



Teen Travel Network
BY TERRA EDUCATION

2024 ARTS & LETTERS FELLOWSHIP

CURRICULUM PACKET



OVERVIEW

Congratulations on your acceptance into **The TTN Arts & Letters Fellowship!** As a fellow you will get to choose one of **three tracks to dive into.** Whether you're delving into videography, creative writing, or photography, this fellowship is designed to challenge and elevate your skills in the respective visual media.

Videographers will create a world-changing film by interviewing and refining cinematic aesthetics. Writers are encouraged to push storytelling abilities, acknowledging the impact stories have on shaping memories. Photographers will push limits in capturing emotional moments, emphasizing thoughtful consideration of elements with each click. **Congratulations again, and may this fellowship be a transformative experience in your artistic journey.**

Congratulations on your acceptance into the TTN Arts & Letters Fellowship!

OPTIONAL

Pre-Program Research

REQUIRED

On-Program Research

REQUIRED

Post-Program Project

PRE-PROGRAM

While preparing for your upcoming program, you'll want to do some research into your area of choice to get a basis for your project thesis.

While the pre-program reading and viewing is 100% optional - your pre-program assignment won't be graded or any work turned in - the best final projects frequently draw from the material you learned prior to travel, in combination with reflections on programmatic content. You won't be tested on this material, but it will have an impact on the quality of your final project.

Depending on your interests, you can peruse suggested question prompts to test your knowledge and related pre-program reading and viewing options here.

Any topic can theoretically be applied to any TTN program, it takes your creativity in the interest field you select to create the story you want to tell.



CREATIVE WRITING



VIDEOGRAPHY



PHOTOGRAPHY

IMPORTANT: You must have your own camera to bring on your program that is not a smartphone on the Videography or Photography tracks. TTN has strict cell phone policies, so you'll need to shoot all of your footage on an external camera, such as a DSLR, a GoPro, or a camcorder. For more info, contact Matt Miller at fellowships@teentravelnetwork.com.



Creative Writing

OVERVIEW: Stories shape the memories of our lives. When you tell someone about who you are, you tell them inside the framework of a story. Writers have long sought out the difficult, emotional, exciting, and polarizing subjects. You can't just sit in a blank room and bang out a novel that will change the world. You need to experience the world and let those experiences shape your writing.

WHAT TO DO: While preparing for your trip and the story or essay you'll write, you'll need to do some research into writers that have come before and **analyze one of these books or short story collections** for creative inspiration and learning. **Choose 1 of these 3 options but feel free to look at or study the other options if you're interested.**

Suggested Question Worksheets

[Ernest Hemingway](#)

[Nerdwriter Video Essays](#)

[The Geography Of Bliss](#)

Recommended Readings/Viewings:

Ernest Hemingway - *Short Stories*

Read some of the works of Ernest Hemingway, one of the greatest short story and short novel writers in American history, and pull inspiration from his work as you think about what to write on your program.

Nerdwriter Video Essays - *Poetry*

Nerdwriter1 is a fantastic youtube channel with topics ranging from understanding art to how some aspects of economics work. Watch these two videos about poetry and try to gain some insight into your own poetic style. Watch the videos in the questionnaire below.

The Geography of Bliss - *Non-Fiction Novel*

Weiner spent a decade as a foreign correspondent reporting from such discontented locales as Iraq, Afghanistan, and Indonesia. Unhappy people living in profoundly unstable states, he notes, inspire pathos and make for good copy, but not for good karma. So Weiner, admitted grump and self-help book aficionado, undertook a year's research to travel the globe, looking for the "unheralded happy places." The result is this book, equal parts laugh-out-loud funny and philosophical, a journey into both the definition of and the destination for true contentment.





Videography

OVERVIEW: Documentary filmmakers try to pursue subjects that will change the world, and on your TTN program you'll have the opportunity to create your own world-changing film. Interview interesting members of the community, other students, and mentors, all the while striving to develop the vision for your film and sharpen an eye for cinematic aesthetics.

WHAT TO DO: While preparing for your trip and the video you'll create, you'll need to do some research into filmmakers that have come before and **analyze one of these films or collections of video essays** for creative inspiration and learning. **Choose 1 of these 3 options** but feel free to look at or study the other options if you're interested.

Suggested Question Worksheets

[Chasing Ice \(2012\)](#)

[Blue Planet II \(2017\)](#)

[Every Frame A Painting](#)

Recommended Readings/Viewings:

[Chasing Ice \(2012\) - Environmental Conservation](#)

Follow National Geographic photographer James Balog across the Arctic as he deploys time-lapse cameras designed for one purpose: to capture a multi-year record of the world's changing glaciers.

[Blue Planet II \(2017\) - Nature & Science](#)

David Attenborough returns to the world's oceans in this sequel to the acclaimed documentary filming rare and unusual creatures of the deep, as well as documenting the problems our oceans face.

[Every Frame a Painting - Video Essays](#)

Perhaps the greatest video essays about film form ever made, Every Frame a Painting has some of the best insights into how films are created. I encourage you to watch all of his videos, but 3 have been selected and linked in the questionnaire below. Please click the corresponding questionnaire, watch the videos, and answer the questions.





Photography

OVERVIEW: When you capture an incredible photo, it moves something inside of you. Photographers are constantly searching for that photo, and on your TTN program, you'll have the opportunity to try and capture yours. Photography isn't just about pointing and shooting. You have to really think about framing, subject, lighting, and dozens of other elements each time you click the shutter.

WHAT TO DO: While preparing for your trip and the photo collection you'll create, you'll need to do some research into photographers that have come before and **analyze one of these films or video essays** for creative inspiration and learning. **Choose 1 of these 3 options** but feel free to look at or study the other options if you're interested.

Suggested Question Worksheets

[Chasing Ice \(2012\)](#)

[Nerdwriter](#)

[Peter McKinnon](#)

Recommended Readings/Viewings:

Chasing Ice (2012) - Environmental Conservation

Follow National Geographic photographer James Balog across the Arctic as he deploys time-lapse cameras designed for one purpose: to capture a multi-year record of the world's changing glaciers.

Nerdwriter Video Essays - Poetry

Nerdwriter1 is a YouTube channel that focuses on art form. The videos in the link below analyze two different photographers and their approach to photography. Please click on the corresponding questionnaire option below to view the YouTube links to videos.

Peter McKinnon - Tutorials; Video

McKinnon is a talented photographer and videographer that has made a name for himself on YouTube through tutorials, product reviews, and editing workflow information. Please click on the corresponding questionnaire option below to view the YouTube links to the videos.



ON-PROGRAM

Once on your program, think about what type of story you want to tell with your project.

Remember, your story is your own and this trip is the perfect landscape to find inspiration to showcase your voice and creativity.

Here are some recommendations below to take on-program with you. Have questions or need help? Be sure to reach out to your mentors or TTN's resident photographer, Matt Miller, at fellowships@teentravelnetwork.com.



Creative Writing

First, decide if you want to create a fiction or nonfiction piece. Is this more of an essay or a short story? First person, third person? Is it about the other students, your own personal experience, the experiences of the locals you're meeting, something entirely different and unique? These are all things you'll need to think about while in country.

We recommend that you keep a journal during your time at the program. Not only will it give you reference material for your story, but the best way to come up with story ideas and angles is to put pen to paper and start writing. It will also focus your vision for what type of story you want to make when you get back home. If you suddenly come up with an interesting idea while journaling, write it down in the margins!

One of the biggest problems with stories from novice writers is a lack of conflict. Does your story have it? Even if it is nonfiction, your main character should have a clear motive or goal and some sort of opposition that tries to keep him from that goal.



Videography

What kind of film do you want to create to tell your story. Do you want to have an interview heavy film with clips of experiences on top? Do you want to use all visuals with no voice over? Be creative! This is your chance to get shots you can't get anywhere else, so try to make them unique.

The creativity of your video is completely up to you. Make it your own and try to develop your personal style that conveys exactly what you want to show. When you're on your trip, **try to observe and ask questions to students, Trip Leaders and the communities you visit and capture (with respect) what you hear and see that inspires you.**



Photography

Think about what type of story you want to tell with your photographs. Photographic style is created over time, and this is the perfect opportunity to try and discover yours. Try to take photos in unique ways that give your collection a specific feel. One of the best tips for taking unique photos is to always think to yourself, "could

somebody take this with a smartphone" and if the answer is yes, find a new angle or perspective to take the photo! This is a simple answer to a difficult problem, but one I still think about as a professional photographer.

Remember to take as many photos as possible. If you're using a digital camera, there is no reason not to take as many photos as you can and edit them down later. You never know if the focus isn't going to be quite right, or the framing of the photo is just a bit off. Take multiples so you always get the shot you want.

The best photographers tell a story with their photos. They have a message. What is your message? Why is that your message? Are you going to try and show what you want everyone to see, or push an impartial lens into every subject, allowing the viewer to make their own judgements?



POST-PROGRAM

Now that you've completed your Teen Travel Network program, it's time to pull insights and learnings from your experience and craft your project.

Creating a well-formed project is more than just going off of a format and doing what people expect. Be sure to stake out a position and defend it using your unique approach. You can use what you experienced on-program, add context from your pre-program reading and viewing, and build on that with new critical thinking or additional material you've consumed after your program. And don't be afraid to take some chances!

The most important aspect of your project is your story. What are you trying to convey? Whether it be a short story, documentary, or portfolio we want to see your creativity shine. You will find our assessment rubrics at the end of this packet to see what components we're looking for in your project.



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[@TeenTravelNetwork](https://www.instagram.com/TeenTravelNetwork)



[+1 858-771-4886](tel:+18587714886)

PROJECT PARAMETERS & REQUIREMENTS



CREATIVE WRITING

Write a story or essay that is **4-11 pages in length**. Take some time to review your journal. The best thing to do is just start typing and see where it leads. Some like to map out their story using outlines or mind maps, whatever your process the key is just not to give up and see it through to the end.



VIDEOGRAPHY

Use your best judgment to create a video that is **3-10 minutes in length**. Submissions should be uploaded to YouTube either with no music or copyright free music. **Remember if you use copyrighted music content, YouTube will block your video!** Once you submit, you'll be automatically entered into TTN's video contest!



PHOTOGRAPHY

Your final project should contain **20 - 30 of the best photos from your experience**. Make sure to be critical of your photos. Consider composition and subject matter. If you choose to do a custom final project that has more or less photos than the photo requirement, make sure you detail this in a project proposal when you submit. Submissions should be uploaded to Google Drive or Dropbox.



DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION

You must submit your final project by no later than **SEPTEMBER 15** to **fellowships@teentravelnetwork.com** including your full name with submission and any required custom project proposals or appropriate links.



FELLOWSHIP COMPLETION

TO COMPLETE YOUR FELLOWSHIP YOU MUST HAVE:

- Participated in a full Teen Travel Network program
- Submitted your final project to the Fellowship Committee by the deadline
- Showed critical thinking and displayed a unique perspective of your subject matter

Otherwise, the amount of time you put into the Fellowship, and any reading or viewing of learning materials, are completely up to you.

AWARDS & CERTIFICATIONS

Should the Fellowship Committee determine you met all the requirements satisfactorily, you'll be awarded:

- A Certificate of Achievement & Pin honoring your achievement
- A Recommendation Letter from our Executive Director (upon request)
- The title of *Arts & Letters Fellow* for your College Applications and Future Resume/CV
- **Arts & Letters Competition** - The TTN student with the best final product will be honored with a showcase, shared on all major TTN channels (including our 100K+ Facebook followers, 20K+ Instagram followers, etc.)

*At this time, you will be considered an **Alumni Fellow in good standing** with Teen Travel Network.*

*The Fellowship Committee will review final essays on a rolling basis. **We expect to have all Fellowship final project submissions reviewed by January 15.***



2024 CREATIVE WRITING FELLOWSHIP RUBRIC

CRITERIA	<u>Excellent</u> 3 Points	<u>Great</u> 2 Points	<u>Good</u> 1 Point	<u>Needs Revision</u> 0 Points
A Narrative Arc	<i>Fantastic set up of premise, great rising action, clear climax/focus, then resolution that shows change in character</i>	<i>Good set up and rising action with a clear climax/focus, concise resolution</i>	<i>Good setup with a clear climax/focus or a clear character change</i>	<i>No setup, unclear climax or focus, no character change</i>
B Character(s)	Character(s) grow and change throughout the story, clear connection to climax/focus	Character(s) change throughout the story. Connection to climax/focus	Character(s) change throughout the story	Character(s) do not change throughout the story
C Connection to TTN Experience	The story has a clear connection to what the student saw/learned through the TTN experience	Story is based or focused around lessons learned from the TTN program	<i>Story is loosely based or focused on the TTN program experience</i>	<i>Story is not based or focused on the TTN program experience</i>
D Style	The style is unique and adds a fantastic feel to the creative piece without detracting from the content	The style is good and adds to the enjoyment of the piece	The voice/style is good, but sometimes inconsistent	<i>There is no style or the style detracts from the content of the piece</i>
E Grammar & Presentation	Punctuation, spelling, and grammar are flawless	Punctuation, spelling, and grammar are almost all correct, with a few errors	Punctuation, spelling, and grammar are mostly correct	Punctuation, spelling, and grammar are flawed with many errors

Did the final project meet the length requirements of 4 - 11 pages? YES NO (1 Point)

A score **above a 6** is considered a passing grade for your final project
 A score of **6 or below** will require the student to revise their submission

TOTAL EVALUATION SCORE: ___ /16

2024 VIDEOGRAPHY FELLOWSHIP RUBRIC

CRITERIA	<u>Excellent</u> 3 Points	<u>Great</u> 2 Points	<u>Good</u> 1 Point	<u>Needs Revision</u> 0 Points
A Overall Aesthetics	<i>Video well composed with intention for subject, story, and technical function</i>	<i>Video has good intention for subject, story, and technical function</i>	<i>Video has a subject and story</i>	<i>Video has no subject or story</i>
B Subject	The subject is clear and the composition accents the subject perfectly	The subject is clear and composed correctly	The subject is clear	The subject is unclear or has an awkward composition
C Connection to TTN Experience	Video has an underlying theme that is deeply connected with the TTN experience	Video has a cohesive TTN theme (can be connected by style)	<i>Video has a theme (can be connected by style)</i>	<i>Video has no theme or connection to TTN experience</i>
D Technique and Editing	The subject is in focus, exposure is correct, and the editing conveys intent perfectly	Subject is in focus and exposure is correct, with some minor issues in editing	Most technical shooting is good, but the editing is choppy or confusing	<i>Video has many technical errors and editing is confusing</i>
E Creativity	Video has great intention and creates a unique perspective of subject and style	Video has a unique perspective and style	Video has a unique perspective or style	Video does not have a unique perspective or style

Did the final project meet the length requirements of 3 - 7 minutes? YES NO (1 Point)

A score **above a 6** is considered a passing grade for your final project
 A score of **6 or below** will require the student to revise their submission

TOTAL EVALUATION SCORE: ___ /16

2024 PHOTOGRAPHY FELLOWSHIP RUBRIC

CRITERIA	<u>Excellent</u> 3 Points	<u>Great</u> 2 Points	<u>Good</u> 1 Point	<u>Needs Revision</u> 0 Points
A Overall Aesthetics	<i>Photos are well composed with intention for shape, subject, color, and light</i>	<i>Photos have intention for shape, subject, color, and light</i>	<i>Most photos have intention for shape, subject, color, and light</i>	<i>Photos do not seem to have intention for shape subject, color, and light</i>
B Subject	The subject is clear and the composition accents the subject perfectly	The subject is clear and composed correctly	The subject is clear	The subject is unclear or has an awkward composition
C Connection to TTN Experience	Photos all connect to each other in an underlying theme that is connected with the TTN experience	Photos have an underlying theme (can be connected by style)	<i>Most photos have some underlying theme</i>	<i>None of the photos connect to each other or the TTN experience</i>
D Technique	The subject is in focus, exposure is correct, and the editing conveys intent perfectly	Subject is in focus and exposure is correct, with some minor issues in a few photos	Focus is correct, but the photos have multiple issues	<i>Photos have many technical issues, such as focus, exposure, or clarity</i>
E Creativity	Photos are taken with intention to create a unique perspective of subject and photographic style	Most photos are unique and have their own photographic style	<i>Only a few photos are unique and have intention behind photographic style</i>	Photos have very little or no intention for creativity or style

Did the final project meet the length requirements of 20 - 30 photos? YES NO (1 Point)

A score **above a 6** is considered a passing grade for your final project
 A score of **6 or below** will require the student to revise their submission

TOTAL EVALUATION SCORE: ___ /16

CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations again on your outstanding efforts, and we look forward to reading your final essay after you complete your TTN program!

This packet has everything you need to complete your requirements as a Fellow. **If you do have any pressing questions that absolutely cannot be answered in this document, please email us at fellowships@teentravelnetwork.com.**



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+1 858-771-4886