

Graduate Fellowship Awards Application Guidelines

Applications are invited from current U of I graduate students for selection as HRI Graduate Student Fellows for the 2025–26 academic year.

The fellowship will enable advanced graduate students to develop their dissertations or research projects and to participate in the year's activities, including the yearlong interdisciplinary Fellows Seminar and other related programming. Graduate Student Fellows receive a \$25,000 stipend and a tuition and partial fee waiver.

HRI welcomes applications from scholars in all disciplines and departments with a research interest in humanities and humanities-inflected scholarship. HRI is especially interested in fostering interdisciplinary work, both within the humanistic disciplines, and between the humanities and the arts.

Eligibility and Terms

Only Urbana campus PhD and MFA graduate students are eligible to apply for this research fellowship opportunity. Applicants should have advanced far enough in their course of graduate study to be proposing working on their *final* research projects, such as a dissertation or thesis, during the span of the fellowship year. Ideally, the application is launched *after* the preliminary examinations have been completed. Graduate students who have previously held an HRI Graduate Fellowship may not reapply. (All other criteria applying, having held an Interseminars Fellowship does not disqualify an applicant.)

All HRI Fellows are required to maintain residency on the Illinois campus (residing within a 20-mile radius) during the award year and to attend the Fellows Seminar in person (Tuesdays, 9 to 11 a.m., roughly biweekly). Graduate Fellows must be enrolled for the academic year. Applicants should make certain that their obligations do not prevent them from participating fully in HRI activities and should identify in the narrative research statement any applications being made for other campus or external grants and fellowships.

Graduate Student Fellows receive a \$25,000 stipend and a tuition and partial fee waiver. As students have differing situations, HRI places no limitations on simultaneous appointments other than that they must comply with Graduate College guidelines on fellowship "major awards" (the HRI Fellowship is defined as a "major award" by the Graduate College) and do not interfere with fellows' required participation in the Fellows Seminar. As this is a substantial fellowship, however, it is hoped that the stipend will minimize the need for other appointments concurrent with the fellowship, so graduate fellows may maximize their time on dissertation/thesis research and writing during the fellowship year. Further, the substantial nature of the award should eliminate

the need for other *waiver-generating* appointments during the fellowship year and therefore fellowship recipients are highly discouraged from holding them. External fellowships *cannot* be held concurrently with the HRI Graduate Fellowship.

Application Guidelines

Applications must be submitted online at the [application portal](#).

Applicants will be asked to create a password-protected account, to which they can return multiple times. The application system opens in September 2024. No paper or emailed applications will be accepted. **The online application must be completed and submitted no later than 5 p.m. on December 6, 2024. Referees must submit their letters of reference by 5.p.m. on the following Monday, December 9, 2024.** Please note that HRI staff will not be available for troubleshooting after the close of business on December 6, so HRI strongly recommends applicants submit their materials well before 4:30 p.m. on the 6th.

In addition to completing the online application form, applicants must submit the following materials through the online application system (documents should be double-spaced, and in 12-point Times New Roman font, with one-inch margins; materials that exceed the required length will not be considered):

- **A 100-word abstract with project title.** [Upload under “**Abstract.**”]
- **A current curriculum vitae**, including a list of all U of I graduate courses taken, papers published, presentations made, and assistantships and fellowships held (maximum 5 pages; this need not be double-spaced, but please consider the committee and render it legible). [Upload under “**Curriculum Vitae.**”]
- **A statement of 2,000 words** describing the student’s research on the proposed project, including preparation to undertake this research and all progress on the project to date. The word count is *exclusive* of notes or bibliography, but in deference to the selection committee, a minimalist restraint should be applied to any citational apparatus. [Upload under “**Research Statement.**”]
- **A pdf of the student’s official transcript.** This should be requested through the registrar. Our preference is that you receive a paper copy and scan and upload it. (It will reveal a “copy” watermark, but that is acceptable). If you are off campus and must receive an electronic pdf for uploading, that is also okay, but not as ideal because the encryption on the pdfs does not interact as well with our application portal as we would like. Nevertheless, either will be accepted. [Upload under “**Transcript.**”]
- **Two (2) letters of recommendation to be uploaded by the applicant’s referees, one of which *must* come from the faculty member supervising the student’s dissertation or equivalent final thesis.** Recommendation letters should speak to the applicant’s abilities and achievements, to their progress on the project, and to the intellectual value of the project itself.

Reference Letters: HRI recommends entering recommenders' names and emails early in the online application process. The application system will generate an email request for letters to those whose names and emails the applicant submits, and the email will provide a unique link to the recommender for uploading the letter. Please note that applicants must enter their personal contact information first before they proceed to entering references' information. Doing so enables the system to insert the applicant's name in the email request to referees. In order for the system to generate those emails, however, the applicant must click "continue" after entering referees' names and emails—even if nothing else is to be done in the application at that time. *Applications for which both letters of recommendation have not been uploaded by 5 p.m. on Monday, December 9, 2024 will be deemed incomplete and will **not** be considered.* All letters must be uploaded through the application portal. No paper or emailed copies will be accepted.

Research statement: In their 2,000-word narrative, applicants should describe their research in reasonable detail, elucidating its relationship to the broader scholarly community at Illinois and elsewhere, and addressing the applicant's readiness to undertake the project. The statement should also indicate how the inter-disciplinary experience offered by the Fellows Seminar would be beneficial to the project. In the spirit of renewing the sense of community we aim to cultivate at HRI, we ask applicants to address the ways they plan to engage with HRI programming and Fellows Seminar participants, and to contribute to community building during their time as a fellow.

Deadline

Online applications must be complete and submitted, **by 5 p.m. Central Time on December 6, 2024. Referees must submit their letters of reference by 5 p.m. on the following Monday, December 9, 2024,** or applications will be deemed incomplete and will not be forwarded for review.

Visit the [application system](#).

Deadline extensions will not be granted. The review committee will consider only complete applications. It is the *responsibility of the applicant* to ensure that all documentation is complete, and that referees submit their letters before their deadline. Applicants should be sure that the application documents are complete and should proofread all materials carefully, as no changes are possible once one clicks "submit." Note that one must click through the final section of the application portal, and hit "continue" in order to have the option to "submit." Merely uploading all required documents does not constitute "submission." Applicants must *actively* submit their applications. The portal will automatically generate an email acknowledgment of your submission. If you do not receive such an email within a reasonable time after clicking "submit," and do not find one in your spam/junk folders, please touch base with HRI. HRI strongly recommends submissions be made *prior to 4:30 p.m.* on the day of the

application deadline, as HRI staff will not be available to assist with troubleshooting after close of business on Friday, December 6. Please ensure and verify that all uploaded documents are submitted under the correct category (as stipulated above). The system will read your file as incomplete and will not permit submission if an upload is erroneously misclassified and thus there is not an entry in each appropriate category (abstract, curriculum vitae, research statement, and transcript).

Selection Criteria

The applications will be reviewed by the HRI Advisory Committee, who will make their award recommendations to HRI; the HRI Director and Deputy Director serve on the committee in an *ex officio* capacity. **Submissions will be evaluated on the following criteria: the scholarly excellence and promise of the project, the applicant's preparation/readiness to undertake the proposed research, the quality of the narrative proposal, the relationship to the annual theme, the case made for how the inter-disciplinary experience offered by the Fellows Seminar would be beneficial to the project, and the letters of support.**

Notifications

All applications will be acknowledged via e-mail, and all applicants will be notified in the latter part of the spring 2025 semester, when the search has concluded. Please do not contact HRI about the status of an application, unless you are having difficulties with online submission; because of the volume of applications HRI receives, we are unable to answer questions about the suitability of particular research topics or the progress of the review and selection process.

Go to the [application system](#), where you will be asked to create an account. The system opens September 1, 2024.

Questions about these fellowships and eligibility for them may be addressed to Nancy Castro at ncastro@illinois.edu or 244-7913.