

August 17, 2026

UW-Madison Faculty Fellowship in AI and Creativity within the Center for Humanistic Inquiry into AI and Uncertainty (AI&U)

Call for Proposals for 2027

DEADLINE: Friday, October 2, 2026 @ 11:59PM EST

Access application information on the AI&U webpage:

<https://aiuncertainty.wisc.edu/people/about-the-fellowship-program/>

The Center for Humanistic Inquiry into AI and Uncertainty, an autonomous research center administratively housed within the Institute for Research in the Humanities, is pleased to announce its **second annual competition for up to four two-semester Faculty Fellowships for UW-Madison faculty who are working on a project that explores the theme of “AI and Creativity” from a humanistic (or descriptive social-scientific) perspective**. These fellowships will be granted for two semesters: in Spring 2027 and Fall 2027. Thanks to an NEH “Humanities Research Centers on AI” research grant, Faculty Fellows receive their regular salary and \$2000 in flexible research funding and are released from teaching duties, pending confirmation of UW-Madison’s teaching policies, for Spring/Fall 2027, so that they may undertake full-time research, participate in the Center’s intellectual community (including weekly meetings with fellows), collaborate on the publication and dissemination of an annual whitepaper, and contribute to the Center’s other activities.

Center’s mission statement: The Center for Humanistic Inquiry into AI and Uncertainty serves as a collaborative hub for gathering people, ideas, and resources from across the UW-Madison community in order to intervene in debates about the many dimensions of uncertainty foregrounded by emerging AI technologies. By fostering a broad-minded, yet focused, community of humanities scholars researching AI and providing them with dedicated time, research support, and other resources to produce impactful academic publications and public-facing resources, the Center engages in urgent conversations with 1) researchers and technologists working on AI and related technologies, 2) scholars grappling with technological shifts more broadly, and 3) the broader public.

The theme for the Center’s second year is “AI and Creativity.” In keeping with its mission of supporting interdisciplinary cohorts of humanities researchers who are committed to probing current and future AI technologies and the multidimensional uncertainties attendant to them, the Center invites applications from scholars working in all humanistic and descriptive social scientific disciplines. We are specifically interested in projects that take up the issue of “creativity” and how AI tools call into question traditional understandings of authorship, art,

authenticity and expression. Research questions may include (but are not limited to): How do we define authorship in an era of artistic outputs generated by AI? Is AI creative, or is creativity a distinctively human capability inaccessible to artificial agents? How does the inclusion of AI-generated content in various artworks alter their aesthetic (and economic) value? What ethical frames should we apply to AI (is it like plagiarism in writing or more akin to sampling in music)? What does it mean for something to be “made with AI”? Overall, we are looking for fellows whose projects demonstrate a deliberate appreciation of uncertainty’s positive potential for productive critique and whose ideas on “AI and Creativity” can highlight previously uncharted paths for innovative humanistic inquiry.

Thanks to the generous support of the National Endowment for the Humanities alongside robust institutional support from the College of Letters & Science, the IRH, the Office of the Vice-Chancellor for Research, the Graduate School, the Data Science Institute, the Center for Humanities, and the Vice-Provost for Teaching and Learning, these fellowships are prestigious appointments and represent one of the ways the UW–Madison seeks to strengthen opportunities for concentrated humanities research on AI and its uncertain future.

Individual faculty members who are on the tenure track or tenured at UW–Madison are encouraged to apply. Faculty budgeted outside the College of L&S are welcome to apply, contingent upon written agreement from their Dean and Department Chair to release them from teaching and to continue their salary during the duration of the fellowship. (Note: The home departments of Faculty Fellows will receive \$10,300 in faculty salary support for each semester of the recipient’s fellowship, for a total of \$20,600.) Please note that the fellowship may not be deferred for any reason. The Center seeks the most exciting projects from candidates who can contribute to and benefit from the Center’s mission.

Criteria for selection:

- The quality and potential impact of the applicant’s current and proposed research
- The clarity of the applicant’s research proposal
- The relevance of the applicant’s research and expertise to the theme “AI and Creativity”
- The diversity of intellectual and disciplinary perspectives, professional experiences, and interests the applicant would bring to the Center’s research mission
- Evidence of interest in, and preparedness for, interdisciplinary collaboration

Eligibility

- Faculty Fellowship applicants for the AI&U Center must be tenured or tenure-track members of the UW–Madison faculty, must be engaged in scholarship in the humanities (or descriptive social sciences), and must be prepared to commit themselves to full participation in the Center’s activities for the period of the appointment.
- Applicants must hold a Ph.D. (or relevant terminal degree such as an MFA or JD).
- Due to stipulations of the NEH grant, this fellowship is open only to tenure-track and tenured faculty members.
- UW–Madison faculty budgeted outside the College of Letters & Science are welcome to apply for the Center’s Faculty Fellowships, and, if selected, will need to provide evidence that their Dean and Department Chair has agreed to release them from teaching for the

fellowship's duration.

- All applicants must have completed two years on the tenure track or as tenured faculty at UW–Madison before applying.
- Projects should be situated clearly within the humanities, which we define broadly to include disciplinary and interdisciplinary scholarship on history, literature, visual and performing art, visual and material culture, philosophy, religion, politics, and language. In addition to applications in the humanities, applications in the social and natural sciences will be considered if they demonstrate potential for comparative, theoretical, and/or interdisciplinary conversation with the humanities. Applications in the performing and creative arts should involve a substantive research component.
- Proposals involving a revision of the doctoral dissertation should involve major expansion, extensive new research, and/or substantive reconceptualization.

Application Materials

- AI&U General Questionnaire. [Download the application form here.](#)
- Project Proposal. Up to 1,500 words (about 5 double-spaced pages of 12-point font). The proposal, written to be accessible to readers outside your discipline and free of jargon, should address the significance of the project. Clearly state the intended product of your research, whether it is a book or an article (or series of articles) and how it connects to the annual theme. For book projects, chapter outlines are highly recommended. The proposal should also state how the project will be accomplished, and the specific work plan for the period of the fellowship. Projects to revise doctoral dissertations should involve substantial expansion, new research, and/or new conceptual frameworks— the proposal should clearly explain how the project relates to the submitted dissertation yet will be a different book.
- Bibliography. Publications (not your own) relevant to the project, up to 2 pages.
- Statement of Interest in interdisciplinary and collaborative research and the envisioned benefits this will bring to your work and that of others (up to 300 words)
- Curriculum Vitae. Including work forthcoming and in progress.

Application Submission and Deadline

- Applicants should submit their applications by email to the Center at: ai.uncertainty@wisc.edu. Please create a single PDF and title the file APPLICANTLASTNAME_APPLICANTFIRSTNAME_AIUINTERNALFELLOW27.pdf Include the following items, in the following order:
 - AI&U General Questionnaire [[DOWNLOAD HERE](#)]
 - Project Proposal/Project Bibliography
 - Statement of Interest
 - *Curriculum Vitae*
- The deadline for **ALL** materials is **11:59 pm CST Friday, October 2, 2026**

Inquiries

- For general questions about the application process, please email ai.uncertainty@wisc.edu
- For substantive questions about projects and proposals, contact Jeremy Morris, Faculty Director for the Center for Humanistic Inquiry into AI and Uncertainty (jwmorris2@wisc.edu).
- Notifications of the awards will be emailed no later than mid-October, 2026