

2022 PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS IN SOCIETY AND NEUROSCIENCE: CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

Interfolio: <https://apply.interfolio.com/94275>.

[Presidential Scholars in Society and Neuroscience](#) (PSSN) is an innovative program pioneering interdisciplinary research between neuroscience and the arts, social sciences, and humanities. Each Scholar in this highly selective program has proposed a novel cross-disciplinary research project at the intersection of neuroscience and at least one other field, which they will conduct over the course of the three-year fellowship. Presidential Scholars join a vibrant community of postdoctoral researchers and faculty mentors and affiliates from across Columbia University.

Columbia University has assembled a distinguished group of neuroscientific researchers in the Zuckerman Mind, Brain, Behavior Institute, one of the most important loci of neuroscience research in the world. The Zuckerman Institute, together with over 100 faculty in neuroscience in basic and clinical departments at the Columbia University Irving Medical Center and the Morningside campuses, are committed to supplementing the groundbreaking experimental inquiry of the neuroscience faculty by systematic investigation into the conceptual underpinnings and the social foundations of such newly obtained knowledge.

To foster true interdisciplinary research, each Presidential Scholar works closely with at least two faculty mentors: at least one drawn from neuroscience or related fields and the other(s) from the arts, humanities, or social science disciplines closest to the work proposed by the Scholar. Mentors are selected in consultation with the Scholar. While Presidential Scholars remain independent, they receive a modest research allowance and tailored support from the program and from their faculty mentors. The PSSN program aims to develop integrative neuroscience research that is leading the way in bringing together disciplines in order to address critical questions about science and society. During every application round, the selection committee comes together to discuss the pressing issues of our time and considers how the next generation of scholars will address these issues as part of their research.

For this application season, PSSN recognizes that there is a growing need for Presidential Scholars who have experience examining questions about diversity, equity, inclusion, anti-racism, and decolonization broadly defined. The future of science depends on scholars who can foster new collaborations among neuroscientists and other discipline experts, practitioners, and policy makers around these compelling and urgent societal issues that connect to mind, brain, behavior, and mental health. It is essential that the scholars tackling these challenges have the confidence and intellectual gravity to dive into complex questions and not shy away from them. We understand this is difficult and complicated work, requiring the support of mentors and leaders across the University, as well as guaranteed research and training support for the individuals endeavoring to do this work.

Some of our Presidential Scholars and PSSN affiliates have already engaged this work including:

- Research on the neuroscience of criminality and punishment by a JD/PhD which produced policy papers to guide appropriate uses of neuroimaging in court proceedings and evidence on the mental health effects of solitary confinement.
- Neuroimaging studies on cognitive changes in new mothers that include populations representative of the neighborhoods surrounding Columbia's medical campus and also provide trauma-informed follow-up care.
- A recent panel hosted by Columbia's President on the use of neuroscientific evidence in diversity research for education, and the future studies and funding still needed to build support for Affirmative Action practices at Universities.
- A seed grant project to develop new applications for a non-invasive neurotechnology that would allow people to create and play music with minimal physical movement, with applications for rehabilitation and people with limited physical mobility.

The Program is working to expand its reach in this realm in the 2022 application cycle.

APPLYING TO THE PROGRAM

Two interdisciplinary postdoctoral positions are available to applicants who have earned the doctorate, or its equivalent, in: (1) a humanities, arts, or social science discipline — such as psychiatry, psychology, public health, law, history, economics, literature, philosophy, anthropology, sociology, political science, journalism, music, and the arts — and who have extensive acquaintance with, and critical understanding of, neuroscience research; OR (2) neuroscience or a related discipline in the natural sciences and who have extensive acquaintance with, and critical understanding of, another discipline in the arts, humanities, or social sciences.

Consistent with our 2022 vision, priority will be given to applications that align with the goal of supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion within the program. This can be considered in three overarching ways: (1) Applications include current research and/or research proposals that involve empirical research, the collection of data, or the study of history, evidence, or policy aimed to better understand or combat racism, bias, and inequality, or that are designed to benefit marginalized groups in the U.S. or abroad; (2) Applicants may come from communities which are historically underrepresented or marginalized in neuroscience or in the field or discipline in which they specialize; or (3) Applicants have demonstrated commitment and contributions towards promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion at their current institutions or within their community. This list of potential criteria is not exhaustive, and there may be many other ways in which a project and the applicant can help support these goals. We encourage applicants to think critically and creatively about samples, fundamental questions, and disciplinary areas that fit under our vision, about their research and scholarship, and their community-building, teaching, and mentoring efforts. If you would like further guidance as you develop your application please reach out to presidentialscholars@columbia.edu.

Successful applicants will be appointed in the Center for Science and Society at Columbia University for a total of three years. Appointments will be made at the level of postdoctoral scholar or scientist, or associate research scholar or scientist, with a start date of **July 1, 2022, for the 2022-23 academic year**. Renewal for the second and third years will be based on satisfactory performance. The annual salary will be approximately \$80,000, plus benefits.

While applications will be open until all positions are filled, **only complete applications that are submitted by Monday, December 13, 2021**, will be included in the first round of reviews.

APPLICATION INFORMATION SHEET

Candidates must hold a doctoral-level degree (PhD, EdD, JD, MD, etc.) by **July 1, 2022**, and must have received this degree after **July 1, 2017**. Review of applications will begin **December 14, 2021**, and will continue until the positions are filled. Only complete applications received by this date will be included in the first round of reviews. All applications must be submitted through the position's [Interfolio link](#) and must include:

1. Cover Letter
2. Curriculum Vitae
3. Proposal for an interdisciplinary research project (or projects) that build(s) on the applicant's current disciplinary background and brings together an aspect of neuroscientific research with research in the arts, humanities, and/or social sciences. **Please refer to the "Instructions for Research Proposal" for specific requirements. If submitting a DEI statement, please include this with your proposal.**
4. Writing sample(s) totaling up to 30 pages (articles or book chapter preferred)
5. Three letters of recommendation

You may upload the following optional materials:

6. PhD Dissertation Abstract (if applicable and available)
7. Work sample or portfolio (for applicants with a background in the arts only)

All applicants should refer to the Instructions for Research Proposal (see section below).

Submissions that do not include an Interdisciplinary Research Proposal with all required sections will not be reviewed. Generic research statements, teaching statements, and position papers are not a substitute for the Interdisciplinary Research Proposal and will not be reviewed. For questions about the application process, please contact presidentialscholars@columbia.edu.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Please submit the Interdisciplinary Research Proposal as a single PDF document with a clear title. It should include the following:

1. COVER PAGE
 - a. Include the title of the proposal.
 - b. Include an executive summary or abstract of the project.
 - c. List your proposed faculty mentors with their titles and affiliated schools.
 - i. Select at least one full-time faculty mentor from Columbia University or Barnard College from the arts, humanities, or social sciences.
 - ii. Select at least one full-time faculty mentor from Columbia University or Barnard College from the (neuro)sciences.
 - iii. Applicants are not required to contact their selected mentors prior to submitting their applications.
2. PROPOSAL NARRATIVE
 - a. The proposal narrative should be no more than 10 pages double-spaced in 12-point font.
 - b. The narrative must include a statement of interdisciplinarity, explaining how the project brings together neuroscience research and at least one other discipline in a novel way to advance understanding of mind, brain, and behavior.
 - c. The narrative must include a timeline of research for the three years of the position.
3. DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION STATEMENT (RECOMMENDED)
 - a. Include a statement (maximum 2 pages, double-spaced, 12-point font) describing how your project and/or other contributions align with the diversity, equity, and inclusion goals as indicated in the call for applications.
4. ITEMIZED PROJECTED BUDGET
 - a. Include an estimate of any anticipated experimental and equipment costs; membership, conference, and travel expenses; costs associated with rental or use of any internal or external resources; publication costs, etc.
5. BUDGET NARRATIVE
 - a. Provide a succinct description and justification of the project expenses itemized in the budget.
6. FIGURES AND TABLES (AS NEEDED)
7. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND/ OR REFERENCES CITED

8. PLAN TO SECURE EXTERNAL FUNDING (AS NEEDED)

- a. If appropriate, include a brief plan for securing external funding, referencing specific grants, granting agencies, or foundations that may be appropriate for your project. A modest research allowance will be available, but it may not fully cover the costs of many projects.