



ACLS Graduate Internships on the Spiritual Infrastructure of the Future 2026

Project	Collaborative, Evidence-based Religion Journalism for the Public Good
Organization	The Conversation U.S.
Location	Remote
Stipend	\$14,000
Duration	9 weeks, Summer 2026

ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION

[The Conversation U.S.](#) is an independent, nonprofit national newsroom that has academics collaborate with editors to produce journalism for the public good. We publish 10-12 stories a day across a variety of subjects, including religion, business, climate, and many others. All the content we produce is free for anyone to read and republish, and as a result, we are in about 1,000 news outlets monthly and are the most read nonprofit news organization in America. We are a close-knit team of 38, consisting of 23 editors as well as audience, university relations, fundraising and operations staff.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Conversation's religion desk's mission is to produce explanatory journalism and analysis about the world through the lens of inter-disciplinary religion research and expertise residing in universities. Our special sauce is not covering breaking news but coming at the news – or just interesting research – with fresh angles, ideas, analysis and explanation.

Some recent stories we published include how colleges shape students' views on religion and how Protestant ideas shaped Americans' support for birth control. We are very open to any areas of interest and expertise but also hope the intern could contribute stories to our ongoing series on the examination of ancient texts for answers to today's challenges as well as a series on virtues. In addition they may contribute to other series such as superheroes, comics and religion as part of our Global Religion Journalism Initiative – a collaboration with the Associated Press and Religion News Service; religion literacy to help the public understand and analyze how different religions intersect with societies; new religious movements; the rise of religious extremism and nationalism in the U.S.; and the examination of ancient texts for answers to today's challenges.

The ACLS Graduate Intern will play an essential role on our religion desk by contributing ideas and unearthing interesting religion research by academics or finding experts to explain breaking news. With guidance from Kalpana Jain, senior religion and ethics editor, they will conceive ideas for stories, help shape story direction, tone and structure – and then edit the piece for clarity and accuracy for the public. By collaborating with individual academics writing pieces, they will extract important ideas from scholarly work, give constructive and diplomatic feedback and produce 3-4 pieces, including choosing photos and writing headlines. They will also be invited to join our weekly zoom meetings with the Associated Press and Religion News Service where they will learn how media organizations discuss, collaborate and conceive story ideas. If the Graduate Intern is far enough along in their research, they may also become an author to produce their own bylined piece. All of the Graduate Intern's work will be published on The Conversation website, as well as on the Associated Press newswire and distributed to more than 1,000 news outlets that choose to pick up the piece. We pride ourselves for our team-minded and supportive working environment.

We are looking for a Graduate Intern who is curious and has a strong desire to explain important ideas through the lens of religion to the public. The intern's work will serve demographically diverse readers across the U.S. The internship appointment is for 9 consecutive weeks, with an expected time commitment of approximately 37.5 hours per week.

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.



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Key Responsibilities:

- Conceiving ideas and evaluating pitches from scholars through the lens of public interest.
- Collaborating with a scholar to frame a story, have them write it and then edit the story for clarity, accuracy and interest.
- Choosing pictures, headlines and fact-checking statements as well as ensuring statements are backed up with academic research links.

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](#).
- Interest and/or experience in editing and providing feedback on written language to scholars.
- Interest and/or experience in helping academics translate their work to a broader audience in plain language.
- Curiosity and willingness to learn how stories are disseminated via our Creative Commons model and used in social posts from YouTube to Instagram to TikTok.

Preferred

- A desire to experiment with and learn how to produce graphics, data visualizations and videos to get scholarly work to the public.
- Strong communication skills and adaptability to work with our cross-disciplinary team and occasionally breaking news.

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.**