Rachel Skaggs

Lawrence and Isabel Barnett Associate Professor of Arts Management
Department of Arts Administration, Education, and Policy | Courtesy Appointment, Department of Sociology
The Ohio State University | skaggs.131@osu.edu

EXECUTIVE PROFILE

Cultural sociologist specializing in creative labor, post-bureaucratic career pathways, and how technological transformation impacts artistic production. Research examines how artists and creative workers navigate precarity, rejection and failure, collaboration, and institutional governance across arts and cultural policy ecosystems.

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

2019-present Lawrence and Isabel Barnett Professorship in Arts Management

2025-present Associate Professor of Arts Management with Tenure
Department of Arts Administration, Education, and Policy, The Ohio State University

2019-2025 Assistant Professor of Arts Management
Department of Arts Administration, Education, and Policy, The Ohio State University

2020-present Courtesy Appointment, Department of Sociology, The Ohio State University

2018-2019 Postdoctoral Scholar, The Curb Center for Art, Enterprise and Public Policy, Vanderbilt University

EDUCATION

2018 Ph.D. in Sociology, Vanderbilt University
2014 Master of Arts in Sociology, Vanderbilt University
2011 Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology and Sociology, Centre College
Phi Beta Kappa, Magna Cum Laude

RESEARCH SPECIALIZATIONS

Creative Labor & Precarity, Post-Bureaucratic Careers, Technological Change & AI in Cultural Work, Arts Administration Infrastructure, Social Networks & Collaboration, Cultural Policy

SELECTED RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Books and Special Issues

Skaggs, Rachel. 2027. *Harmonious Creativity: The Collaborative Work of Setting Truth to Music in Country Songwriting:* Princeton University Press. ISBN: 9780691257075

Novak-Leonard, Jennifer and **Rachel Skaggs** (Eds.). 2027. *Arts Administration, Arts Management, and Cultural Policy: Structure and Maturity of the U.S. Field*., Routledge. ISBN-13: 978-1041162933

Woronkowicz, Joanna, Douglas S. Noonan, and **Rachel Skaggs** (Eds.). 2026. *Creative Work in the Digital Age: AI, Power, and Transformation.* Special issue of *Work and Occupations* 53(3).

Peer Reviewed Articles & Book Chapters

Woronkowicz, Joanna, Douglas Noonan, and **Rachel Skaggs**. 2026. "GenAI and Creative Labor: New Evidence on Valuation, Inequality, and Adoption." *Work and Occupations* 53(3): 599-634.

Skaggs, Rachel. 2024. "Kaleidoscopic Failure: The Regularity, Repetition, and Patterning of Failure in the Arts." *Sociologica* 17(3).

Skaggs, Rachel and Tania Aparicio. 2023. "Workers and Work in the Arts: Definitional Challenges and Approaches to Collective Action among Arts and Creative Workers." *Work and Occupations*.

Skaggs, Rachel. 2023. "Socially Distanced Artistic Careers: Professional Social Interactions in Early, Established, and Late Career Stages during COVID-19." *Poetics*.

Novak-Leonard, Jennifer and **Rachel Skaggs**. 2023. "U.S. Public Perceptions of Artists during the COVID-19 Pandemic." *International Journal of Cultural Policy*.

Policy Reports & Applied Literature

Skaggs, Rachel, Jennifer Novak-Leonard, and Jeff Barbee. 2024. "The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Arts and Design Alumni." Strategic National Arts Alumni Project Report. Austin, TX: Arts + Design Alumni Research, SNAAP.

Frenette, Alexandre, Timothy J. Dowd, with contributions from **Rachel Skaggs** and Trent Ryan. 2020. "Careers in the Arts: Who Stays and Who Leaves?" SNAAP Special Report. Bloomington, IN: Center for Postsecondary Research, Indiana University, School of Education.

Data Sets

2025 Novak-Leonard, Jennifer L., and **Skaggs, Rachel**. Public Perceptions of Artists, United States, 2017, 2019, 2022. Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research [distributor], 2025-05-12. https://doi.org/10.3886/ICPSR39355.v1

2025 Novak-Leonard, Jennifer L., Ibrahim, Deanna, Scotto Adams, Lee Ann, Miller, Angie L., **Skaggs, Rachel**, Bigelow, Shanita, and Folk, Christian. Strategic National Arts Alumni Project (SNAAP), 2022 [United States]. Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research [distributor], 2025-05-07. https://doi.org/10.3886/ICPSR39320.v2

POLICY ADVISING AND FIELD SERVICE

2024 - now Strategic National Arts Alumni Project (SNAAP) Research Advisory Board
2023 The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Thriving Artists Research Advisor

2025 - Editorial Board Member, *Poetics*
2025 - 2027 Editorial Board Member, *Social Currents*
2024 - 2028 Editorial Board Member, *The Sociological Quarterly*
2022 - 2025 Editorial Board Member, *Work and Occupations*

SELECTED GRANTS, FELLOWSHIPS, RESEARCH CONTRACTS, HONORS, AND AWARDS:

2026 Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study, Fellowship, Short Term Research Stay.

2024 – 2026 Grant Implementation Team, Mellon Foundation grant for "Community Engagement via the Arts" ($2,000,000).

2023 – 2024 Creatives Rebuild New York, Research Contract, co-PI ($12,018.42 subcontract of $95,651.23 University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign).

2022 Inaugural Prize Winner, Mulcahy Emerging Scholar Research Award, Social Theory, Politics, & the Arts.

2022 – 2023 National Endowment for the Arts; FY2022 Art Works: Research Grant: COVID-19's Impact on Working Artists, Principal Investigator, sole PI ($30,000).

2022 – 2023 National Endowment for the Arts; FY2022 Art Works: Research Grant: To support a suite of data analysis reports that examine the careers and lives of alumni from arts and design programs in higher education, co-PI ($20,111 subgrant of $80,000 grant to University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign).

SELECTED INTERNATIONAL & KEYNOTE TALKS

"Harmonious Creativity: The Shared Work of Setting Truth to Music in Country Songwriting" Stockholm University Department of Education. Stockholm, Sweden, 2026.

"Creating Alone in a Collaborative Field" We Want More! Music Sociology Conference, Erasmus University Rotterdam, Rotterdam, Netherlands, 2026.

"Public Perceptions of Artists in Communities in the United States: Current Perspectives & Trends Over time." With Jennifer Novak-Leonard. Social Theory, Politics, and the Arts, Osuna, Spain, 2024.

"Kaleidoscopic Failure: The Regularity, Repetition, and Patterning of Failure in Artistic Work." American Sociological Association, Montreal, Quebec, 2024.

"Reshaping the Creative Career: How COVID-19 Impacted Art and Design Graduates", Faculty Inservice Keynote Talk, Willamette University Pacific Northwest College of Art. Portland, Oregon, 2023.

"What Did Artists Need During the First Year of COVID-19?" International Conference on Cultural Policy Research, Antwerp, Belgium, 2022.

"Pandemic and Systemic Challenges Among U.S.-based Creative Workers." Culture Work Shop, Erasmus University, Rotterdam, 2022.

"Rural Music, National Culture: A Comparison of American Country Music and Chinese Rural Music." Invited Speaker, International Symposium on the Revitalization of Rural Culture. National Cultural Development Research Institute of Wuhan University, Wuhan, China, 2019.

"Metrics for Evaluating Changing Perceptions of Artists in America." Invited Speaker, U.S. and China: A Symposium on Communities, Cultural Participation, & Policy. University of Chicago Center, Beijing, China, 2018.