



ACLS Graduate Internships on the Spiritual Infrastructure of the Future 2026

Project	Reviving Pluralism: Charting the Next Chapter of an American Tradition
Organization	Interfaith America
Location	Chicago, IL
Stipend	\$15,400
Duration	9 weeks, Summer 2026

ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION

[Interfaith America](#) is a national nonprofit organization based in Chicago. We believe that religious diversity is a foundational American strength, and we are building a nation that achieves that promise for the common good. Our mission is to activate leaders to build an interfaith America. We leverage our expertise in interfaith leadership in different sectors in American life, activating a public discourse on pluralism with a focus on higher education, workplaces, and civic partners. IA activates leaders and institutions in these sectors with the tools and resources they need to positively engage religious diversity for the common good.

At Interfaith America, we are ever-adapting and changing. We look for people who set audacious goals and love that one workday may not be like the next. We have a strong commitment to pluralism and building bridges across deep differences. Our programs help people build skills to bridge deep ideological divides. Our work is about staying in relationship with one another and contributing to the common good even when we might disagree on fundamental things.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Today, questions about how people of different identities and divergent ideologies can live together are more urgent than ever. Pluralism—respect for diverse identities and divergent ideologies, mutually inspiring relationships between diverse communities, and cooperation across difference for the common good—is a distinctly American tradition, shaped by thinkers such as Jane Addams, Horace Kallen, Alain Locke, John Courtney Murray, John Rawls, Diana Eck, and Danielle Allen. It has long served as both a philosophical ideal and a practical framework for democratic life in a diverse society. This project seeks to carry that tradition forward by convening today’s leading voices to explore how pluralism can respond to contemporary tensions and strengthen the civic fabric of American democracy.

The ACLS Graduate Intern will play a key role in a new initiative from Interfaith America that aims to recover, extend, and publicly engage the rich intellectual and civic traditions of pluralism in American life. Working closely with Interfaith America’s higher education team, the fellow will help support a national initiative that brings together scholars, public intellectuals, and civic leaders to examine pluralism’s philosophical, historical, and practical dimensions. The project includes a series of both small and public gatherings, a curated editorial process leading toward an edited compilation, and contributions to public-facing discourse on pluralism. These efforts will catalyze deeper engagement with pluralism as both an academic field and a civic imperative, shaping discourse and practice across higher education and American public life. The internship appointment is for 9 consecutive weeks, with an expected time commitment of approximately 37.5 hours per week.

Key Responsibilities:

- Conduct targeted research on pluralism and religious diversity, with particular attention to higher education and key thought leaders in the field.
- Assist in strategic planning, logistics, and communications for virtual and in-person convenings.
- Document key insights from convenings and contribute to internal memos and public-facing summaries.
- Support the development of public scholarship, including articles, opinion pieces, and digital content.

This position is *only* available through the ACLS Graduate Internships on the Spiritual Infrastructure of the Future program. You may *not* contact the host institution to inquire about this position.



ACLS Graduate Internships on the Spiritual Infrastructure of the Future 2025

- Contribute to preliminary editorial work and research for a future journal issue or edited scholarly volume.
- Collaborate with the higher education team to integrate project insights into campus-based pluralism initiatives.
- Attend relevant meetings to gain a broader understanding of Interfaith America's work.
- Write two project-related essays for IA Magazine.

Qualifications:

- PhD student in any field of the humanities or humanistic social sciences, with a dissertation/research focus on the study of religion. Read more about eligible fields [here](#).
- Strong qualitative research and analytical skills.
- Exceptional organizational and communication skills, including clear and effective writing; if selected, finalists will be asked for writing samples.
- Ability to work collaboratively and independently in a professional environment.
- Interest in issues related to pluralism, democracy, and higher education.
- Experience engaging others in culturally, politically and religiously diverse and intellectually rigorous settings.

APPLICATIONS

- Information on the Graduate Internships on the Spiritual Infrastructure of the Future Program: <https://www.acls.org/competitions/acls-graduate-internships-on-the-spiritual-infrastructure-of-the-future/>
- All applications must be submitted through the ACLS Online Fellowship Application System (<ofa.acls.org>).
- Application deadline: **Wednesday, January 14, 2026, 9 PM EST.**