Graduate Student Research Fellowship
2016-17 Call for Applications

The Eisenberg Institute for Historical Studies will award up to six Graduate Student Research Fellowships in the amount of $5,000 each for the 2016-17 academic year. These fellowships aim to assist outstanding graduate students in pursuing their dissertation research. Graduate Fellows form a core part of the Institute community and are expected to participate regularly in Institute events. Fellows are also encouraged to serve as presenters and discussants in Institute programming. This fellowship program has been funded by a generous gift from Kenneth and Frances Aftel Eisenberg.

Eligibility: The Institute invites applications from University of Michigan graduate students in history and joint history programs who are entering at least their second year of graduate training. Fellows are expected to maintain Ann Arbor residency during the fall and winter terms of their award, with exceptions for short research, conference, or personal leaves of absence.

Award: The Graduate Student Research Fellowship consists of a $5,000 taxable research grant, disbursed in a lump sum for research-related purposes in July 2016. Funds may be used during the fellowship term, July 1, 2016-June 30, 2017.

Application: The application consists of the following:

- A brief statement of ongoing research (or dissertation prospectus) and why affiliation with the Institute might be particularly useful (400-750 words); while it is not required, applicants may share how their work relates to the Institute’s 2015-17 theme, “Senses and Longings” (see below for theme description).
- A research plan for the fellowship period, with estimated research expenses if applicable (250-500 words).
- A recommendation from the applicant’s dissertation chair or co-chair (visit lsa.umich.edu/eihs/grantsfellowships/graduestudentresearchfellowships for form). Applicants are responsible for ensuring their advisors submit these forms by the application deadline; incomplete applications will not be reviewed.
- A curriculum vitae.

Submit complete applications via email (eisenberginstitute@umich.edu) by March 7, 2016. Institute staff will confirm receipt.

Notification: Fellowship awards will be made by the Institute’s Steering Committee and announced in March or April 2016. The Institute will contact each applicant regarding the outcome of his/her application.
2015-17 Theme:  
Senses and Longings

The Eisenberg Institute proposes to explore perception and feeling in relation to the time-scapes of human experience. We aim to find a place in history for longings, i.e., yearnings for a state of affairs—perhaps lost to the past or beckoning as an imagined future—that differs from a given present.

The "affective turn" of the past twenty-odd years contends with a default assumption that human action is rational, the result of goal-oriented choices made by actors seeking the most effective means to their ends. Historians bring a rich perspective to this "turn." We know that human action and decision arise in definite historical situations, brought to us by the senses; moreover, choices to act are frequently steeped in one or more emotions—hope, sorrow, love, resentment, desire, and more. Thus we see a complex of elements. The senses stir feeling; feelings can arouse or dull the senses. Both are contingent on time—through the education of the senses, for instance, and in the temporal dimensions of memory or anticipation that frequently constitute emotions. We propose to capture this complex of sense and feeling particularly in longings that imaginatively traverse long stretches of historical time.

Today the look forward is clouded by conditions of economic disorder, political violence, and environmental disaster, leading observers to recognize a "crisis of futurity" manifested in an inability to imagine better times to come, in mythic embroidery of old times, or in fear of bygone calamities returned to haunt the world. Such a crisis—a loss of fruitful longings—will be just one of the problems we hope to broach, as the Eisenberg Institute invites discussion of all these aspects of situations, from all periods and places: modes of perception (histories of the human senses), textures of emotional response, the profound temporality of experience, and the framing of long-range time-scapes looking toward past and future.