



CALL FOR SPEAKERS

Indiana Humanities seeks proposals for talks and presentations from scholars and experts in the environmental humanities. Applications will be accepted through **January 31, 2021**.

WHY ARE WE CREATING A SPEAKERS BUREAU?

Indiana Humanities' new thematic initiative, launching in spring 2021, will be focused on the environmental humanities. Over at least two years, we will design and support humanities programs that help Hoosiers critically examine our relationship to the natural world and grapple with the reality and implications of climate change.

We work with scholars and experts to shape and lead our programs. Humanities scholars bring not only deep expertise and provide valuable context, but they're also often skilled at sharing information and unlocking conversation around a big idea or shared text. Further, scholars are good at helping people become comfortable with tension and gray area, with the idea that answers are rarely "yes" or "no," but more often "to some extent," "on the one hand, and on the other," and "sometimes this, sometimes that." Skilled humanities scholars ask thoughtful questions, model patient consideration of multiple points of view and get others excited to talk about ideas.

We also know, especially in the environmental humanities, scholars are passionate about connecting their research to the public. A speakers bureau helps facilitate these connections and furthers our mission to help Hoosiers think, read and talk.

WHAT TYPES OF TALKS ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

We've identified some key themes for our own programming, and are especially interested in proposals that can help Hoosiers unpack these resonant but complex ideas:

- **The encounter.** Related topics: idea of wilderness; human/animal, human/non-human and human/nature encounters; human impact on nature; rhetoric; representations of nature.
- **Decolonizing the environment.** Related topics: indigenous geographies; Black and indigenous ecologies; pre-capitalist and pre-colonialist perspectives on nature; animism; environmental justice.
- **Connection to place and an ethic of care.** Related topics: moral, ethical and legal frameworks; religious and philosophical traditions; environmental literature and writing; sustainability; Indiana's particular environmental histories and writing.
- **The Anthropocene and the future.** Related topics: science fiction and climate fiction; apocalyptic narratives; environmental history; imagined futures; grappling with climate change; attitudes/responses to climate change; climate knowledge and climate change denial.
- **Water as a lens for thinking through the above and/or other environmental humanities ideas.** Many of our programs, including a tour of the Smithsonian exhibit *Water/Ways* and a new round of short films about Indiana water stories, will be about water.

We welcome proposals for talks by scholars working across disciplines and invite interdisciplinary perspectives. Each talk should be about 40 minutes long plus time from questions or discussion with the audience (about an hour total). Presentations can be geared toward adult, teen, or youth audiences. And we're open to proposals that take the standard scholar talk and flip it on its head, i.e., creative writing or performance workshops, text-centered conversations, or whatever else you can imagine. As long as your proposal aligns to our goal of helping Hoosiers make sense of the ways we shape the environment and it shapes us, we're open to it.

WHO ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

The ideal scholar-facilitator:

- Shares Indiana Humanities' vision for open-ended, non-partisan and thoughtful discussion of the ways we shape our environment and it shapes us.
- Is enthusiastic about sharing the insights of the humanities with ordinary Hoosiers.
- Is passionate about Indiana and its future—and sees how the humanities can make a difference in our state.
- Is not afraid to tackle difficult topics and help communities ask hard questions.
- Is open to learning new techniques and best practices for giving talks and leading public humanities programs.
- Has advanced training, such as an M.A. or Ph.D., in a humanities or humanistic social science field, or in relevant fields of environmental studies.
- Responds to email communication in a timely manner.
- When public health conditions allow, be willing to travel statewide and provide their own transportation.

WHAT MAKES A GREAT TALK?

- **A compelling idea:** Great talks are interesting and are usually built around one focused idea. However they start—with a question, with a bold claim or with the posing of a problem—they should leave the audience with that indelible buzzy, refreshed feeling of encountering a new idea.
- **Dynamic, easy speaking style:** Some speakers are funny, some are serious, but all great speakers share a few things in common: they're able to adjust their tone and formality depending on the audience, they avoid arcane jargon and confusing syntax, and they have the charisma to hold the attention of a crowd. Great talks are more than just a paper read out loud.
- **Deep expertise:** The speaker knows their stuff! Usually this is demonstrated by advanced study such as an M.A. or Ph.D. in a related humanities field such as literature, history, philosophy, history of science, art or theater history, etc.
- **Unexpected connections:** The speaker makes the case for how their specific topic is a lens for thinking about the larger historical context, a broader philosophical question, a contemporary debate or phenomenon, etc.
- **Relevance:** The speaker has spent time thinking about how to make their talk relevant to non-specialist, general public audiences, often by creating a hook that connects to people's everyday lives.

HOW DOES THE SPEAKERS BUREAU WORK?

Indiana Humanities facilitates an application process for libraries, schools, civic organizations and other tax-exempt organizations to host a speaker. If awarded, speakers receive a standard honorarium of \$400 per talk, plus mileage and travel reimbursement. Talks will be listed on the Indiana Humanities webpage and in a speakers bureau catalog. While anyone can contact a speaker to plan a program, Indiana Humanities will only pay honoraria for those awarded through the application process (speakers may accept and negotiate additional engagements on their own).

TO APPLY:

By Sunday, January 31, 2021, apply by visiting <https://bit.ly/375DH1b>.

Proposals will be reviewed by a committee of IH staff, board members and subject area experts. Candidates may be asked to provide additional information or have a quick call with IH staff in order to make final decisions. Applications will open in late spring for talks starting on or after Aug. 1 through the end of 2022. Indiana Humanities plans to hold at least two application cycles in 2021-2022 and fund up to 60 talks.

QUESTIONS? IDEAS?

Contact Megan Telligman at mtelligman@indianahumanities.org / 317.616.9409.

ABOUT INDIANA HUMANITIES

Indiana Humanities connects people, opens minds and enriches lives by creating and facilitating programs that encourage Hoosiers to think, read and talk. Learn more at www.IndianaHumanities.org.

