

Round 3 Call for Proposals
Due: September 1, 2023



Overview: The Humanities Research Institute announces a \$500k initiative, including \$55k for programming, toward interdisciplinary teaching and research in the humanities and arts funded by the Mellon Foundation.

Tenure-stream faculty in the humanities and arts, what would you do with the opportunity to:

- have the time and resources to explore ideas/projects with other scholars beyond the limits of existing campus structures and funding?
- change the culture/practices of interdisciplinary research and teaching?
- shifting the lines between research and teaching?
- **team teach** an interdisciplinary graduate seminar with faculty from other departments and fields?
- work with a cohort of funded graduate students from diverse backgrounds and fields?
- transform a reading group into a **funded interdisciplinary research project** with other faculty and graduate students?
- collaborate with other faculty and graduate students on a **conference, exhibition, or public performance** in your research area?

The Interseminars Initiative provides funding and administrative infrastructure for collaborative teaching, extended interdisciplinary inquiry, and public- and community-facing research in the humanities and arts. This initiative aims to build communities of inquiry around emerging research directions and to promote the value of heterogeneity and access in graduate education in the humanities and arts. The Interseminars initiative encourages projects that center students from populations historically underrepresented in graduate education and that advance diverse ideas, perspectives, and experiences.

In its third and final round, Interseminars will fund an 18-month interdisciplinary project that will provide course releases and summer funding for 2-3 faculty coordinators, up to eight graduate fellowships, and programming funds for a public- and/or community-facing culminating event (such as a conference, exhibit, or performance). We invite proposals for projects that will take place from fall 2024 to fall 2025.

Eligibility

Proposals must include a minimum of two (and up to three) tenure-stream faculty from the Urbana- Champaign campus representing at least two different disciplines or interdisciplines in the arts and humanities. Faculty members may participate in only one proposal each. Preference will be given to projects that include faculty conveners from at least two different academic units. We encourage applicants to consider diversity across disciplines and faculty ranks.

All faculty must commit to being available for the entire term of the project. Faculty members who will be on sabbatical during the 2024-2025 academic year or during the Fall 2025 semester are not eligible to participate.

Once a project is selected, the faculty conveners and two members of the Interseminars Steering Committee will use an open call to select a cohort of up to eight graduate students currently enrolled in participating arts and humanities PhD, DMA, and MFA programs at the University of Illinois, Urbana- Champaign. Students must be taking coursework during the 2024-25 academic year to be eligible. The selection process will be facilitated by the HRI Interseminars Project Coordinator and will be completed by December 15, 2023.

Interseminars Project Structure

Each Interseminars project will be required to adhere to the following timeline:

- **September 15, 2023–May 15, 2024:** Faculty conveners revise the graduate student call for applications, select graduate fellows, and plan the Fall 2024 course.
- **Summer I (2024):** The Interseminar project collective (faculty and graduate students) meets for one week in workshop format to establish shared interests and approaches; build a sense of intellectual community; develop plans for a semester-long course, which graduate students will help co-design; and set shared goals for summer research.
- **Fall I (2024):** Faculty conveners teach a graduate seminar on interdisciplinarity and collaborative research in the humanities and arts and related topics. The design of this course will be shared by the faculty conveners, the Interseminars Steering Committee, and the Project Coordinator. Interseminar Graduate Fellows will enroll for credit.
- **Spring (2025):** Faculty conveners team-teach their theme-based graduate seminar, which is taken for credit by Interseminar graduate fellows. A budget for the project's culminating (Fall 2025) event will be required by March 1.
- **Summer II (2025):** The Interseminar project collective meets for (at least) one week in workshop format to pursue either (a) development of research for publication or other forms of dissemination based on the Interseminar course; or (b) development of pedagogical models for interdisciplinary teaching based on their Interseminars project. Plans for the fall culminating event should be finalized by July 1.
- **Fall II (2025):** The Interseminar project collective presents a public- and/or community-facing collaborative culminating event or project (such as an exhibition, a performance, a symposium, or other event).

Award Details

Each Interseminars award will provide:

Faculty support:

- Opportunities for up to three tenure-stream faculty to help design and participate in an Interseminars methods seminar in Fall 2024 and to design and team-teach their Interseminars theme-based course in Spring 2025. To enable participation in the Interseminars courses, each faculty member will be released from one course in fall and one course in spring in their home unit—to be replaced by the Interseminars co-taught seminar

each semester. The department providing each release will receive an administrative allowance of \$21,000 per course (up to a total of \$42,000) as a result of the faculty member's participation in the Interseminars initiative. In the case of faculty holding a dual percentage (joint) appointment, the distribution of funds will be determined upon award.

- Research funds of \$8,000 per summer for each faculty convener (for a total of \$16,000 per faculty member).

Graduate student support:

- Fellowships of \$25,000 for up to eight graduate students in a participating arts and humanities degree program (MFA, PhD, or DMA) for the 2024-2025 academic year.¹
- A summer fellowship of \$5,000 per graduate student fellow per summer for two years (2024 and 2025).
- Research funds of \$2,250 per student (which can be used for travel, books, and other research-related expenses).

Project programming funds:

- Up to \$15,000 per semester for visiting speakers and programming in conjunction with the proposed Interseminar course in Fall 2024 and Spring 2025 (up to \$30,000 for the year).
- Up to \$25,000 for the culminating event (such as an exhibition, performance, or conference) in Fall 2025.

Proposal Requirements

1. Proposal narrative of no more than 2000 words ([Please use template](#) – opens in PDF). The narrative should provide a:
 - a. description of the proposed topic, providing the intellectual rationale for the proposed project theme and methodology;
 - b. an explanation of how the project draws on faculty expertise and how graduate students will participate in planning design of the project's courses and events;
 - c. plan for recruiting and mentoring historically underrepresented graduate students;
 - d. Provisional course description for Spring interdisciplinary graduate seminar (including course rubrics and numbers);
 - e. plan for assessment of project impact, including methods of assessment and timeline for documenting assessment.
2. 2-page c.v. for each faculty convener.
3. A draft of a call for applications for graduate student fellows for the proposed project (1 page). Call should reflect the full 18-month experience of the Interseminars project and should center graduate students from historically underrepresented groups.
4. Approval from the executive officer(s) of each faculty convener's department/academic unit(s) or the appropriate budgetary decisionmaker from the faculty convener's unit. ([Please use form](#); open in Adobe Acrobat for a fillable form.) The executive officer agrees to: release the faculty member from one course in Fall 2024 and one course in Spring 2025;

¹ These fellowships include a waiver of full tuition, service fee, AFMA fee, and library fee. In addition, the University provides payment of the health service fee, basic dental and vision coverage, and partial payment of the graduate student health insurance fee per semester. While all graduate students' situations are different, this fellowship is meant to obviate the need for other graduate appointments, such as fellowship, teaching assistantship, research assistantship, or hourly positions, during the term they are being supported by an Interseminars fellowship.

offer the proposed course for credit under the proposed rubric(s); and acknowledge that the department will receive funds that will help offset expenses incurred as a result of the faculty member's participation in the Interseminars initiative.

Completed proposals must be [submitted as a single pdf file online](#) by September 1, 2023. Notification of awards will be made by September 15, 2023.

Proposal Review Process and Criteria

Proposals will undergo peer review by the Interseminars Steering Committee. Proposals will be evaluated according to the following criteria: intellectual significance; clarity of the proposed project design; contribution to interdisciplinarity; commitment to diversity, including plan for recruiting and mentoring underrepresented graduate students; feasibility; and the potential impact on the future of interdisciplinary graduate education.

Submission and Award Notification

Completed proposals must be [submitted as a single pdf file online](#) by **September 1, 2023**. Notification of awards will be made by September 15, 2023.

Notification

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Reporting, Archiving, and Assessment

Each project's faculty conveners will be required to submit a mid-project report of activities by January 2025 and a final project report of activities by December 2026. These reports are not only pragmatic documents regarding the project's progress, but also intellectual resources, functioning as an important archive for future interdisciplinary initiatives in graduate education.

In consultation with the Project Coordinator and Interseminars Steering Committee, faculty conveners will participate in developing evaluations of the broader Interseminars experience within two months of the end of the Interseminars project.

Contact

More information about the Interseminars initiative is available at <https://go.illinois.edu/interseminars> . Direct questions to the Project Coordinator, Alaina Pincus, at apincus2@illinois.edu.