



ACLS Graduate Internships on the Spiritual Infrastructure of the Future 2026

Project	Developing AI for Interfaith Literacy and Dialogue
Organization	Institute for Islamic, Christian, and Jewish Studies, Inc.
Location	Remote
Stipend	\$14,000
Duration	9 weeks, Summer 2026

ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION

The [Institute for Islamic, Christian, and Jewish Studies](#) (ICJS) is an independent, educational nonprofit advancing interreligious dialogue and understanding in order to build and sustain a multireligious democracy in the United States. Through educational programming, public-facing scholarship, and relationship-centered fellowships and workshops, ICJS models a new conversation in the public square that affirms religious diversity and creates opportunities for participants to practice the art of interreligious dialogue. Our audiences include the general public, civic leaders, teachers, chaplains, clergy, congregational leaders, seminarians, librarians, museum professionals, and higher-ed faculty.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

ICJS will be launching a planning and development project to explore how a large language model (LLM) can be ethically adapted to facilitate nuanced, respectful, and accurate interfaith dialogue that dismantles religious bias and builds interfaith understanding. As generative AI becomes a common tool for answering interreligious questions, there is an urgent need to ensure these technologies promote understanding rather than reinforce religious bias and bigotry.

With the public launch of ChatGPT in 2022, generative AI entered a new phase of accessibility and public influence. People from various sectors use AI—including faith communities, religious denominations, and interfaith practitioners. While AI tools are increasingly used to answer religious questions, current applications focus on either 1) transmitting insider beliefs to other religious insiders, or 2) religious conversion. Currently, generative AI is not designed to increase interreligious understanding or to facilitate dialogical encounters with religious differences.

This project addresses a critical gap: the need for AI technologies that promote nuanced understanding across religious boundaries. Current Large Language Models (LLMs) flatten religious diversity, overgeneralize traditions, and prioritize shared values over substantive differences. If left unchecked, these technologies could exacerbate religious stereotyping, misrepresentation, and even deepen isolation in more homogenous or digitally dependent communities. With this project, we seize a transformational, field-shaping opportunity to ethically shape LLMs that reflect the values of interreligious learning, including respecting religious differences and prioritizing the capacity to dialogue around those differences.

The 2026 intern will be working on phase one of a three-phase project. This is the “Plan and Convene” phase. During this phase, ICJS will convene an interdisciplinary cohort of interfaith religious scholars, technologists, and ethicists to assess the current state of LLMs and define core values. We will then write a white paper on the state of interfaith literacy on existing LLMs and current limitations as it pertains to interfaith dialogue.

The white paper will help establish internal evaluation metrics for phase two (development and testing). The intern will be assisting the project manager with all aspects of phase one, including reviews of relevant technical literature, experimenting with current LLMs, and establishing internal evaluation metrics. The internship appointment is for 9 consecutive weeks, with an expected time commitment of approximately 37.5 hours per week.

This position is only available through the ACLS Graduate Internships on the Spiritual Infrastructure of the Future program. You may not contact the host institution to inquire about this position.



ACLS Graduate Internships on the Spiritual Infrastructure of the Future 2025

Key Responsibilities:

- *Explore LLMs*: Become familiar with existing current LLMs and what answers they provide to questions regarding faith, religion, or interreligious issues.
- *Prepare Literature Review*: With supervisor guidance, prepare and review the existing academic literature on Large Language Models (LLMs) and any of the following: faith, religion, interreligious studies.
- *Identify Experts*: Work with the project manager to identify technologists, ethicists, and religious studies scholars to invite to a Phase One convening where they will develop internal evaluation metrics for the development and testing phase.
- *Recruit and Onboard Experts*: With project manager, invite and engage technologists, ethicists, and religious studies scholars to Phase One and engage this group of professionals in their initial inquiry.
- *Assist with White Paper*: Contribute to a white paper on the state of interfaith literacy on existing LLMs.

Qualifications:

- PhD student in any field of the humanities or humanistic social sciences, with a dissertation/research focus on the study of religion. Read more about eligible fields [here](#).
- Capacity to communicate clearly and effectively, in oral and written form; if selected, finalists may be asked for writing samples.
- Ability to perform job duties with high degree of initiative and professionalism.
- Ability to meet deadlines and prioritize tasks.

Preferred

- Interest or experience with interfaith / interreligious engagement.
- Familiarity or interest in digital humanities, AI, or LLMs.

APPLICATIONS

- Information on the Graduate Internships on the Spiritual Infrastructure of the Future Program: <https://www.acls.org/competitions/acls-graduate-internships-on-the-spiritual-infrastructure-of-the-future/>
- All applications must be submitted through the ACLS Online Fellowship Application System (ofa.acls.org).
- Application deadline: **Wednesday, January 14, 2026, 9 PM EST.**