

Dr. Nathaniel Stern is a Fulbright, National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), and National Science Foundation (NSF) grantee, with 25 years of experience across art, engineering, and media, creative technologies, startups, Blockchain and AI, curricular design and workshops, management, and community engagement. He is a leader in interdisciplinary innovation at universities and with public and private institutions worldwide. His talks, workshops, consulting, and Subject Matter Expertise emphasize collaborating across art, design, technology, and business: ideation & innovation, lean launch & customer discovery, arts/design thinking, prototyping, industry/research partnerships, creative technologies, and more.

Collaborative and Interdisciplinary Leader

- Director and Co-Founder of the UWM Startup Challenge. Responsible for identifying, funding, and partnering with students who have product ideas. At the request of campus leadership and as one of four core staff/faculty members, helped to secure more than \$30M in funding towards the Lubar Entrepreneurship Center. More than 250 ventures thus far.
- Executive Director and PI of the Autism Brilliance Lab for Entrepreneurship (ABLE), an ongoing, NEA-funded Research Lab across Art and Design, Education, Engineering, and Sociology that trains neurodiverse individuals for college and the workforce, helps universities and businesses recruit neurodiverse talent, and grows communities of people with autism more generally.
- Integral to pioneering the Interdisciplinary Arts and Technology and Creative Technologies programs across four departments in Peck School of the Arts, at the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee (UWM).
- In close partnership with UWM Chancellor and Dean of Engineering, developed product design curriculum, to bring together teams of artists, designers, engineers, and architects so as to conceptualize and prototype new product ideas for local businesses, seeing 300+ successful projects to fruition.
- Works directly with both startups and long-standing businesses on long- and short-term investments across the arts, sciences and engineering, for-profit and non-profit, in both the private and public sector.
- Continuously acts as liaison from Peck School of the Arts and College of Engineering and Applies Science to other institutions, creating and taking part in 100+ collaborations with, or placing students and peers at, museums, research centers, businesses, and schools, including all major museums in Milwaukee and surrounding areas, engineering firms, and research institutes.
- Forge, model, and create programs and coursework that require students to work together on new ideas and ventures. 20 classes and six programs or curricula developed at UWM and Wits.

Innovation Expert and Consultant

- Expert in new, creative, and alternative uses of technology, including but not limited to artificial intelligence, Blockchain and web3, computer vision, sensors and actuators, experimental imaging, web development, and open source hacking towards creative ends.
- Consultant around ESG and sustainability promises or mandates, with expertise in CO2 removal and climate action, battery research, non-fossil fuel-based energy solutions, creative approaches to green technologies.
- Branding and social media expert in and around innovation and technology.
- Co-founder & CNO (Chief Networking Officer) of Sunflower EcoTech (formerly Eco Labs), who leverage the Blockchain towards reversing climate change.
- Collaborator, lecturer, and workshop host, that can speak, teach, and produce across civil, mechanical and electrical engineering, business, soil science, experimental physics, art, design, advertising, and more.
- Consultant and designer with teams across new projects at AKQA, Rexnord, TAPCO, Johnson Controls, GE Medical, Aurora Health Care, the Medical College of Wisconsin, DRS Power and Control, EMTEQ, Sharp Packaging Systems, the Wisconsin Department of Traffic, Rockwell, and more. Also a coach at the Stanford d.School.
- Awarded competitive Fulbright specialist grant to offer writing seminars for postgraduates in art and design at the University of Johannesburg in South Africa, NEA grants for creative technology education, NSF grants for new tech startups.
- Works across performances and exhibitions worldwide, academic and mainstream writing, and other activities including empowerment workshops for HIV-positive township teens in South Africa, graduate student supervision in engineering or design, and one-on-one mentoring for local artists through the Milwaukee Artist Resource Network.
- Experience writing and securing private and public grants and funding at the regional, national, and international level. Involved in over \$32M of funding and support over last 20 years.

International Public Speaker, Author, Artist, and Subject-matter Expert

- Critically acclaimed monographs on: understanding digital media and reclaiming materiality in the digital age; and ecological thinking across art, design, and policy.
- Panelist and speaker on "Imagination Science," entrepreneurship, Blockchain and NFTs, Artificial Intelligence, Ecological Aesthetics, interactive and digital technologies, collaboration and interdisciplinarity more generally.
- Independently secured 350+ books, catalogs, and press articles, including high profile, international reviews in the *Wall Street Journal*, *M Magazine*, *Guardian UK*, *Huffington Post*, *Daily Mail*, *Boing Boing*, *Gizmodo*, *Petapixel*, *Washington Post*, *Daily News*, *Art Journal*, BBC's *Today show*, *WIRED*, *Popular Mechanics*, *Time*, *Forbes*, *Fast Company*, *Scientific American*, *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, *Leonardo journal*, *Rhizome*, and more, through successful media campaigns, interviews, and public events.

- Internationally acclaimed artist and designer for work across web and Blockchain, installation, sculpture, performance, print, and public art. Collected by 35+ public and private institutions with 200+ international exhibitions and performances.
- Published author across mainstream newspapers and blogs, specialist journals, and academic writing, including MIT Press, Routledge, Open Humanities Press, Blackwell, Taylor & Francis, Palgrave Macmillan, Cambridge Scholars, Rodopi, Glyphi Limited, the University of Amsterdam, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, Rhizome.org, and others.
- Public speaker on art, design, and innovation; 60+ refereed academic papers and 200+ invited talks, including TEDx
- Maintains and continually develops worldwide, high impact relationships over years of living and working across the globe, for long stretches in Europe, North America, and Africa, and briefer periods in Asia and South America.

Relevant Professional Experience

- **University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee**, *Full Professor of Art and Design and Mechanical Engineering. Director of the UWM Startup Challenge*, 2008 - present
- **Sunflower EcoTech** (formerly Eco Labs), Co-Founder and Chief Networking Office, 2021 - present
- **University of Johannesburg: Research Centre, Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture**, *Associate Researcher*, 2013 - present
- **Trinity College Dublin: Electronic Engineering and Computer Science**, *Doctoral Fellow and Lecturer*, 2006 - 2009
- **University of the Witwatersrand: Digital Arts MAFA**, *Lecturer*, 2002 - 2006
- **Cornell University: Human Computer Interaction Group**, *Researcher, Web and Software Developer*, 2002

Select Honors, Awards, Grants, and Support

Startups

- > \$30M in funds for the Lubar Entrepreneurship Center with the LEC team and campus leadership
- \$60,000 NSF ongoing grants for Eco Labs climate action startup
- \$50,000 National Science Foundation I-Corps L grant for Educational Technology Start-up, Entrepreneurial Lead
- \$275,000 University of Wisconsin System grant, with Ilya Avdeev (PI) and Brian Thompson, Entrepreneurial Program
- \$50,000+ School of Information Studies grant, with M. Hostad, I. Avdeev, B. Thompson, Entrepreneur Program
- \$50,000, Provost award for ongoing Entrepreneurial Program, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee,
- \$100,000+, Technology Development Fund grant, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, ongoing
- \$30,000 Venturwell Sustainability grant Co-PI

Art- and Writing-based Research

- \$300,000 NEA grant, renewable up to 3 more times; also serves as NEA grant reviewer
- \$90,000 Discovery and Innovation grant for Creative AI research, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2023
- \$50,000, Connected Systems grant, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2020
- \$20,000, Research Grant University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2019
- \$63,000 Research Growth Initiative grant, UW-Milwaukee, 2018
- \$130,000+ Student Undergraduate Research Fund Awards, Office of Undergraduate Research, UW-Milwaukee, 2009 - 2022
- \$15,000, Research Committee Award, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2013
- \$61,000 Research Growth Initiative grant, UWM, 2012
- \$10,000 National Geographic sponsorship for Tweets in Space transmission, 2012
- Top ranking in Leonardo Abstracts (MIT Press), peer reviewed database of interdisciplinary theses, 2010
- \$10,000 Research Committee Award, UWM, 2009
- Exhibition funding from SA National Lottery, Royal Netherlands Embassy, Kellogg Foundation, Ford Foundation, 2006
- Greenwall Foundation commission, getawayexperiment.net, with Marcus Neustetter, 2005
- American Consulate grant, equipment and educational budget for 'the storytellers,' Johannesburg Art Gallery, 2004

Educational Research

- Pathways to Innovation, NSF-funded, 3-year grant, core team member with Stanford University, 2013-2016
- Fulbright Specialist grant, conducted at the University of Johannesburg, South Africa, 2013
- €90,000 Postgraduate Research Scholarship, tuition + stipend for doctoral study at Trinity College Dublin, 2006 - 2009
- \$80,000 Graduate Assistant Fellowship, Tisch School of the Arts, New York University, 1999 - 2001

Education

2009. **PhD.** Disruptive Design Team, *Department of Electronic and Electrical Engineering*, Trinity College Dublin
2001. **Master of Professional Studies.** *Interactive Telecommunications Program*, Tisch School of Arts, New York University
1999. **Bachelor of Science.** *Fiber Science and Apparel Design*, School of Human Ecology, Cornell University