



Title: Postdoctoral Research Fellow

General Overview

Dr. James O. Pawelski at the University of Pennsylvania seeks a Postdoctoral Research Fellow to join the ongoing work of the Humanities and Human Flourishing (HHF) Project. This project is currently sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts Research Lab Program and the University of Pennsylvania and involves close collaboration with Dr. Katherine Cotter. The aim is to 1) contribute to the ongoing work of HHF's "Art Museums: Institutions for Well-being," which explores how engagement in art museums may promote well-being among individuals and communities, and 2) identify and assess the mechanisms through which the arts and humanities influence physical, psychological, neurological, and normative aspects of human flourishing through both qualitative and quantitative methods.

This work will require a Post-Doctoral Fellow with expertise in psychology of aesthetics, creativity, empathy, and/or well-being, and designing and conducting experimental and field research studies. Results will be published in a variety of psychology, humanities, and research methods venues.

This will be a one-year position starting on August 1, 2022 (contingent on funding), with renewal for subsequent years to be awarded based on performance and availability of funding. The individual will be appointed as a Postdoctoral Fellow to the Humanities and Human Flourishing Project. They will be located at the University of Pennsylvania's Positive Psychology Center, directed by Martin E.P. Seligman.

About the Humanities and Human Flourishing Project

Founded and directed by Dr. James O. Pawelski, a philosopher located at Penn's Positive Psychology Center for more than fifteen years, the Humanities and Human Flourishing Project (HHF) is an interdisciplinary research project that explores how engaging in the arts and humanities brings well-being to individuals and communities. Since its inception in 2014, the Humanities and Human Flourishing Project has spearheaded the development of the Positive Humanities, an emerging field that integrates the precision of positive psychology with the wisdom of the arts and humanities. As part of that development, the Humanities and Human Flourishing Project conducted foundational research, including the creation of a conceptual model and a toolkit of psychometric scales; the creation of 10 edited volumes to be published by Oxford University Press in 2022 and 2023; and numerous experimental studies exploring the relationship between humanities engagement and human flourishing. In the coming years, HHF plans to both continue its empirical, interdisciplinary research and to apply it within community arts organizations by creating and evaluating evidence-based interventions that are easily scalable.

In alignment with its broad interest in the arts and humanities in their relation to human flourishing, HHF has developed a specific program of research on art museums as institutions for well-being, collaborating with a range of art museums (including the Metropolitan Museum of Art; the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; the Philadelphia Museum of Art; the Barnes Foundation, and others), learning from art museum professionals around the globe to understand and promote well-being within these important cultural institutions, and authoring a review of the psychological literature on art museums as institutions for human flourishing.

Key Responsibilities and Tasks:

- Lead empirical research projects
- Conduct experimental field studies
- First-authoring top-tier peer-reviewed publications
- Presenting findings at national scientific conferences
- Possible teaching duties in two courses per year
- Initiate and lead grant writing efforts
- Foster close collaborations with arts institutions

Qualifications and Skill/Experiences:

- Ph.D. from an accredited university in psychology, cognitive science, clinical science, or a related field; research interests in psychology of aesthetics, creativity, empathy, well-being, and intervention design a plus
- Strong analytical skills
- Strong oral and written communication skills
- Strong foundation in experimental design
- Demonstrated experience preparing conference presentations, research findings, and manuscripts for submission to peer-reviewed journals
- Demonstrated ability to work autonomously, and lead and execute research projects from inception to completion

Interviews will be conducted until the position is filled. To apply, submit a cover letter, CV, names and contact information for three references, and two published articles (preprints or manuscripts accepted for publication are also allowable). Please send all application materials and direct any inquiries about the position to Sarah Sidoti (sidotis@sas.upenn.edu). Salary will be commensurate with credentials and experience. The University of Pennsylvania is an EOE/Affirmative Action Employer.