

Interpretive Fellowships at Art Museums

Application Guidelines

Purpose and Background

The purpose of the Kress Interpretive Fellowship at Art Museums program is to provide a new kind of mentored professional development opportunity within American art museums. The program is intended to encourage students to explore interpretive careers in art museums, whether as future museum educators or curators; to strengthen the profession of museum educator within the art museum community; to strengthen ties between museum educators and curators in the shared task of interpretive programming in art museums; and to expand the range of promising career options available to students of art history and related fields.

Successful interpretive programs in art museums require formal education in art history, understanding of learning theory, and sensitivity to the learning needs and styles of widely diverse audiences. Within a mentoring environment, the Kress Interpretive Fellow develops the first-hand experience, expertise and confidence on which to base an interpretive career in art museums, whether as museum curator or museum educator.

Kress Interpretive Fellowships provide competitive grants to American art museums which sponsor supervised internships in art museum education. Preference is given to institutional applications that will provide fellows with an opportunity to collaborate closely with both art museum educators and curators, and will advance the appreciation of European art history of the pre-modern era (see award Criteria below).

Description

A minimum of six Kress Interpretive Fellowships are awarded each year to American art museums for 9-12 month professional development opportunities. Typically, Interpretive Fellowships begin in late summer or early fall. The Fellowship award is \$30,000, with a minimum of \$25,000 reserved for the Fellow's stipend and up to \$5,000 available to support health, travel and other benefits for the Fellow and/or to defray the direct costs of hosting the Fellow. A final report will be due from the host institution approximately one month after the completion of the fellowship (see Reporting and Other Requirements below).

Eligibility

Application must be made by the art museum proposing to host a Kress Interpretive Fellow. These Interpretive Fellowships are intended as an opportunity for individuals who have completed a degree (B.A., M.A., or Ph.D.) in art history, art education, studio art or museum studies and who are pursuing or contemplating graduate study or professional placement in these or related fields. The appropriate level of educational achievement will be determined by the host museum and dependent upon the needs of the proposed fellowship project. The Fellowship candidate may be identified in advance of application by the host institution or recruited subsequently. Priority is given to first-year requests, but worthy projects that clearly outline benefits to the Fellow for a second year of Fellowship will also be considered.

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Criteria

Reflecting the goals of the Fellowship program, the evaluation of applications is based on relative as well as independent criteria. Overall, the program seeks to support a set of professional development opportunities that offer:

- Opportunities to work collaboratively and in a team environment alongside both art museum educators and curators
- Opportunities for students or graduates from a variety of North American academic programs in art history and related fields
- Opportunities to work in a variety of institutions, including large municipal art museums, smaller regional art museums and academic art museums
- A combination of proven Fellowship sites as well as opportunities at institutions that have not previously hosted Kress Interpretive Fellows

Interpretive Fellowship Applications will be rated according to the potential for the host institution to:

- Provide a varied and challenging set of tasks appropriate to the goals of the program
- Provide a strong mentoring environment embracing both professional art museum educators and curators working in tandem
- Identify a suitable Fellowship candidate

If a specific candidate is proposed, review will also be made regarding the proposed Fellow's commitment and potential to pursue a career in interpretation within the art museum community, and the appropriateness of the proposed Fellowship experience for that individual.

If a specific candidate is not proposed at the time of application, review will include the appropriateness of the search procedure to fill the Fellowship position. Final approval of awards will be contingent on the Kress Foundation approval of the selected Fellow and their commitment and potential to make a contribution to the field.

Reporting and Other Requirements

Fellowship host institutions agree to:

- Acknowledge the Samuel H. Kress Foundation's financial support in all publicity materials and new releases related to the project. Recommended language: "This Kress Interpretive Fellowship has been supported by a grant from the Samuel H. Kress Foundation" in acknowledgements.
- Submit a final written report to Kress Foundation prior to September 30 of the year following the award, summarizing the goals, activities, and results of the Fellowship, and confirming that the total grant funds have been expended as proposed. (If the Fellowship is not complete at that time, an interim report will be required by September 30.)

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Application Procedure

Please attach the following materials to the application form and submit in one package to the Kress Foundation, via mail:

- Description of the proposed Fellowship program, including envisioned interpretive activities and mentoring relationships
- Curriculum vitae of the Fellowship mentor or supervisor(s)
- Curriculum vitae of the proposed Fellow (if identified), or position description/announcement and proposed search procedures
- Three (3) letters of recommendation for the proposed Fellow (if yet identified)
- Other supporting materials, such as descriptions of the collection and institution, as desired
- The email address of contact to be notified of the receipt of application

NOTE: In addition to submitting the printed materials, applicants should include a CD containing a complete set of the application materials. The material on the CD must be presented as a single PDF document.

Deadline and Notification

All materials must be **RECEIVED** in the Kress Foundation office by April 1. Applications will be acknowledged by email. Notification of results will normally be made by May 15. Award payments will normally be made by August 1.