



ACLS Graduate Internships on the Spiritual Infrastructure of the Future 2026

Project	Enriching Public Understanding of Religion Through Digital Media
Organization	Religion News Service
Location	Remote
Stipend	\$14,000
Duration	9 weeks, Summer 2026

ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION

[Religion News Service](#) (RNS) is the leading independent nonprofit news organization dedicated to producing fact-based journalism and thoughtful commentary on religion, ethics, and spirituality in all its forms. Our work provides essential context to consequential issues and focuses on the intersection of religion and politics, race, gender, science, education, and social justice. Our staff of 15 reporters and editors, plus our contributing columnists and writers, serve over one million readers and listeners each month through our website (www.rns.org), daily newsletters, podcasts and social media platforms. We serve millions more through our partnerships with NPR, the Associated Press, and secular and non-secular publishers including The Washington Post, Christianity Today, and National Catholic Reporter.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The intern will serve as a reporter, contributing ideas and working on assigned topics, covering a broad range of religion topics. They will help educate and engage readers about important issues, people, and events; build audience for the RNS website and flagship newsletter; and reach new audiences by learning to amplify content through social media channels. They will enhance our work by contributing the deep contextual knowledge and interpretive skills that are hallmarks of humanistic and social scientific training. This perspective is especially valuable as we seek to deepen our coverage of underreported spiritual communities and evolving religious movements—what we think of as America’s “spiritual infrastructure.” An intern would both support and shape editorial priorities, while gaining practical experience in writing for a general audience and working in media. This partnership would strengthen RNS’s capacity to produce thoughtful, inclusive coverage of religion while providing a meaningful, hands-on experience for a scholar committed to bringing humanistic insight to the public square. Examples of stories that might be produced include:

1. Stories at the Intersection of Faith and Public Life

A fellow might explore how religious communities are responding to rising political tensions, violence, or social unrest—examining how faith traditions are adapting their theologies, practices, or community roles in the face of these challenges.

2. Emerging and Underrepresented Faith Communities

The fellow could report on lesser-known spiritual movements or marginalized religious identities, translating academic insight into accessible narratives. These stories might highlight how individuals and groups are creating space for themselves within mainstream religious structures, illuminating broader shifts in American religious belonging.

3. Transformations in Religious Practice and Community

This story might examine how demographic shifts, economic pressures, or cultural changes are reshaping religious institutions, from rural congregations to urban spiritual collectives. For example, an aging congregation may develop outreach to serve, and merge with, younger, culturally diverse neighbors.

The internship appointment is for 9 consecutive weeks, with an expected time commitment of approximately 37.5 hours per week, generally between the hours of 9 a.m.-6 p.m. local time, M-F. Reporters occasionally have interviews and events in the evenings or on the weekends but are given the latitude to adjust their work schedule accordingly.

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

Key Responsibilities:

- Identify, develop and pitch story ideas to editors at a national digital publication.
- Report and write factual news articles representing multiple points of view.
- Work directly with editors to correct, tighten and improve articles and to select appropriate visuals, images and graphics.
- Produce at least 7 original reported pieces over the course of a 9-week internship.
- Promote stories via at least one social media platform.

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 writer and self-editor.
- Open to learning tenets of journalistic writing and reporting.

Preferred

- Photography and social media skills a plus.

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.**