

Guide for Yale Library Senior Exhibit Fellowship applicants:

Proposals are reviewed by members of the Sterling Library Exhibition Committee. The Committee's 10 members represent a range of subject expertise, viewpoints and have experience producing exhibits. Based on our collective knowledge and experience, we will use the following criteria in reviewing proposals for the Yale Library Senior Exhibit Fellowship.

Selected exhibition proposals will be clearly executable in the given timeframe and the exhibit committee will look for the following elements during the selection process:

1. Thorough and careful original research
 2. Thoughtful analysis of library collection materials
 3. Compelling and innovative research subjects
 4. Visually engaging collection materials
 5. A focus on underutilized collections
 6. Chosen topic is different from recent exhibitions, if topic has been recently exhibited, is the topic presented from a unique point of view
- [Review this list of past student exhibitions.](#)

In addition, the Committee will give preference to proposals that provide evidence of the following student qualifications:

1. Excellent organizational skills;
2. Ability to manage cascading or overlapping deadlines;
3. Demonstrated ability to conduct self-directed research during summer research fellowship and early fall semester for exhibit development

Examples of what is included in a strong proposal:

1. Shows an in-depth exploration of a significant collection or draws from multiple collections in the Yale University Library.
2. Shows evidence of previous experience working with [primary source materials](#).
3. Shows strong familiarity with the subject discipline. For example, if your topic is about bookplates, you should be familiar with research in the history of art.
4. Shows evidence of time already spent with the collection and/or letters of support need to indicate that applicant has the time and ability to develop the project more fully.
5. Outlines how the narrative of the thesis will be furthered through the elements of the exhibition (labels, visual elements, collections materials, facsimiles where needed, etc.).
6. Demonstrates clear understanding of responsibilities and timeframe of the exhibit project independent of the senior thesis project for their department.

Proposals must be accompanied by letters of support from both a faculty advisor and a librarian advisor. Letters of support should:

- a. Demonstrate a strong connection between the subject of the proposal and the faculty advisor
- b. Agree to the responsibilities outlined for the [faculty advisor](#) and the [librarian advisor](#).
- c. Attest to the student's past success the subject discipline.
- d. Speak to the student's ability to successfully complete the project in the timeframe allotted.

What makes a good exhibit in the Sterling Library exhibition corridor?

1. A strong narrative.
2. Strong visual elements that further the thesis or narrative of the exhibit. Fluidity between the elements telling a strong story.
3. Use of a variety of types of library collections material to tell a story. For example, an exhibit with manuscript documents, photographs, prints, and bound material will be stronger than an exhibit with only textual collection materials.
4. Keep these points in mind as you think about items to include in your exhibit:
 - a. Use of originals may be limited for collections that are fragile or vulnerable to light damage.
 - b. Most special collections materials can only be shown in reproduction.
 - c. Proposed objects should consider the spatial limitations of the exhibition cases.

The Sterling Library Exhibit corridor is not presently equipped to incorporate multimedia.

Contact Kerri Sancomb, Exhibits Committee Chair with any questions. kerri.sancomb@yale.edu