A letter from Teaching Shakespeare 2016 director, Dr. Peggy O’Brien:

Since 1984, the National Endowment for the Humanities has supported the continuing work of the Folger Shakespeare Library’s Teaching Shakespeare institutes’ intense, month-long studies of a few plays from three essential perspectives: scholarship, performance, and the secondary school classroom. We know that schoolteachers do the most important work on earth. For our faculty and staff, the chance to work in depth with teachers is not only an honor, but our most exciting work. And we are particularly excited about Teaching Shakespeare 2016, the year in which the world will celebrate the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare’s death.

Our theme is America’s Shakespeare. In that spirit, and closely aligned with the Library’s groundbreaking America’s Shakespeare exhibit, we’ll be collaborating with renowned institute faculty and Folger staff to get deep inside Othello, Merchant of Venice, and The Tempest.

The work is fast-paced, exhilarating, and challenging; there are moments when it can be overwhelming too. Our theory is this: you and your work (and your students) are so important to us that in every moment of a Teaching Shakespeare month, we want to offer you an experience, an opportunity, a new horizon that you couldn’t get anywhere else, at any other time. If you are looking for a program in which there is lots of time to reflect, to see the sights in DC, to get a break from your busy teaching year . . . those are all worthy goals, but I’d suggest most respectfully that this may not be the program for you.

If you’re high energy, a natural collaborator, looking to learn about Shakespeare and teaching Shakespeare, please apply!