



ACLS LEADING EDGE FELLOWSHIP

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| Project: | Ethical Considerations: COVID-19 Vaccine Research |
| Organization: | National Museum of American History |
| Location: | Washington, D.C. [Fellow will work remotely] |
| Stipend: | \$60,000 per year, plus health insurance and professional development funding |
| Start Date: | January or February 2021 |

ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION

The National Museum of American History empowers people to create a just and compassionate future by exploring, preserving, and sharing the complexity of our past. At the heart of the museum are the dedicated professionals who care for its audiences, national collections, resources, messages, buildings, and scholarship, all in service to the people of the United States. From our nearly 800,000-square-foot home on the National Mall and through our numerous online channels, the museum welcomes millions of people every year from across the country and around the world, free of charge.

<https://americanhistory.si.edu/>

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Because COVID-19 has disproportionately impacted communities of color, the need for diverse pools of test subjects for a vaccine has become especially crucial. Yet America's long and complex history of unethical medical experimentation in communities of color has made many community members hesitant to participate in clinical trials. By researching and collecting materials related to the ethical imperatives that shape the development and implementation of clinical trials for an effective COVID-19 vaccine, the National Museum of American History seeks to document and collect around efforts to rectify and address ethical lapses which have long impacted and shaped medical research.

The Leading Edge Fellow will conduct research on the role that religious institutions and community organizations are playing in encouraging community participation in clinical trials. The Fellow's research will focus specifically on efforts by the National Institute of Health's COVID-19 Prevention Network's (CoVPN) Faith Initiative. Led by a minister, CoVPN's Faith Initiative uses seven "faith ambassadors" and more than 30 clergy-consultants from the Black, Latinx and American Indian/Alaska Native communities to assist in efforts to diversify clinical testing pools for COVID-19 vaccines. The Fellow will research the ethical parameters for COVID-19 vaccine trials as determined by law and then conduct oral histories of individuals involved in CoVPN's Faith Initiative. Oral histories will explore the role religious leaders played, or did not play, in ensuring that COVID-19 clinical trials reflected the diversity of the American experience. Oral histories conducted by the Leading Edge Fellow will assist the museum in identifying objects, such as ethical protocols, public health materials, test kits, and vaccines, which are central to documenting this story for museum visitors and researchers.

From the first curative serums developed in the 1890s to punch cards from polio vaccine clinical trials, the National Museum of American History (NMAH) possesses one of the world's leading collections of historic vaccines and immuno-therapies. By researching and identifying aspects of COVID-19 vaccine clinical trials, the Leading Edge Fellow will enhance understanding and interpretation of the museum's existing collection of vaccines and clinical trials, while also providing future museum visitors and researchers with an understanding of the ethical considerations involved in developing a COVID-19 vaccine.

This position is *only* available through the Leading Edge Fellowship program.
You may *not* contact the host institution to inquire about this position.

Responsibilities and tasks:

- Stay apprised of the latest news regarding Stage 3 vaccine trials, including any emerging policy or legal changes to medical trial ethics procedures with respect to race as a selection criteria.
- Conduct research on the roles of religious institutions in COVID-19 prevention and vaccine development.
- Determine potential subjects for oral histories; arrange and conduct oral histories.
- Review oral histories and provide a written overview for the project as well as introductory overviews for each oral history.
- Develop a report for the Associate Director of Curatorial Affairs and the Chair of the Division of Medicine and Science highlighting potential COVID-19 objects for collection by the museum.
- Prepare documentation for a general audience which describes objects; this documentation will also include an overview of this collecting effort and be posted on the museum's website for all audiences.
- Prepare and present a public program highlighting this work for the general public.

Qualifications:

- PhD in any field of the humanistic social sciences, so long as the applicant's research contributes to the scholarship and understanding of religion, theology, or ethics. Read more about eligible fields [here](#).
- Organized, detail-oriented, self-motivated planner who can work independently.
- Experience in conducting interviews or oral histories.
- Must be willing to learn new applications and identify innovative ways for technology to support organizational objectives
- Interest in and experience with public humanities and community outreach.
- Project management skills: ability to multitask, problem-solve, prioritize, delegate, and create systems and processes to manage and track projects
- Excellent oral and written communication skills, including public speaking, meeting/classfacilitation, and the ability to develop texts for both general and specialist/scholarly audiences (social media, blogs, articles, reports, etc.)

Preferred:

- Spanish language skills

APPLICATIONS

- Information on the Leading Edge Fellowship Program: <https://www.acls.org/Competitions-and-Deadlines/Leading-Edge-Fellowships>
- All applications must be submitted through the ACLS Online Fellowship Application System (ofa.acls.org)
- Application deadline: 9pm EST, November 2, 2020

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