

NEWCOMBE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION FELLOWSHIPS



2023 Newcombe Fellows from left to right: Ariana Peruzzi, University of Michigan; Matthew DeMaio, George Washington University; Aparajita Majumdar, Cornell University

THIS FELLOWSHIP SUPPORTS DOCTORAL CANDIDATES IN THEIR FINAL YEAR OF WRITING, WHO ARE WORKING IN AREAS OF RELIGION, ETHICS, VALUES, OR MORALS.

Now in its fifth decade, the Newcombe Fellowship has become a nationally recognized award that distinguishes recipients within their fields. The Newcombe Fellowships have supported over 1 400 graduate students who have written dissertations which respond to and participate in, deep and meaningful conversations within religion, values, and ethics. Those awarded a Newcombe Fellowship are often at the forefront of creative and original scholarship, proposing new insights and ground-breaking work in the questions and conversations surrounding religion, ethics, and values.

[HTTPS://NEWCOMBEFOUNDATION.ORG/FELLOWSHIPS](https://newcombefoundation.org/fellowships)

Opens: August 1

Deadline: November 1

**CHARLOTTE W.
NEWCOMBE**
FOUNDATION

Funding: \$31, 000

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We are seeking applications that reflect normative complexity. That is, we are looking for proposals that demonstrate moral, ethical, theological, or religious relevance with nuance, depth, and intellectual sophistication. Strong applications will go beyond merely identifying a topic related to values—they will engage that topic rigorously, exploring its implications, tensions, and significance with clarity and seriousness.

Applicants should make the normative dimensions of their work unmistakably clear. We expect to see evidence that the scholar is genuinely wrestling with difficult questions—whether ethical dilemmas, theological tensions, or issues of moral consequence—and doing so with depth, originality, and scholarly rigor.

This does not mean that projects without overt normative arguments are excluded. We also welcome non-normative approaches, provided they attend meaningfully to questions of values, ethics, or religion in ways that reflect analytical subtlety and moral or theological relevance. What we aim to avoid are topics that tangentially engage the deeper questions at the heart of the mission of this Fellowship.

TIMELINE

- Application (phase 1) opens: August 1
- Application closes: November 1
- All applications under review*:
November 15 – January 15
 - Institutional Partners provide internal reviews
 - An independent panel reviews applications from at-large Institutions
- Status notification to finalists and other applicants: January 15 – January 21
- Finalist submission of application (phase 2): January 23 – February 13
- Finalist reviews begin: February 17
- Fellows chosen by April 1; all finalists notified of status: the first week of April

*Institutional partners conduct internal reviews, while applications from at-large institutions are evaluated by an independent panel. All applications are reviewed within the context of their submission pathway, using the same core criteria and rigorous standards of scholarly merit.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Scholarly Merit and Originality

- Does the proposal display outstanding scholarly merit?
- Does the proposal display originality?
- Does it promise to add a new dimension and significance to the body of knowledge within its field?
- What is the overall quality of this proposal?

Student Qualifications

- Does the student have the necessary qualifications for carrying out the proposal?
- Are there any glaring gaps in this student's background, knowledge, or literature pertaining to this subject?

Timetable

- Is the timetable reasonable?
- Is the applicant on a trajectory to complete the dissertation between April and August of the Fellowship year?

Relevance to the Newcombe mission

- Does the proposal contribute to the scholarly understanding of ethics, or religion, or values as they relate to this subject?
- Are values questions central to its purpose?