

HRI–Andrew W. Mellon Pre-Doctoral Fellowships in Legal Humanities, 2021–22

Application Deadline: Friday, January 15, 2021

The Humanities Research Institute, supported by a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, seeks to select two Pre-Doctoral Fellows in Legal Humanities for the 2021–22 academic year.

Legal humanities examines how the law, society, culture, politics, and economy are mutually constituted. It thus draws from a range of methodologies, including those dealing with representation (e.g., literary, cultural, and performance studies), history, philosophy, and sociological perspectives. Legal humanities understands the law as both reflecting and actively influencing societal values, aspirations, anxieties, biases, and notions of justice, examining how law constitutes and shapes the social world in which it is embedded.

The HRI-Mellon Pre-Doctoral Fellows will participate in all activities of the Legal Humanities Research Group, as led by the 2021–22 HRI–Mellon Faculty Fellow in Legal Humanities, Professor Colleen Murphy. The Fellows will pursue an individual research project in an area of the legal humanities; participate in a seminar and programs focused on the methods and challenges of interdisciplinary work in the legal humanities; work together on a collaborative, public-facing project in the field; and work with the research group to develop a legal humanities curriculum.

Advanced PhD students from all humanities disciplines, including the humanities-inflected social sciences, whose research and teaching interests lie in the area of legal humanities are invited to apply. Areas of interest include, but are not limited to, human rights; transitional justice; racial, im/migrant, and/or gender justice; Indigenous sovereignty; and similar issues.

Eligibility

Only Urbana campus PhD students in humanistic disciplines are eligible to apply. Applicants must be “ABD” (i.e., have completed all requirements for their doctoral studies, save the dissertation) and should be ready to work on their dissertation projects during the span of the fellowship year.

Terms

HRI-Mellon Pre-Doctoral Fellows receive a \$25,000 stipend with tuition and partial fee waiver, and a \$2,500 research fund.

All HRI-Mellon Pre-Doctoral Fellows are required to maintain residency on the Illinois campus (residing within a 20-mile radius) during the award year and to participate in the activities of the research group. Applicants should make certain that their teaching and research obligations do not prevent them from participating fully in the Legal Humanities Research Group activities, and should identify in the narrative statement any applications being made for other campus or external grants and fellowships.

Application Guidelines

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 no more than 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 (see further details below). [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 provided by third-party Credentials Transcripts Plus does not interact as nicely 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**. Recommendation letters should speak to the applicant’s abilities and achievements, to his/her/their progress on the project, and to the intellectual value of the project itself.

In the narrative statement, the applicant should describe his/her/their research in reasonable detail, explaining its significance to the work of the Legal Humanities Research Group and addressing the applicant’s readiness to undertake the project. The statement should also indicate the applicant’s willingness to participate in the Legal Humanities Research Group’s activities, and should include any specific past experience or future ambitions that the applicant brings to this emerging field of humanistic study. Statements should include a discussion of how the research group’s activities will impact the student’s individual research and how the student hopes to contribute to the group’s programming and activities. The statement should elaborate the student’s experience with and appetite for collaborative work.

Selection Criteria

The applications will be reviewed by the Mellon Faculty Fellow in Legal Humanities, the HRI Director and Principal Investigator on the Mellon Emerging Areas in the Humanities grant, and Members of the HRI Advisory Committee, who will make their award recommendations to HRI. The HRI Deputy Director serves on the committee in an *ex officio* capacity.

Submissions will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- the relationship of the project to the legal humanities,
- the scholarly promise of the project,
- the applicant’s preparation to undertake the proposed research,
- the quality of the narrative proposal,

- the letters of support, and
- the potential contributions to the research group.

Deadline

Online applications must be complete and submitted, including all letters of support uploaded, by 5:00 p.m. on January 15, 2021, after which the application portal closes. The application system can be found at <https://my.atlas.illinois.edu/submit/go.asp?id=1506>.

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 the deadline.

Notifications

All applications will be acknowledged via email, and all applicants will be notified in the latter part of the spring 2021 semester, when the search has concluded. Please do not contact HRI about the status of an application; because of the volume of applications HRI receives, we are unable to answer questions about individual applications.

Go to <https://my.atlas.illinois.edu/submit/go.asp?id=1506> to view the application system, where you will be asked to create an account. The system opens October 19, 2020.

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