



Preparing highly qualified undergraduates to engage in advanced humanistic inquiry, aiming to create more accurate depictions of the human experience and laying the foundation for more equitable futures.

## Our Mission

### **The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation**

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation was established in 1969 to strengthen, promote, and defend the arts and humanities as essential to democratic societies. In recent years, Mellon has expanded on these core principles by actively prioritizing social justice across all of our grantmaking. This strategic shift builds on the foundation's long history of advocating for and investing in expanded access to higher education, humanities, and the arts. The foundation provides grants in an effort to build just communities, foster critical thinking, and nurture imagination.

### **The Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship**

Established in 1988, the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship (MMUF) was founded to address the obstacles contributing to underrepresentation in higher education faculty. The fellowship is committed to fostering a diverse professoriate and advocating for the importance of multiple perspectives in the humanities and related fields. The fellowship pays tribute to Dr. Benjamin E. Mays, a prominent African-American educator, statesman, minister, and former president of Morehouse College.

Today, the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Research Fellowship is housed in the "Higher Learning" wing of the Mellon Foundation. It aims to magnify perspectives and contributions that have been marginalized in the traditional scholarly record. The pursuit of more complete and accurate narratives of the human experience is referred to as *multivocality*, and it lies at the heart of MMUF's commitment. The Mellon Foundation seeks to nurture students whose work exemplifies a drive toward transformative academic leadership and the realization of a more socially just world.

# Who Should Apply?

The Mellon Mays Undergraduate Research Fellowship, under the Mellon Foundation's Higher Learning program, is committed to bolstering research and academic endeavors that are aimed at shaping more accurate depictions of the human experience and establishing the groundwork for fairer and more equitable futures. Consistent with this commitment, the Mellon Foundation amplifies marginalized perspectives within academia. They aspire to creating a more socially just world. The Mellon Foundation refers to this goal as 'multivocality,' and it forms the foundational principle of MMUF.

The Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship is open to applicants of all backgrounds. Applicants will be evaluated based on their prior coursework, their plans for a major, and their potential to bring historically marginalized or underrepresented perspectives to the academy.

## Benefits

- Mentorship at various levels: administrators, graduate students, summer program instructors, and faculty members.
- Support for refining research questions and organizing projects.
- Assistance locating/accessing additional research resources, applying for fellowships and PhD programs.
- Membership in the vibrant international community of MMUF scholars.
- Continued support in graduate school through research development grants and conference opportunities.
- Professional Programs provided by the Social Science Research Council and the Institute for Citizens and Scholars for both academia and alternative career paths.

## Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Components:

- Summer Research Program
- Annual Conferences
- Financial Support
- Bi-weekly Seminars
- Field Trips, Workshops

## Financial Award:

- Summer Stipend (\$3,900/summer)
- Quarterly Stipends (\$800/ quarter)
- Research travel funds (\$600/year)



- Graduating Mellon Fellows are eligible for up to \$10,000 in loan repayments and up to \$7,500 for research expenses if they enter into a PhD program within 39 months of graduation

**Application Deadline April 15**

# Selection Criteria

- Interest in pursuing a Ph.D. in an eligible discipline of the humanities or humanistic social sciences
- Activities and leadership that reflect an interest in social justice issues and the promotion of multivocality
- Availability for full and enthusiastic participation in all aspects of the MMUF program, including attendance at conferences and regular meetings
- Short essay response about how the applicant's life experiences and academic goals would contribute to furthering the goal of a diverse academy
- Potential for serving as a mentor for a wide variety of students

## FAQ

### **Q: Do I need to have a faculty mentor already?**

A: No, not at all. We will assist you in securing a mentor.

### **Q: Is there a minimum GPA?**

A: No, but we would like to see that you are doing well in courses related to your research interests.

### **Q: Will I owe money back if I don't enter a PhD Program?**

A: No, and you will always be considered part of the MMUF international community. The saying goes, "Once a Mellon, always a Mellon!"

### **Q: What if I change disciplines?**

A: We assist in crafting competitive Ph.D. applications, and it's common for individuals to switch disciplines.

### **Q: Research! I am only a second year. This is scary!**

A: Connect with MMUF students, alumni, and staff to address concerns—no need to fear, support is available.

### **Q: Why are some fields of study excluded?**

A: The Mellon Foundation prioritizes transforming the arts and humanities in academia, excluding certain fields linked to professional careers.

## Eligibility

- Sophomores at the time of application
- US citizens, permanent residents, or DACA Recipients
- Intend to pursue a research-based degree (Ph.D.) in one or more of these eligible fields of study:
  - Anthropology and archaeology
  - Area/cultural/ethnic/gender studies
  - Art history
  - Classics
  - Geography and population studies
  - English
  - Film, cinema, and media studies
  - Musicology, ethnomusicology, and music theory
  - Foreign languages and literatures
  - History
  - Linguistics
  - Literature
  - Performance studies
  - Philosophy and Political Theory
  - Religion and theology
  - Sociology
  - Theater
  - Interdisciplinary studies\*

\*Approved interdisciplinary studies eligible; interdisciplinary education grad programs, even with eligible fields, are ineligible for MMUF benefits.

# MMUF Expectations at the University of Chicago

- Commit to participating in the University of Chicago's MMUF Program for two full years.
- Maintain a minimum of a 3.0 GPA
- Complete a thesis for your major
- Take at least 1 research methods course in your major.
- Take ENGL 13000 "Little Red Schoolhouse" before you graduate.
- Take 2 Colonizations courses before you graduate.
- Complete research plan and report before and after your independent research.
- Participate fully in all components of the MMUF Fellowship
- Work closely with a faculty mentor: Take at least two courses with your faculty mentor and meet quarterly with that mentor to discuss your work.
- Build relationships with two other faculty members in order to be well-positioned to ask for two additional recommendation letters for graduate school.
- Attend at least one other professional conference of choice before graduating.
- Meet as requested with the MMUF Faculty Director, Professor Travis Jackson.
- Quarterly meetings with Elise LaRose, MMUF Program Director.

## More Information

### MMUF General Information

- [www.mmuf.org](http://www.mmuf.org)
- [www.mellonmays.uchicago.edu](http://www.mellonmays.uchicago.edu)

### Apply to MMUF:

- [www.mellonmays.uchicago.edu/apply](http://www.mellonmays.uchicago.edu/apply)

Opportunities and resources for MMUF post-baccalaureate, graduate students, and faculty.

- [www.ssrc.org/programs/mellon-mays-graduate-initiatives-program/](http://www.ssrc.org/programs/mellon-mays-graduate-initiatives-program/)