

PRESS RELEASE

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CGS Announces Additional Funding to Continue Work on Career Pathways of Humanities PhDs

Washington, DC — Today the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) announced grant funding from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for *The Humanities Coalition*, a new effort that will expand CGS's work to understand and support the careers of PhDs. This latest endeavor seeks to further enhance our understanding of humanities PhDs and their careers and to refine humanities-specific strategies for curricular change and program improvement. One component of the new initiative is additional research to better understand the nature of early career transitions for humanists.

The project, a component of CGS's *Understanding PhD Career Pathways for Program Improvement* project, builds upon three earlier phases of CGS Best Practice and research initiatives: a [feasibility study](#) supported by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation; a [survey development](#) phase supported by Mellon, Sloan, and the National Science Foundation (NSF); and a [data collection phase](#) supported by Mellon and NSF. There are currently 70 universities contributing data to the project.

Through a competitive sub-award process, the new effort will select ten U.S. doctoral-granting institutions to develop and assess initiatives for better supporting humanities PhD students transitioning from graduate school into the workforce. CGS has also received additional support from Mellon to expand the number of institutions currently collecting data about the careers of PhD students and alumni in the humanities.

"The PhD Career Pathways project has already provided valuable information about the careers of humanities PhD alumni and the career aspirations of humanities PhD students," said Suzanne Ortega, president of the Council of Graduate Schools. "With *The Humanities Coalition*, we hope to learn more about the kinds of transitions humanities PhDs face as they move from graduate school to career. Humanities PhDs have a wide variety of career pathways in front of them. We need to make sure they know what they are and how to access them."

Richard Kurin, distinguished scholar and ambassador-at-large at the Smithsonian Institution and member of the CGS Employer Roundtable, provided a perspective from a large employer of humanities degree holders. "We know from CGS's [work on PhD career pathways](#) that humanities PhDs are employed in all major sectors of the economy, and there is no doubt they play a critical role in leading and supporting cultural institutions," Kurin said. "I am delighted to see that CGS is building on its important work by helping universities develop and refine practices that will help support successful transitions from humanities doctoral programs to a wide variety of career pathways. This can help fulfill the professional aspirations of talented, creative and accomplished scholars and also improve the institutions and causes they serve."

Over the five-year project, an advisory committee (listed below) will guide CGS's efforts to increase the impact and reach of the project and provide insights for addressing challenges and opportunities specific to various humanities disciplines. CGS will issue a Request-For-Proposals (RFP) to CGS member institutions to participate in the project as funded partners and will continue to work with its current partners to collect data in both STEM and humanities fields.

Advisory Committee Members:

- **Carlos Alonso**, Dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Columbia University
- **Antoinette Burton**, PI, Humanities without Walls; Director, Illinois Program for Research in the Humanities; Professor of History and Gender and Women's Studies, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
- **Susan Carvalho**, Associate Provost and Dean of the Graduate School, The University of Alabama
- **Joy Connolly**, President, American Council of Learned Societies
- **Elizabeth Dolan**, Deputy Provost for Graduate Education, Lehigh University
- **Patricia Easton**, Executive Vice President and Provost, The Claremont Graduate University
- **Daniel Fisher**, Project Director, Humanities for All, National Humanities Alliance
- **James Grossman**, Executive Director, American Historical Association
- **Paula Krebs**, Executive Director, Modern Language Association
- **Preselfannie Whitfield McDaniels**, Dean, Division of Graduate Studies, Jackson State University
- **Mary Papazian**, President, San José State University
- **Rob Townsend**, Director of the Humanities Indicators and Director of the Washington Office, American Association of the Arts and Sciences
- **Maren Wood**, Co-Founder, Beyond the Professoriate

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About CGS

The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) is an organization of approximately 500 institutions of higher education in the United States and Canada engaged in graduate education, research, and the preparation of candidates for advanced degrees. The organization's mission is to improve and advance graduate education, which it accomplishes through advocacy in the federal policy arena, research, and the development and dissemination of best practices.