

Project:	Chronicling Community Artists during COVID-19
Organization:	Smithsonian Folklife Magazine
Location:	Washington, DC [Fellow will work remotely]
Stipend:	\$60,000 per year, plus health insurance and professional development funding
Start Date:	September or October 2020

ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION

The Smithsonian Institution is the largest museum, research, and educational complex in the world. The Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage promotes greater understanding and sustainability of cultural heritage across the United States and around the world through research, education, and community engagement. Smithsonian Folklife is the Center’s digital magazine of music, food, craft, and culture. We tell unforgettable stories about people, ideas, and a wide array of arts and traditions that help us explore where we have come from and where we are going: <https://folklife.si.edu/magazine>

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Chronicling Community Artists during COVID-19 is a groundbreaking national series that explores one key question: how are folk and traditional artists and their communities responding to COVID-19? Local artists and musicians are powerful voices that express the values, struggles, and creative responses of their communities. As the unofficial spokespeople of many communities, they bond, bridge, and challenge. They strengthen ties within cultures, and they build understanding and empathy across cultural difference. These bonds create “social power”—shared values and ties that enable and facilitate cooperation and community building. Folk and traditional arts are a compelling gateway into understanding the culture, history, and problems facing communities across the country. Community artists and musicians are often agents of change, using traditional styles and practices as a foundation for addressing and overcoming the challenges of contemporary life, especially COVID-19 and the struggle against racism. Over the course of a year, Smithsonian Folklife Magazine will produce online stories and, in partnership with National Public Radio, occasional broadcast pieces to reach up to 18 million people per week.

What can we learn about people through their local art forms? How do the stories of individuals and communities reflect significant issues such as environmental change, political conflict, economic marginalization, and the pandemic? How do people use culture to struggle against injustice? These are the questions we explore by investigating the social power of community arts. The project is rooted in the belief that awareness and appreciation of other cultures contribute to greater quality of life throughout the world. Pete Seeger said, “If humanity survives another century, it will be because of music,” and inspired by this vision, we strive to understand how music and other community arts are critical to the future wellbeing of humankind. Segments may include interviews, artist profiles, reports from the field, in-depth explorations into specific cultural expressions, and pieces that connect current events to relevant

This position is *only* available through the ACLS Leading Edge Fellows program. You may *not* contact the host institution to inquire about this position.

traditions. The fellowship tenure is twelve consecutive months, with an expected time commitment of approximately 37.5 hours per week.

Responsibilities and Tasks:

- Research community artists' responses to COVID-19 outside the United States.
- Develop written content.
- Assemble and/or create multimedia content.
- Create and promote 52 web publications (roughly one per week). These will include interviews, artist profiles, reports from the field, in-depth explorations into specific cultural expressions, and pieces that connect current events to relevant traditions.
- Collaborate on a multidisciplinary team.

Qualifications:

- PhD in art history or other humanities field that draws primarily upon art historical or visual culture approaches
- Exceptional research and writing skills for a variety of audiences and stakeholders
- Knowledge of dynamics of culture
- Knowledge of digital humanities, especially digital strategy, digital storytelling, and social media
- Ability to write for diverse audiences on digital platforms
- Ability to collaborate effectively on teams to produce digital content

Preferred:

- Ability to produce digital audiovisual content, including video and audio for different delivery platforms, including web, podcast, television, and radio
- Ability to assemble content in a digital publishing system

APPLICATIONS

- Information on the Leading Edge Fellowship Program: <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, July 31, 2020.

This position is *only* available through the ACLS Leading Edge Fellows program.
You may *not* contact the host institution to inquire about this position.