Whiting Public Engagement Fellowship
Guidelines for nominating schools

The Whiting Foundation invites selected colleges and universities to nominate an associate professor in the humanities for the Whiting Public Engagement Fellowship, a pilot program designed to recognize and support faculty who incorporate public engagement into their scholarly vocations.

We believe that those who devote their professional lives to the study and teaching of the humanities are in a unique position to contribute to public understanding. This fellowship aims to identify recently tenured professors with a demonstrated commitment to using their scholarly expertise to reach wider audiences. It funds six consecutive months of leave for work on an ambitious project with direct and significant impact outside the academy.

If successful over time, the program will amplify the voices of scholars who take up the challenge of engaging the public, build a community of faculty dedicated to this form of service, and ultimately help to restore broader faith in the value of advanced work in the humanities.

Who is eligible?

Associate professors in the humanities who received tenure in or after the 2010-11 academic year are eligible to be nominated. In this initial round, we seek scholars who have previous experience with public engagement; in future rounds, we hope to be able to support faculty who are undertaking this kind of work for the first time.

The Humanities Indicators Projects has compiled a useful list of disciplines that are included in the category of the humanities, although individual scholars doing humanistic work in social-science fields such as cultural anthropology are also eligible.

The Whiting Public Engagement Fellowship can be taken consecutively with institutional or other grant-supported leave, if the nominating institution approves.

If a nominator is uncertain whether a particular scholar or project is eligible, please contact Daniel Reid at the Whiting Foundation at dreid@whiting.org.

What kinds of public-facing work will be supported?

A nominee can propose to work on any new or existing project that will substantively engage the public beyond the academy. Opportunities to contribute to public life and understanding vary considerably based on a scholar’s expertise, interests, and talents, and they are not restricted to those who study topics that are obviously connected to contemporary political, cultural, or social debates. We hope to support Fellows whose scholarship covers a range of disciplines, periods, places, and perspectives.

We also hope to support Fellows who, taken as a group, use a variety of methods and forms to engage the public; more important than the medium chosen is the ability to connect with a broader audience in an intellectually rich and compelling way. Illustrative examples include, but are by no means limited to:
• Writing a deeply researched book for a general audience on a topic in contemporary philosophy
• Writing and placing one or more articles in a mainstream magazine on the history of science
• Contributing to the research for and creation of a documentary film on Elizabethan theater
• Curating an exhibit at an off-campus museum or gallery on an aspect of race in American history
• Collaborating with a director as a dramaturg for a theater or play with a significant historical aspect and creating program notes incorporating scholarly research
• Developing curriculum modules for grades 6-12 on the history and culture of East Asia, along with a plan to disseminate them effectively
• Working with a local station to launch a live radio show and/or podcast bringing the English Romantic poets or the Harlem Renaissance to a wide listenership
• Co-creating a smartphone app to direct users to rich historical information about nearby sites
• Designing and implementing a series of professional development workshops for high school teachers of Latin and history to discuss recent scholarship on the ancient world and consider how they might incorporate it in their pedagogy

For the purpose of this fellowship, we distinguish between the interpretive humanities and the creative arts. For example, a professor of dance proposing to choreograph a new piece would not be eligible, though one proposing a film on the history and meaning of the work of a choreographer would be.

The plan to complete a project should be thoroughly fleshed out, though work need not yet be underway. We recognize that the amount of time required to bring a project to completion will vary considerably. Nominees need not propose work that will be finished within the fellowship period, but they should be in a position to make significant progress on it through six months of concentrated work. (If a project requires more time to complete, the application should make clear how the fellowship term will fit into the overall timeline.) If the project involves collaboration with partners, those relationships should be in place by the time the application is submitted. For example, if a nominee proposes to develop a live radio show, an agreement should be in place with the partner station.

**What does the fellowship consist of?**

Fellows’ home institutions will be given a grant of $40,000 to fund six consecutive months of leave and an additional stipend of up to $10,000 to be made available to the fellow to cover costs such as travel, collaboration, and training. Fellows may choose to take the leave in the fall of 2016 or the spring of 2017. All fellows will participate in two convenings, one in the summer of 2016 and one in the summer of 2017, and provide a brief final report on their work at the end of the fellowship.

In cases where the $40,000 grant does not fully cover half of the nominee's annual salary and benefits, the Foundation expects that the home institution would ensure the fellow continues to receive her or his full salary and benefits without interruption or diminution.

**What are the selection process, timeline, and criteria?**

Approximately forty schools will be invited to nominate one candidate each. We encourage schools to select nominees using an internal version of the Foundation’s review process described below. Nominees should submit completed applications by e-mail by October 15, 2015.
Applications will be reviewed by a committee composed of distinguished humanities scholars and public humanists from across the disciplines. The 2016-17 fellows will be notified by the end of February 2016.

The committee will consider each application in light of the following three criteria:

- **Intellectual significance**: Does the project make use of the nominee’s scholarly expertise in an intellectually rigorous way? Will the project make a meaningful intellectual contribution for its audience, conveying the complexity and nuance of humanistic learning? Does the nominee have an outstanding history of research and teaching that lends itself to the proposed project?
- **Anticipated public impact**: How significantly will the project affect the public, in terms of both breadth (e.g., the size of the audience) and depth (e.g., the level of engagement)? Does the nominee have a clear plan to reach the intended audience(s)? Has the nominee demonstrated an ability to reach broader audiences effectively?
- **Feasibility**: Is it clear that the nominee will be able to complete the work proposed during the fellowship (or in the longer timeline laid out in the application)? Is the project itself manageable, taking into account any work the nominee has already done? Does the nominee have the qualifications to undertake the project successfully? If success of the project depends on collaborators or a third party (such as a magazine or book publisher), does the proposal include persuasive evidence that the collaboration will be effective?

**What should be included in the application?**

Each nominee should submit to the Foundation by e-mail (to Daniel Reid at dreid@whiting.org) an application packet consisting of the following five items:

1. **Place of public engagement in your career** (up to 1, single-spaced page): Describe any previous experience engaging audiences outside the academy through your scholarly expertise; discuss how the proposed project and public engagement more generally fit into your scholarly career.
2. **Project description** (up to 5, single-spaced pages): Describe how you would use the fellowship leave and stipend, with special attention to the selection criteria laid out above. Include the following sections, as applicable:
   - **Summary**: Describe the work and intended product, including a timeline. Be sure to make clear, in language compelling to a non-specialist audience, why the project will be engaging to the general public. In addition, indicate the project’s current status and, if applicable, describe any work already completed; discuss how the work will draw on your scholarly expertise; address the nature of the contribution to public understanding; and describe the plan to ensure the project reaches the intended audience.
   - **Budget** (if applicable): If there are significant costs associated with the project aside from your leave (e.g., travel, collaboration), summarize those costs and indicate which of them, up to $10,000, you wish to use the stipend to cover. Please also list any other sources of funding you have secured or intend to pursue for the work, if applicable.
   - **Collaboration** (if applicable): Identify any partners who will be critical to the success of the project. If collaboration is central to the work (e.g., with a school district for a series of workshops), please submit a letter from each partner indicating the nature of their participation. These can be submitted directly by the partner(s) instead.
3. **Resume / CV** (up to 2, single-spaced pages): Include a CV highlighting your scholarly work most relevant to the project and any previous public-engagement experience, if applicable.
4. **Biographical questionnaire**: Complete the attached biographical questionnaire.
5. **References:** Please request two letters of reference from referees. Taken together, the letters should address both the intellectual and academic merits of your previous scholarship work and your ability to communicate with an audience outside your field. These can be submitted as part of the application package or sent separately directly to the Foundation.

6. **Nomination letter:** Your dean or provost should provide a short letter indicating that the school has selected you, briefly describing the internal selection process, and confirming that the school will provide normal salary and fringe benefits during the fellowship term. The letter should also confirm when you received tenure and your current role at the school and indicate any support the school will provide for the proposed work. Finally, it should lay out the criteria for promotion to full professor and the role your project may play in that process. This letter can be included with the application materials or submitted directly by your dean or provost.

**Where should questions be directed?**

Questions should be directed to Daniel Reid at dreid@whiting.org.
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Appendix – Biographical Questionnaire for Nominees

**Contact information**
1. Name

2. Date of birth

3. Mailing address

4. E-mail address

5. Phone number

**Institutional affiliation**
6. Institution

7. Title

8. Department

**Scholarship and tenure**
9. Area(s) of scholarly expertise

10. When and at what institution did you first receive tenure?

11. If different from above, when did you receive tenure at your current institution?