Requests for Interest
Post Doctoral and Post MFA Research Fellowship in the Study of (In)Equality

The University of Denver Interdisciplinary Research Incubator for the Study of (In)Equality (IRISE) requests interest from DU faculty for the selection, mentorship, and supervision of one of five post-terminal degree fellows.

Purpose

The Interdisciplinary Research Institute for the Study of (In)Equality (IRISE) is designed to support research and creative work dedicated to issues of (in)equality, social justice, and inclusivity. Its mission is to (1) facilitate the interdisciplinary teaching and learning, collaboration, research, scholarship, and creative works that seek to promote equality in historically underrepresented communities; and (2) develop, support, and implement academic programs and activities that seek to promote the advancement of historically underrepresented populations in the Academy.

The IRISE postdoctoral fellowship is the signature program to achieve these goals. Under this initiative, departments, programs, and units on campus have the opportunity to engage and mentor a promising scholar in their field or in an associated field. Through their work with you on IRISE-related research, and through additional work with IRISE and in DU classrooms, postdoctoral fellows contribute to the mission of IRISE and larger University strategic initiatives designed to develop knowledge bridges to address complex problems and issues of inequality in Denver and the larger Rocky Mountain West.

As such, IRISE is seeking to identify faculty that are interested in working with a postdoctoral fellow in one the following five areas:

1. Race, Inequality, Social Change and Policy
2. Interdisciplinary Indigenous Studies
3. Equity, Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (“ESTEAM”)  
4. Health (In)Equity
5. Environmental Justice and Sustainability

Post Terminal Degree Fellowship Information

IRISE will fund five, two-year fellowships during the 2016-2018 academic years.

During this time, IRISE is aligning its work with DU IMPACT 2025 in order to develop knowledge bridges—structures to link and integrate various parts of our academic programs—to address complex problems and issues in depth and produce multidisciplinary educational opportunities for students. Fellows will be sought for their expertise and interest in building a knowledge bridge in one of the following areas related to IRISE’s stated goal to develop cutting edge interdisciplinary research on issues of inequality, social justice, and inclusivity:
1. **Race, Inequality, Social Change and Policy**

This topical area seeks to connect curricular efforts to interrogate issues of power, ideology, and the perpetuation of inequity as centrally informed by race to the most pressing social issues of the day. Helping us think about DU’s unique relationship to the significant disparities impacting our local communities and the need for DU to address these inequalities in innovative and transparent ways, a fellow working in this area will contribute to practices that foster analytical and scientific inquiry, produces interdisciplinary and emergent “ways of knowing”, and asks questions which better help us consider and evaluate DU’s commitment to “the public good.” In so doing, a primary goal is to promote conscious, inclusive, and politically engaged communities.

2. **Interdisciplinary Indigenous Studies**

This topical area seeks to contribute to the on-going efforts to heal in the wake of the 2014 DU John Evans Committee Report and Recommendations. Focusing in particular on curriculum and pedagogy, a fellow working in this area would help to establish a framework by which Native American/Indigenous epistemologies, histories, languages, cultural texts and social as well as religious practices could be made part of the curricular experiences at DU. Grounded in the interdisciplinary study of history, culture, language, law, policy, economics, and the social as well as physical sciences, a primary goal would be to embed within DU’s curricular offerings the multiple contexts and constraints through which indigenous individuals and polities have expressed and continue to express themselves.

3. **Equity, Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (“ESTEAM”)**

This topical area seeks to connect DU’s Science, Technology, and Engineering and Math (STEM) Initiative to efforts to confront the challenges of persistent patterns of in(E)quality in American culture and life. Recognizing that equality, diversity and (A)rts have not had a high profile within the STEM framework, a fellow working in this area would help to identify the many ways to promote equality, equity, inclusiveness, and creativity in the teaching practices and research projects of the STEM disciplines. A primary goal would be to amplify DU’s STEM initiative to include Equity and Arts (“ESTEAM”) in order to position DU as leader that provides culturally responsive, collaborative, innovative and creative solutions to the most pressing problems of unequal access and inequitable opportunity in Denver and the larger world.

4. **Health (In)equality**

This topical area seeks to connect various health research, scholarship, centers and programs on campus to that of social scientists, humanists, clinicians, educators, and legal academics that detail structural disparities in political economy, the social environment, race, gender, age, and economic status. Drawing upon Martin Luther King Jr.’s observation that, “[o]f all the forms of inequality, injustice in health is the most shocking and inhumane," a fellow working in this area seeks to incorporate exploration of community assets, cultural strengths and protective factors that have positively impacted health status and led to community centered, community driven responses to health inequities. A primary goal will be to understand and overcome those underlying social and institutional forces that put marginalized individuals and communities at extreme risk of poor physical, psychological or social health.
5. **Environmental Justice and Sustainability**

This topical area seeks to connect long-standing efforts at DU to address climate change, diminishing natural resources, and environmental pollution related to industry and consumption to the devastating impacts of these trends and activities among those individuals and communities most affected by structural inequality. A fellow working in this area will work collaboratively across the DU, Denver, and Rocky Mountain region to identify sustainable practices aimed at eliminating environmental racism and associated outcomes. A primary goal is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income in being protected from environmental hazards that directly impact the quality and opportunities in which to equitably live, learn, work, play, and pray.

As part of their work in creating knowledge bridges in one of the above topical areas, each fellow will be expected to contribute to IRISE in all of the following ways (with guidance from the IRISE Faculty Advisory Board): (1) Produce research, scholarship, and or creative works that directly address problems of inequality and inequity in underserved populations; (2) contribute to diversity, equity and inclusion efforts on campus; (3) engage and empower diverse and unequal communities in the Denver area and or larger Rocky Mountain Region; and (4) design individual courses as a model to embed principles of Inclusive Excellence in the curriculum while empowering our students to have substantive and meaningful conversations about diversity, equality, and inequity when such issues inevitably arise.

Fellows are staff research associates with the title Postdoctoral Fellow in IRISE with explicit affiliations in one or more individual department/s. The fellow will spend approximately 2/3 of their time engaged in independent research, scholarship, or creative work under the guidance of at least two DU faculty members. The fellow’s remaining time will be spent in contributing to IRISE’s initiatives and campus partnerships coordinated by members of the IRISE Faculty Advisory Board. For descriptions of such programs, please consult the IRISE webpage at [www.du.edu/irise](http://www.du.edu/irise). The primary mentors and IRISE Faculty Board members will work closely together to provide guidance and support to the Fellow throughout the fellowship period. Each mentorship team will collectively have up to $3,000/year to be used for an individual mentor’s own professional development connected to the project.

Fellows are expected to be in residence and to be active in the DU community of scholars. Fellows will teach one advanced course in their specialty the first year and two such courses in their second year. They will give a colloquium for the wider campus community as part of an IRISE lecture series and engage with the other IRISE Fellows and faculty. The fellows will not have any administrative or committee responsibilities, but they are expected to join DU students, faculty, and staff in the opportunity to learn and think collectively about our equality efforts locally and nationally. All fellows are expected to participate in a campus-wide forum exploring questions of compositional diversity and inclusive excellence at this university and in the wider academy.
Selection Process

The selection process will occur in two stages. DU faculty will (1) fill out a brief Qualtrics survey indicating their interest in working with a postdoctoral fellow. The selection committee, which consists of the Assistant Provost for Inclusive Excellence Research & Curriculum Initiatives and at least five members of the IRISE Faculty Advisory Board (faculty members representing different units and disciplines from across campus), will (2) review each survey and group faculty around shared interests. The Assistant Provost for Inclusive Excellence Research and Curricular Initiatives will then reach out to each grouping of selected faculty and secure their joint commitment to participation. In addition to the mentorship and supervision responsibilities described above, each faculty grouping will commence immediately a national candidate search (with the support of IRISE) to be completed by May 1, 2016.

We ask that you complete the Qualtrics survey here no later than Friday, March 11, 2016. Faculty will be notified the week of March 14, 2016 of the status of their application, and, if approved, of the names of others in their faculty grouping.