

SAMUEL H. KRESS  
CONSERVATION PUBLICATION  
FELLOWSHIP  
2004–2006



Application Guidelines for Fellows and Professional Associates

The AIC Publications Task Force, appointed in 1993, prepared an application to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation in 1994 for support to work toward its goal of improving the quality and quantity of publications in the field of conservation by encouraging conservation professionals to prepare publishable manuscripts. Through 2003, the program has awarded fellowships; for a list of past fellowship recipients and their topics, please see the AIC website (<http://aic.stanford.edu>) under “Grants and Awards.” The foundation has graciously awarded the Foundation of the American Institute for Conservation a fourth three-year grant to continue the program through the year 2006.

This article supplies the information necessary to prepare an application for a Kress fellowship.

Applicants should provide concrete evidence of their readiness to write a book-length manuscript that would represent a substantive contribution to the conservation literature. The applicant is expected to have completed all basic research on the proposed topic prior to the application, so that a publishable manuscript can be completed within the grant period.

### I. Guidelines for Manuscripts

1. Publications should reflect the process that underlies the intellectual actions and decisions of a conservation professional. It is as important to describe what goes on in conservators’ heads as in their hands.
2. Manuscripts addressing controversial issues should include critical discourse on all sides of controversies. Critical evaluation rather than mere enumeration of ideas should be a major component of each manuscript.
3. Manuscripts dealing with the treatment of a single material such as lead or glass must provide a discussion of the occurrence of the material and its deterioration and damage that are as complete as possible before treatment is addressed. Every conservator’s experience is limited to the collections he or she has treated; the field needs to transcend these limitations. The presentation of treatment methods should include applicable scientific data, empirical results, and, if possible, the reexamination of the objects after a period of time.

4. Manuscripts that provide comparative studies of aspects of conservation treatment as practiced across specialties are encouraged for their potential to enhance high standards of practice. For example, a publication on compensation that deals with the full range of specialties would be an important learning tool. Dividing the literature into areas of specialty in order to discuss treatment issues encourages the kind of isolation and insularity that is detrimental to high standards of practice.

### II. Types of Literature

Proposals are welcome that reflect a range of literary forms from biography and memoirs to dictionaries, literature reviews, manuals on conservation equipment, reference books, textbooks, collected case studies, and scientific treatises.

Recent publication of Specialty Group catalogues has made it clear that conservators are prepared to organize and codify in-depth knowledge in specific subject areas. Established course curricula and associated written material can also be used as the foundation of manuscripts for this fellowship.

### III. Subject Areas

The following subject areas have been suggested as valuable additions to the conservation literature. All subject areas, however, that fall within the AIC definitions of conservation (published in the AIC Directory) will be considered as long as the proposal fits the above guidelines.

#### 1. Problem solving in conservation: Case studies.

This subject offers the opportunity to present case studies in greater depth than is possible in the periodical literature. A book-length manuscript could examine the rationale behind conservation decisions: why certain treatments were not done, how different decisions might have been made in a different context, and how auxiliary issues such as time or funding constraints and the training and experience of the conservator may have affected treatment. The reasons one object receives treatment while others do not, the nature of discussions with curators on how a piece should look, and

the influence of the future use of the object on treatment are other matters that are seldom examined in the conservation literature.

**2. Conservation treatment methodology.** A cultural artifact is the tangible expression of the legacy of the maker and the effects of the cultural environment through which it has passed. Yet it is also a physical object subject to the deteriorating effects of time. Conservators have developed sophisticated technical treatment methods which they apply to the wide range of objects found in today's collections. Many nontechnical questions need to be addressed. For example, when signs of use obscure the design of a Native American basket, how much cleaning should be done? When an artist has repainted a painting at a much later date and the later colors do not match, what should be done? Topics in this area include an interdisciplinary look at one facet of a treatment, such as compensation for loss; a single issue in decision making, such as the ethically appropriate influence of the value of an object on its treatment; or a decision tree that could be applied to many different kinds of treatment. The issues discussed could be technical (such as the choice of treatment materials), philosophical (such as aesthetic factors or institutional mission), or pragmatic (such as time constraints or the availability of equipment).

**3. Methods of identifying original materials in cultural property.** The ability to predict the behavior of an object, decide on authenticity, or determine the best course of treatment depends on the proper identification of the object's constituent materials. Manuscripts describing methods for identifying materials could cover single materials. For each material type, the text should consider available resources outside the conservation literature and their applicability to artifacts; sampling techniques, ethics, and safeguards; identification techniques, from visual examination and spot tests to instrumental analysis; and the location of reference collections. Pragmatic trials using the identification techniques described should be carried out and reported on.

**4. The conservation of a single material** (such as lead or tortoise shell) or object type (such as Renaissance bronzes or Amish quilts). Manuscripts in this category could include sections on the occurrence of the single material in different types of objects and the way the object type affects both technical and philosophical issues of treatment; the chemistry involved in damage and deterioration; the maintenance of the objects; health and safety in handling and treatment; environmental considerations; the history of treatment; and case studies. The topic should be approached from the broadest possible perspective.

**5. Conservation science.** The conservation field is grounded in both science and art. Science as it relates to conservation encompasses a broad range of scientific disci-

plines and practices: geology and botany as well as chemistry and the physical sciences, microscopy and spot tests as well as radioactive dating. Topics in this area include the definition of conservation science, the education of conservation scientists, deterioration studies, experimental design and the use of statistics, examination techniques, conservation materials testing, and reassessments of earlier research.

**6. Attribution and authenticity in the fine arts: Connoisseurship and technical studies.** This subject area includes manuscripts that combine stylistic and technical criteria to answer questions of authorship, dating, and authentication. The impact of treatment on technical studies and the discussion of mechanisms for professional interaction among art historians or archaeologists, conservators, and conservation scientists are other possible topics. Suggested formats might be case studies or essays on theory and philosophy.

**7. History of conservation.** Topics in this area include studies of pre-20th-century conservation practices in various parts of the world, ethnographic preservation practices, the development of the modern field, and institutional histories. Proposals may include interviews with conservators about their careers or about various aspects of the development of the field.

**8. Other topics.** Other topics that might be considered include: contemporary art, taxidermy specimens, conservation assessments or surveys, historic interiors, archival materials, collection containerization or display, industrial or functional objects, exhibition case design, conservation ethics, and sacred objects.

## IV. Eligibility

Grants provide support for AIC members who hold Professional Associate and Fellow status and who are employed in educational or cultural institutions, regional centers, or private practice. They allow conservation professionals release time from work obligations to prepare publishable book-length manuscripts. Retirees are also encouraged to apply.

## V. Grant Amount and Timetable

Fellowships are limited to \$25,000. The starting date must be within six months of date of award notification, and fellowships must be completed 18 months after the starting date as specified in the fellowship contract. The award will be distributed in three portions, at the beginning, middle, and end of the project. Two fellowships will be awarded each year.

## VI. Review Criteria

In reviewing applications, panelists consider the completeness of the application package and the following:

1. Effectiveness of the proposal at fulfilling the guiding principles;
2. Quality of information—The handling of the subject matter should be accurate, comprehensive, unbiased, and insightful;
3. Quality of writing—The ability to express complex issues in a clear and lively manner is essential. Each applicant must provide as much concrete evidence as possible of his or her ability to organize and write a full-length book within the time allotted;
4. Readiness of applicant—Previous publications in peer reviewed journals relevant to the topic and/or curricula or hand-outs developed for teaching courses will be considered evidence of the applicant's level of readiness and expertise. Applicants will be judged by their professional background and educational qualifications as well as their breadth of knowledge and experience particularly as they relate to the topic of the proposed manuscript, including the length of time the applicant has dealt with the topic; and
5. Significance to the field and applicability of the proposed topic—These will be considered but will not be given priority over other criteria.

## VII. Deadline Dates & Notification

### Timetable:

November 1—Deadline for receipt of fellowship applications

January 10—Notification of results by Review Committee

*Note:* If the date falls on a weekend, applications should be submitted by the Monday directly following the deadline.

## VIII. Taxability of Fellowships

The Internal Revenue Code provides that the full amount of a fellowship grant is taxable to its recipient. If you have any question about your own tax liability, you should contact the IRS or your tax consultant.

## IX. How To Apply

Applicants must send the following materials in one package to: Fellowship Review Committee, FAIC, 1717 K St. NW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20006.

1. Six copies of a completed application form and the supporting materials.

2. Description of Project: Summarize what you plan to do in the space labeled "Summary Description of Project" on the application form. **Use additional sheets of paper to provide a full description of the project including the following:** a) Working title and general description of the manuscript to be written including general summary of approach/methodology of handling the subject; b) proposed Table of Contents including paragraphs describing the content of each chapter.

Supporting Information: Describe: a) need and usefulness of the information in the proposed manuscript to the conservation field (e.g., contribution it will make to the extant literature); b) qualifications of applicant to write on the proposed subject, including writing skills; c) plan of work including a timetable for completion and how you would use release time to prepare a publishable book-length manuscript; d) approximate number of text pages and illustrations.

Applicants should submit a published writing sample or other evidence of their writing skills. A text of substantial length as close as possible to the style and subject matter of the proposed manuscript would be helpful to the review committee; a first chapter draft would be ideal. The names of two colleagues who have agreed to review drafts of the manuscript should also be provided.

The "Career Summary Background" section of your application should relate directly to the activity for which support is requested. Please also include a résumé with your application package.

3. Evidence granting you release time for the period of time specified in your application must be provided prior to distribution of grant funds.

4. Letters of recommendation in support of your application from two conservation professionals who have reviewed your proposal. These recommendations should address the merits of your proposed project and its potential effect on the conservation field. **The individuals providing recommendations should send them directly to: Fellowship Review Committee, FAIC, 1717 K St. NW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20006.**

For your application to be considered by the review committee, the two recommendations must have been received by the November 1 deadline. *Note:* FAIC will not accept any application materials by electronic transmission (i.e., facsimile).