Affiliated Scholar Application Process

The Eisenberg Institute for Historical Studies welcomes requests for affiliation from visiting scholars with short- or long-term residency in Ann Arbor. Aside from joining the Institute’s intellectual community, benefits may include shared office space, library privileges, and access to information technology resources.

Eligibility: Applicants in fields related to history or historical studies may apply on their own or faculty from University units may do so on their behalf. Affiliates are expected to participate in Institute programming during their relationship with the Institute, which may range from two weeks to a year.

Benefits: Depending on availability and need, this may include shared office space, library privileges, and access to information technology resources. Affiliate status does not confer or imply any financial benefits from the Institute or the University.

Application: The application consists of the following:

- A brief statement describing why affiliation with the Institute might be particularly useful or interesting; while it is not required, applicants may address how their work relates to the Institute's 2015-17 theme, “Senses and Longings.”
- Desired dates of affiliation.
- A curriculum vitae.

Submit complete applications via email (eisenberginstitute@umich.edu) at least four weeks (and preferably longer) in advance of the desired start date. Institute staff will confirm receipt.

Notification: Affiliation requests will be reviewed by the Institute’s Steering Committee in consultation with the Department of History’s Executive Committee on an as-needed basis. The Institute will contact each applicant or sponsor 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.