ACLS Leading Edge Fellowship

| Project: August Wilson’s Century Cycle and the African American Experience in Pennsylvania |
| Organization: Pennsylvania Humanities Council |
| Location: Remote |
| Stipend: $60,000 per year, plus health insurance and professional development funding |
| Start Date: September 1- September 30 |

ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION

Pennsylvania Humanities Council’s mission is to put the humanities in action to create positive change in the lives of residents and communities. Our work is grounded in people and champions their creativity and big ideas. We bring Pennsylvanians together to shape the future through the power of stories, reflection, and relationships. We focus our resources in two areas – civic engagement and education – where the need is great and where the humanities can have the deepest impact. Learn more at https://pahumanities.org/.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The ten plays of Pennsylvania native August Wilson’s Century Cycle (including Fences, The Piano Lesson and Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom) chronicle the collective memory, history, and dreams of African American families across the 20th century. All but one is set in Pittsburgh’s Hill District; the plays’ themes and emotions unite African American communities in the U.S. and Pennsylvania. PHC is currently developing a slate of programs exploring scenes and monologues from the ten Century Cycle plays in conjunction with a range of community organizations across the state, an embodiment of PHC’s humanities-based approach to civic engagement. For example, in York PHC might work with a historical society to plan an exhibit exploring the experiences of ex-slaves in the 1900s, while in Lancaster we might work with a performing arts group to produce a concert highlighting the African American influences on music in the 1920s. Building a humanities-based program drawing together African American communities will be a keystone program, engaging PHC’s commitment to social justice and equity.

The ACLS Leading Edge Fellow will build this program from the ground up, developing connections for PHC across the state, interacting with scores of organizations, humanities professionals, and funders. The Fellow will develop relationships between PHC and communities willing to host Century Cycle projects, work with PHC staff to write and develop proposals for funding, and begin planning events. This is a full-time commitment for the fellowship year, including dedicated time for professional development activities.

Responsibilities and tasks:

- Develop relationships between PHC and communities willing to host Century Cycle projects
- Work with organizations across Pennsylvania – theaters, community groups, museums, etc. – to build a program of interconnected projects
- Work with PHC staff to write and develop proposals for funding

This position is only available through the Leading Edge Fellowship program. You may not contact the host institution to inquire about this position.
• Use and expand PHC’s network to develop projects adapted for each community

Qualifications:

• PhD in any field of the humanities or humanistic social sciences. Read more about eligible fields [here](#);
• Interest in August Wilson, literature and/or history;
• Willingness and interest to engage community members, scholars, and artists to educate and tell stories;
• Experience in, and commitment to, working with African American communities

APPLICATIONS

• Information on the Leading Edge Fellowship Program: [https://www.acls.org/Competitions-and-Deadlines/Leading-Edge-Fellowships](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 EDT, May 6, 2021

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