



The Legacy Fund Fellowship for LGBTQIA Columbus History 2026

Project description: Over the past 25 years, the LGBTQIA community has won significant civil rights victories thanks to activism and support from groups like The Legacy Fund of the Columbus Foundation. As Central Ohio continues to grow and change, it is vital that we continue invest in the cultural and local history infrastructure to ensure that this history is not forgotten, lost or erased. We believe that a deeper awareness of local LGBTQIA history can have a dramatic impact on our understanding of Central Ohio's history. In our first year, we developed a traveling exhibit about the history of the LGBTQIA community in Central Ohio, supported two Fellows, developed a one-stop digital stop resource for exploring that history, and expanded archival collections.

Fellowship: The Legacy Fund of the Columbus Foundation and Ohio Humanities in collaboration with the Local History and Genealogy Department at the Columbus Metropolitan Library seeks to support a public history research fellow to help address the gaps in LGBTQIA history in Central Ohio. The aim of the initiative is to extend our knowledge and awareness of under-studied aspects of this history, such as during the mid-20th century, among all peoples present in the region, and in outlying towns and communities beyond the urban core. As such, we are particularly interested in researchers who have a deep curiosity about the history of LGBTQIA people in Central Ohio and are skilled historical researchers.

Outcomes:

The Fellow should select at least one of the following outcomes for their Fellowship period:

- Travelling Pop-Up Exhibit Panel: As a culmination to the research, CML, Ohio Humanities, and the fellow will aim to add one additional pop-up banner to the exhibit developed in 2025, that is currently travelling to sites throughout Central Ohio.
- Journal Publication Opportunity: The fellow may have an opportunity to submit their work for consideration for publication in the Rust Belt Studies: A Journal Emplaced Humanities, a new initiative of the Rust Belt Humanities Lab, Ohio Humanities, and Midstory.
- Lecture/In-Person Presentation: The fellow may have an opportunity to share the results of their research at The Legacy Fund's annual fundraising event, and/or another public event organized by The Legacy Fund or the Columbus Metropolitan Library.

Qualifications include:

- Excellent writing, research, and communication skills;
- Familiarity with Central Ohio history and culture;
- Experience with public history communication tools (exhibits, lectures, or essays);
- Ability to research independently;
- Ability to work collaboratively in an environment with diverse perspectives;
- Commitment to meeting established deadlines;
- Availability to meet electronically and in person with OH and CML staff;

- Education:
 - Preferred:
 - A degree in History, Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, Folklore Studies, Archive and Library Science, or related humanities and social science disciplines.
 - Minimum Requirement: Extensive and verifiable experience carrying out public history research, writing.

Fellowship begins immediately upon the identification of a successful candidate. The candidate will complete 320 hours of work during summer 2026. As a paid fellowship of Ohio Humanities, candidates may expect to receive an honorarium of \$5,000 (flat rate); benefits are not available for this position. The fellow may have access to small budget for research-related activities.

To apply, send cover letter outlining qualifications, curriculum vita or resume, and a short writing sample to David Merkowitz, PhD; dmerkowitz@ohiohumanities.org. Deadline: April 7, 2026. Applications will be reviewed upon receipt.