



THE CLASSICAL INSTITUTE *of the* SOUTH
at THE HISTORIC NEW ORLEANS COLLECTION

Frequently Asked Questions

Do I need to know a lot about the Gulf South to apply? How is CIS relevant to a non-southerner?

While knowledge of the Gulf South is a plus, it is not required! Orientation week features many lectures and field trips to help fellows get acquainted with the region's history and material culture. Team discussions and assigned relevant background readings delve further into historical context throughout field work. Our hosts are usually eager to share local lore and excited that outside researchers are interested in their towns.

The most important CIS fellow qualifications are familiarity with object handling and a working vocabulary of decorative arts terms. A strong background in decorative arts basics will translate to any new situation. Students of other regions will likely find familiar objects during CIS field work! Gulf South residents usually imported finer home décor from style centers like New York, Philadelphia, and France.

I got my graduate degree last year; can I still apply?

Yes! We welcome applications from emerging professionals in the early stages of their careers. If you have a full-time job, check with your employer about extended absence policies before applying.

Where will field work happen this year?

Magnolia Grove in Greensboro, AL, will be a 2020 fieldwork site. Other locations will likely include Natchez, MS, or western Louisiana.

Finding fieldwork sites is a year-round process of travel, research, and networking. When possible, the CIS team will explore potential future locations to assess their eligibility.

Do fellows have to write a final paper?

No, CIS database additions are the final product. Fellows will take a few days before the New Orleans Antiques Forum to edit their work before submitting it for the coordinator's final editing. We do request that fellows submit a short summary of their fieldwork experience with feedback for future years.

Publication opportunities are available in THNOC's [Quarterly](#) magazine and [First Draft](#) blog series. We encourage fellows to pursue research topics they discover in the field!

Isn't it hot in the Gulf South in the summer?

While it can get quite hot and humid outside, the majority of the cataloging work takes place in air-conditioned spaces. If work does take place in outbuildings or historic structures without climate control, we often adjust our schedule to avoid the hottest parts of the day. Shorts and t-shirts (without logos) are welcome work clothes. A water bottle is crucial for frequent hydration breaks.

What is the daily schedule like?

The CIS team typically works Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., as site availability permits. If the team has to work on a Saturday, the coordinator will find time for another day off during the week.

During cataloging work, one fellow acts as the note taker in the CIS Excel template, while the other works as photographer. Fellows trade roles every few days so they can master all aspects of fieldwork. The coordinator assists the fellows throughout the day, managing workflow and photo staging and interviewing site owners about object history.

Will I have any free time?

Fellows are free to spend non-cataloging time as they wish. Personal space and relaxation time are important during such close collaboration! Teams often enjoy exploring local attractions and restaurants together, but also choose some nights at home preparing their own meals. Feel free to bring any running or other fitness equipment you desire. Occasionally the CIS team has access to a swimming pool.

What are the housing and travel arrangements? Should I bring my own car?

CIS provides free housing during the entire fellowship. For orientation and the Antiques Forum, fellows stay in a French Quarter apartment near THNOC. During field work, the fellows and coordinator find lodging near their work sites, often in private homes generously loaned by local contacts. Typically each team member has their own room. If room sharing is necessary, fellows will only have to share with someone of the same gender.

CIS will reimburse fellows for their airfare or other travel expenses to and from New Orleans. Since long-term parking in downtown New Orleans is difficult and expensive, we do not recommend bringing your own vehicle. It is easy to get around the city on streetcars, buses, and rideshare apps. CIS provides a large rental SUV during fieldwork to accommodate luggage and photo equipment.