To: All SLA Faculty  
From: Kevin Gotham, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, SLA  
Date: August 17, 2009  
Re: Andrew W. Mellon Foundation’s New Directions Fellowships (reminder)

Dear SLA Faculty:

This is a reminder to an email I sent you on May 27. We invite you to nominate colleagues for the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation’s New Directions Fellowships. These highly selective fellowships provide support for exceptional faculty members in the humanities and humanistic social sciences who received their doctorates between five and fifteen years ago, and whose research would benefit from their acquiring systematic training outside their own disciplines. New Directions Fellowships are primarily for advanced training in pursuit of a specific research agenda. Unlike other fellowship awards, this program does not aim to facilitate short-term outcomes, such as completion of a book. Rather, New Directions Fellowships are meant to be viewed as longer-term investments in scholars’ intellectual range and productivity.

The fellowships cover salary for approximately one academic year and two summers (including released time from teaching, if required). In addition, the institutions with which fellows are affiliated will receive a subvention of as much as $10,000 to assist them with adjusting to the fellows’ reduced teaching schedules and other plans associated with their awards. Once an award is completed, fellows will be eligible to apply for supplemental funding to permit them to make appropriate scholarly use of their newly acquired training. Attached is a more detailed description of the program.

The Mellon Foundation has invited Tulane University to submit two nominees for the Fellowships. Candidates for this program should be highly qualified scholars pursuing innovative research. The SLA Dean’s Office will organize a committee of senior faculty members in relevant disciplines to evaluate the candidate’s research and accomplishments to date, as well as the program of study to facilitate advanced training in pursuit of a specific research agenda.

Supporting Material:
• A proposal describing the candidate’s plans for future research and accomplishments to date, and the anticipated program of study the new work requires. The proposal should follow closely the four principle criteria for selection:
  (1) the overall significance of the research.
  (2) the case for the importance of extra-disciplinary training for furthering the research.
  (3) the likely ability of the candidate to derive satisfactory results from the training program proposed.
  (4) a well-developed plan for acquiring the necessary training within a reasonable period of time.
• A letter of recommendation from an informed senior colleague (e.g., department head) describing the importance of the candidate's proposed research for his or her field and other relevant matters the selection panel should consider.
• A preliminary budget may be included, but the proposed costs of training are not considered in the selection process. The Mellon Foundation will work with the recipients on developing final requests.

Nominations and supporting material are due to me in the SLA Dean's Office no later than September 1, 2009. We will convene a committee of senior scholars to evaluate each candidate's dossier. The committee will submit two nominees to the Mellon Foundation. The Mellon Foundation will convene a panel of distinguished scholars who will choose approximately ten finalists to present to the Foundation's Trustees. Final Foundation Board approval will be given in March of 2010.

See the attached description for more information. So far, I have only received one inquiry and no nominations. Please contact me if you have any questions. Sincerely, Kevin.

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The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
NEW DIRECTIONS FELLOWSHIPS

Purpose: New Directions Fellowships assist faculty members in the humanities and humanistic social sciences who are between five and 15 years from receiving their PhDs and who wish to acquire systematic training outside their own disciplines. Scholarship that crosses disciplinary boundaries holds great potential, but in practice it often requires formal substantive and methodological training in addition to the Ph.D. This program is intended to permit excellent scholars in the humanities and humanistic social sciences to work on problems that interest them most, but to do so at an appropriate level of sophistication. In addition to facilitating the work of individual faculty members, these awards should benefit humanistic scholarship more generally by encouraging the highest standards in cross-disciplinary research.

Terms of the Awards: Candidates will be faculty members in the humanities and humanistic social sciences who were awarded doctorates between five and 15 years ago
and whose research interests call for formal training in a discipline other than the one in which they are expert. Such training may consist of coursework or other programs of organized study. It may take place either at fellows’ home institutions, or elsewhere as appropriate. Although it is anticipated that most fellows will seek to acquire deeper knowledge of other fields in the humanities or social sciences, proposals to study disciplines farther afield will also be eligible. The principal criteria for selection are: (1) the overall significance of the research, (2) the case for the importance of extra-disciplinary training for furthering the research, (3) the likely ability of the candidate to derive satisfactory results from the training program proposed; and (4) a well-developed plan for acquiring the necessary training within a reasonable period of time.

Fellows will receive: (1) the equivalent of one academic year’s salary; (2) two summers of additional support, each at the equivalent two-ninths of the previous academic year salary; and (3) tuition and other reasonable costs associated with the fellows’ training programs. To permit flexibility in meeting individual scholars’ needs, these funds may be expended over a period not to exceed three full academic years following the date of the award. In addition to the awards for individual recipients, a subvention of up to $10,000 will be provided to their home institutions to assist in accommodating the fellows’ plans. The Foundation also asks that any budgetary relief resulting from the award be used for academic purposes, preferably in the fellow’s department.

**Selection Process and the Making of Grants:** Institutions will be invited to participate in this program and will be asked to solicit proposals from eligible faculty members in the humanities and humanistic social sciences wishing to further their research through engaging in programs of study in fields other than their own. It is expected that institutions will communicate the particulars of both the program and the application process throughout the relevant departments. Following an internal competition to be overseen by a committee of senior faculty members in the relevant disciplines, each institution will forward the proposals it has selected to the Foundation. The Foundation will convene a panel of distinguished scholars which will choose approximately ten finalists to present to the Foundation’s Trustees. Institutions and individual recipients will be notified and asked to provide budgets. Once the Trustees have given their final approval, grants will be awarded to, and administered by, the fellows’ home institutions.

**Supplemental Award:** New Directions fellows who have completed their programs of study and submitted their final reports will be eligible to apply for a supplemental award, not to exceed $50,000 to be used within three full academic years from the date of the award, to permit them to make appropriate scholarly use of their newly acquired training. These funds could be used for leave time (or summer support) in order to complete additional research, further training, writing projects, or course development associated with their New Directions programs. Other related uses will be considered.

Revised May 12, 2008