

The Huntington Library Fellowship Program

The HEHL Program

- A *collections-based* research and educational institution: the mission of the research department is to facilitate high-quality research *on the basis of the collections*
- The largest and most competitive program in North America: c.200 fellowships to the value of \$1.8m in 2015-16; about 19% of this funding is in history of science, technology and medicine
- *Long-term fellowships*: pay \$50k@ for between 9 and 12 months residence; applicants must hold the PhD; either for work in the collections or for writing (availability of office space); typically 11-12 awards each year [NB the 2 or 3 Thom Fellowships for non-tenured faculty]
- *Short-term fellowships*: pay \$3000pcm for between 1 and 5 months of residence; applicants must be ABD; primarily for work in the collections; typically 140-150 awards each year.
- *Travel Grants for Study in the UK*: pay \$3000 plus return air-fare for one month in UK archive(s) which have cognate strengths with Huntington collections; applicants must be ABD; 6 awards each year (+ 4 exchange fellowships with Oxbridge colleges [Corpus Christi, Lincoln & Linacre in Oxford; Trinity Hall in Cambridge])

Application ratios for the academic year 2015-16

- Long term fellowships: 149 applications; 12 awards (success rate = 8.1%)
- Short-term fellowships: 422 applications; 164 awards (success rate = 38.9%)
- Travel Grants: 83 applications; 11 awards (success rate = 13.3%)

Timetable

- Deadline: 15 November 2015
- Peer-Review Committees Meet: Jan. 30 (long-term); Feb. 6 (Dibner), 13 & 20 (short-term)
- Decision-making: long-term (by phone pm on January 30); short-term (by letter early March)
- Fellowships tenable: 1 June 2016—30 June 2017.

The Process of Peer Review

- Long- and short-term fellowship committees: 5 members (1 historian of North America; 1 literary scholar of North America; 1 historian of Britain; 1 literary scholar of Britain; 1 art historian). Committees are refreshed very regularly (an NEH requirement)
- Dibner fellowship committee: 5 members (4 historians of science; 1 historian of medicine)
- The Director of Research chairs these meetings but does not vote
- Applications are pre-screened (first by the Director of Research with 2 external advisors; and then by the curators)

Strong applications

- Emphasize why HEHL collections are crucial to development and/or conclusion of the project (consult curators in advance: http://www.huntington.org/thehuntington_full.aspx?id=598)
- Situate the project in the context of the existing scholarship in the field
- Address the 'so-what?' question successfully: proposals need not necessarily be inter- or cross-disciplinary but must explain the broader significance of the project to academic specialists *outside* the applicant's own field.
- Are literate and accessible: do not use jargon for its own sake and do not submit simply an annotated bibliography

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