



# COLLABORATIVE ROBOTICS LAB

## Collaborative Robotics Lab (CRL) Artist in Residence Program 2026

### **Call for Expression of Interest (EOI)**

*Where Creative Practice Meets Robotic Innovation*

The Collaborative Robotics Lab (CRL) Artist in Residence program celebrates creativity, experimentation, and critical inquiry at the intersection of robotics, art, and human-robot interaction. Internationally renowned for its pioneering research in Robotic Art, CRL provides a rare opportunity for local artists to immerse themselves in a cutting-edge technological environment, a place where cultural, creative, and technical dimensions converge.

The program welcomes early-career artists, practitioners, and creative researchers from the ACT and surrounding region to take up residence alongside our team of engineers, roboticists, and researchers to explore new ideas, experiment with robotic systems, and challenge traditional boundaries of both art and technology.

### **Why Get Involved?**

This is an immersive collaboration rather than just standard studio time. It offers a unique opportunity to:

- Gain hands-on access to advanced laboratory infrastructure and robotic platforms.
- Share your work and deeply connect with the vibrant Canberra community.
- Feature and promote your creative research through CRL communication channels, research networks, and public forums.

## About the Collaborative Robotics Lab (CRL)

CRL is dedicated to exploring the technical, cultural, and human dimensions of robotics. We champion interdisciplinary exploration, treating "Robotic Art" not merely as an application, but as a core discipline within engineering and research.

Our facility serves as a hub where complex systems, human-robot interaction, and perception meet creative expression. CRL prioritizes curiosity-driven exploration and long-term innovation, fostering an environment where slow, deep research can thrive away from purely metrics-driven models. We actively bridge academic discovery, creative practice, and public engagement to explore how robots exist within our societal and cultural landscapes.

To anchor their creative inquiries, applicants are strongly encouraged to refer to the seminal book [\*Robots and Art: Exploring an Unlikely Symbiosis\*](#) as a key foundational reference point. The program is designed to support the next generation of creative voices, specifically favouring **emerging artists** who will benefit from deep immersion in an advanced research facility.

## Core Technical Interests

To ensure a meaningful collaboration, the artist's proposed project must align specifically with **at least one** of CRL's core technical research interests:

- **Human-Robot Interaction (HRI):** Exploring how humans and robots communicate, cooperate, and coexist socially, spatially, and emotionally.
- **Robot Intelligence:** Investigating decision-making, adaptive behaviours, and the cognitive capabilities of autonomous systems.
- **Robot Perception:** Exploring how machines sense, map, interpret, and understand their physical environments.
- **Soft Robotics:** Engaging with compliant materials, bio-inspired designs, and flexible robotic systems that challenge rigid machine archetypes.
- **Secure Robotics:** Examining trust, safety, privacy, resilience, and the ethical safeguards required in human-robot ecosystems.
- **Neuro-AI and Brain-Computer Interfaces (BCI):** Exploring how brain signals can be decoded and integrated with AI to support human-centred robotic systems.

# Artist in Residence Program Overview

The Artist in Residence program invites creative practitioners to draw inspiration from, critique, and collaborate with the technologies and minds inside CRL.

The residency is self-directed and flexible, running through to the end of 2026.

## The purpose of this residency is to:

- Support and promote ACT-based emerging cross-disciplinary artists working with embodied AI technologies.
- Activate and enrich the lab environment through creative, non-traditional utilization of robotic systems.
- Explore new perspectives on human-robot interaction, embodiment, or machine perception.
- Contribute to public discourse on the cultural, ethical, and aesthetic dimensions of robotics within the local community.

## Support and benefits include:

- **Financial Support:** A stipend of \$5,000 based on early career NAVA rates
- **Lab Access & Mentorship:** Shared workspace and access to CRL laboratory resources for the duration of the residency (concluding at the end of 2026) including multiple robotic platforms, sensors and compute nodes. The selected candidate will also have the unique opportunity to be mentored by Prof Damith Herath, alongside our broader team of researchers and technical experts.
- **Public Engagement/Exhibition Support:** Costs associated with resources for public-facing workshops or events will be covered by CRL pending further discussion and agreement.
- **Dissemination:** Promotion of the residency process and outcomes through CRL, academic and creative publications and partner networks.

## Expectations of the Resident:

- Develop and progress a creative project or body of research within the residency timeframe that aligns with a core CRL technical interest.
- Maintain a regular, mutually agreed presence within the lab environment.
- Participate actively in regular lab meetings, CRL-led social media campaigns, documentation, and other promotional activities to share the residency journey.
- Deliver at least one public-facing or community engagement activity (such as an artist talk, open-lab demonstration, or workshop) sharing the creative process or outcomes with the Canberra community before the conclusion of the residency.

## Eligibility

The program is strictly limited to **early-career artists, designers, and creative technologists residing and practicing within the ACT and surrounding region** who:

- Are 18 years or older.
- Are resident in the ACT or surrounding region.
- Demonstrate a promising creative practice and a strong interest in technology, robotics, embodiment, or human-machine interaction.
- Are willing to work collaboratively and safely within a dynamic lab environment under mentorship.
- Are prepared to engage in open dialogue with researchers and the Canberra community regarding their creative process.

*Note: Individual and collaborative group applications are welcome, though the stipend and workspace allocation remain fixed per residency.*

## How to Apply

To apply, please submit an Expression of Interest consisting of:

1. **Project Proposal (Max 1–2 pages):** Outlining your creative concepts, how your ideas build upon or respond to themes found in *Robots and Art*, how it connects to the Canberra community, and **explicitly stating which core CRL technical interest(s)** your work aligns with.
2. **Artist Statement & CV (Max 2 pages):** Describing your current practice, confirmation of your regional residency status, and explaining how this mentorship opportunity will benefit your development as an early-career artist.
3. **Portfolio:** A selection of recent work relevant to this application (PDF or online links).

A selection panel composed of robotics researchers, and creative practitioners will assess all applications based on artistic potential, conceptual alignment with CRL technical pillars, and the feasibility of the technical scope. Short listed candidates maybe invited for a conversation with the CRL team prior to final selection.

For enquiries regarding laboratory capabilities, specific robotic platforms, or the application process and to make your submission, please contact the lab administration at [crl@canberra.edu.au](mailto:crl@canberra.edu.au). Use the heading “CRL Artist in Residence Program” in your correspondences.

Submissions received until **Friday, 17<sup>th</sup> July 2026** (midnight AEST) will be considered for selection. Selected artist will be announced by early August.

## Additional resources:

- CRL website: <https://collaborativeroboticslab.github.io/>
- The recommended book on Robots and Art could be accessed via the National Library ([Link](#)) or copy could be borrowed from CRL for on-campus reference.
- Our work in Robotic Art: <https://roboticart.org/>
- The Art of Human-Robot Interaction: Creative Perspectives from Design and the Arts: <https://www.frontiersin.org/research-topics/11183/the-art-of-human-robot-interaction-creative-perspectives-from-design-and-the-arts/magazine>
- Robotic Art – The Aesthetics of Machine Communication (a conversation with Stelarc): [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=5268527](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=5268527)
- Documentation of a previous residency at CRL: [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=5002279](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=5002279)