

Mellon Fellowships for Dissertation Research in Original Sources Guide for Reference Providers

The deadline for submission of reference letters is 5:00 pm Eastern time on Friday, November 13, 2009.

Your letter should be on letterhead and must be submitted electronically through CLIR's online system. You will receive an e-mail message containing your unique log-in information when the student requesting a reference enters your information into the online application system. If you believe you were sent an e-mail request you did not receive, please contact mellon@clir.org.

Should you be providing reference letters for more than one applicant, you will receive a unique Reference ID and password for each request.

Your letter will be most beneficial to the applicant and our evaluators if it covers the following:

1. How long and in what capacity have you known the applicant, and how would you rank the applicant's ability and reliability overall in relation to other doctoral candidates?
2. Is the amount of research time and support requested by the applicant appropriate? Will more be needed, or would less suffice?
3. Are the primary-source collections and institutions in which the applicant proposes to work appropriate? Are better or more convenient sources available?
4. Will the applicant use original source materials with originality and creativity? For example, will the applicant use sources that are newly opened, not traditional for the field, little used, or seldom used in the way proposed by the applicant?
5. How well is the applicant prepared for the proposed research through academic coursework, language competencies, research experience, familiarity with relevant secondary literature, and other experiences and achievements?
6. How important is the applicant's proposed dissertation to scholarship in its field?
7. Will the applicant have completed all doctoral requirements except the dissertation prior to the beginning the fellowship, including approval of the dissertation proposal?

Should you have questions, please contact us at mellon@clir.org. Please note that we are unable to accept reference letters by e-mail or regular mail; all letters must be provided through the online application system.

The Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) will offer approximately 15 competitively awarded fellowships for 2010-2011. The fellowships are funded by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for dissertation research in the humanities in original source materials—primary sources in the holdings of archives, libraries, historical societies, museums, and related repositories. Awards up to \$25,000 each are available for 9 to 12 months of dissertation research starting between June 1 and September 1, 2010. Further details about this fellowship program are available at <http://www.clir.org/fellowships/mellon/mellon.html>.

Sincerely,
The Council on Library and Information Resources