



# Segal Center Postdoctoral Research Fellowship Call for Applications

**Start Date:** September 1, 2025.

**End Date:** No later than August 31, 2026.

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 an international membership of over 7,000 professors and other academic insiders, 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 Mike and Sofia Segal Foundation, the Templeton Religion Trust and other donors, HxA is pleased to announce a call for residential faculty research fellowships at the Segal Center for Academic Pluralism.

The Segal Center hosts researchers to explore and disseminate research insights concerning the philosophy, law, history and science (broadly construed) of open inquiry, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement in higher institutions of research and education. We are especially interested (though not exclusively so) in applications that propose to research questions like the following:

- What are the various models of university governance? How do they vary across types of institutions? What models of governance best promote open inquiry, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement? What are the duties and responsibilities of faculty, students, university staff and leadership, trustees and elected officials when it comes to university governance?
- What are the likely effects of recent state laws to promote free speech protections on campus, ban teaching of “divisive concepts”, bar the use of diversity statements in faculty hiring, or foster greater intellectual diversity on campus? From the perspective of advancing open inquiry, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement, how appropriate are such laws? What is the role, if any, of legislation in advancing open inquiry, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement in academia?

- How effective are various systems of tenure in protecting open inquiry or fostering viewpoint diversity? Are there alternatives to tenure that might accomplish these same goals at lower costs, or is tenure the best mechanism for securing academic freedom?
- What policies can colleges and universities implement to protect open inquiry?
- What policies can colleges and universities implement to ensure that their students and faculty engage with a wide variety of viewpoints in the classroom and in research?
- To what extent is the rise of scholar-activism a threat to open inquiry, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement? How can scholars best balance their duties as researchers with their rights to advocate for their political views?
- What messages about the nature and purpose of the university are communicated in marketing materials and student orientation programs? How effectively do these messages prepare students for an environment of open inquiry from diverse perspectives?
- What accounts for the overrepresentation of ideological liberals in institutions of higher research and education? Is balancing representation between liberals and conservatives the only or best way to promote inquiry that accounts for a broader array of viewpoints, or are there alternatives? Is such balancing compatible with a commitment to academic merit?

## Postdoctoral Fellowship Responsibilities

Postdoctoral Fellows will be expected to:

- Conduct original research in accordance with their research proposals
- Participate in the Segal Center's weekly discussion and research seminar in its Manhattan office
- Participate in a special workshop in New York in May 2025 to present their research project proposals and meet the 2024-2025 Fellows
- 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 the Segal Center's office in Manhattan for their use and a generous budget for research costs.

## How to Apply

In order to apply for a Segal Center 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). **Applicants must also either be members of HxA or have applied for membership before submitting their application.** Membership in HxA is free, so please [apply today](#).

To apply for the Postdoctoral Research Fellowship, 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 the Segal Center's mission, how a term at the Segal Center 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 the specific questions of focus, briefly contextualize those questions in relation to existing research and the Segal Center'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 dissertation abstract.
- A writing sample by the applicant, preferably from a peer-reviewed publication.

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

**Applications are due at 11:59PM EST on Tuesday December 31, 2024**, with review to follow thereafter. Promising applicants may be contacted to schedule a phone call or virtual meeting to learn more about their projects. HxA aims to make decisions on fellowship awardees no later than January 31, 2025.

## 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 the Segal Center'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 promising track record of research, which may include presentations at high-quality workshops and conferences or publications in peer-reviewed venues such as scholarly journals and academic presses.
- Demonstrate a commitment to actively participate in the academic life of the Segal Center, 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 the Segal Center'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 on issues in the philosophy, law, history and science (broadly construed) of open inquiry, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement in higher institutions of research and education.
- 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](mailto:fellowships@heterodoxacademy.org).