The Creativity Initiative is an interdisciplinary research collaborative, launched in 2010 at Michigan State University, focused on a broad and distinctive range of research including:

- Research that connects the traditional creative arts with one another, and the social and natural sciences
- Research on creativity in approaches to teaching math, engineering, and other STEM disciplines
- Research on teaching creativity across the curriculum, focusing on groups and communities, in addition to individuals, and “at risk” students
- Research on creativity in everyday decision making, in multimedia composing, and digital gaming
- Research on creativity within scholarly communities (especially in an interdisciplinary context)
- Research on creativity in the development of preventative health practices
- Research on creativity in newly evolving forms of entrepreneurial activity
- Research on creativity in the use and cultivation of space in community contexts

The initiative leverages existing faculty research strengths to generate a substantial body of research applicable to a broad set of academic disciplines and professions. It has relevance across the university and potential to secure external funding and impact communities. The Creativity Initiative endeavors to make a significant and sustainable contribution to the economic development of Michigan, and beyond, through initiatives related to creative processes. As such, it promises to enhance the role and reputation of MSU, and its partners, nationally, regionally, and locally.

The Office of the Vice President for Research has committed to fund the initiative’s initial planning process. The intent of this phase is to identify distinctive areas of creativity research in which MSU can play a key role, as either a leader or significant partner. Further, the planning process will develop models for disseminating research outcomes through innovative and productive use of new communication technologies and MSU’s broad network of social and community resources.

The Creativity Initiative has adopted a hub and cluster structure for the planning year. With a decentralized administrative core (hub) and five thematic research foci (clusters), the initiative has identified an initial set of fertile research domains. As planning progresses, other clusters may be added as promising new research areas come to light.

The planning period will culminate with the launch of a new journal, proposals for funding to external granting agencies and foundations, and pilot research projects undertaken by each research cluster.

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Research Clusters

Creative Processes and Entrepreneurial, Group, and Community Activities

Cluster Co-Directors: Prof. Jeff Grabill (AL, WRAC), Mr. Vincent Delgado (RCAH)

Creative Processes and Teaching

Cluster Co-Directors: Prof. Punya Mishra (Ed, EdPsych&EdTech), Prof. David Sheridan (RCAH)

Creativity Processes, Digital Composing, and “At Risk” Students

Cluster Co-Directors: Prof. Mark Sullivan (MUS, RCAH), Prof. Pennie Foster-Fishman (SocSci, Psych)

Creative Processes and Health

Cluster Co-Directors: Prof. Marsha MacDowell(AL, ArtArtHist), Prof. Clare Luz (HumMed, FamMed)

Creativity, Social Knowledge Platforms, and Forms of Scholarly Inquiry

Cluster Co-Directors: Prof. Dean Rehberger (SocSci, MATRIX, WRAC), Prof. Ethan Watrall (SocSci, MATRIX, Anth)

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