The Appalachian College Association (ACA) is proud to provide substantial support toward the professional development of faculty members at its member institutions. The fellowships provide from $3,000 to $30,000 for pre- or post-doctoral study. Fellowships are awarded for a short term (generally summer, maximum $6,000), one semester (maximum $15,000), or an academic year (maximum $30,000). To be considered for a fellowship, ACA faculty must have served for at least two years in full-time status at her/his current ACA institution and must return to teach full-time at same school for at least one additional year after completion of the fellowship.

APPLICATION MATERIALS

Qualified faculty members from ACA institutions have the opportunity to submit online application for fellowships each year during the fall semester. (To assist member institutions in their personnel and budgetary planning, the ACA seeks to determine the fellowship recipients before the end of each fall semester.) The required application materials include:

1) A project narrative explaining in detail the research and/or project, including the project goals, methodology, anticipated outcomes, and timeline. The narrative is limited in length, and it should also include a brief statement on the importance of this project to the individual, the institution, and/or the academic discipline. The applicant should address how this work will inform the broader knowledge of the discipline. A page of works cited may be included.

2) Outline of the anticipated expenditures related to the fellowship request, e.g., amounts to be applied to offset the expenses of the leave (to institution or applicant), to cover other institutional expenses, to be used to cover legitimate expenses incurred by the applicant related to the research project.

3) Documentation that satisfies (at least) one of the following requirements:
   a. For applicants working toward a terminal degree: Proof of admission to the terminal degree program and a transcript of work already completed in that program.
   b. For applicants who have completed a terminal degree: Applicants should submit a letter from a colleague from another institution who possesses expertise in the area of study, indicating the applicant’s competence to complete the project within the time allotted

4) Letters of Support from the following persons:
   a. One’s Chief Academic Officer: This letter is very important as it should identify and explain the importance of the project to the institution and furnish an assessment of the applicant’s capacity to complete the proposed project in a competent and timely manner. It must also verify that the applicant and CAO have reviewed the anticipated expenditures in the proposal and are in agreement with the final itemized budget. Letters should be on institutional letterhead.
   b. (For pre-doctorate proposals only) The advisor/mentor at the research institution indicating the applicant’s ability to complete the project within the time allotted.

5) Current Curriculum Vitae, not to exceed five pages.

GENERAL GUIDELINES AND INFORMATION

1) Only electronic submissions are accepted.
2) The applicant is responsible for ensuring that all parts of the final application, including letters of support, are uploaded in a timely manner. (The CAO’s letter of endorsement will be submitted electronically directly to the ACA.) Incomplete applications will not be reviewed by the committee.

3) All proposals should avoid professional jargon and be written so that individuals not in the particular discipline can understand the project.

4) If the applicant has previously received ACA funding for a similar project, include in the project narrative when grant was received and evaluate the success of the previous effort.

5) The amount for each semester or one-year fellowship will depend in part upon the applicant’s salary during the application year and any other external support. If the fellowship is being used to offset the applicant’s lost salary, it will not allow for the individual to exceed their annual income from their institution.

6) Other funding sources should be applied to faculty compensation before ACA funding. If all funding sources add up to more than the applicant’s salary, then the ACA will reduce the fellowship award accordingly. If other external funding comes through after the ACA Faculty Fellowship has been awarded, the ACA requires the ACA funding overage to be refunded to the ACA up to the amount of ACA’s original award.

7) The fellowship is provided to institution rather than individual applicant. When the institution receives fellowship funds from the ACA, the institution determines how the faculty fellowship funding will be allocated based upon the initial proposal. The applicant is required to include the budget regarding expected expenditures from the fellowship support, with confirmation that the applicant and her/his CAO are in agreement with the proposed budget.

8) The itemized budget may include expenditures related to reduced salary, replacement costs for the institution (if related to a one-semester or full-year leave by the applicant) and/or expenditures to be incurred by the applicant related to the specific proposal. Pre-doctoral applicants may include in their budgets the costs of tuition or other direct costs associated with the completion of degree, i.e., instructional expenses. Replacement costs for a one-semester leave may not exceed $15,000. Replacement costs for a full-year leave may not exceed $30,000.

9) If the recipient will do the study or research away from home institution during a short-term fellowship, the maximum award is $6,000. If the recipient plans to conduct research from his/her home institution, the maximum award is $3,000. In both cases, a proposed itemized budget is required.

10) Faculty who have signed a contract for a book with a for-profit press (i.e. not a university press) and want a fellowship to conduct additional research or to revise their manuscript are ineligible.

11) Member institutions may not submit more than four applications for fellowships in a single year. A single institution may not receive more than two awards in a year. For institutions submitting multiple applications, the CAO is encouraged to prioritize the proposals for the Review Committee; however, final determination of awards remains with the Review Committee. Schools will determine internally which applications will be reviewed if more than four candidates exist.

12) While it is expected that fellowship research will inform course development, proposals with the primary goal of developing courses are discouraged.

13) The ACA does not withhold any taxes or fees from the award amount. Any necessary deductions are the responsibility of the institution or the individual.

14) Each individual who receives an award is responsible for following all guidelines of the award:
   a. A report on the project is expected by no later than May 1 of the year the funding is expended. The report must include a final expenditure budget. If any remaining expenditures are outstanding, these should be included in the report. (If there are unusual circumstances regarding spending later in the cycle, the recipient should work directly with the ACA to establish an alternate timeline.)
   b. Each fellow is expected to provide in the final report a short (150 words or less) abstract that captures the essence of the project and is appropriate for posting on the ACA website and/or other venues.
c. Recipients are required to return to full-time duty at their ACA institution for at least one full year after completion of the fellowship.

d. Fellowship recipients may also be required to participate in assessment activities (such as a one-year follow up questionnaire and a five-year follow up questionnaire) requested by ACA program staff.

The ACA reserves the right to withhold any final allotments of the fellowship until the recipient’s final report, with record of expenditures, is furnished to the ACA.

EVALUATION AND AWARDS

The quality of the proposal is the top priority in evaluating and awarding fellowships; however, other factors also affect the final decision. Listed below are the ratings topics and values the committee uses for each final application. These ratings are a starting place for the Fellowship Review Committee’s discussion, not the final arbiter. The five-person Fellowship Review Committee is composed of Chief Academic Officers from ACA institutions, elected by the Council for Chief Academic Officers; CAOs on the committee, per policy, do not review applications from their home institutions. Members of the committee have the opportunity to discuss each application individually and apply their professional judgment with each particular application.

Ratings Scale for ACA Fellowship Applications

- Presentation of Proposed Project (Quality and Substance (scored between 0 and 10 points)
- Feasibility of the proposed timeline (0 to 2 points)
- Benefit/importance to home institution (0 to 8 points)
- Importance to one’s academic field (0 to 3 points)
- CAO Endorsement (0 to 5 points)
- Reviewer Recommendation(s) (0 to 3 points)
- ACA Resource Use Priority (up to 5 points)
  - 5 points for faculty who will complete terminal degree
  - 3 points for faculty who will work toward (but not complete) a terminal degree
  - 2 points for faculty engaged in post-doctoral research
- Recent Fellowships at Applicant’s Institution (up to 4 points)
  - 4 point if the institution’s last fellowship recipient was in 2016-17 or earlier
  - 3 points if the institution had a fellowship recipient in 2017-18
  - 1 points if the institution had a fellowship recipient in 2018-19
  - 0 points if the institution had a fellowship recipient in 2019-20

Maximum Score: 40

A high scoring proposal is not a guarantee of funding. Typically, the requests for fellowships far exceed the funds available in any given year. Therefore, it is quite probable that some strong proposals will not receive awards.

DIRECT YOUR QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS TO:

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