



Leadership for Change

Emerson Collective Youth Collaborative Internship Opportunities at the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage

The 2023 Leadership for Change internships provide opportunities for students to see how museums and cultural organizations are changemakers and to explore new ways to bring equitable educational resources to communities near and far.

Internships take place June 12 to August 4. The program is open to rising college sophomores, juniors, and seniors with a strong passion for advocacy, justice, social change, and education. Students receive a \$4,800 stipend for the eight-week internship, along with a modest travel and lodging award. Interns can choose to work all eight weeks in person in Washington, D.C., or three weeks in person and five virtual.

Applications are open through February 27. Review the specific opportunities below, and reference the Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage in your application. Apply at emersoncollective.com.

1. Highlighting Women in the Blues

Department: Smithsonian Folkways Recordings

Description: [Smithsonian Folkways Recordings](#), the Smithsonian's record label and musical archive, contains over 65,000 tracks of songs and sounds from around the world. This internship opportunity focuses on presenting this vast catalog to the public in ways that promote the Folkways mission: supporting cultural equity and increased understanding among peoples through the documentation, preservation, and dissemination of sound.

The experience will focus on publishing a musical and cultural learning resource called *Listen What I Gotta Say: Women in the Blues*. This online "Learning Pathway" will feature blueswomen from the Folkways catalog in lessons that will be used in music, history, and social science classes across the United States. Interns will gain hands-on experience working in the realm of applied ethnomusicology, museum education, copyright research, and web production—all within the context of an active record label. The majority of the skills learned will be crucial "behind-the-scenes" elements, such as copy editing, publication formatting, rights research, web content editing, and data management. However, the interns will also develop professional communication skills in the work of reaching out to, and gaining permissions from, license holders. They will also communicate regularly with other Smithsonian units to collaborate in the use of primary source materials, and may have the chance to join in curatorial collaboration with a concurrent exhibit being developed at National Museum of American History.

At the end of eight weeks, interns will have editorial credits on our *Women in the Blues* educational resources, present the things that they learned at a Folkways staff meeting, and will have built a [Learning Lab](#) collection based on pan-institutional resources from their favorite lesson from the pathway.



2. Exploring the *Living Religion* Program with Educators

Department: Smithsonian Folklife Festival

Description: This project will immerse an intern in planning and executing a visit to the dynamic learning experience of the [Smithsonian Folklife Festival](#), allowing them to interact with a diverse group of educators in the REACH program—a multi-year project funded by the Department of Education and based at the University of South Florida. REACH stands for Race, Equity, Arts and Cultural History, and its goal is “to establish a national replicable model that will strengthen the fiber of arts learning and harness the learning and effectiveness of arts integration as a catalyst for increasing student engagement and achievement.”

Each summer, a group of educators—college professors, teaching artists, national education service organization representatives, and school administrators—visit a site for active learning and reflection leading to the development of lesson plans, curriculum, and other products to be shared with their constituents. In 2022, the first year of the project, the group visited civil rights movement sites in Montgomery, Alabama. This year, the [Living Religion](#) program will form the backbone of the visit, with auxiliary visits to relevant Smithsonian museum exhibitions, for another intense, immersive learning experience.

The intern will share in this experience while helping the director and coordinator of the visit. They will also be expected to create their own product at the end for their own use and to share through an appropriate platform, such as the Smithsonian Learning Lab.

3. Folklife Storytellers Workshop

Department: Folklife Magazine

Description: Storytellers—researchers, educators, writers, and visual communicators—are vital to world conversations on culture and social justice. This internship offers professional skill-building for students interested in producing written feature stories, editorial illustrations, web comics, photo essays, and short audio and video documentary pieces for the Center’s online publication, [Folklife Magazine](#).

Interns participate in one-on-one story meetings with editors and cultural experts and a weekly workshop to learn and share techniques of interviewing, creative nonfiction writing, and media production in a highly supportive atmosphere. Topics of workshop sessions have included scene-building, story structure, description, dialogue, narrative closeness, suspense-building, and subtext. Storytellers then put these concepts to good use through multiple drafts before completing their work for final consideration. Interns critique each other’s work and receive the personal attention of editors. Many participants arrive with a potential story in mind, often from their own research or community experience, but stories may be assigned as well. Since the internship coincides with the 2023 Smithsonian Folklife Festival, June 28–July 9, stories will include coverage of the events and participants.

Interns will learn to tailor their work to an international audience interested in culture, build cultural and/or issue-based content into compelling narratives, create written and/or visual stories that educate as well as intrigue and motivate, incorporate the Center’s philosophies and methods of cultural presentation, give and receive criticism along with useful team-building skills.