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Welcome!

From the time we welcome each new “G1” student to Princeton’s graduate school, we are focused on their success here and beyond.

Because our goal is to help develop scholars who will become leaders of their chosen professions and contributors to the well-being of our world, professional development is a critical part of the holistic support we offer. We know our students require skills, experiences and connections that go beyond traditional academic training.

Since its launch five years ago, GradFUTURES, the Graduate School’s professional development program, has become a nation-leading example that has fostered more than 450 mentor relationships for graduate students. Last year alone, GradFUTURES offered 160+ programs.

As you’ll discover in this report, beyond these numbers are stories of real impact our efforts have had on student careers and lives. Collaboration has been the key to the success of GradFUTURES. We could not offer students such a broad variety of programming and opportunities without the support of so many. Thank you to the campus community and the many external companies, organizations, and Princeton alumni who have partnered with us – and thank you to Eva and the GradFUTURES team for their leadership.

Of course, our biggest thanks are to our students. We see your relentless drive to learn. We see your dedication to excellence and making a difference in this world. Thank you for the inspiration! As always, it is an honor for the Princeton Graduate School to be your partner on your path to success. We hope you will let us know how GradFUTURES can continue to grow to support you and your boundless aspirations.

All the best,

Rodney D. Priestley
Dean of the Graduate School, Pomeroy and Betty Perry Smith Professor of Chemical and Biological Engineering

Since we launched GradFUTURES in 2019, we’ve been on a mission to make integrative, inclusive, and innovative professional development available to every member of our talented and diverse community of graduate scholars and researchers. As we embark on our fifth year as Princeton’s graduate student professional development hub, I am delighted to share our second GradFUTURES Impact Report with information about our holistic approach to professional development and the ways this support positions our graduate students for lifelong impact in the ever-evolving future of work.

This involves shifting the paradigm of graduate student professional development from training for a singular pathway to the professoriate to preparing them for a much more expansive landscape of opportunity. We’re focused on addressing long-standing systems and reimagining graduate education to ensure all Ph.D. students have equitable access to comprehensive professional development.

It starts with catalyzing a student-centered learning framework that scaffolds and supports every graduate student’s discipline-specific training while offering a wide range of interdisciplinary professional development opportunities wherein they build critical skills, social capital, insights – and self-efficacy. In that work, we’re fortunate to have an expansive ecosystem of internal and external stakeholders and partners to help us meet the unique and evolving needs, interests and aspirations of today’s graduate students.

Whether you are a graduate student, alum, or prospective partner, I hope you will consider this report an invitation to join us! We look forward to creating bright new possibilities and futures together.

With sincere GRAditude,

Evangeline Kubu
Senior Associate Dean for Graduate Student Professional Development
Supporting Success Now & In the Future

Princeton University President Emerita Shirley Tilghman shares her experiences in higher education leadership with The Business Skills for Ph.D.s in Academia & Beyond Learning Cohort. Photo: Sameer A. Khan / Fotobuddy
GradFUTURES empowers graduate students to succeed in graduate school and create their futures.

In a fast-changing professional landscape, graduate students are uniquely situated to engage their futures with creativity, insight, and in-demand skills that reveal diverse options within the academy and beyond. Working with the academic departments and an expansive ecosystem of partners and alums – while centering graduate students’ interests in all that we do – we serve as Princeton’s graduate student professional development hub.

Offering numerous points of entry and emphasizing mentorship and real-world experience, our programs open doors to multiple futures while enhancing one’s research and teaching. These programs are strategically designed to complement the Graduate School’s holistic support of graduate students, helping them explore, thrive, and find a sense of belonging while at Princeton.

SHARPEN SKILLS
• Workshops & bootcamps
• Interdisciplinary Learning Cohorts
• Star Lessons in Leadership Series
• Annual GradFUTURES Forum

GAIN EXPERIENCE
• Pre-Matriculation Internships
• University Administrative Fellowships
• Community College Teaching Fellowships
• Higher Education Leadership Fellowships
• Social Impact Fellowships
• Micro-Internships in Industry

FORGE CONNECTIONS
• Graduate Alum Mentorship Program
• Alum-in-Residence Program
• Networking receptions
• GradFUTURES LinkedIn group

EXPLORE PATHWAYS
• Site visits & treks
• Graduate alum career outcomes
• Labor market data
• Trailblazers Beyond the Tenure Track Series
• GradFUTURES Podcast
Graduate Student-Centric
*In all we do, we encourage graduate students to cultivate self-efficacy, explore their evolving interests, and pursue personally meaningful professional pathways.*

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
*We strive to ensure equitable access to opportunities for all graduate students by advocating for inclusive systems, policies, processes, and practices. Our work is informed by the diverse voices, professional stories, and perspectives of our many constituents.*

Collaboration & Connection
*We collaborate with faculty, staff, graduate students, graduate alumni, and academic, public, and private sector partners to help graduate students build diverse, systematic, and organic professional networks and experiences.*

Innovation
*We’re galvanizing a culture of innovation in professional development that supports emerging pathways and future of work trends.*

Data Transparency & Continuous Assessment
*We advocate for and adopt institutional policies and practices regarding sharing data about graduate students’ interests, graduate alumni career pathways and labor market insights in ways that inform and inspire decision-making at all levels.*

Life-long Learning
*We emphasize approaches that cultivate a growth mindset and foster resilience, optionality, and competitive advantage by supporting the acquisition of skills that are aligned with future of work trends.*
Supporting the entire graduate student lifecycle.

Our learning framework centers graduate students’ experiences throughout the entire graduate student lifecycle from recruitment to retention, completion, and beyond. We scaffold and support discipline-specific professional development efforts in the departments while providing a broad spectrum of skills training, social capital-building, bespoke experiential opportunities, and interdisciplinary exploration programs. Programs weave together each section of the framework wheel, so graduate students are learning/honing skills, building connections, gaining experience, and exploring their interests every step of the way.
Inspired leaders emerge at the intersection of graduate education and professional development—which is why a comprehensive competency framework underpins our work. Skills are the currency of the job market. Clearly defining these skills and competencies renders visible highly transferable skills and gives students the language with which to translate those to a broad array of audiences and opportunities.

Alongside the development of strong foundational and discipline-specific skills, we emphasize distinguishing skills that translate universally across an array of leadership environments. This sets our Ph.D.s apart on the academic job market and prepares them for success in diverse fields—including entrepreneurship.

GradFUTURES 8 Core Competencies

**RESEARCH & DATA ANALYSIS**
Conducting original and independent research within and beyond your discipline using methods that will advance knowledge and enhance understanding across many fields.

**LEADERSHIP & COLLABORATION**
Managing complex projects and working collaboratively in diverse, multidisciplinary teams to achieve mutual goals and realize a sense of shared accomplishment.

**TEACHING & MENTORING**
Applying instructional pedagogies, assessment methods, and effective teaching practices to promote inclusive learning environments whether within a formal classroom setting or online, for student mentoring and tutoring, or facilitation of training programs within other organizational settings.

**PERSONAL WELL-BEING & EFFECTIVENESS**
Maximizing your overall well-being allows you to perform at peak effectiveness in all aspects of your academic, personal, and professional life by fostering resilience, social connectedness, balance, and a growth mindset.

**WRITING & PUBLIC SPEAKING**
Developing strong written communication and public speaking skills to effectively communicate complex topics and demonstrate your expertise and research to diverse audiences.

**CAREER MANAGEMENT**
Exploring diverse career paths, developing job search skills and materials, and building relationships that enable you to achieve your current and future professional goals.

**DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION**
Engaging in lifelong learning to understand and apply strategies that foster inclusion and intercultural fluency while advancing equity within various professional, institutional, organizational, and community contexts.

**INNOVATION & ENTREPRENEURSHIP**
Applying innovative, inclusive, creative, and entrepreneurial approaches and mindsets to accelerate discovery and catalyze solutions to complex problems—whether within the context of the academic research enterprise and/or new venture creation.
By the Numbers*

450+
New or continuing graduate student/ alum mentoring pairs

193
University Administrative Fellows

120
Social Impact Fellows

40
Community College Teaching Fellows

*Combined data from 2019-2023

GradFUTURES Impact Report 2021-2023

Year-over-Year Growth in Programming
Includes all workshops, panels, learning cohort sessions, conferences, meetups, networking events, and mentorship-related programs.

Year-over-Year Growth in Unique Graduate Student Participants
Combines unique master’s and Ph.D. students participating in workshops learning cohort sessions, meetups, networking events, mentorship, and experiential programs.
The GradFUTURES® professional development initiative requires an entire ecosystem, on and off-campus, bringing to bear the full range of expertise, experience, and support that gives Princeton graduate students what they need to realize their scholarly and professional goals. Off campus, GradFUTURES has mobilized a large and growing network of alumni and industry connections. On campus, GradFUTURES has galvanized a remarkable coalition that puts the success of Ph.D. students at the heart of the Princeton experience.

Established in 2019, the Professional Development Working Group now includes more than 70 partners from across campus in a collaborative, cross-functional coalition. The Working Group meets regularly to plan, assess, and promote professional development programs, resources, and opportunities. To fully integrate and make easily accessible the breadth of programs and events available across campus for graduate students, GradFUTURES was one of the sponsors of the new campus-wide event management and community building platform, MyPrincetonU.

The Graduate Student Professional Development Ecosystem

- **Faculty Members**: Working closely with academic departments to create customized, discipline-specific professional development programs and resources.
- **Campus Partners**: Collaborating with a coalition of staff across campus with the shared goal of expanding programs, resources, and opportunities.
- **Academic, Industry & Community Partners**: Designing bespoke experiential learning programs in partnership with academic institutions, industry, and the community.
- **Graduate Students**: Co-creating programs and events with graduate students that reflect their unique interests, input, and innovative ideas.
- **Graduate Alums**: Involving graduate alums as advocates and mentors to provide meaningful advice, referrals to opportunities, and inspiration.
- **Associations, Foundations & Government Agencies**: Engaging with scholarly and praxis-based associations, foundations, and government agencies that play a role in advancing professional development for graduate students.

GradFUTURES Team

Ensuring graduate student professional development is “visible, valuable, and viable” (AAU, 2019)—and an intrinsic part of graduate education at Princeton.
The GradFUTURES GRADitude Award for Advancing Graduate Professional Development honors national leaders who have influenced the field of graduate professional development in profound and substantial ways. Recognizing his pioneering work modeling and promoting graduate student professional development locally and globally, the inaugural 2022 award was presented to Leonard Cassuto.

An English professor at Fordham University, he is the author or editor of nine books. His latest is “The New PhD: How to Build a Better Graduate Education” (with Robert Weisbuch; 2021). His books and regular column for the Chronicle of Higher Education are a clarion call for reform and forward-thinking. He has facilitated the American Higher Education learning cohort for the past four years.

“I’ve been concerned with graduate education and graduate student professional development for more than a decade, and have seen it tried at many campuses nationwide. Princeton is doing it right. I’m impressed with what I see here, and grateful to do my part to help. GradFUTURES is a terrific program, the state of the art.”

Leonard Cassuto
Professor of English, Fordham University
Clio Hall Awards Honor Our Collaborators

GradFUTURES cultivates a broad ecosystem of support with the conviction that innovation in dialogue creates new possibilities. Our partners play a central role in expanding access to professional development and changing how graduate students envision their futures. Our Clio Hall awardees share an inspired view of what can happen when professional development becomes a priority within graduate education. They include faculty, staff, graduate alums – and, importantly, graduate students, whose perspectives inform all that we do.

2023 Clio Hall Award Honorees

For a list of previous years’ recipients visit gradfutures.princeton.edu/ClioHallAward

Andrew Finn
GS, English

Anne-Marie Maman ‘84
Executive Director, Princeton Entrepreneurship Council

Denise Valenti
Manager of Communications, Office of the Dean of the Faculty

Ke (Kevin) Xu
GS, Chemical and Biological Engineering

Kristy Novak
Graduate Program Administrator, History Department

Laura Murray
Assistant Director, Graduate Learning Programs, The McGraw Center

Meredith Martin
Associate Professor of English, Director of the Center for Digital Humanities

Jim Scully *03
Managing Director, Accenture
GradFUTURES co-sponsored the FASPE Reunion on campus. FASPE is a partner in the Social Impact Fellowship program.

Photo by Sameer A. Khan / Fotobuddy
Most people associate the term “business” with the private sector. However, business skills and models are widely applied in every sector: public, private, and non-profit – which includes academia. From research and writing, to project management and problem-solving, Ph.D students acquire many transferable skills. Using a flipped-classroom model that encourages accelerated learning, the premier cohort of GradFUTURES’ Business Skills for Ph.D.s in Academia & Beyond launched in June 2022. A first-of-its-kind academic and alum partnership, it was led by Jim Scully *03 (Economics), Managing Director at Accenture Strategy, with course content developed by faculty at the University of Virginia’s Darden School of Business.

Across 10 sessions, a vibrant learning community of faculty, industry partners, graduate alums, and graduate students explored case studies from a diversity of organizations, using a “business and society” approach to learn how to create socially responsible business practices. A throughline in the series is its emphasis on transferable skills, including: strategy development, inclusive leadership, ethical decision-making, building value, communications, innovation, and change management. A second cohort kicked off in the fall of 2023, deepening Princeton’s partnership with UVA’s Darden School of Business.

“Ph.D. students become experts in one specific discipline and analyze problems through that lens. Understanding business skills and frameworks will not only broaden their thinking but can also broaden their professional horizons.”

Jim Scully *03
Economics, Managing Director, Accenture Strategy

“I want to encourage Ph.D. students to think about their Ph.D. as an asset that they can leverage in multiple ways. I seek out opportunities to learn and grow in this profession. The opportunities are endless for someone who has the right mindset and knows how to think critically. Think creatively about how to leverage your Ph.D. to improve the future of work.”

Roshni Raveendhran
Assistant Professor of Business Administration, UVA Darden School of Business
In 2022-23, GradFUTURES launched an interdisciplinary learning cohort that reveals new ways to think about pathways in the public humanities, theatre, arts, and GLAMS (galleries, libraries, archives, and museums). Over the course of the academic year, Ph.D. students met with cultural practitioners and attended groundbreaking arts events — from behind-the-scenes engagement with Princeton’s McCarter Theatre to visits to leading arts institutions in DC and New York. Participants also developed a critical perspective on top-of-mind issues, including access and diversity, public engagement and outreach, digital humanities, and art and social change. Along the way, they examined the reciprocal relationship between research and arts institutions, uncovering creative ways to engage, partner, and work with them.

These experiences led to several Social Impact Fellowships at the McCarter Theatre and NYC’s Jewish Museum. Looking to 2023-24, plans are in place to add further trips and site visits. The cohort also spawned a new collaborative initiative at McCarter, “The Scholar’s Take”, in which graduate students will write reflections on shows and events through the lens of their own research and expertise. With an emphasis on networking, additional campus soirees with cultural leaders and alumni working in relevant fields are also planned.

Dylan Blau Edelstein  
GS, Spanish and Portuguese, Working in the Arts & Public Humanities Co-Founder

“...I worked in the theater before graduate school, mostly as an actor, and though my career goals don’t include a return to the stage, I craved a means of more direct contact with the arts. One of our guiding goals in creating this cohort has been to help graduate students think about the ways their research projects can draw from and contribute to cultural institutions – as well as to help these organizations see how graduate students and the research we produce may offer a lot in the way of achieving their institutional missions.”

Shelby Lohr  
GS, History

“One of the signal messages brought throughout both trips is that we do not need to view the academic market in binaries of academia and alt-ac. With a re-imagined lens – and a perspective designed for the realities of the academic market – it is possible to continue publishing books, working in related fields, and ultimately ending up back in academia, if desired. This idea feels revolutionary, but with the changing landscape in the academy, it feels essential.”
Positioning graduate student professional development as a catalyst for creating equitable access to pathways across fields, the GradFUTURES Forum for 2023 was inclusive in its theme: “Advancing Innovation, Equity, and Inclusion via Professional Development.”

Over six days, hundreds of graduate students, graduate alums, thought leaders, and partners came together for 27 sessions that explored that topic from all angles.

The forum featured Ruha Benjamin, who joined Graduate School Dean Rodney Priestley to explore the message of Benjamin’s new book, “Viral Justice: How to Grow the World We Want” (Princeton University Press, 2022). She encouraged graduate students to “embrace the role of the amateur” and step beyond the routines of professional life to create “something more lively,” working to change industries from within. Other events focused on everything from the “invisible currency” of networks to “scholarship as an act of global resistance.”

To directly connect graduate students to opportunities, the inaugural Graduate Internships and Fellowships Fair showcased more than 40 campus and external partners. Find session recordings on our website.

Ruha Benjamin, the Alexander Stewart 1886 Professor of African American Studies, joined Rodney Priestley, Dean of the Graduate School and the Pomeroy and Betty Perry Smith Professor of Chemical and Biological Engineering.

Photo: Sameer A. Khan / Fotobuddy

More than 100 graduate students met with over 40 GradFUTURES partners—both on campus and off campus partners—to learn about opportunities, resources, and programs tailored to meet their needs.

Photo: Sameer A. Khan / Fotobuddy

Ali Nouri, *06 Molecular Biology
Deputy Assistant to the President and Deputy Director of the Office of Legislative Affairs, The White House

“There are so many issues right now in public policy that have a nexus with science and technology. We really need more students, postdocs, and faculty members to bring their advice to policymakers on these issues. GradFUTURES has done a terrific job of building that ecosystem and community here at Princeton in order to help support those efforts.”
Building Resilience and Cultivating Creativity: The Drivers of Our Ability to Navigate Change & Lead Innovation

Gabriella Rosen Kellerman - Chief Innovation Officer, Betterup and author of “Tomorrowmind: Thriving at Work with Resilience, Creativity, and Connection—Now and in an Uncertain Future”.

Laura Murray - Assistant Director, Learning Programs - Graduate Students, McGraw Center for Teaching & Learning

Brave Not Perfect

Reshma Saujani - Founder and CEO, Moms First; Founder, Girls Who Code and author of “Pay Up: The Future of Women and Work (and Why It’s Different Than You Think)”

Championing Science to Energy and Environment Policymakers

Ali Nouri *06 (MOL) - Deputy Assistant to the President & Deputy Director of the Office of Legislative Affairs, The White House

Roger Aines - Energy Program Chief Scientist at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory

Shannon Hoffman, GS, CBE - Professional Development Associate

Princeton PhDs in UX: Reflections on Research and Life Beyond the Tenure Track

Jamie Sherman *11 (PhD, ANT) - Principal UX Researcher, Esri

Nicole A. Pangborn *19 (PhD, SOC) - Senior UX Researcher, MathWorks

Max Horder, GS (ANT) - University Administrative Fellow

Sam Jaroszewski *19 (PhD, SOC) - Senior UX Researcher, Etsy

Harnessing Neuroscience for Effective and Memorable Communication

Matt Johnson *11 (NEU) - Author of “Branding That Means Business”

Technical Leadership: A Primer for STEM Graduate Students

Jean Tom *93 (CBE) - Executive Director of Development Engineering Bristol Myers Squibb.

Giving a Great Talk: How to Engage Listeners When You Are the Only Expert in the Room

Amy Aines - Communication strategist, speaker, coach, and trainer

Where Equity Meets Innovation: Networks

Julia Freeland Fisher ’07 - Director of Education Research, Clayton Christensen Institute

Leonard Cassuto - Professor of English, Fordham University

Graduate Alumni Mentors Mika Provata-Carlone *02 (COM) (on screen), Andrea Morris *99 (MOL), Joe Tylka *19 (MAE), and Raghuveer Vinukollu *11 (CEE) share their insights regarding inclusive mentorship. The panel was moderated by Assistant Dean Sonali Majumdar.

Photo: Sameer A. Khan / Fotobuddy
French biologist François Jacob defined the distinction between two complementary aspects of scientific research as “day science” and “night science.” Day science is the executive domain of experimentation and hypothesis-testing. Night science is the creative domain of exploration, idea-generation, and connections. Both, as it turns out, have relevance to graduate professional development.

Inspired by Night Science Workshops held during Wintersession 2022-23, GradFUTURES Creativity Workshops encourage graduate students to embrace innovative thinking and apply an entrepreneurial mindset toward bold, disruptive research ideas. Participants gain seven distinct creative thinking tools that are as applicable to graduate research as they are to future planning.

Itai Yanai
Professor of Biochemistry and Molecular Pharmacology, NYU Grossman School of Medicine

“We need a sandbox for ideas – and the secret for enabling this is to find someone you can talk to. One-on-one’s are the best, because you can develop trust and be vulnerable with the other person. Together, you can avoid being too critical by thinking of the conversation as an improvisation, like jazz or improvisational theater.”
Natalie wanted to explore how best to fully engage in the graduate school experience through the research and writing of her dissertation, teaching, post-graduate career exploration, and in giving back through the development of her own mentor program for undergraduates! My role has been to try to be a good listener and a good partner in reflecting back to her what I am hearing and discussing alternative perspectives. In this way, new solutions are created by her.

Debbie Godfrey *84, PSY
President, New Logic Strategies

I signed up for the mentorship program with one main goal: to discover what opportunities exist for Ph.D. students beyond academia and typical research positions. Being paired with Raghuveer has exposed me to an industry I didn’t know existed, helped me develop tools to expand my network and initiate informational interviews, and served as a friendly sounding board for all the questions and obstacles that come with the Ph.D. experience. The program has been the single most impactful component of my professional development at Princeton.

Natalie Miller
GS, MUS
Mentor Mentee

Shannon’s enthusiasm and proactive follow-up have been key elements in making her mentorship journey successful. Her dedication to staying engaged, taking initiative, and executing on the mutually agreed strategies added a dynamic and productive aspect to the experience. This is something continuing mentees can take inspiration from, reminding them of the importance of proactive involvement and genuine passion in the mentorship process.

Shannon Hoffman
GS, Chemical and Biological Engineering
Mentor Mentee

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GS, Chemical and Biological Engineering
Mentor Mentee

Connecting Beyond Careers

During the 2023 GradFUTURES Forum, Mentor Raghuveer Vinukollu *11 (Civil and Environmental Engineering), threw a surprise engagement party for his mentee, Shannon Hoffman (GS, Chemical and Biological Engineering).

Graduate alums have heeded the call to expand access to mentoring for graduate students, serving as key partners in our vision to make professional development an intrinsic part of graduate education. More than 450 matches have been made since 2019, with pairings based on mutual academic interests, goals, life challenges, and shared experiences.

Mentor Mentee

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Mentor Mentee

Debbie’s insights and coaching encouraged me to begin the process of post-graduate planning by considering my own passions, values, skills, and goals. We then worked together to create a plan for cultivating experiences during my time at Princeton to foster these skills and continue exploring these passions. Heading into the second year, Debbie has supported me as I have sought after opportunities in line with these interests.

Natalie Miller
GS, MUS
Mentor Mentee

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Mentor Mentee

GradFUTURES Impact Report 2021-2023
GradFUTURES emphasizes the profound impact of graduate student/graduate-alum connections as one of the five pillars for graduate professional development. A testament to the dynamic and growing graduate student alum network that unites Princetonians around the world, our Alum-in-Residence program brings alums back to campus to expand access to in-person mentorship. Current graduate students are invited to speak with individuals working across sectors during 1:1 consultations. Engaging with fellow Princetonians who took a unique path to defining their own future, graduate students are further empowered to chart their own courses.

In August 2023, Natalie Berkman *18 (French and Italian), an Instructional Design Manager at ESSEC Business School in Paris, flew across the Atlantic to spend three packed days embedded as GradFUTURES' fourth Graduate Alum-in-Residence. She met with nearly a dozen Ph.D. students in 1:1 meetings, and gave several presentations to groups. Topics included instructional design as a career option and publishing off the tenure track. Berkman also recorded an episode of the GradFUTURES Podcast while on campus.
Increasingly, Ph.D. students in the humanities are empowered to explore a myriad of futures within academia and beyond. To facilitate personal and professional discovery – alongside opportunities to gain experience and connections in the field – GradFUTURES has invested in a wide-ranging partnership with the Modern Language Association. Taking shape in a diverse and increasing roster of programs, the partnership stems from a shared commitment to shape a sustainable future for the humanities.

Princeton’s Graduate School Becomes a Founding MLA Strategic Partner Network Member

The GradFUTURES repository of Ph.D. student outcomes data highlights the value of humanities graduate education, as well as the options it confers to its graduates. The MLA Strategic Partner Network brings together deans and leaders nationwide that share a commitment to proactively supporting humanities training both now and with an eye on the future. The initiative creates a shared space in which to address emerging issues in higher education, while conferring significant benefits to humanities-focused students and departments affiliated with partner institutions:

- MLA memberships for all graduate students and part-time faculty
- Extensive professional development and mentoring resources
- Department membership in the MLA’s professional development programs
- Convention discounts for attendees and exhibitors
- Online access to the ADE Bulletin and its full archives

Roster of MLA Social Impact Fellows Grows

Since the summer of 2022, GradFUTURES has placed five social impact fellows with the MLA and counting. Their work has spanned areas including program development, award and prize administration, executive management, and strategic partnership development.

Our Fellowship Partner

Founded in 1883, the Modern Language Association of America provides opportunities for its members to share their scholarly findings and teaching experiences with colleagues and to discuss trends in the academy. MLA members host an annual convention and other meetings, work with related organizations, and sustain one of the finest publishing programs in the humanities. For more than a century, members have worked to strengthen the study and teaching of language and literature.

A Blueprint for Impact-Oriented Partnerships

In addition to our work with the MLA, GradFUTURES has established strategic partnerships with the American Historical Association and the American Philosophical Association.

Paula Krebs
Executive Director, Modern Language Association

“My career in higher ed has been shaped by my side hustles, not by my path as a professor. Ask me about founding publications, getting grants to start national projects, forming coalitions, or working as a sportswriter. The MLA is happy to connect with GradFUTURES to spread professional development opportunities for graduate students nationwide.”
Modern Language Association (MLA) regional summer Institutes are designed to strengthen the teaching of reading and writing at access-oriented colleges and universities. Participants receive intensive training in pedagogical theory and practice, as well as strategies to facilitate the study of the humanities in vocationally-oriented educational contexts. In July 2022, the Office of the Dean of the Graduate School and GradFUTURES hosted one such institute, bringing together faculty and doctoral students from more than a dozen institutions for five immersive days of shared learning.

The theme for 2022 was anti-racist pedagogy and indigenous populations, which came to life in discussions focused on dismantling white language supremacy, bridging the gap between reading and writing in the classroom, and more. Working side-by-side with faculty from access-oriented institutions, participants explored how to make reading and writing instruction accessible, effective, and meaningful for students. The experience culminated in research proposals aimed at exploring and potentially solving issues encountered in their classrooms and institutions.

Janine Utell
Program Manager, Professional Development, Modern Language Association

“The thing that has driven my professional choices over two decades in higher education has been the desire to flourish others in their career development. I’m a curious person, and I care deeply about helping others create their own authentic narratives about their personal, professional, and intellectual growth.”

Jason Rhody
Director of Academic Program Services and Professional Development, Modern Language Association

“MLA and GradFUTURES share a commitment to providing exceptional professional development so that humanities graduate students can strengthen their skills and portfolios, preparing them for a wide range of future career paths. Through our collaboration, graduate students have learned the intricacies of working at a humanities-focused nonprofit organization even as they’ve used their expertise and research skills to help us build greater insight into the history and future of the profession.”

Engagement with MLA on Campus & Beyond

- Visits to MLA headquarters in NY as part of the Working in the Creative Arts & Public Humanities GradFUTURES Learning Cohort and the Humanities Expedition & Trek
- Ph.D. student meet-ups with MLA Executive Director Paula Krebs on campus
- GradFUTURES Forum presentations on Career Diversity Trends & Best Practices and Accelerating Humanities Professional Development
- Panel for humanists and social scientists at the Future Faculty Workshop
- Careers in the Humanities workshop

Fellowships Spur Publication Credits

For two GradFUTURES fellows, Social Impact Fellowships led to chapters in a book focused on improving language program enrollment: “Language Program Vitality in the United States: From Surviving to Thriving in Higher Education” (Springer, 2023)

Lidia Tripiccione: “Beyond the Crisis: Tools for Analyzing Historical Enrollments in Languages Other Than English”

GradFUTURES and the McCarter Theatre have forged a wide-ranging partnership based on the ways the arts and scholarship mutually inform one another. Thanks to collaborations with McCarter and other arts organizations, graduate students can apply their doctoral training in creative ways, from direct engagement with artists to fellowship-based immersion in day-to-day nonprofit operations. Co-creating programs alongside their mentors, they gain an inside perspective on the workings of a renowned cultural institution – and the many professional roles made possible with and enhanced by a Ph.D.

Social Impact Fellow Shares the Stage with Patti Smith

In 2023, McCarter opened its season with a performance by writer, musician, and public intellectual Patti Smith. As a Social Impact Fellow, Music Ph.D. student Hope Littwin played a leading role in the day’s events. Alongside Brigid Doherty, associate professor of Art & Archeology, Littwin facilitated a pre-show talk in Chancellor Green Rotunda with Smith for students, faculty, and members of the community. The expansive conversation, part of McCarter’s Arts & Ideas program, including topics like defining success, the importance of centering inspiration in one’s work, and the rewards of a daily creative practice.

To prepare, Littwin drew on skills deepened while working alongside her Social Impact Fellowship mentor, Debbie Bisno. After helping Bisno launch a Wintersession panel on viewing the world through a creative Lens, Littwin launched her “3 Songs Podcast” in 2023 with a series of interviews with McCarter visiting artists. The evolution of Littwin’s fellowship reflects the bespoke approach that McCarter has taken to its work with graduate students, crafting opportunities that suit the skill-sets and interests of graduate students, and helping them add skills like arts-related marketing and data analysis.

The work that results has ripple effects. “In partnership with campus, McCarter becomes more than just a tour stop for performers,” Bisno says. “For our visiting artists to be able to engage with graduate students in both conversation and co-curation elevates their experience. What is great about working with graduate students is that we are both surprised by what we can do together. Graduate students help us to think about things differently and improve our own work.”

Debbie Bisno
Director of University & Artistic Partnerships, McCarter Theatre

“All arts organizations – certainly the theater and performing arts – are in the position of having to reinvent themselves. We are all figuring out our value proposition in this new world. If there was ever a time for thinkers and innovators to come to the table with artists, it is now. They can help us and we can help them. I have been a producer for many years, and the opportunity to refresh, restart and reset through the eyes of students is a gift.”

Hope Littwin
GS, Music

“My advice to grad students is to continue to come back to your personal statement as a tool to refocus your energies and efforts during your time here. GradFUTURES has opened the doors for a lot of meaningful networking opportunities for me in the short time that I have been here.”

Patti Smith
in conversation with Music Ph.D. student Hope Littwin.

“If you end your life, and you have done great work, and maybe the world hasn’t given you any laurels, that to me would be worth so much more than ending your life in riches and a palace and to have done mediocre work... I encourage all students to just experience it – because it’s a one-time opportunity to experience a place like this.”

Watch a trailer from the event on YouTube!
Scholarly communication is experiencing a paradigm shift, as scholars reconsider how community engagement can strengthen their research, and how research can be translated to strengthen communities. Among other developments, this shift requires new modes of communication that reach audiences who might not have access to peer-reviewed academic journals. Launched in 2022, the GradFUTURES Podcast has graduate students at the forefront – developing communication skills as producers, hosts, and podcast team members, all while expanding the platform from which guests can share their knowledge and experiences beyond the University.

The podcast explores a central question: As the global professional landscape continues to shift, what does the future hold for graduate students and graduate alums? Hosted by graduate student Hellen Wainaina, the podcast is shaping new narratives about what post-graduate school success can look like by telling the professional development stories of graduate students, graduate alums, and those who partner and collaborate with them.

Recent Episodes Of The GradFUTURES Podcast

- **Finding Fulfillment in France**: A Conversation with Natalie Berkman *18
- **New Philosophies for Graduate Education**: A Conversation with Barry Lam *07
- **21st Century Graduate Education**: A Conversation with Sarah-Jane Leslie *07
- **Unexpected Career Turns**: A Conversation with Ann Kirschner *78
- **Telling the Scientific Story**: A Conversation with Jason McSheene *15
- **How to Build a Better Graduate Education**: A Conversation with Leonard Cassuto
What if graduate students broadened their thinking about their graduate education before even starting coursework? This question inspired The Humanities Expedition & Lab, co-sponsored by GradFUTURES and the Princeton Entrepreneurship Council. During a summer 2022 excursion to New York led by graduate alum Lucy Partman ’21 (Art and Archeology), nine graduate students criss-crossed the city, speaking to graduate alums and others doing innovative work that leverages humanities training.

Participants gained first-hand insight into the myriad of ways a graduate degree in the humanities and social sciences can have an impact. The aim is for participants to remain involved in the growing community of innovation and entrepreneurship at Princeton, while rethinking the boundaries between academia and the rest of the world. “This past week has already changed how I understand my program,” said Sofia Tong, a doctoral student in the English department, as the experience drew to a close. When she completed her course enrollment, she explained, a broadened perspective about her graduate education and the opportunities beyond had even changed the courses she selected for her first semester at Princeton.

“The future of the Ph.D. and of graduate education will see more groups of interdisciplinary teams working on grand challenges, and it is key that we connect with humanities graduate students as they begin their training to facilitate connections that will expand the reach and impact of their research, as well as augment, complement and extend the new knowledge others are creating in other disciplines.”

“I consistently hear undergraduate students returning from TigerTreks they organized to Silicon Valley, New York, and Tel Aviv, say that the discussions they had were among the most meaningful of their undergraduate experience, and that the bonds they formed were life-changing. When imagining how we could give graduate students a view into the huge array of options that are open to them, I thought that we could adapt the TigerTrek idea.”

Anne-Marie Maman ’84
Executive Director, Princeton Entrepreneurship Council

James M. Van Wyck
Assistant Dean for Professional Development
GRADUATE STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS

Graduate students participating in the GradFUTURES Business Skills Learning Cohort, a partnership with UVA’s Darden School of Business. Photo by Sameer A. Khan / Fotobuddy.
Career & Professional Development as a Discovery Process

Kevin (Ke) Xu
GS, Chemical and Biological Engineering

“I was very interested in exploring what a career in venture capital looks like and gaining real-life working experience. Scott Alpizar was an excellent mentor. We became good friends, and continue reaching out to each other when we need each other’s advice – it is very much a constructive bi-directional relationship. When I was exploring commercializing my Ph.D. work and founding a startup, he provided lots of guidance. Going from being a researcher to an entrepreneur is really a mindset change.”

Scott Alpizar
Director of Venture Commercialization, Foundation Venture Capital Group

“The skills I learned during my time in my Ph.D. program prepared me for a job in any industry – even in venture capital, where I had no previous experience. Resources like the GradFUTURES Social Impact Fellowship will not only bolster your current abilities. It will help lay an invaluable foundation of skills and experiences.”

At Princeton, professional development is graduate-student centered by design. For Chemical and Biological Engineering Ph.D. student Ke (Kevin) Xu, that philosophy has inspired a hands-on approach to thinking about his future – and a passion for encouraging his peers to do the same. Throughout his Ph.D. training, Xu has participated in and helped co-create multiple programs with GradFUTURES and other campus partners. As vice-president of the Graduate Consulting Club, Xu helped co-create a Wintersession workshop that became the Structured Problem Solving like Consultants GradFUTURES Learning Cohort, which he continues to help facilitate. As a Professional Development Associate partnering with the GradFUTURES team during the pandemic, he helped to launch Virtual Meet-Ups that fostered connection between engineering graduate students and graduate alums.

Each experience revealed new possibilities for his research, which focuses on sustainable, scalable manufacturing of natural products using yeast. Professional development has also inspired Xu to bring an entrepreneurial mindset to the lab. To learn how venture capital works, he pursued a Social Impact Fellowship with Foundation Venture Capital Group. It illuminated concrete steps to commercialization – and sparked meaningful connections.

Xu notes that being a part of GradFUTURES has illuminated unexpected skills. Ongoing work with the Structured Problem Solving cohort, for example, amplified his interest in mentoring and teaching. To that end, he has parting advice for his fellow Ph.D. students: Plans change, he says. The best way to prepare for the future is to continue to get out there and explore.

Our Fellowship Partner

Foundation Venture Capital Group (FVCG) is a Princeton, NJ-based organization that uses impact investing to provide pre-seed and seed funding to health-related start-up companies at our partner organizations (Princeton University, Rutgers University, Rowan University, New Jersey Institute of Technology, Stevens Institute of Technology, and the Kessler Foundation) to help them advance toward and through commercialization. We work directly with academics throughout New Jersey on very early – sometimes still in the conceptual stage – projects.

Learn More About GradFUTURES Interdisciplinary Learning Cohorts

GradFUTURES Learning Cohorts are interdisciplinary and co-curricular opportunities that bring together students, alums, faculty, and industry partners to explore diverse professional pathways and focus on current societal, industry, and/or global trends. While each learning cohort is unique, most offer an experiential component such as a site visit, shadowing opportunity, immersive project, or internship/fellowship.
Public research takes time and focus. It is also capable of fostering positive community change, which is one compelling reason why it should be a prominent part of academic research. That’s one of the takeaways from Esther Ishimwe’s experience as a Social Impact Fellow with New America. Working with Ivy Love, senior adviser in the Center on Education & Labor, Ishimwe examined the intricacies involved in producing socially-engaged research, from data collection to publication. Then she partnered with Love on public-facing projects focused on topics like food insecurity among college students, as well as housing insecurity among student parents.

Ishimwe’s work is featured on New America’s education policy blog, EdCentral. The Center on Education & Labor at New America (CELNA) has hosted six GradFUTURES fellows to date, spanning fields from architecture and Slavic studies to social psychology. This disciplinary diversity has been an asset, Love says.

**Our Fellowship Partner**

New America is dedicated to renewing the promise of America by continuing the quest to realize our nation’s highest ideals, honestly confronting the challenges caused by rapid technological and social change, and seizing the opportunities those changes create. Since 1999, New America has nurtured a new generation of policy experts and public intellectuals. Today we are a community of innovative problem-solvers, combining our core expertise in researching, reporting and analysis with new areas of coding, data science, and human-centered design to experiment and innovate nationally and globally.

**Ivy Love**

Senior Advisor in the Center of Education & Labor at New America

“Regardless of how closely related our fellows’ programs of study at Princeton are to higher education and labor issues, they have contributed meaningfully to a range of projects. We’ve consistently been able to rely on them to get up to speed and take on new tasks, and we are so grateful to have had such bright emerging scholars as part of our team.”

**Esther Ishimwe**

GS, Architecture

“My experience as a GradFUTURES Social Impact Fellow was illuminating. I learned that the research that drives social impact is a thorough process that takes time and effort. It has higher stakes and the ability to drive new social change. As someone who aims to work in architectural education, this experience helped me realize that my skill set is transferable and it broadened my options for post-grad work.”

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**Student-Produced Public Research at New America**

**Esther Ishimwe (GS, Architecture)**

• Leading the Way: Colleges Championing Access to Housing for Parents (with Ivy Love)
• Growing Solutions to Food Insecurity on College Campuses

**Leon Mait (GS, Psychology)**

• “Just Trying to Fight for Yourself”: What We Still Need to Know about Affirmative Action Bans’ Impact on Student Well-Being
• To Support Student Parents, Colleges Need to Know Who they Are

**Megan Baumhammer (GS, History)**

• Fostering Adult Student Success during COVID: 3 Key Takeaways for College Leaders (with Mauriell H. Amechi of New America)

**Ariana Natalie Myers ’22 (History)**

• 4 Ways College Leaders can Support Students with Disabilities as COVID Still Rages (with Mauriell H. Amechi)

**Rebekah Haigh (GS, Religion)**

• Six Years and No College Degree
• Travel-based Learning at Community College
When research becomes tangible, it changes the way graduate students think not just about their futures, but about their time at Princeton. For Chemical and Biological Engineering Ph.D. student Elena Cho, a Micro-Internship in Industry at Colgate-Palmolive delivered hands-on experience and career mentorship that broadened her perspective on how her academic background might be applied in the field. As an intern paired with the Cross-Category Research and Innovation team, Cho was able to design experiments that aimed to precisely control the size and rate of enamel repair by translating academic research to the realm of commercial personal care products. As part of a cross-functional team, Cho also worked on introducing bio-based surfactants into skin care product formulations for more sustainable product development. One of the most rewarding elements of Cho’s time at Colgate-Palmolive was the chance to connect with talented individuals from diverse backgrounds who shared their personal and professional experiences with her. For example, her mentor, Hongwei Shen, Associate Director of Technology for R&D, offered guidance on topics ranging from experimental design to the power of reaching out for advice as one pursues their professional path. These connections helped Cho see the possibilities of where her research could take her.

Dr. Long Pan
Director, Cross-Category Research & Innovation,
Colgate-Palmolive

“Colgate aims to create a healthier future for all. One way we fulfill our purpose is by creating educational pathways into Colgate careers. By teaming up with GradFUTURES in this experiential learning opportunity program, graduate students can see the real-world application of their graduate training, acquire new ‘on the job’ skills related to their areas of research, and gain industry experience, all of which are directly applicable to the job market.”

Learn More About GradFUTURES Micro-Internships in Industry

Micro-Internships in Industry provide paid, part-time industry internship experience and an opportunity to apply discipline-specific training to interdisciplinary project(s) while working under the direction of an industry mentor. Graduate students receive one-on-one mentoring and coaching, and gain exposure to organizational dynamics and leadership strategies while shadowing and participating in meetings and/or presentations.

Micro-Internships in Industry Launch with Colgate-Palmolive

In 2022, GradFUTURES partnered with Colgate-Palmolive’s Experiential Learning Opportunities (ELO) program to launch our newest experiential opportunity: Micro-Internships in Industry. These paid, part-time engagements immerse doctoral students in an industry setting where they can apply their academic training and discipline-specific knowledge to advance research and innovation, while working alongside an industry mentor. The program has since expanded to include three partners and continues to grow.

Our Fellowship Partner

Focused on oral care, personal care, home care and pet nutrition and reaching more than 200 countries and territories, Colgate-Palmolive teams develop, produce, distribute and sell health and hygiene products and pet nutrition essential to society. Visit the Colgate-Palmolive website to learn more.
Innovating New Intersections with Early Music

While teaching music as an adjunct at Delaware State University, Ph.D. candidate Joyce Chen was struck by the need for resources to support students with an interest in early music from underrepresented communities. A classically trained harpsichordist with a prior D.M.A in harpsichord performance and a global performance career, she had worked with Early Music America as a featured soloist pre-pandemic. In 2020, she was recruited to EMA’s IDEA task force, which advises on strategic initiatives that expand BIPOC involvement in classical music. The intersection got Chen thinking: What if a curriculum could be developed for historically Black colleges and universities that creates inroads to early music – and expands the canon along the way?

Working with GradFUTURES, Chen designed a Social Impact Fellowship with EMA to develop a flexible HBCU music curriculum, piloted at Delaware State. Modular by design, it included workshops that expose students to early music – and its impact was quickly seen. One student landed a scholarship to perform at EMA’s festival. Another was awarded a full scholarship to Penn State. Chen is now an EMA board member and IDEA taskforce co-chair. In 2022, she helped launch a scholarship program for BIPOC musicians. As she prepares to defend her dissertation, Chen is already working as an assistant professor of historical keyboards at the University of Oregon. Chen’s mentor at EMA, Patricia Ann Neely, was one of the speakers as Chen’s vision came to life. Now retired and on the Board, she was the founder of the IDEA task force and is a scholar and musician in the areas of historically-informed performance.

Joyce Chen

GS, Music

“Academics have a lot of opportunities to change and transform lives through our writing, through our creative work, through our lectures, and through programs like the Social Impact Fellowship. I want to help make classical music more accessible for underrepresented musicians and communities.”

Patricia Ann Neely

Board Member, Early Music America

“I was happy to have the opportunity to work with Joyce Chen on her project of reaching out to HBCUs to expand curriculum choices in the study of music and music history. Not only did she provide a comprehensive look at periods of music history (renaissance and baroque) and the instruments that were prevalent at that time, she is also an ambassador for diversity in the field. GradFUTURES supporting her work lends enormous strength to her mission.”

Joyce Chen (GS, Music) brings together Delaware State University students with an interest in early music.
Engaging the Literary Side of Cultural Diplomacy with Villa Albertine

Sophia Millman
GS, French and Italian

“I feel incredibly lucky to have been a Social Impact Fellow and to have been supported by Princeton in pursuing my professional development off campus. I learned much more than I imagined I would about translation and the French/American book industry. Moreover, I was able to collaborate with other departments at the Villa Albertine, and I now feel excited about pursuing a wider range of opportunities in cultural diplomacy.”

The work of cultural diplomacy puts one in close contact with fascinating writers and thinkers. For French and Italian Ph.D. student Sophia Millman, a Social Impact Fellowship at Villa Albertine, the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs’ U.S. institution for arts and ideas, landed her the opportunity to interpret for author Vanessa Schneider in conversation with journalist Alexandra Schwartz. This was one of many experiences that revealed distinct facets of translation and the French/American book industry. During her fellowship, Millman was a front-row participant in La Nuit des Idées (The Night of Ideas), Villa Albertine’s global “flagship nocturnal marathon of philosophical debates, performances, readings.”

She also participated in the Albertine Translation Prize selection process – and helped to launch its first French-American Book Market. Complementing her research interests, which span cultural gerontology, 20th-century French and Italian feminist theory, and film studies, off-campus work helped her to develop career-differentiating skills in global and intercultural fluency.

Her mentor, Louise Quantin, was well prepared to guide her through these initiatives. A 10-year veteran of the French publishing industry, she oversees the promotion of French and Francophone authors and thinkers through the organization of residencies, tours, and events. In many ways, hers is a professional path defined by creative ideation.

Our Fellowship Partner

Villa Albertine

Villa Albertine, a French institution for arts and ideas in the United States, builds on the bold and innovative programs that have been the hallmark of the French cultural network abroad for more than a century.

Created by the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, and supported by the French Ministry of Culture, Villa Albertine offers a novel artists’ residency model in which residents choose the location best suited to their work within the host country.

With a permanent presence in 10 major US cities, it aims to foster in-depth exploratory residencies for artists, thinkers, and culture professionals hailing from all creative disciplines.

Louise Quantin

Director of Books and Ideas Department, Villa Albertine, Book Attachée at the French Embassy in the U.S.

“After more than ten years working in publishing in France, I wanted to put my skills to the service of the French diplomatic network in the United States. This new professional experience, which is both closely related to the work I was doing before, but also very different, is extremely rewarding and shows how risk-taking and change are most often rewarded!”

GradFUTURES Impact Report 2021-2023
Strategies for Resilience Take Center Stage at the Center for Music Ecosystems

Doctoral research can be a solitary endeavor. For Music Ph.D. student Genevieve Allotey-Pappoe, an ethnomusicologist and composer who studies the global circulation of the music of Africa and the Black diaspora, engaging in applied research is like crafting a composition with a strong underlying melody. This approach resonated in meaningful ways during her recent Social Impact Fellowship at The Center for Music Ecosystems (CME), a global research and development organization whose objective is to understand, advance, and enrich music ecosystems. As a Fellow with CME’s Music Policy Resilience Lab, Allotey-Pappoe traveled to three of the 11 remote global communities where CME is working to further music’s role in fostering resiliency.

A musician dating back to her childhood in Nigeria and Ghana, Allotey-Pappoe considered this kind of fieldwork to be an ideal fit. Collaborating with local communities, Allotey-Pappoe found herself energized by the ways research can be translated into tangible policies and programming, especially in places responding to crises. In one city, for example, she saw that music was a source of collective healing after historic flooding in late 2022.

In addition to her work with CME, Allotey-Pappoe was a Social Impact Fellow with Newark Symphony Hall. She was also a University Administrative Fellow with GradFUTURES, where she helped establish the strategy for the GradFUTURES Podcast. Using the skills that she developed there, from project management to digital storytelling, she launched her own podcast, Black Music Nomad, which explores Black music in spaces beyond the U.S. The capacity to apply skills across projects amplifies her contribution to CME, and has given her a toolbox that she will take into academia and the worlds beyond.

Genevieve Allotey-Pappoe
GS, Music

“The social impact of music on the communities I visited is so important. It was inspiring to see how music brings people together. Cities like this face a lot of challenges but the work people are doing to develop their music ecosystem is remarkable as they understand the value of music for community well-being. This experience has taught me the importance of turning research results into applicable strategies and implementable policies for communities and organizations.”

Angharad Cooper
Head of Projects, Center for Music Ecosystems

“With Genevieve’s research background in ethnomusicology, her input into this unique project about resilience in remote places and public policy is particularly valuable in several ways – not least by her ability to develop comprehensive and culturally sensitive approaches to address the challenges faced by these communities. Her analytical ability, communications skills, and ability to pull a narrative from the sometimes complex and broad nature of this research is second to none.”

Our Fellowship Partner

The mission of the Center for Music Ecosystems is to conduct globally relevant research that demonstrates how music can be a catalyst for social change and support communities to use music to foster sustainable development at a local, national, and global level.

Learn More About GradFUTURES Social Impact Fellowships

GradFUTURES Social Impact Fellowships are bespoke opportunities for Princeton graduate students with nonprofit organizations that have partnered with the Graduate School. Host organizations work closely with the Graduate School to determine the learning outcomes and professional development goals for these immersive experiences. Each fellowship is custom-designed, allowing graduate students to apply discipline-specific skills, gain interdisciplinary project team experience, and receive one-on-one mentoring while contributing to the social impact mission of the organization.
Building a Framework for Inclusive Teaching

Isabela Muci Barradas
GS, Art and Archaeology

“I executed the Inclusive Leadership action plan while teaching the History of Photography at the Rhode Island School of Design during Fall 2022. While it is often difficult to measure the impact of inclusive teaching, I received positive and encouraging student feedback through anonymous teaching evaluations stating that the course achieved the goal of being thematically diverse, striving away from the traditional canon, and that the class encouraged students to openly participate and explore a variety of personal interests.”

Facilitating classrooms defined by equity and accessibility requires more than a vision. It requires an action plan – and this is exactly what art history Ph.D. candidate Isabela Muci Barradas developed as a GradFUTURES Inclusive Leadership Learning Cohort participant. Her goal was to create a structure wherein students feel a sense of belonging and empowerment while embracing diverse backgrounds. Working across GradFUTURES programs, she pursued it from multiple angles.

Sessions with her graduate alum mentor, art historian Freda Murck *95, focused on strategies for online teaching and the craft of writing. As a Community College Teaching Fellow, Barradas deepened her pedagogical approach, developing and teaching an introductory art history course at Rowan College of South Jersey. Then, at the 2022 MLA Institute for Reading and Writing Pedagogy, she honed skills related to anti-racist pedagogies and indigenous populations. These experiences primed her to activate her plan for inclusive teaching. Barradas also made an impact on her mentor – reflecting the spirit of mutual exchange that defines all GradFUTURES programming.

Freda Mureck *95 (ART)
Art Historian

“I have had the good fortune to mentor two exceptional art history graduate students... Being young and tech savvy, they have taught me a lot about internet resources and teaching on Zoom.”

Learn More About GradFUTURES Interdisciplinary Learning Cohorts

GradFUTURES Learning Cohorts are interdisciplinary and co-curricular opportunities that bring together students, alums, faculty, and industry partners to explore diverse professional pathways and focus on current societal, industry, and/or global trends. There are generally seven or more sessions (an hour or more in length) with optional pre-reading and reflection activities. While each learning cohort is unique, most offer an experiential component such as a site visit, shadowing opportunity, immersive project, or internship/fellowship.

Community College Teaching Fellowship
Partner Spotlight

Rowan College of South Jersey is a student success-oriented, accessible and affordable learning center dedicated to enhancing its community’s economic development and quality of life by striving for academic excellence in offering innovative programs and services to a diverse community of learners in a safe and caring environment.
Nuances of Global Partnerships Revealed at Mpala Research Centre

Daniel Persia
GS, Spanish and Portuguese

“As a UAF with the International Affairs and Operations team, I've gotten a behind-the-scenes look at how Princeton builds and sustains relationships with partnering institutions across the globe. These relationships are complex and continually evolving, and there is no doubt a place for the Humanities in continuing to re-envision them. Traveling to the Mpala Research Centre in Kenya and meeting the local team was a life-changing experience that has shaped both my research and professional goals.”

Described as a “living laboratory” located in central Kenya’s Ewaso ecosystem, the Mpala Research Centre has been a 48,000-acre gateway to the multidisciplinary exploration of ecosystems, biodiversity, and sustainable livelihoods since 1994. For graduate student Daniel Persia, the site offered an opportunity to envision the impact of his graduate training. A translator and storyteller who cites language as a muse, Persia’s University Administrative Fellowship at Mpala enabled him to further develop a constellation of skills ranging from communications and social media to donor relations and impact analysis.

The results of his effort went beyond the theoretical. Persia contributed to communications projects showcasing Mpala’s research, built the organization’s first digital database for annual giving, and co-led a year-end campaign that raised more than $64,000 for graduate scholarships for Kenyan students.

Princeton has been an Mpala partner since its inception, and today works in concert with institutions including the Smithsonian Institution, Kenya Wildlife Services, and the National Museums of Kenya. A key priority of the Centre is to expand that collaboration – across disciplines and with researchers based in Kenya, according to Associate Provost for International Affairs and Operations Aly Kassam-Remtulla, who oversees the research center and serves as chair of its board of trustees, and recently created an equity-focused Mpala Advisory Council.

By contributing to such efforts, Princeton’s Social Impact Fellows can envision the many ways in which their graduate training can be extended beyond academia. The value of learning across contexts is emphasized by Grace Penn, who supports Princeton’s oversight of Mpala as part of the Office of the Provost. She cites professional exploration as a lifelong opportunity.

Our Fellowship Partner

The Office of the Provost promotes the success of every Princeton student, scholar, faculty member and employee by providing key budgetary and programmatic support to both academic and administrative units of the University.

Our vantage point at the intersection of academics and administration provides us with unique opportunities to increase the University’s capacity to advance learning through scholarship, research and teaching of the highest quality in service of the common good.

Units within the Office include: Academic Affairs, Institutional Equity and Diversity, International Affairs and Operations, Resource Planning and Institutional Research, and Space Programming and Planning.
Aly Kassam-Remtulla  
Associate Provost for International Affairs and Operations  
“Over the last number of years, we have increased the number of scientists from Kenya and other parts of the continent, including Uganda and South Africa. We want to accelerate that success and create an environment where we are attracting top researchers from Africa and beyond and benefiting from deep, authentic collaborations that start with the conceptualization of projects. We want to acknowledge and reduce barriers to entry that some scholars may face. Through subsidies and fundraising we can level the playing field.”

Grace Penn  
Associate Director for International Affairs and Operations  
“The road to professional fulfillment is not always a straight line. Despite what may seem like a winding path, you will learn important lessons and valuable skills that will allow you to be successful and thrive at each point along the way. When I got to Princeton as a first year in 1995, my goal was to work in international relations. Life took me on a very winding journey from teaching in the Bronx, to planning alumni affinity conferences, and now years later I find myself in international affairs. I don’t know what’s next, but I know that each of these experiences has been valuable and important, and will continue to be as I move through my professional journey.”
Expanding Access to South Asian Ephemera & Landing a Residency at Duke

Adhitya Dhanapal
GS, History

“I have never thought of my job at the Library as simply a job. The University Administrative Fellowship shaped my research and transformed the way I think about the academic ecosystem as a whole. In collaboration with Dr. Ellen Ambrosone, I was able to design a bespoke UAF that catered to my own interests. I used the opportunity to reach out to important leaders in the field of South Asian librarianship and get a better sense of the challenges and opportunities of collection development for the history, culture and political economy of South Asia.”

Archival librarianship is partly a process of categorization – and this was certainly a feature of Adhitya Dhanapal’s bespoke University Administrative Fellowship with the Princeton University Library’s South Asian Ephemera Collection (SAE). Yet leveraging his language skills in Hindi, Marathi, Gujarati, and Tamil to generate metadata for a collection of over 2,300 items also was the springboard for questions beyond the taxonomical. Applying the lens of a historian, Dhanapal grew curious about the history and meaning of collecting, and the relevance of ephemera beyond its lifecycle in its country of origin. With an emphasis on equity and accessibility, these questions shaped a long-term mentorship experience with South Asian Studies Librarian Ellen Ambrosone that sparked dialogue with librarians nationwide about ephemera that is undiscoverable or only minimally discoverable in current catalogs.

Dhanapal and Ambrosone expect that this will be the beginning of a long-term professional connection. Upon completion of his Ph.D. in 2024, he will begin his new role as Resident Librarian for South and Southeast Asian Studies at Duke University.

Our Fellowship Partner

Princeton University Library enriches teaching and learning, facilitates world-class research, and preserves knowledge and cultural heritage by providing dynamic services and diverse collections. The Library aspires to be an active and creative partner within Princeton University and across the global community by curating resources and strategically engaging in new forms of teaching, learning, and research, especially those that foster diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Ellen Ambrosone
South Asian Studies Librarian

“Adhitya has always been a great thought partner and interlocutor. We have talked through inclusive terminology and ways to mitigate harm in the description of South Asian material. I’ve also had the opportunity to see him present both about his developing research and about the UAF, and each time he has brought an original and thought-provoking perspective to these labors. Adhitya has always encouraged me to be more direct about the ways in which I am trying to take insights from postcolonial studies and put them into practice in our library workflows.”

Adhitya Dhanapal and Ellen Ambrosone look over materials in Firestone Library.
Photo: Sameer A. Khan / Fotobuddy
Archival Research at a Scholarly Association Highlights Non-Linear Pathways

Archival skills are in demand beyond academia. This is one of many revelations that emerged over the course of Ph.D. student Anaís Martinez Jimenez’s Social Impact Fellowship. Working with the Racial Justice Initiative at the The National Psychological Association for Psychoanalysis in New York, she has been engaged in long-term research, digging into the archives of a peer-reviewed journal “The Psychoanalytic Review,” and developing a historiographic map against which to evaluate its contents. The results will be showcased in an original article in the March 2024 issue of the journal that will introduce her project to an international audience of psychoanalysts and scholars – exposure which is sure to extend the strong connections she has already made with mentors in the academic, psychoanalytic, and publishing spheres as a part of her fellowship.

Martinez Jimenez’s dissertation focuses on a comparative reading of the topology of the Freudo-Lacanian unconscious and the paraconcept of the ‘poetic’. This literary approach to humanistic therapeutic practice in some ways parallels the journey of her NPAP mentor, Beverly Scheider. A literature and religion student before completing her training at NPAP, Scheider now leads the NPAP’s Racial Justice Initiative. This may seem like a straightforward path, but she was also a child welfare worker and a Wall Street professional. And she views this non-linear path as an asset.

Beverly Schneider
Chair of the Racial Justice Initiative, National Psychological Association for Psychoanalysis

“Years later, I see I managed to fashion a life that requires all parts of what is important to me, the inner life and the socio-political one. The most interesting lives are rarely a straight line, rather a spiral upward at best. Celebrate the nonlinearity by following your spirit wherever it takes you.”

Anaís Martinez Jimenez
GS, Comparative Literature

“There is a lot of overlap between my academic interests and the kind of work that can be achieved in alt-academia. The GradFUTURES social impact fellowship afforded me a strong grounding in my chosen field outside of academia without completely severing the interests and skills I have built as a graduate student. It worked as a perfect bridge between my two major interests, clinical psychoanalysis and critical theory.”

GradFUTURES Impact Report 2021-2023
“The Scholar’s Take” Adds Graduate Student Voices to the McCarter Audience Experience

The Working in the Creative Arts and Public Humanities Learning Cohort connects humanities Ph.D. students with a diverse range of partners in a dynamic, interdisciplinary and co-curricular space. While learning about the past, present, and future of cultural organizations, participants acquire contacts and experiences that equip them for their own journeys and futures. Through McCarter’s Conversation Series – which was codesigned, co-curated, and facilitated by Ph.D. student Dylan Blau Edelstein (GS, Spanish and Portuguese) – industry leaders, producers, and artists share insights with the rising generation of arts leaders from all fields. Informal gatherings are paired with a performance and reveal nuances of the non-profit model. In an engaging, conversational setting, Ph.D. students can network and brainstorm ways to engage McCarter – and their own research – in mutually beneficial ways.

In spring 2023, roughly 15 Ph.D. students gathered before each of the first three performances of “Felon: An American Washi Tale.” Presented by the Lewis Center for the Arts, it evokes MacArthur Genius Grant Fellow Reginald Dwayne Betts’ experience with incarceration and how it informed his views on justice, art, and community. Over a pre-show meal with McCarter team members including Debbie Bisno and Associate Artistic Director Nicole A. Watson, they discussed the concept of creative development, with an emphasis on the ways in which Ph.D. training translates across arts careers. Then they experienced firsthand how that vocation – whether onstage or behind the scenes – unfolds in a live performance. GradFUTURES recently signed a Social Impact Fellowship partnership agreement with Freedom Reads, the non–profit founded by Betts to place curated libraries in jails, and the organization has already hosted two fellows.

Ipsita Dey
GS, Anthropology

“Developing The Scholar’s Take program, in collaboration with the McCarter Theater, has been a significant intellectual and professional development opportunity. Drawing on my dissertation research to offer commentary on a performance’s main themes, I have the platform to communicate academic knowledge to a wider audience. In the process of recruiting fellows for the Program, graduate students in departments outside of my own have opened my eyes to the myriad of ways academics can frame their research expertise as socially, politically, and culturally relevant to the lay public.”
WAYS TO ENGAGE

Our goal for partnership outcomes is simple, yet expansive: to empower individuals with the professional competencies and connections required to chart their future(s).

Academic Departments & Faculty
Create customized, discipline-specific professional development programs and resources in partnership with our team.
• Bespoke programs & presentations
• Career outcomes & labor market data
• Competency-based learning programs
• Alum engagement programs
• Part-time experiential learning opportunities

Graduate Students
Collaborate with us to expand professional development initiatives in your department and at the divisional level.
• Interdisciplinary learning cohorts
• Skill-building workshops
• 1:1 mentoring with graduate alums & professional connections
• Bespoke experiential learning programs
• Professional Development Associate opportunities

Graduate Alums
Take your place among hundreds of graduate alums who have joined our initiative as mentors, role models, and advocates
• Graduate Alum Mentorship Program
• Alum-in-Residence Program
• Interdisciplinary Learning Cohorts
• Immersive experiences or fellowships at your organization
• GradFUTURES Podcast interviews

Join us at the annual GradFUTURES Forum!
Open to all, our annual conference features dozens of engaging speakers, skill-building workshops, alum panels, and networking sessions.

Campus Partners
Empower graduate students as part of our ever-growing roster of partners who help launch events, share resources, and curate experiences.
• University Administrative Fellowship hosting opportunities
• Cross-listed events and programs
• Resources to help graduate students envision their future

Higher Ed Partners
Promote access, social mobility, and inclusive economic development and innovation by hosting Princeton graduate students.
• Community College Teaching Fellowships
• Higher Education Leadership Fellowships
• Campus professional development programs

Industry Partners
Partner with GradFUTURES and foster mutually beneficial relationships with talented Princeton graduate students across fields.
• Part-time experiential opportunities (10 hours/week)
• On-campus lunch and learns
• Site visits and tours

Contact us at: gradfutures@princeton.edu