Executive Summary

Columbia University’s thirteen humanities departments are among the pillars upholding the stellar reputation of both the College and the University. Long known for housing a remarkable array of public intellectuals, Columbia humanities departments bring the world’s best art and ideas to the attention of those within the university and beyond.

The humanities help us to connect the past, present, and future. Each year, Columbia humanities professors introduce students to works both timeless and timely that change how they see the world and prepare them to lead in a world that is constantly changing.

In 2014-15, the humanities faculty identified key areas for innovation. Some of these proposed changes will strengthen traditional areas of excellence; others will allow us to expand into important emerging areas. Our vision is that ten years from now, students would leave at least half of all humanities courses having mastered a digital or computational skill. Exciting new courses based on cutting-edge research will rethink the history of communication and connect the arts of storytelling to the most pressing challenges facing us today. A visiting scholars program will enable Columbia students to encounter the world’s great teachers without ever leaving Morningside Heights, while a new emphasis on experiential and service learning will extend the Columbia classroom into the city of New York.
Columbia humanities departments bring the world’s best art and ideas to the attention of those within the university and beyond.

Overall Objectives

1. **Undergraduate Opportunities**—Expand research opportunities for undergraduates and create a new undergraduate concentration in comparative media.

2. **New Courses**—Create innovative courses on sustainability, comparative media, computing in context, and world philology.

3. **Public Outreach and Education**—Engage students in experiential and service learning connected to cultural institutions and multilingual communities in New York City and abroad. Train faculty in public outreach.

4. **Faculty**—Add 10-12 new professors in areas of strategic importance.

5. **Visiting Professors**—Host up to 8 visiting professors from outside the United States each year.

6. **Graduate Students**—Increase graduate student stipends to competitive levels, enhance support for graduate research, and create a new graduate certificate in digital humanities and a new doctoral program in Comparative Media Studies.

7. **Postdoctoral Fellows**—Establish funds to bring 12 postdoctoral fellows to Columbia each year. Fellows will be extraordinary recent Ph.D.s who will increase the global reach of our course offerings and represent newly emerging skills and areas of knowledge.

8. **Humanities Fellows Program**—Endow residential fellowships for extraordinary Columbia graduate students and faculty to support innovative research and teaching.

9. **New Collaborative Programs**—Initiate work across departments and divisions in Comparative Media; Computation and Culture; and Public Scholarship.

10. **Faculty Support**—Support faculty research and teaching by increasing the basic faculty research allowance to $5,000 a year. Create New Direction grants to help humanities faculty acquire new regional expertise and new computational skills.

11. **Support for Collaborative Scholarship and Teaching**—Create Pedagogical Innovation Fellowships that will fund curricular development, team-teaching, conferences, workshops, exhibits, collaborative publications, digitization and website design.

12. **Infrastructure and Space**—Support innovative global coursework by outfitting 5-6 video-conferencing rooms. Provide additional classrooms, offices, lecture halls, meeting rooms, and performance spaces.
INITIATIVES

Our goal for the next decade is to make the humanities more digital, more public, and more global.
Computation and Culture

Data and Society; Global; Just Societies; Arts & Humanities

Faculty Participants:

Manan Ahmed
Assistant Professor of History, Co-founder of Columbia’s Group for Experimental Methods in the Humanities and Acting Director of Center for International History

David Blei
Professor of Computer Science and Statistics. His research involves probabilistic topic models, Bayesian nonparametric methods, and approximate posterior inference. He works on a variety of applications, including text, images, music, social networks, user behavior, and scientific data

Alex Gil
Digital Scholarship Coordinator, Humanities & History, Columbia University Libraries, Co-founder of Columbia’s Group for Experimental Methods in the Humanities and Chair of Global Outlook: Digital Humanities

Frances Negrón-Muntaner
Associate Professor of English and Comparative Literature

We are currently experiencing one of the most significant information revolutions since the invention of print. The digital revolution requires that scholars rethink the history of information in the past and explore how digital platforms and computational tools can and should transform knowledge in the present.

The Center for Computation and Culture will combine Columbia’s preeminence in the humanities with its growing strength in statistics, data science, and natural language processing.

Now that we can digitize texts, images, and music and make them available for computational analysis, we have the capacity to pose traditional humanities questions on a scale never before possible. In the past, scholars answered the question “what is a novel?” by drawing on a few hundred works. Today, scholars in the digital humanities can answer these questions using tens of thousands examples.

By revealing patterns and structures never before perceptible, data mining, network analysis, text encoding, and geographical tagging are inspiring scholars to rethink what it means to study art, literature, and music. Digital platforms and computational tools are also revolutionizing education. Now, in addition to taking exams and writing papers, students can also express their ideas through interactive games, videos, maps, and multimedia presentations.
The **Center for Computation and Culture** also turns a critical lens on digital culture. How are computers and online media changing what it means to be a person and a politically engaged citizen? Who is excluded from these new forms of literacy? Students and faculty will work together to create free public tools and sites, to offer open workshops, and to craft globally accessible podcasts and video publications. Affiliated faculty members are already conducting public outreach projects that include teaching computer programming through digital storytelling to New York City prisoners; creating wikis that can help museums gather information about unidentified objects in their collections; and collaborating with the British Library to improve their archive of electronic texts.

We propose to hire 2-3 established leaders in the digital humanities; host 2-3 postdoctoral library fellows per year who will support digital humanities teaching and research; institute a graduate certificate in digital humanities; and create digital humanities “bootcamps” designed to increase the faculty’s digital literacy.

A new Core Course, “Computing in Context,” will prepare all Columbia undergraduate students for decision-making in a world where algorithms, data, and computation play an increasingly important role. The Center will also inaugurate a space for collaborative, project-based, engaged research from across the disciplines in A&S.

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Barbara Rockenbach  
Director of Humanities and History Libraries

Dennis Tenen  
Assistant Professor, Department of English and Comparative Literature, Co-founder of Columbia’s Group for Experimental Methods in the Humanities, Co-founder of Digital Storytelling Lab, Faculty Affiliate at the Berkman Center for Internet and Society

Julia Hirschberg  
Percy K. and Vida L. W. Hudson Professor and Chair of Computer Science, Founder of the Columbia Speech Lab

*Above images taken from Columbia Data Science Institute*
Humanities scholars are engaged in fostering a better understanding of the human condition: what constitutes a good life, for the greatest number, on a fragile planet? At a time of increasing political instability, deepening economic inequality, and growing environmental challenges, our current way of life seems precarious, even unsustainable. How can we best prepare our students to understand and confront the many forms of vulnerability they will inherit? How can researchers in the humanities cooperate with scientists to elucidate the problems we face and to build a path forward?

This multidisciplinary initiative brings together faculty interested in addressing problems of vulnerability and sustainability. It unites scientists and engineers who identify and solve problems with humanists who understand how art and storytelling can help us imagine a better future.

New fields such as environmental humanities, animal studies, medical humanities, and disability studies are emerging to consider these pressing issues. Numerous Columbia faculty in the humanities and elsewhere are already leaders in these fields. The crucial innovation of Sustainable Worlds is to unite these many approaches. Where other universities are building discrete programs in environmental, medical, or legal humanities, this program offers the pioneering opportunity for Columbia faculty and students to consider these issues holistically.

Sustainable Worlds will involve the targeted hires of 2-3 chairs who study fragility and resilience in ways informed by humanist perspectives; two visiting professorships to enrich research and curriculum; team-teaching initiatives; five graduate research fellowships; undergraduate internships and service learning opportunities; faculty working groups; and an annual international conference. It will also engage in innovative public outreach and pedagogy. A Columbia Roundtable on Sustainable Humanity will gather experts in key academic disciplines as well as in the public and private sectors. Faculty will help to create undergraduate summer internships with cultural organizations that address sustainability, and will work with NYC organizations to involve undergraduates and graduate students in K-12 outreach programs on issues ranging from energy literacy to aging in place.
Faculty Participants:

Nadia Abu El-Haj  
Professor of Anthropology, Barnard College

Lila Abu-Lughod  
Professor of Anthropology, Columbia University

Rachel Adams  
Professor of English and Comparative Literature and Director of the Center for the Study of Social Difference, Columbia University

Courtney Bender  
Professor of Religion, Columbia University

Susan Crane  
Parr Professor of English and Comparative Literature, Columbia University

Stuart Firestein  
Professor of Biological Sciences, Columbia University

Stathis Gourgouris  
Professor of Classics, English, and Comparative Literature, Columbia University

Bärbel Hönisch  
Associate Professor of Earth and Environmental Sciences, Columbia University

Jean Howard  
George Delacorte Professor in the Humanities, Columbia University

Elizabeth Hutchinson  
Associate Professor of Art History, Barnard College

Karl Jacoby  
Professor of History, Columbia University

Eleanor Johnson  
Assistant Professor of English and Comparative Literature, Columbia University

Rashid Khalidi  
Edward Said Professor of Modern Arab Studies History and Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies, Columbia University

Eugenia Lean  
Associate Professor of Chinese History and East Asian Languages and Cultures and Director, Weatherhead East Asian Institute, Columbia University

Reinhold Martin  
Associate Professor of Architecture, Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation

Timothy Mitchell  
William B. Ransford Professor of Middle Eastern, South Asian and African Studies, Columbia University

Roz Morris  
Professor of Anthropology, Columbia University

Shahid Naaem  
Professor of Ecology, Evolution, and Environmental Biology and Director, Center for Environmental Sustainability, Earth Institute, Columbia University

Frances Negrón-Muntaner  
Associate Professor of English and Comparative Literature, Columbia University

Ana M. Ochoa  
Professor of Music, Columbia University

Jonathan Owen  
Associate Professor of Chemistry, Columbia University

Elizabeth Povinelli  
Professor of Anthropology, Columbia University

Saskia Sassen  
Robert S. Lynd Professor of Sociology, Columbia University

Haruo Shirane  
Shincho Professor of Japanese Literature

Joseph Slaughter  
Associate Professor of English and Comparative Literature, Columbia University

David Stark  
Arthur Lehman Professor of Sociology, Columbia University

Jesús R. Velasco  
Professor of Latin American and Iberian Cultures, Columbia University

Dorothea von Mücke  
Professor of German Languages, Columbia University

Jennifer Wenzel  
Associate Professor of English and Comparative Literature and Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies, Columbia University

Paige West  
Professor of Anthropology, Barnard College

Nancy Worman  
Professor of Classics, Barnard College
The Global Scholars Program (GSP) is a trans-regional summer study program that furthers Columbia’s mission to provide students with a truly global education. It provides experiential overseas research and learning opportunities for undergraduate students. The program’s syllabi are credit-bearing, intellectually grounded within the Columbia curriculum and go through rigorous COI approval. During the programs, Columbia faculty members lead a group of students—competitively chosen from across all Columbia schools and majors—through multi-country research workshops centered on themes of global importance.

The innovative program was established in 2011 by the Weatherhead East Asian Institute, the Office of Global Programs, and the Columbia Global Centers, with the initial support of the Institute for Latin American Studies and the Harriman Institute. There have been three successful pilot programs so far, including an inaugural program to Beijing, Shanghai, and Mumbai to study “Environment and Urbanization, a second program on “Pathways and Development” in Beijing and Santiago, and a third one where students traveled from Berlin to Beijing along the trans-Siberian railroad, stopping in Moscow and Ulan.

The humanities are born global.
Bator, to study “Contemporary Cities of Eurasia.”

The GSP allows Columbia faculty and students to conduct comparative research by applying theoretical approaches and a range of methodologies in real-world settings. The GSP allows students to conduct fieldwork in one area of the world and then test their findings in a second country that offers a new set of assumptions and variables. The program relies on the expertise, resources, and cross-regional networks offered by Columbia’s Global Centers. Its aim is to help Columbia undergraduates map the globe by exploring issues of transnational importance and applying diverse research skills in a range of challenging and diverse international contexts.

The empirical research component takes place abroad during the summer. It is preceded by required participation in a Global Seminar in the Spring Semester at Columbia, in which the students learn to interpret and analyze comparative studies. Students are required to write a research paper based on their summer research. Additionally, students are asked to give presentations about their experiences at a Global Scholars symposium.

Building on feedback from previous GSP faculty that the program proved “career-altering,” we believe GSP trips provide professors with the opportunity to expand their knowledge about a region and/or discipline outside their areas of expertise. After evaluating the first three pilot years, it is clear that the GSP is equally rewarding for both students and faculty.

Faculty Participants:

- Charles Armstrong
  Korea Foundation Professor of Korean Studies in the Social Sciences, Columbia University

- Robert Barnett
  Senior Research Scholar, Weatherhead East Asian Institute, Columbia University

- Debashree Mukherjee
  Assistant Professor of Middle Eastern, South Asian and African Studies, Columbia University

- Catherine Nepomnyashchy
  Ann Whitney Olin Professor of Russian Literature and Culture, Barnard College

- Pablo Pinto
  Research Scholar, Arnold A Saltzman Institute of War and Peace Studies, Columbia University

- Ying Qian
  Assistant Professor of East Asian Languages and Cultures, Columbia University

- Guobin Yang
  Associate Professor of Asian and Middle Eastern Cultures, Barnard College

- Xiaodan Zhang
  Research Scholar, Weatherhead East Asian Institute, Columbia University
Global Visiting Professors and Postdoctoral Fellows Program

Global; Arts & Humanities

In the last decade, Columbia University has developed an innovative approach to the globalization of the university by creating Global Centers in eight major world cities. These Centers enable professors and students to engage with key world regions and to connect with thought leaders in Asia, Africa, Europe, South America, and the Middle East.

As we send Columbia out into the world, we also need to bring the world to Columbia. In the 1970s, Columbia University’s humanities and social science departments regularly brought some of the world’s greatest thinkers to campus. Those visits fell into abeyance during the budget troubles of the 1980s and have never been reinstated. During our planning exercises this past year, Columbia's faculty identified a robust program of international visitors and fellows as a top priority.

By bringing eminent scholars from all over the world to Columbia, we will make our New York City campus itself a global center, a core channel for the global flow of knowledge. We plan to host six visiting professors per year, drawn from all continents. Visitors will teach undergrad-
As we send Columbia out into the world, we also need to bring the world to Columbia.

Graduate and undergraduate lectures and seminars, including concentrated, intensive mini-seminars. Each visiting professor will also give at least one public lecture co-sponsored by a non-academic institution. Columbia faculty will be eligible to apply for Pedagogical Innovation Faculty Fellowships to team-teach with visiting professors.

A new program for global postdoctoral fellows will bring recent Ph.D.s from all continents to Columbia, with a special focus on scholars addressing issues of globalization as well as emerging areas of inquiry. These three-year fellowships will include two semesters of teaching each year, preferably in the Global Core. We will recruit 5-7 fellows annually. Each cohort of Global Fellows will organize a major public colloquium, international workshop, or exhibition. Fellows will be assigned faculty mentors and will be affiliated with at least two regional centers and one department.

Above images taken from Columbia Global Centers | East Asia (Beijing), Columbia Global Centers | Turkey (Istanbul), Columbia Global Centers | South Asia (Mumbai), and Columbia Global Centers | Latin America (Rio de Janeiro)
In any given era, newly emergent technologies, from clay tablets to print, from photographs to smartphones, have changed what it means to be human, reshaping the stories we tell and the ways that we tell them.

Whether we think of media as Bollywood films or as Facebook algorithms, Columbia has an unusually strong cohort of faculty across Humanities, Social Sciences, and the Schools of Journalism and the Arts. Their expertise provides historical depth and global breadth, spanning media past, present, and emerging, from medieval manuscripts to computer music. Working in conjunction with 2-3 newly hired stars in key areas, these scholars will institute a new model for teaching and researching media.

The Center for Comparative Media will integrate research across different disciplines, world regions, and historical time periods. Affiliated faculty have begun to develop open access reference tools such as a Comparative Media Glossary and will develop new curriculum for undergraduate students with interdisciplinary team-taught courses on Comparative Media, such as “The History and Future of Media” and “Informal Digital Economies in Global Context.”
The Center for Comparative Media will unite scholars from different disciplines to create a hub that will link graduate students interested in media, who are currently isolated in different departments. Faculty will also establish a new doctoral program and certificate program that will make Columbia a world leader in media studies.

Faculty Participants:

Alex Alberro  
Professor of Art History, Barnard College

Stefan Andriopoulos  
Professor of Germanic Languages (Co-Chair), Columbia University

Nico Baumbach  
Assistant Professor of Film Studies, School of the Arts, Columbia University

Claudia Breger  
Professor of Germanic Languages, Columbia University

Jonathan Crary  
Professor of Art History, Columbia University

Noam Elcott  
Assistant Professor of Art History, Columbia University

Jane Gaines  
Professor of Film Studies, School of the Arts, Columbia University

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Assistant Professor of East Asian Languages and Cultures, Columbia University

Branden W. Joseph  
Professor of Art History, Columbia University

Rob King  
Associate Professor of Film Studies, School of the Arts, Columbia University

Brian Larkin  
Professor of Anthropology, Barnard College (Co-Chair)

Lydia Liu  
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Reinhold Martin  
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Rosalind Morris  
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Debashree Mukherjee  
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Ana Maria Ochoa  
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Felicity Scott  
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Ying Qian  
Assistant Professor of East Asian Languages and Cultures, Columbia University

Dennis Y. Tenen  
Assistant Professor of English and Comparative Literature, Columbia University

Above image taken from Brown Institute for Media Innovation and Butler Library
Columbia’s new Program in World Philology (PWP) focuses on the art of making sense of texts. For centuries, across the world, philologists have translated, established and commented on great texts and helped to explain their meanings. In order to teach the extraordinary history of philology to students today, primary materials in English translation must be created for use in undergraduate and graduate courses. Columbia’s thirteen humanities departments have the linguistic and cultural expertise needed to identify these primary materials, and, with the proper support, can make these works and their interpretation available to the world.

PWP will design two new courses: “Philology: A World History” (undergraduate) and “Genres and Method in Philology” (graduate), each accompanied by a speaker series. In conjunction with these courses, faculty will also develop a companion Reader in World Philology. New translations and selected critical works will present the leading approaches to philological theory and practice from around the world.

PWP will also mount an online collaborative project for the creation, preservation, and dissemination of philological works across time and space. Adopting an ambitious, critically crowdsourced approach, PWP will enlist Columbia faculty, students, and librarians alongside the world’s best scholars to translate and annotate texts from the African, Hebrew, Arabic, Chinese, European, Japanese, Persian, and Indian traditions.
Learning to understand and respect intellectual diversity is at the heart of the philological enterprise.

To support the objectives of PWP will require 2-3 new faculty hires; post-doctoral fellowships in African, Arabic, Persian, South Asian and East Asian philology, as well as in digital humanities; and funds to support graduate research, particularly for intensive language study and for travel to archives. It will also require support for course and curriculum development, conference programming, digitization of ancient texts and commentaries, and the creation of an interactive website that will present original texts enriched by philological commentary.

Faculty Participants:

Manan Ahmed  
Assistant Professor of History, Co-founder of Columbia’s Group for Experimental Methods in the Humanities and Acting Director of Center for International History, Columbia University

Gil Anidjar  
Professor of Religion and Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies, Columbia University

Allison Busch  
Professor of Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies, Columbia University

Jeremy Dauber  
Atran Professor of Yiddish Language, Literature and Culture and Director, Institute for Israel and Jewish Studies, Columbia University

Wael Hallaq  
Avalon Foundation Professor in the Humanities, Columbia University

Joseph Howley  
Assistant Professor of Classics, Columbia University

Harrison Huang  
Assistant Professor of East Asian Languages and Cultures, Columbia University

Robert Hymes  
Horace Walpole Carpentier Professor of Oriental Studies, Columbia University

Elizabeth Irwin  
Associate Professor of Classics, Columbia University

Marcus Folch  
Associate Professor of Classics, Columbia University

Eleanor Johnson  
Associate Professor of English and Comparative Literature, Columbia University

Mana Kia  
Assistant Professor of Middle Eastern, South Asian and African Studies, Columbia University

Seth Kimmel  
Assistant Professor of Latin American and Iberian Cultures, Columbia University

Lydia Liu  
Wun Tsun Tam Professor in the Humanities, and Director,
The National Science Foundation recently issued a warning that at least 3,000 of the world’s 6,000-7,000 languages are at risk of disappearing. This may be correlated to the decline of biodiversity monitored and studied by the world’s scientists. It has become critically urgent to explore rapidly dwindling linguistic diversity.

Taking language justice as the humanistic equivalent of environmental justice, the aim of the Global Language Justice initiative is to initiate a cutting-edge program of research and pedagogical innovation at the interface of science, humanities, and big data to address a range of questions that are typically kept separate and compartmentalized: the global impact of English monolingualism; the relationship of language and technology; the problem of translation (including machine translation) across disciplinary divides as much as between unequal (and often incommensurable) language worlds.

The introduction of this pioneering field of study will amplify Columbia’s leadership role in the reinvention of the humanities for the twenty-first century, putting us well ahead of our peer institutions. By taking up the pressing issue of language justice, Global Language Justice will create a unique and lasting legacy, creating innovative graduate and undergraduate courses and developing new research directions for the humanities and social sciences. It will bring together humanists who specialize in numerous regions of the world, environmentalists, lawyers, human rights activists, translators, artists, community leaders and students to collaborate in the form of research clusters, lab work, internships, lecture series, workshops, conferences, publications and online resources.

With its focus on a multilingual pedagogical mission, Global Language Justice will lead to the creation of an M.A. degree program in Critical Translation Studies at the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society. The new program will fill a gap at Columbia where no formal, critical translation program is available. M.A. students with multilingual interests will make use of the extensive language programs on campus and many internship opportunities at court, hospital or international organizations in New York City to acquire experience as linguistic and cultural translation.
Faculty Participants:

Susan Bernofsky
Director, Literary Translation, Columbia School of the Arts

Rita Charon
Director, Program in Narrative Medicine, Columbia Medical School

Peter Connor
Director, Center for Translation Studies, Barnard College

Geraldine Downey
Director, Center for Justice, Columbia University

Brent H. Edwards
Professor of English and Comparative Literature, Columbia University

Stathis Gourgouris
Professor of Classics, English, and Comparative Literature, Columbia University

Bernard Harcourt
Isidor and Seville Sulzbacher Professor of Law, Professor of Political Science, and Director, Columbia Center for Contemporary Critical Thought, Columbia Law School

Lydia H. Liu
Wun Tsun Tam Professor in the Humanities, and Director, Institute for Comparative Literature and Society, Columbia University

Elizabeth Povinelli
Professor of Anthropology, Columbia University

Anupama Rao
Associate Professor of History, Barnard College

Jesús R. Velasco
Professor of Latin American and Iberian Cultures, Columbia University
Program in Public Scholarship

Just Societies; Arts & Humanities; Global; Precision Medicine; Neuroscience; Climate; Data & Society

The Program in Public Scholarship will train faculty to deliver their expertise to a wider public outside the university. Columbia University’s stature as a world-class research institution and presence in one of the nation’s media capitals offer a unique set of conditions to transform our professors into thought leaders. But because academia trains experts to speak to other experts, graduate education and professional success do not teach scholars how to communicate with a broader public.

Public scholarship should be a way of life for all faculty, but to date only a few have regularly engaged with a broader public, often thanks to personal connections in journalism and trade publishing. External programs such as the Op-Ed Project have proven effective but their success tends to be temporary, with even the most prolific faculty members ceasing to publish after they lose access to the program’s mentors.

The Program in Public Scholarship will make public engagement a permanent way of life for all of our faculty. Three full-time Public Scholarship Directors with experience in journalism, media, and cultural programming will be regularly available to help professors transform deep knowledge into pithy opinion pieces, documentaries, or museum and library exhibits. Directors will also connect our faculty to editors, publishers, radio and television producers, museum curators, and libraries. Directors will be selected for their editorial skills and their knowledge of the media landscape in the New York City area and beyond. The program will be overseen by a university committee to include the provost, deans, department chairs, and representatives from Public Affairs offices, as well as from public-facing units such as Columbia University Press, Public Books, and the Columbia Journalism Review.

The Program will also hire a grant writer to connect Arts & Sciences to the professional schools, and a community liaison to link faculty to social entrepreneurs and non-profit organizations. An advisory board consisting of prominent alumni engaged with media, publishing, and major cultural institutions will meet annually to help the Program in Public Scholarship set goals and assess achievements.