

**Mellon Public Humanities Fellowships**  
*Call for Applications 2025-2026*

**Due Tuesday, April 1, 2025**

The Center for the Humanities invites applications for two Public Humanities Fellowships designed to provide graduate students in the humanities with experience outside of academia. By placing fellows in partner organizations around Madison including museums, hospitals, non-profits, community centers, and emerging businesses, the program facilitates the reciprocal sharing of resources and expertise and highlights the significance of the humanities both on and off campus. We aim not only to provide graduate students the opportunity to explore diverse career paths, but also to cultivate a practice of public humanities within their academic work.

We encourage applicants to imagine themselves in any one of our positions, regardless of their discipline. We have placed doctoral students in unexpected settings: a Music Theory student in a STEM education non-profit, a Geography student in a food collective, a Design Studies student in a historical society. Non-academic skills and experiences acquired prior to and concurrent with your degree are valued by partner organizations as equally as the transferable skills you have gained and refined during your education.

The Public Humanities Fellowships program is made possible with the essential financial support of the Graduate School of the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

**Overview**

In 2025-2026 the Center for the Humanities will award two public humanities fellowships to doctoral students at UW-Madison (applicants may be at any stage of their degree). Recipients of this fellowship will receive all the benefits of a 50% graduate project assistant (including tuition remission and health care) and be paired with an organization in Madison for a nine-month (academic year) residency. These residencies will give fellows the opportunity to use their humanities experience and expertise to develop new programs, expand existing ones, and translate their academic skills into the public sphere. The fellowship period is **August 18, 2025–May 17, 2026** and fellows will be in residence at their assigned organization 20 hours a week (excluding academic breaks) during that period.

[Full instructions for preparing your applications](#) are at the end of this document.

## **Available Positions**

1. **RENEW Wisconsin**
2. **Chazen Museum of Art, University of Wisconsin-Madison**

## **Eligibility and Criteria**

This opportunity is open to UW-Madison PhD students in the humanities and related fields. We expect that applicants will bring to these positions a host of skills drawn from their scholarly training, including a strong research and writing background, creativity, and specific forms of field-based knowledge and expertise (in, for example, history, anthropology, art history, cultural studies, digital media, literature, languages, or film, among many others). Partner organizations will provide fellows the opportunity to undertake significant work on innovative programs and ensure that they receive appropriate mentoring.

*Applicants should apply for a position, rather than to the program as a whole.* The final and most important round of application review and interviews will be conducted by the partner organizations independently of the Center for the Humanities.

Applicants will be reviewed based on their academic accomplishments; relevant training and experience; and the relation between the fellowship and their professional goals.

*For questions, email Danielle Weindling, Assistant Director of Public Humanities, at [weindling@wisc.edu](mailto:weindling@wisc.edu).*

*Please do not contact any of these organizations with questions about the positions.*



**Mellon Public Humanities Fellowship Application**  
**Due Tuesday, April 1, 2025**

Save the following application form, along with any additional required documents, as *one* PDF file. Name your file: **PHF 2526 App [your last name]**

1. Name:
2. Address:
3. Telephone Number:
4. Email Address:
5. Student ID number:
6. Department:
7. Field of Specialization:
8. Year in program and/or dates of Preliminary Examination(s) and admission to candidacy (if applicable):
9. Title of Dissertation (if applicable):
10. 100-word abstract of dissertation (if applicable):
11. Faculty director of your dissertation (if applicable):
12. Expected date of completion of PhD:
13. Briefly state your research interests:
14. Position to which you are applying:
15. Would you be interested in interviewing for a different fellowship position? If we present your application to your alternative, we will ask you to revise your materials to be addressed to that partner organization.

16. List the names, titles, institution, and email addresses of one reference who will submit a letter on your behalf. The reference letter should address the student’s academic record and progress; qualifications for the position; past work; and potential contributions to and benefits from a Public Humanities Fellowship. The reference letter should be submitted electronically as a PDF document and sent directly by your recommenders to: [applications@humanities.wisc.edu](mailto:applications@humanities.wisc.edu) with “**PHF Recommendation STUDENT NAME**” in the subject. Deadline is **Tuesday, April 1, 2025**.

## **Additional Materials**

### **1) COVER LETTER (required)**

This should be written for the specific position you have selected. Please address your letter to the selected organization. You should explain why you are applying for this position and how your academic and extra-academic experience prepares you for it.

### **2) CV (required)**

### **3) Recommendation letter (required)**

### **4) Additional materials (optional)**

Present any documentation of your transferable skills that enhances and expands on but does not duplicate your cover letter or CV.

**Please submit all application materials electronically, in a single PDF document.**

**In the subject line, please put “PH Fellowship Application\_ORG NAME\_STUDENT NAME”**

**and send to [applications@humanities.wisc.edu](mailto:applications@humanities.wisc.edu)**

**[Register Here for Information Session: March 12, 2025 3:00pm](#)**

**Applications due: Tuesday, April 1, 2025**



**RENEW WISCONSIN**  
**Clean Energy Access & Community Engagement Fellow**

**Organization Description**

RENEW Wisconsin is a nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing renewable energy in Wisconsin. We work on policies and programs that support solar power, wind power, renewable fuels, local hydropower, building electrification, energy storage, and electric vehicles. Our vision is clean, renewable energy powering a strong, healthy, and vibrant Wisconsin. Our mission is to lead and accelerate Wisconsin's transition to renewable energy through advocacy, education, and collaboration.

**Position Description**

RENEW Wisconsin seeks a **Clean Energy Access & Community Engagement Fellow** to support our efforts in connecting energy-burdened communities with clean energy policies and regulatory processes. This fellowship will play a key role in translating complex policy discussions into accessible, community-centered narratives and engagement strategies. Through qualitative research, storytelling, and public outreach, the Fellow will bridge the gap between regulatory decision-making and the lived experiences of impacted communities with high energy burdens, ensuring their voices shape Wisconsin's energy future. The Fellow will identify barriers to clean energy access, analyze policy impacts, and develop humanities-driven engagement strategies—including writing, community dialogue, and public education—to empower communities to participate effectively in the regulatory process.

**Fellowship Structure & Focus Areas**

**Phase 1: Learning and Community Engagement (First Semester)**

- Gain a thorough understanding of RENEW Wisconsin's policy priorities and regulatory work.
- Research and identify energy-burden disparities across Wisconsin using available data sources such as the Wisconsin PSC, Focus on Energy, utility disconnection reports, and, if available, Justice40 census tracts. Examine correlations with income levels, housing stock, racial disparities, and rural vs. urban differences, while assessing contributing factors like housing efficiency, fuel types, and access to clean energy programs.
- Engage with 5-10 community organizations, advocacy groups, and stakeholders through surveys and one-on-one interviews to understand local energy challenges. Collaborate with low-income housing groups, environmental justice organizations, tribal communities, and utility customer advocacy groups to gather insights on barriers to clean energy access.
- Analyze community perspectives on the Public Service Commission's role and its relevance to energy burden issues and clean energy access.

- Synthesize insights into compelling narratives that highlight key themes such as energy costs, access to renewable energy, and weatherization needs. Align these community concerns with RENEW's existing regulatory priorities, identifying areas for deeper advocacy and regulatory interventions.
- Present initial findings to the RENEW team with recommendations on how RENEW can adjust or expand its regulatory focus to better serve energy-burdened households.
- Develop engagement goals for the RENEW Summit, such as leading a 101 session and/or engaging energy-burdened communities to attend and actively participate in clean energy discussions.

## **Phase 2: Summit Presentation and Final Reporting (Second Semester)**

- Present 101 Session at the RENEW Summit and encourage energy-burdened communities to attend and participate in clean energy discussions.
- Create educational materials like blogs, fact sheets, and webpages, explaining key clean energy regulatory issues and their potential impact on energy-burdened communities.
- Support community engagement by helping individuals and organizations participate in clean energy regulatory proceedings, such as attending hearings or submitting comments on Public Service Commission (PSC) dockets. \*This work will be contingent on docket schedules and whether relevant clean energy issues are before the commission at the time.
- Facilitate connections between community members and RENEW's policy team to ensure grassroots perspectives are represented in clean energy decision-making. Work with both groups to create clear, sustainable communication channels such as a dedicated email list, regular virtual check-ins (e.g., monthly or quarterly calls), an online community forum, or a shared document repository, ensuring that these channels are accessible and responsive to all parties. The goal is to foster ongoing dialogue and collaboration, with systems in place that allow the connection to continue effectively even after the fellowship ends.
- Complete the final report and present it to RENEW staff, summarizing findings, recommendations, and strategies for continued engagement with energy-burdened communities.

## **Preferred Qualifications**

The ideal candidate is a PhD candidate or an advanced graduate student passionate about environmental justice, energy policy, and community engagement. Experience with regulatory processes, public engagement, and research is highly desirable.

Preferred skills and knowledge:

- Strong communication and relationship-building abilities.
- Experience conducting research and working with community organizations.
- Familiarity and/or interest in clean energy, equity, and the regulatory process.
- Understanding of and/or interest in the clean energy policy landscape in Wisconsin.
- Ability to work both independently and collaboratively to develop a strategic work plan.
- Experience in education, outreach, or program development is a plus.

## **Fellowship Expectations**

- The Fellow will be based at RENEW Wisconsin's office in Madison, WI (214 N. Hamilton St.), with the potential for remote work for research-based tasks.
- The Fellow is expected to attend weekly staff meetings and the RENEW Annual Summit in February 2026.
- RENEW will cover the cost of any travel required for community outreach and engagement.
- The Fellow will report to the Deputy Director and work closely with the Communications and Policy Teams.

This fellowship offers an opportunity to contribute to advancing energy equity in Wisconsin by connecting energy-burdened communities to regulatory decision-making. The Fellow will gain hands-on experience in policy research, community outreach, and public engagement, shaping strategies that create meaningful and lasting impact.

*For questions, email Danielle Weindling, Public Humanities Program Manager, at [weindling@wisc.edu](mailto:weindling@wisc.edu).*

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Chazen Museum of Art

**CHAZEN MUSEUM OF ART**  
**Engagement Fellow**

**Organizational Description**

The Chazen Museum of Art opened in 1970 as the Elvehjem Art Center to further the University of Wisconsin–Madison’s mission of education, research, and public service. In 1978 it became the Elvehjem Museum of Art, and in 2005, in honor of a lead gift toward expansion, was renamed the Chazen Museum of Art. The expansion opened in October 2011, doubling the size of the museum (now over 176,000 square feet).

The museum’s permanent collection of more than 25,000 works of art covers diverse historical periods, cultures and geographic locations, from ancient Greece, Western Europe, and the Soviet Empire to Moghul India, 18th-century Japan and modern Africa. The Chazen is currently undertaking an ambitious reinstallation of its permanent collection that will result in a visitor experience that highlights the strengths of the museum’s unique holdings and responds to the changing expectations and needs of its audiences.

**Position Description**

The Chazen seeks an **Engagement Fellow** to holistically support a major initiative related to the museum’s permanent collection gallery reinstallation project. Working closely with, and reporting to, the Chazen’s Chief Engagement Officer (Berit Ness), the Engagement Fellow will help realize an array of different interactive strategies that tangibly offer new ways for visitors to experience the Chazen. For examples, a hands-on area that demonstrates various printmaking processes and materials installed near a gallery featuring prints from the collection or self-guided tour materials for visitors of all ages.

The Fellow’s related project primarily focuses on assisting staff in redesigning a variety of spaces across the museum—such as a series of gallery-adjacent niches, mezzanines, and hallways—to make these places be more active and accessible to visitors of all backgrounds. Working from initial concepts set by Chazen staff, the Fellow will critically assist Engagement and Curatorial teams with determining the design, layouts, and engagement collateral for these spaces. The Fellow will also help steward related contributions from other partners, including students, staff, and external stakeholders. These may include didactic videos, process demonstration materials, interactives, self-guided tour materials, etc.



The Fellow may also participate in designing and implementing a plan for assessing and evaluating existing and future gallery and engagement spaces.

Later in the year, the Fellow will have the opportunity to co-develop and execute a digital app (BloombergConnects) to build the framework for current and future engagement. The Fellow will also help conceive of public programming related to the initiative, once it opens, and assist with other future-forward planning.

Through this position, the Engagement Fellow will gain experience in conceiving and executing various forms of museum-based public engagement and interpretation – from the hands-on to the digital. The Fellow will be trained in best practices on museum accessibility and strategies for inclusion. Moreover, the Fellow has the unique experience to meaningfully contribute to a major museum initiative and to see those contributions realized upon the Chazen’s reopening.

### **Responsibilities**

The Engagement Fellow will be responsible for a range of assignments related to the broader reinstallation initiatives, including:

- Co-developing, prototyping, and executing interactive installations across the museum.
- Researching artworks from the collection and contributing to public-facing didactic texts.
- Helping organize project checklists, budgets, and other planning materials.
- Coordinating contributions from related stakeholders.
- Assisting with the implementation of a BloombergConnects app, including participating in the 13-week BloombergConnects onboarding training.
- Contributing to related assessment and evaluation efforts.
- Conceptualizing future public programs and events related to the Chazen’s reopening.
- Participating in regular team and project-based workshops and meetings.

### **Preferred Qualifications**

The Chazen encourages graduate students from all backgrounds to consider applying. A qualified individual might have all, or some, of the following qualities:

- Creative educator who has an interest in fostering learning, interactivity, and accessibility within art museums. Eager to collaborate with interdisciplinary partners and to find new ways for visitors to engage with the Chazen.
- Thoughtful and detail-oriented communicator. Comfortable with writing for public audiences.
- Adept at project management. Can balance creativity with structured planning in a non-profit environment.
- Has a background, or interest in, art history, art, material culture, design, education, public programming, or a related field.

### **Expectations**

- Given the nature of this position, the Museum will prioritize on-site work at the Chazen. Remote and off-site work may be allowed on a task-specific basis.
- The Fellow is expected to regularly attend standing check-in meetings with the Chief Engagement Officer and related project meetings across the Museum. To the extent that the Fellow's schedule allows, they will also participate in monthly Engagement Division meetings and weekly Museum staff meetings.

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