



great minds don't
always think alike

CAP Postdoctoral Research Fellowship Description

Start Date: September 3, 2024—negotiation possible.

End Date: No later than May 31, 2025.

Heterodox Academy (HxA) is a non-partisan, non-profit organization that advances the principles of open inquiry, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement to improve higher education and academic research. With a growing membership of over 6,000 professors, administrators, and graduate students, HxA helps colleges and universities live up to their highest ideals — and resist the destructive temptations of groupthink and tribalism. Working for change in higher education, HxA communicates and engages with faculty, students, administrators, philanthropists, journalists, and the general public; develops research, tools, trainings, and events; and facilitates online and on-campus communities.

Thanks to the generous support of the Templeton Religion Trust and other donors, in 2023 HxA launched the Center for Academic Pluralism (CAP), an arm of HxA whose mission is to explore the theoretical and empirical foundations for pluralism in higher institutions of research and education, and share our findings with scholars, opinion leaders, and lay public around the world.

The scope of questions to address concerning pluralism in academia is vast. Here are some illustrative questions that illustrate this scope:

- How does pluralism in academia relate to the purposes of institutions of higher education? What are those purposes, and how might conflicts or tradeoffs between purposes be resolved?
- What is the state of pluralism in academia? What are the attitudes of various constituencies towards pluralistic norms such as viewpoint diversity and open inquiry?
- How do academic institutions function? How do the incentives they are subject to, and the incentive structures they themselves create and sustain, influence the activities of academic institutions' constituents? How do wider cultural influences affect academic institutions? To what extent should academic institutions be responsive to wider cultural influences?
- How do academic institutions change, and how have they changed over time?
- Why should scholars welcome diverse perspectives—even challenging or perhaps unpalatable perspectives—in their classrooms? What is the value of viewpoint diversity?

How, under what circumstances, and to what extent do different kinds of diversity enhance or present challenges for research, teaching, learning and cooperation?

- What is the nature of open inquiry in academia, and why might it be valuable? What are the ethics of open inquiry? What are the barriers to open inquiry at various levels of the academic enterprise?
- How can disagreement about emotionally charged, highly contested topics be rendered constructive? How can scholars make progress toward knowledge and understanding on such topics?
- What are the best objections to pluralism in academia? How might we shift the ways pluralism in academia is understood, discussed and operationalized in light of these objections?
- What are the ethical obligations of research and teaching in a pluralistic context? What moral and intellectual virtues are relevant to academic practice, given pluralism in academia?

At the center of CAP's activities is the work of its Faculty and Postdoctoral Fellows. We are excited to recruit a new cohort of Fellows for the 2024-2025 academic year. Fellows will be expected to:

- Conduct original research on pluralism in academia
- Participate in CAP's weekly discussion and research seminar in its Manhattan office
- Write and present for public audiences about their research in HxA outlets and at HxA-sponsored events
- [Become a member](#) of Heterodox Academy (there is no cost to join)
- Give advice and feedback, where appropriate, on HxA's internal research projects
- Contribute to a collaborative annotated bibliography of scholarly and popular resources on pluralism in academia
- Be available to engage with HxA's Campus Community Network and present as a member of HxA's Speakers Bureau.

Postdoctoral Fellowship privileges

Fellows appointed for a full-time nine-month Postdoctoral Fellowship will receive a \$75,000 salary, along with a comprehensive benefits package that includes:

- Medical, dental, vision, life and disability insurances;
- A significant health insurance contribution for employees and their families;
- Additional tax-deferred savings opportunities, such as pre-tax deductions and FSAs.

Fellows will also receive office space in CAP's office in Manhattan for their use and a budget for the purchase of research materials.

Applying for a Postdoctoral Fellowship

In order to apply for a CAP Postdoctoral Fellowship, applicants must have a doctoral degree obtained within the last five years from an accredited institution of higher education. Exceptional pre-doctoral candidates may also be considered, provided they are at the ABD stage and they have permission from their doctoral advisor(s).

To apply, applicants should assemble the following:

- An up-to-date CV.
- A transcript for the applicant's doctoral degree.
- A cover letter outlining the applicant's general interest in CAP's mission, how a term at CAP would fit into the applicant's academic goals, and the names of three references HxA may solicit letters of reference from.
- A research proposal not to exceed 2,000 words. Proposals should identify specific questions to investigate, briefly contextualize those questions in relation to existing research and CAP's mission, explain how the applicant's own plan might yield progress on those questions, and enumerate specific deliverables and outputs of the research plan.
- A writing sample by the applicant, preferably from a peer-reviewed publication.

Please submit these materials using the [online form](#).

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis beginning on **December 1, 2023**, with fellowship offers anticipated no later than March 31, 2024.

Evaluation criteria

Successful applications for a Postdoctoral Research Fellowship will:

- Clearly articulate a plan of research that addresses an issue pertinent to pluralism in academia. Proposals should identify specific questions to investigate, briefly contextualize those questions in relation to existing research and CAP's mission, explain how the applicant's own plan might yield progress on those questions, and enumerate specific deliverables and outputs of the research plan.
- Exhibit a track record of successful research publications in peer-reviewed venues such as scholarly journals and academic presses.
- Demonstrate a commitment to actively participate in the academic life of CAP, including a commitment to be physically present in New York City during the fellowship period—either residing in the city or regularly commuting—for weekly meetings and regular work time in CAP's office in Manhattan.

Other criteria that will be considered, though are not essential to fulfill, include:

- A history of practical, professional, or scholarly experience working specifically on issues related to academic, political, religious, or other forms of pluralism.
- Experience engaging with non-academic audiences, whether in print or in non-academic presentations.

If you have any questions about the Postdoctoral Fellowship, please write fellowships@heterodoxacademy.org.