



## Senior Program Officer Higher Education and Scholarship in the Humanities

The [Andrew W. Mellon Foundation](#) (“Foundation”) invites nominations and applications for the position of Senior Program Officer, Higher Education and Scholarship in the Humanities (“HESH”). Succeeding [Gene Tobin](#), this person will have the opportunity to collaborate with other thought leaders to provide vision and programmatic oversight for the Foundation’s work in supporting the intersection between the humanities and the public good.

The Foundation is a not-for-profit, grantmaking organization that seeks to strengthen, promote, and defend the contributions of the humanities and the arts to human flourishing and to the well-being of diverse and democratic societies. Through the [Higher Education and Scholarship in the Humanities](#) program, the Foundation assists colleges, universities, and research institutes. Among these institutions are: research universities, liberal arts colleges, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Tribal Colleges and Universities, and Hispanic-Serving Institutions. In practical terms, this means helping institutions train scholars and produce scholarship in the humanities broadly conceived; fostering practices of diversity and inclusion and promoting the social value of the humanities; responding to the economic, demographic, financial, and technological challenges affecting higher education; and expanding access and supporting degree completion. Currently, priority is given to programs that foster curricular innovation; provide professional development to academics across career stages; employ traditional and non-traditional means to help colleges and universities diversify student populations; research broad structural questions in higher education; and aim to increase understanding of diversity and efforts at diversification and inclusion, among other forward-looking and inventive priorities.

The incoming HESH senior program officer will be a leading voice on issues surrounding the role of higher education, particularly the humanities and liberal arts, in addressing some of the most difficult challenges facing society today. She/he/they must be conversant and comfortable within the many varied spaces of higher education, including institutions serving historically underrepresented groups, large research universities, small private colleges, comprehensive institutions, independent research institutes, and other education- and humanities-based cultural organizations. She/he/they must be bold and collaborative, providing forward-looking leadership that reinforces the role of the humanities in diverse and inclusive societies and supports those institutions and initiatives that creatively bring humanities scholarship to the forefront of public discourse.

## **Leadership and Governance**

Since 1969, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation has demonstrated an abiding commitment to the humanities and the arts. To this end, it supports exemplary institutions of higher education and culture as they renew and provide access to an invaluable heritage of ambitious, path-breaking work. Since its inception, the Foundation has paid out nearly \$6B in grants. At the end of 2017, its endowment totaled approximately \$6.8B.

[Elizabeth Alexander](#) joined the Foundation as its seventh president in 2018. With more than two decades of experience leading innovative programs in education, philanthropy, and beyond, Ms. Alexander builds partnerships at Mellon to support the arts and humanities while strengthening educational institutions and cultural organizations across the world. Prior to joining the Foundation, Ms. Alexander served as the director of Creativity and Free Expression at the Ford Foundation. In this capacity, her work focused on the intersection between the arts, social justice, and mass incarceration. There, she co-designed the Art for Justice Fund—an initiative that uses art and advocacy to address the crisis of mass incarceration—and guided the organization in examining how the arts and visual storytelling can empower communities.

A poet, essayist, and scholar, Ms. Alexander brings extensive experience in higher education to the Foundation. She was the Wun Tsun Tam Mellon Professor in the Humanities at Columbia University from 2015 until 2018. Between 2000 and 2015, Ms. Alexander taught at Yale University, where she was a professor in the departments of African American Studies, American Studies, and English, helping rebuild the African American Studies department while serving as its chair for four years. In 2015, she was appointed as Yale's inaugural Frederick Iseman Professor of Poetry. At Smith College, she was the Grace Hazard Conkling Poet-in-Residence and the inaugural director of the Poetry Center. While assistant professor at the University of Chicago, she was awarded the Quantrell Prize for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching.

Ms. Alexander earned a BA from Yale University, an MA from Boston University, and a PhD in English from the University of Pennsylvania. She holds honorary doctorates from Yale University, Haverford College, Simmons College, and the College of St. Benedict. Ms. Alexander is a chancellor of the Academy of American Poets and serves on the board of the Pulitzer Prize.

An accomplished Board of Trustees supports the work of President Alexander and the Foundation broadly. Between eight and ten Directors comprise the Board, and Directors are elected at each annual meeting. The officers of the board include a Chairman, Secretary, Chief Investment Officer, and other officers as the Trustees may, from time to time, elect. The President of the Foundation also serves as a member of the Board in an *ex officio* capacity. Directors advise the Foundation on grantmaking priorities and bring a wealth of personal and professional experience with them. The current Directors include:

- [Kathryn A. Hall](#), Board Chair: Founder and Co-Chair, Hall Capital Partners LLC
- [Richard H. Brodhead](#): President Emeritus, Duke University
- [Katherine G. Farley](#): Former Senior Managing Director, Tishman Speyer
- [Joshua S. Friedman](#): Co-Founder, Co-Chairman, and Co-Chief Executive Officer, Canyon Partners LLC
- [Heather Gerken](#): Dean, Yale Law School
- [Thelma Golden](#): Director and Chief Curator, The Studio Museum in Harlem
- [Glenn D. Lowry](#): Director, Museum of Modern Art
- [Eric M. Mindich](#): Chief Executive Officer, Eton Park Capital Management, L.P.
- Sarah E. Thomas: Former Vice President for the Harvard Library, Harvard University

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## **Diversity**

Mellon's commitment to diversity, inclusion, and access dates back to its inception. In the 1970s, the Foundation supported programs such as A Better Chance (ABC), and in the 1980s, it established the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program. The Foundation has funded: initiatives to diversify the professoriate; research that led to the founding of the Posse Foundation; and long-term support of post-doctoral programs aimed at facilitating the progress of early career faculty of color. Across its history, the Foundation has spurred diversification efforts in higher education, particularly in the United States and South Africa.

Previous to March 2019, the Mellon Foundation maintained a distinct program funding division specifically focused on such diversity initiatives. However, given that diversity has been and remains a key focus that cuts across all of Mellon's grantmaking in support of higher education, the humanities, and the arts, the Foundation merged the program with the HESH program area. Within this merger, Senior Program Officer Armando Bengochea and his talented team continue to lead the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program, as well as the important portfolio of grants to Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, Tribal Colleges and Universities, and other minority-serving entities. The formal integration of the Higher Education and Diversity programs makes the essential work of promoting diversity, access, and belonging even more central and prominent in the Foundation's work across the higher education sector. It also underscores that rigorous, discerning inclusion is critical to the Foundation in all of the sectors in which it works.

## **Programs**

Collaborative planning by the Foundation and its grantee institutions generally precedes the giving of awards and is an integral part of grantmaking, as the Foundation seeks to continue with programs long enough to achieve meaningful and measurable results. Through its grantmaking, the Foundation seeks to strengthen institutions' core capacities while promoting and defending the centrality of the humanities and the arts to human flourishing and the well-being of diverse, fair, and democratic societies. To this end, the Foundation makes grants to support exemplary and inspiring institutions of higher education and culture in the following four core program areas:

### **Arts and Cultural Heritage**

The [Arts and Cultural Heritage](#) program seeks to nurture exceptional creative accomplishment, scholarship, and conservation practices in the arts while promoting a diverse and sustainable ecosystem for these disciplines. The program supports the work of outstanding artists, curators, conservators, and scholars, and endeavors to strengthen performing arts organizations, art museums, research institutes, and conservation centers. Particular emphasis is given to programs that focus on new media and multidisciplinary arts; broaden public access to and understanding of the arts; enhance diversity and inclusion in arts organizations; foster collaborations between institutions of higher education and the arts; and address vulnerabilities distinctive to the arts, such as the financial health of small arts organizations and emergency preparedness and response.

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### **Higher Education and Scholarship in the Humanities**

Through the [Higher Education and Scholarship in the Humanities](#) program, the Foundation assists colleges, universities, and research institutes. Among these institutions are: research universities, liberal arts colleges, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Tribal Colleges and Universities, and Hispanic-Serving Institutions. In practical terms, this means helping institutions train scholars and produce scholarship in the humanities broadly conceived; fostering practices of diversity and inclusion and promoting the social value of the humanities; responding to the economic, demographic, financial, and technological challenges affecting higher education; and expanding access and supporting degree completion. Currently, priority is given to programs that foster curricular innovation; provide professional development to academics across career stages; employ traditional and non-traditional means to help colleges and universities diversify student populations; research broad structural questions in higher education; and aim to increase understanding of diversity and efforts at diversification and inclusion, among other forward-looking and inventive priorities.

### **International Higher Education and Strategic Projects**

The Foundation's promising experience in South Africa justifies targeted extension of its work to other countries or regions where the Foundation's commitment to the humanities, the arts, and higher education could contribute to stabilizing fragile democracies and creating favorable conditions for their participation in global networks of research and culture. In its next phase of development, the [International Higher Education and Strategic Projects](#) program will stress partnerships with institutions already supported by the Foundation, especially on issues of global grand challenges. The program's overarching purpose is to help these institutions become durable and capable of contributing to social cohesion as well as to assist them in constructing educational systems that serve the interests of society at large. In order to bolster the capacities of academic and cultural institutions and of the people working within them, the program provides professional and financial resources in support of teaching, learning, scholarship, and effective scholarly communication, and will encourage its grantees to find ways to share the benefits of this work with the public at large. The program encourages proposals that are attentive to the common challenges facing humanity and to the need for interdisciplinary and international scholarly collaboration oriented toward trans-hemispheric or global solutions. New areas and strengthened emphases include programs that engage scholars in all academic disciplines in the joint study of a core societal problem; mobilize humanistic scholars and artists to participate in interdisciplinary and international collaborations; share the benefits of teaching, learning, and research with the public; and coordinate international grantmaking across all program areas in order to heighten the salience of global contexts in all grantmaking.

### **Scholarly Communications**

Digital technologies have transformed how knowledge is embodied, organized, disseminated, and preserved. Use of these technologies has the potential to expand and equalize access to cultural and scholarly resources across sectors of society. The [Scholarly Communications](#) program promotes the common good by supporting the creation, dissemination, use, and preservation of original sources, interpretive scholarship in the humanities, and other scholarly and artistic materials. The program aims to develop the sustainable tools, organizations, and networks of scholars and other professionals needed for these purposes. In pursuit of these goals, the Scholarly Communications grant portfolio includes ambitious, multi-year, multi-stage, collaborative grants that promise to change scholarly practice in ways that advance teaching, research, preservation, and publication. The Foundation manages the funding of these high-risk, high-reward projects by insisting on a step-by-step, phased funding approach for planning, proof-of-concept, implementation, and integration into the broader system of scholarly communication. Preference is given to programs that support publication of the scholarly and cultural record, its preservation over time, and access to its use.

### **Search for the Next Senior Program Officer**

An integral member of the HESH program's leadership team, the incoming senior program officer will work closely with Senior Program Officers [Dianne Harris](#) and [Armando Bengochea](#) and share responsibility with her/his/their colleagues for maintaining and strengthening the Foundation's relationships with a diverse group of higher education leaders. She/he/they will participate in meetings and policy discussions as a thought leader and supporter of pedagogy, curriculum, and scholarship in the humanities. The senior program officer will also work collaboratively with other program officers and associates to help define, strengthen, and execute HESH's grantmaking efforts and initiatives, ensuring that the Foundation maintains and strengthens its commitment to preserving and promoting the societal importance of humanities scholarship and education. Additionally, the senior program officer will have the opportunity to:

- **Leverage the Foundation's relationships to identify and provide grant support to a new and diverse range of scholarly endeavors in the humanities:** Building upon the Foundation's sterling reputation throughout the higher education sector, the new senior program officer will be tasked with representing the Foundation to current and potential grantees and will regularly meet with presidents, provosts, deans, consortia directors, and others who seek or receive support from HESH. She/he/they will especially champion grant opportunities for new initiatives and programs that have been historically under-resourced, further allowing the Foundation to propel inclusion and innovation within higher education and the humanities. Additionally, the new senior program officer will travel and present on behalf of HESH and invite exemplary programs and initiatives to apply for the Foundation's support. She/he/they will then be responsible for evaluating submitted proposals and advocating for programs to the Foundation's Board of Trustees.
- **Anticipate the role of humanities education in addressing broader societal concerns:** With many pressing issues in the national and global consciousness, from climate change to mass incarceration, it is more important than ever to defend and promote the role humanities scholarship plays in the betterment of society. The next senior program officer will be uniquely situated to assist in identifying and supporting leading institutions and humanities initiatives that will give rise to potential solutions for some of the most fraught and important issues facing the world today.
- **In partnership with the Foundation's Diversity program, focus grantmaking opportunities toward programs that address diversity, inclusion, and access within higher education:** With the merging of the Diversity program into HESH, the incoming senior program officer will have the opportunity to collaborate with other program officers to enhance the Foundation's efforts to support minority-serving institutions and programs serving historically underrepresented groups. There will be myriad opportunities for this new senior program officer to leverage her/his/their higher education knowledge, experience, and scholarship to further grant opportunities that promote diversity within humanities faculty, ensure access for students, and advance inclusive practices and pedagogy across the higher education spectrum.
- **Lead and support discussions around specific challenges facing higher education and the humanities:** As a representative of the Foundation and a leader in the field, the next senior program officer will engage head-on with current trends and topics of concern within higher education. As institutions evolve and respond to external and internal pressures, including new technologies, changing student demographics, and financial constraints, the senior program officer will have the opportunity to lend her/his/their own expertise, organizing and leading discussion on the topics that are of interest to the Foundation and the institutions and disciplines it serves.

- **Assist with the management of day-to-day operations:** In consultation with a diverse and collaborative leadership team, the incoming senior program officer will work within HESH to prepare grant recommendations, essays, and reports for the Foundation's Board of Trustees and will participate in quarterly Board meetings. Additionally, she/he/they will monitor and reconcile all grant narrative and financial reports, engage with other program officers on policy matters and cross-programmatic initiatives, and provide assistance with grantmaking initiatives that involve undergraduate and graduate education. The senior program officer will also contribute content to the Foundation's communications platforms, including blog posts, newsletter stories, edited transcripts of public talks, and the like.

### **Desired Qualifications and Characteristics:**

The Foundation's next HESH senior program officer will possess expert knowledge of higher education and its current challenges and opportunities as well as a nuanced understanding of possibilities and perceptions surrounding humanities scholarship. Serving as spokesperson and champion for the impact humanities education can have on the public good, the next senior program officer will lead with boundless passion for the humanities and ideas for how new areas of education and scholarship can address the evolving needs of societies nationally and globally. In addition to an experienced understanding of higher education administration and a desire to promote vision and creativity within HESH, the next senior program officer will possess the following qualifications and attributes:

- A PhD in a field of the humanities with demonstrated intellectual breadth, familiarity with a range of critical and theoretical approaches used in the study of the arts and humanities, and an ability to work cross-disciplinarily;
- Significant experience at the college or university level as a tenured faculty member and administrator;
- Experience in managing large and complex programs;
- Ability to collaborate with a diverse group of colleagues and engage at a broader level with individuals from a wide range of backgrounds;
- Thorough understanding of processes, policy issues, and trends in higher education;
- Ability to imagine and address the broader issues nationally and globally that will impact higher education and the humanities;
- Deep commitment to diversity and inclusion and a record of leading and supporting programs that give voice to underserved populations;
- A strong record of publication in the candidate's field;
- Ability to work independently and possession of the excellent organizational and time management skills needed to meet quarterly deadlines;
- Proven competence in interpersonal communication, including public speaking;
- Exceptional editorial judgment and meticulous writing and copyediting skills;
- Demonstrated capacity for team building, mentoring, and leadership;
- Willingness to travel frequently both domestically and internationally; and,
- Commitment to a collegial work environment and to collaboration with colleagues in all of the Foundation's programs and functional areas.

Evaluation of candidate materials will begin immediately and continue until a new senior program officer for HESH is selected. For best consideration, nominations, and application materials should be sent to:

**Shelly Weiss Storbeck, Managing Partner**  
**Julia Patton, Senior Associate**  
Storbeck/Pimentel & Associates, LP  
[MellonHESHPO@storbecksearch.com](mailto:MellonHESHPO@storbecksearch.com)

*The Foundation is an equal opportunity employer offering a competitive salary, generous benefits, and excellent working conditions.*