficiency level?</p>	<p>What are factors in educational settings that support or mitigate against effective assessment of student progress and achievement in art?</p> <p>What are successful strategies for including community members in assessment of art experiences and programs?</p> <p>Which assessments of art and design programs are most effective for fostering robust visual art education programs?</p> <p>How can indicators and methodologies appropriately be applied to assess the impact of contextual factors on student learning and classroom instruction about art?</p>	<p>What are the most appropriate measures for assessing art teaching and learning?</p> <p>What are exemplary authentic assessment procedures within art education practices today?</p> <p>What are effective means for documenting creative thinking and visual skills that demonstrate student growth?</p> <p>In what ways may visual arts assessments align with the National Core Arts Standards in the Visual Arts, Common Core, State and/or Local Standards, and developmental models of student visual art skills and creative thinking abilities?</p>

# SOCIAL JUSTICE

STUDENT	EDUCATOR	CONTEXT	CONTENT
<p>How can art education serve students with high interest ability in art, as well as those with special needs such as learning, physical, and emotional disabilities, and those learning English as a second language?</p> <p>How can art education prepare students to be enlightened citizens engaged in a global community?</p> <p>How can art education promote understanding of diversity with regard to sexual orientation, cultural identity, religious beliefs, and other areas where prejudice and marginalization may exist?</p> <p>How can art education address student issues related to privilege and economic disadvantage?</p>	<p>How does the field prepare art educators to apply inclusivity in their teaching practices?</p> <p>How does the field encourage candidates from underrepresented groups to become art educators and leaders?</p> <p>How do pre-service programs prepare art educators to respect and teach content based on social justice?</p> <p>How does the field prepare art educators to address art learning across the lifespan?</p>	<p>What types of art program practices effectively engage the community beyond school, university, and museum settings?</p> <p>What are facets of effective art education programs that demonstrate sensitivity to the socio-cultural context of a community?</p> <p>In what ways do art curricula effectively incorporate community members' assessments and evaluations?</p>	<p>How culturally diverse are the producers of art included in art curricula, and what are the implications of that diversity or its absence?</p> <p>How do artworks and instructional strategies featured in art curricula help students understand social justice?</p> <p>How do artworks and instructional strategies featured in art curricula support or hinder students' participation in global communities?</p>

# EMERGING TECHNOLOGY

STUDENT	EDUCATOR	CONTEXT	CONTENT
<p>In what ways do different technologies impact student learning about art and design at various age levels in diverse educational/social contexts?</p> <p>How do students enhance their visual arts learning by using digital resources and social media to conduct research?</p> <p>In what ways may technology be used as new media for art creation as well as a means to encourage interdisciplinary learning?</p> <p>In what ways do students find the use of technology effective or ineffective for online art learning?</p>	<p>How might web-based resources and interactive technologies enhance professional development?</p> <p>How does higher education prepare pre-service educators to teach about art and design education and use of new media to create artworks?</p> <p>Which art education pedagogical practices effectively incorporate technology to creatively teach about art and design?</p> <p>What impedes art educators' use of technology in implementing and assessing arts and design learning within STEAM curricula?</p> <p>What kind of instructional skills do art educators need to effectively meet state standards and deliver online art instruction?</p>	<p>To what extent are art classrooms and museums equipped with necessary hardware and software to engage students about the use of technology as a means for creating artworks and supporting interactive art learning?</p> <p>How is technology used to promote student learning in community art settings?</p> <p>Which technological tools and processes might be needed to develop curriculum and conduct online art courses and programs?</p>	<p>What kinds of multi-modal skills are needed to create artwork with digital media?</p> <p>Which educational policies and/or ethical standards are important when using technology to teach about the visual arts?</p> <p>What resources are available for studying the historic development of digital technologies as art media?</p> <p>Which new media arts skills directly connect with 'traditional' visual arts content and in what ways?</p>

# DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

STUDENT	EDUCATOR	CONTEXT	CONTENT
<p>How does the student/art educator ratio vary nationally, regionally, and locally and what relationships might these ratios be to student learning outcomes?</p> <p>How does the structure and support for art education students in the United States compare with structure and support provided students in other countries?</p> <p>How do test scores, grades, and/or extracurricular activities differ among high school students who studied about art in elementary and middle school as compared with students who did not?</p> <p>In what ways does integrated curriculum across disciplines, such as STEAM, impact student learning in the arts and other disciplines?</p>	<p>How are underrepresented groups represented in the field of art education in terms of numbers and positions across the US and how are they recruited to art educator preparation programs?</p> <p>Nationally, what data are available about art program structures (such as number of courses, content of courses), graduation requirements, and perceived strengths of art education programs?</p> <p>How does the education and experiences of art educators in the US compare with the preparation of art educators in other countries?</p> <p>What is the relationship between the number of art educators in a county and that county's median income?</p> <p>What data-driven methodologies can be applied to study the many contexts that influence development and success of art programs in schools, museums, and communities.</p>	<p>What is the level of funding for art education per pupil across the nation? How does funding compare regionally and across local contexts (rural, urban, suburban etc.)?</p> <p>What kinds of art teaching and learning opportunities exist beyond the art classroom, in local communities across the nation? What are their goals? How are they funded?</p> <p>What are student-educator ratios for schools with art programs compared to those schools without art programs?</p> <p>What are the percentages of minority populated schools with art programs compared to similar school populations without art programs?</p> <p>Is there a relationship between the number of full-time equivalent art educator (FTE) positions and per-pupil spending in specific school districts?</p>	<p>In the United States, in which grades is art a required subject locally, regionally, and nationally?</p> <p>Nationally, are there college admission requirements pertaining to the visual arts; if so, what are the specifics of these requirements?</p> <p>In what ways is creativity specifically fostered in art classrooms, museums, and community organizations across the nation?</p> <p>How does the delivery of art standards vary in different locales and across different economic strata?</p> <p>How does the pre-service education and experience of art educators in the United States compare with the preparation of art educators in other countries?</p>