

LEADERSHIP IN GOVERNMENT FELLOWSHIP

Deadline: July 24, 2025

Fellowship Overview and Applicant Deadlines

The Leadership in Government Fellowship program of Amalgamated Charitable Foundation funded by Open Society Foundations seeks applicants. Applications are due on July 24 at 11:59pm ET and must be submitted online at <https://leadingov.grantplatform.com>.

The online system will begin accepting applications on June 12. This document contains the eligibility guidelines (Part I) and information on how to apply (Part II).

1 Guidelines

Program Description

The Leadership in Government Fellowship program supports outstanding individuals who have played a significant role in advancing social change from within government in the United States and its territories at the city, county, tribal, state, and federal levels. The Fellowships will allow recent government leaders to reflect on their public service, expand their network and knowledge, and insert their unique perspectives and expertise into the public dialogue. The selected individual grantees are referred to as fellows. Fellows will undertake a project of their choosing as described in their application for the fellowship that will help them promote a richer and more nuanced understanding of the opportunities for making and implementing change from inside of government and, in turn, give them the chance to promote specific policy ideas beyond their former jurisdictions. The Leadership in Government Fellowship program will consider proposals for projects that align with the goal of building strong pro-democracy organizations and movements with enough political, economic, and cultural power to advance an open society at home and abroad.

Fellows will also have opportunities to network with one another as a cohort. This networking and relationship building will provide fellows with deeper connections and broader perspectives on social change in the United States.

The Applicant

The Leadership in Government Fellowship program seeks fellowship applicants who have served in senior-level, full-time government positions in the United States and its territories. The ideal candidates are public servants who have

recently completed their time in government (or within the last two years) or will have completed their term prior to the beginning of their fellowship and have served in the chief executive role or senior management of their agency or office. Examples include: Deputy Mayor, Commissioner, Chief of Staff, City Manager, Counsel, Senior Policy Advisor, Legislative Director, and Assistant Undersecretary.

Ideally, applicants see themselves serving as change agents within government in the future or are looking to apply their public service experience to an advocacy career. People of all political parties or ideologies are encouraged to apply, especially those who expand ideas and approaches to social change.

Successful applicants will demonstrate the following qualities: a keen interest in reflecting on their government service; a passion for solving problems and implementing policy; a desire to advance ideas beyond their former jurisdictions; and a desire to inject their work into the public dialogue.

The fellowship program only accepts individual applications. Joint applications will not be considered. Fellows should have served in a full-time capacity in their government role. Those serving in a solely volunteer positions, a consultant to government, or government contractor are ineligible for the fellowship. Applicants must use the current application template provided. Accommodations will be made for people with disabilities. Additional materials submitted besides the requested application materials will not be considered.

The Topic of the Project

The topic of the project should align broadly with the mission of championing the search for bold, democratic solutions to our urgent, common challenges that advance rights, and greater economic, civic and cultural participation in democracy in the U.S. and abroad. OSF does this by supporting a wide array of independent voices and organizations around the world that provide a creative and dynamic link between the governing and the governed. OSF's approach seeks to counter the narrow pursuit of political self-interest and short-term opportunism—in pursuit of a sustainable future for people and planet that leaves no one behind.

Project themes can focus on a particular issue or cut across broad areas of interest. Further, we recognize that public narratives, erosion of democratic norms, anxiety across racial groups, and economic insecurity have reinforced divisions and the systems that perpetuate inequities. It is in this context that we ask applicants to

place their project and explain how and why their project is necessary to move towards a more vibrant and inclusive democracy.

A project might identify a problem in the implementation of policy that has yet to be fully recognized or discussed, offer new strategies on how to work with government and advocate for policy change, or highlight a different approach for legislative or executive action. Projects may not include any lobbying or political campaign activities, as discussed in more detail below.

The Project Deliverable

Applicants should carefully consider the impact they want their project to have and the audiences they wish to reach. They should then think creatively about the activities and project deliverable that will reach these audiences most effectively. Applicants should determine the content and scope of the project deliverables and make a convincing case that the work is sufficiently ambitious. Deliverables may include, but are not limited to: a book, report, blog, white paper, implementation guide, public education project, technical assistance to advocacy or non-profit groups, or series of op-eds and media appearances. The hope is that these deliverables will be made available to a wide audience.

Fellows will want to provide an in-depth analysis of the issue and meet with organizations and actors both familiar and unfamiliar to them as part of their project, on all sides of the issue. In addition, fellows may want to use their grant to engage in activities such as participating in panel discussions, conferences, policy debates, and promoting their ideas in other public venues. As the host organization for the fellowship program, ACF's Leadership in Government Fellowship Director will provide mentorship and guidance and may also encourage and support fellows to produce op-eds, develop quotes for the media, and do public appearances related to their fellowship project.

Not Sure if Your Project Fits? Submit an Email Inquiry

Applicants who are uncertain whether their government experience or proposed project fits within the parameters of the fellowships guidelines may submit an email inquiry before proceeding with the full application. The email should provide a brief (no more than 200 words) description of the proposed project, as well as some background information on the applicant, and should be sent to:

LIGfellowship@amalgamatedfoundation.org

Best efforts will be made to respond to all email inquiries within a week of their receipt. Applicants should send an email inquiry no later than Wednesday, July 9.

Fellowship Term

The Leadership in Government Fellowship is a program of Amalgamated Charitable Foundation (“ACF”) funded by OSF. ACF will consider applicants from all parts of the United States and its territories. Fellowship terms can be one year or 18 months. The expectation is that fellows will spend sixty to eighty percent of their time (based on a 40-hour work week) over the course of the fellowship devoted to their project. ACF will inform applicants of their selection as prospective fellows in early October 2025 and award grants, contingent on ACF compliance review, for fellowships to start in early November 2025. Work must begin by the end of November 2025, with a possibility to start the fellowship as early as October 1. Fellows cannot have full-time employment and cannot run for public office during the term of the fellowship.

Fellowship Award

Fellows will receive a grant in a general range of \$115,000 - \$160,000 depending on percentage of time committed to the project. Fellowship grant amounts are non-negotiable.

These grant amounts are all-inclusive—that is, they are intended to cover a fellow’s living expenses, project-related expenses, travel, conference fees, health insurance, etc. We do not provide additional funds beyond the fellowship award (we do, however, cover any costs associated with attending fellowship-related conferences, gatherings, or meetings organized by the fellowships program).

The fellowship does not fund enrollment for degree or non-degree study at academic institutions, including dissertation research.

Information related to the grants will be disclosed on ACF’s tax filings to the extent required by law.

The tax implications for receiving grant fellowship payments are unique based on the recipient's individual state and federal tax circumstances. Guidance can be obtained through independent tax professionals.

Fellows will be required to sign a fellowship grant agreement with ACF before ACF distributes the grant funds. To the extent the terms of the grant agreement

are inconsistent with the terms of these Leadership in Government Fellowship Guidelines, the terms of the fellowship grant agreement will control.

Lobbying and Political Campaign Activity Restriction

Projects that include lobbying or political campaign activities will not be funded. For purposes of these Leadership in Government Fellowship Guidelines, lobbying includes carrying on propaganda, or otherwise attempting, to influence legislation at the state, federal, or local level or internationally. Political campaign activities includes political campaign activities refer to the direct or indirect participation or intervention in political campaigns on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office at the state, federal, or local level or internationally. Fellows are prohibited from using any grant funds for these purposes.

Applicants must also agree to refrain from engaging in restricted lobbying and political campaign activities during any percentage of time they have allotted to fellowship work.

Selection Process

The selection committee for the Leadership in Government Fellowship program will evaluate applications and consider whether the applicant's balance of experience and profile, track record, and depth of expertise give reason to believe that the project will be successfully completed and will support the applicant's professional development. The committee will also consider how well the topic of the project aligns with the mission of championing the search for bold, democratic solutions to our urgent, common challenges that advance rights, equity, and justice, and how the proposed work product will advance the understanding of how to make progress on the chosen issue(s). The selection committee will review proposals and nominate a select group of finalists. The finalists will be invited to interview virtually in middle of September 2025 with the selection committee. From the pool of finalists, a small number of applicants will be awarded fellowships.

Under certain circumstances, ACF staff may, at different points in the selection process, reach out to specific candidates by phone or email to get answers to questions that may help us determine whether to select someone as a finalist or to award a fellowship.

The fellowship opportunity considers applications subject to funding availability.

Application

Application Information

The application deadline is July 24. Incomplete applications will not be given full consideration.

Online Submission

Applications must be submitted online via the [Leadership in Government Portal](#) (the Portal), which can also be accessed through the Leadership in Government Fellowship [website](#).

For technical assistance and support using the Portal, email:
LIGfellowship@amalgamatedfoundation.org

Content of Complete Application

The Portal will begin accepting materials on June 12. When using the Portal, applicants will need to fill out personal information and must be prepared to provide the following:

1. Resume
2. Completed Cover Page and Proposal
 - Your proposal will consist of responses to the eight questions listed below. Each question has a word limit, which is the maximum amount of text needed to answer the question fully. Please note that any additional materials or publications will not be reviewed by OSF staff.
 - Question 1 - Reflection on Government Service and Fellowship Opportunity (600 Words): How do you hope to use this fellowship to reflect on your time in government service? What insights, skills, and lessons from your time in government can you offer advocates, policymakers, and social movements? Please also provide information about why the fellowship is the right next step for you, what parts of your career do you hope to further invest in and explore?
 - Question 2 - Project Explanation (800 Words): What is your proposed project? Provide a clear, detailed, and focused explanation of the project. Your answers should include the following: project goals and objectives, why it is needed at this time, a description of the people or communities

affected by the issue, the final outcome or work product, and the audience or constituencies you hope to reach through this work.

- Question 3 - Project Activities and Timeline (400 Words): Please provide a succinct explanation of your major project activities and include a corresponding quarterly timeline.
- Question 4 – Project Impact (400 Words): What impact do you hope your project will have over the course of your fellowship and beyond? How will you measure your impact? (We are not asking for a comprehensive evaluation plan; we want to see the thought you have given to how you will know if your fellowship is successful.)
- Question 5 – People, Organizations, and Networks (250 Words): Who are the people and/or organizations in your network that will be important for informing your fellowship, and why? What people and organizations, or types of people and organizations, do you not yet know but hope to connect with in carrying out your project?
- Question 6 - Time Commitment (150 Words): What is the proposed percentage of time (60 to 80 percent) of a 40-hour work week that you will devote to the project? Do you anticipate devoting 12 or 18 months to the fellowship? Describe any non-fellowship work responsibilities (e.g. consulting, hourly project-based work, etc.) or educational commitments that you expect to have during the course of your fellowship, including the approximate time to be devoted to these responsibilities or commitments.
- Question 7 – End of Government Service, Post-Government Restrictions, and Conflicts of Interest (150 Words): When was or is your estimated last day of government service? Do you have any restrictions related to your post-government work or funding, and if so, how might these restrictions impact the proposal? Explain any conflicts of interest you have with ACF or the Open Society Foundations.
- Question 8 - Further Information: Is there any other information that you would like to provide?

Applicants who are uncertain whether some aspect of their proposed project fits within the parameters of the guidelines or whether the project is otherwise likely to be of interest may submit an email inquiry. The email should provide a brief (no more than 200 words) description of the proposed project, as well as some background information on the applicant, and should be sent to LIGfellowship@amalgamatedfoundation.org by July 9. Please do not submit an email inquiry before reviewing the appropriate fellowships' guidelines.

Selection Timeline

Application Deadline:	July 24, 2025
Finalists Notified:	September 2025 (All applicants will be notified via email whether they have been selected as a finalist.)
Finalist Interviews:	Week of September 29 (All finalist interviews will be held virtually.)
Selected Fellows Notified:	Middle of October 2025
Projects Begin:	November 2025

Selection timeline subject to change. The application deadline will remain July 24 in all circumstances.