



Richard C. Kessler Reformation Collection Research Fellow

Pitts Theology Library at Emory University invites applications to serve as a Richard C. Kessler Reformation Collection Research Fellow for 2027. The Kessler Research Fellows will work virtually for a full year studying a specific item or aspect of the Richard C. Kessler Collection. Throughout the academic year, Fellows will meet virtually with library staff to discuss research progress and make digitization requests. Fellows will work toward the creation of detailed metadata for the item(s) studied, a research-quality essay, and a digital exhibition to be hosted by the library. While residence in Atlanta is not required, Fellows will make one research trip of 3-5 days to the Pitts Theology Library, with expenses paid by the library. During their visit, Fellows will have access to the Kessler Collection for research and will offer one public presentation. Fellows will also meet with graduate students and library staff to discuss research methods.

Funding

The fellowship will consist of an honorarium of \$4,000 for the academic year. The fellowship also includes funds to cover all travel, food, and lodging expenses associated with the research visit to Pitts Theology Library.

Outputs

Kessler Fellows are required to produce the following:

- A publication-worthy essay on the item(s) studied, consisting of at least 8,000 words. This essay can be submitted to a relevant leading journal or made available online, by the library
- A digital exhibition, to be hosted by Pitts Theology Library, which highlights the focus of the fellowship
- One research visit to Pitts Theology for 3-5 days, during which time the Fellow will offer a public presentation based on their research

Eligibility

All scholars of theology, history, art history, book history, or related fields, connected to printed works of the 16th century are eligible to apply. Eligible scholars will be either ABD in a PhD program or will have completed a PhD in a related field in the last 10 years.

Application Process

Applicants should email kesslerfellows@emory.edu the following application materials:

- A letter of introduction, describing the trajectory of the scholar's career and how the fellowship fits within an ongoing research program
- A current curriculum vitae
- A research proposal of no more than 500 words, identifying the item or collection of items to serve as the focus of research
- A letter of recommendation from a colleague, teacher, or mentor, who can speak to the applicant's research potential

About the Richard C. Kessler Reformation Collection

The Richard C. Kessler Reformation Collection was established in 1987, when Richard and Martha Kessler donated their private collection of Reformation imprints and manuscripts to Emory University. These materials were combined with Reformation holdings at the Pitts Theology Library, and an effort was launched to enlarge and sustain this collection in the years to come. In the sixteenth century the social and theological movements of central Europe, known collectively as the Reformation, critically shaped religion, law, education and other institutions in the West, and their long shadow has extended even to the present. The purpose of the Kessler Collection is to document these changes by collecting print and manuscript materials down to 1570 by Martin Luther (1483-1546) and those whom he influenced or engaged in debate. In this way historians and theologians will be able to hear the full range of voices that were raised in this dynamic period. The holdings of the collection now exceed 3,900 items, a mark approximated by only two other libraries in North America; no American library approaches the Kessler Collection's 1,000+ publications of works written by Luther himself. An advisory committee of Lutheran laypersons and clergy and of Candler School of Theology faculty and administrators oversees the nurture of the collection and its programs. The Reformation Notes newsletter (<http://pitts.emory.edu/reformationnotes>) provides annual updates on the growth of the collection, and the Reformation Day at Emory program of music and lectures each October (<http://pitts.emory.edu/reformationday>) celebrates the collection and its contributions to music, history, and theology