**OPEN SOCIETY
FOUNDATIONS**

Leadership in Government Fellowship

Guidelines and Application

Deadline: January 31, 2023

Fellowship Overview and Applicant Deadlines

The Leadership in Government Fellowships seek applicants. Applications are due on January 31, 2023 at 11:59 PM EST and must be submitted online at [the Open Society Foundations Grant Portal](). The online system will begin accepting applications on November 18, 2022. This document contains the eligibility guidelines (Part I) and information on how to apply (Part II).

Guidelines

Program Description

The Leadership in Government Fellowships support 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. For the purposes of this solicitation of proposals, we refer to the selected individual grantees as fellows. Fellows will undertake a project of their choosing 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 Fellowships will consider proposals for projects that align with our overall goal of building a multi-racial, pro-democracy alliance with enough political, economic, and cultural power to advance an open society at home and abroad.

While Open Society—U.S. devotes a considerable portion of our grant making resources to advocacy and support of non-profit organizations, we are committed to investing in leaders that can inform and disrupt our collective thinking about advancing open society in the United States. These grants to former government staff and officials will help us find visionaries whose projects have the potential to identify different ideas and strategies for thinking about how reform is not just won, but implemented successfully.

Fellows will be able to take advantage of the considerable intellectual and logistical resources of the Open Society Foundations (OSF) and contribute meaningfully to the Foundations' thinking in return. 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.

Through the Leadership in Government Fellowships and our partner fellowships within Open Society-U.S.—the [Soros Equality Fellowship](#)s and the [Soros Justice Fellowships](#)—the Open Society Foundations aim to provide a network of leaders with the resources to effectively address injustice and inequality, and the space to imagine a more just and equitable future. Given the overlapping goals and strategies across the different fellowships, we may, with applicants' permission, refer applicants to other fellowship programs within Open Society-U.S. should they be deemed a better fit (all three fellowship programs have the same application deadline and roughly the same selection timeline). Applicants, however, cannot apply to more than one fellowship program.

The Applicant

The Leadership in Government Fellowships seek fellowship applicants who have served in senior-level, full-time government positions in the United States and its territories. Our 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. We have had applicants and fellows with the following titles: 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 can challenge our thinking and approach 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. Applicants should also have an interest in engaging constructively with our grantee network, and in furthering Open Society—U.S.'s strategic goal of building and supporting a multi-racial democracy.

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

Open Society—U.S. supports efforts to advance equality, fairness, and justice, with a focus on the most marginalized communities and the most significant threats to open society in the United States. Open Society—U.S. is committed to building a vibrant, inclusive, and more just society in the United States. We combine grantmaking, advocacy, fellowships and field office work to create a single entity dedicated to promoting full participation in the nation's civic, political, and economic life—particularly for communities that are historically marginalized—and to ensure that the core institutions of civil society are effective, equitable, and accountable to the public.

Our work is guided by the power of local voices: through our urban laboratory of change, the Open Society Institute–Baltimore; our work in helping to rebuild Puerto Rico; and our ongoing efforts in a number of primarily South and Southwestern cities and states.

The issues we work on have included the following:

- ending mass incarceration, making police departments more accountable to the communities they serve, challenging the death penalty, and replacing youth justice policies that stigmatize and suppress with policies that safeguard the rights of children and young people;

- promoting drug policies that ensure access to treatment and address drug use—and the health, mental health, and social needs it creates—within the context of communities rather than the criminal justice system

- promoting fairness and equality for all people in the United States by removing barriers to full participation in economic, social, and

civic life for all; seeking to reduce the racial wealth gap and change the national racial narrative;

- strengthening the capacity of community and legal organizations that work to promote the rights of immigrants, safeguarding them against unjust attack, and promoting their full participation in American life;

- supporting high-quality journalism to help hold powerful institutions accountable, protecting the public interest on matters of media and information policy, reducing various forms of corruption and the undue influence of money in politics, empowering communities to combat multiple forms of voter suppression, and advancing reforms safeguarding the independence of state and federal courts;

- promoting the rule of law, defending civil liberties and human rights; and

- promoting economic opportunity for all, reducing income equality, establishing fairness in the workplace, and advancing fair housing and lending policies.

The topic of the project should align with Open Society—U.S.'s areas of focus. Project themes can focus on a particular issue or cut across broad areas of interest. Further, we are living in unprecedented times, where toxic narratives, erosion of democratic norms, racialized anxiety, economic insecurity, and an ongoing health pandemic 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 counter these threats and move toward a more 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 should not include any lobbying or political campaign activities, as discussed in 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. We do not dictate the deliverables that applicants propose. Instead, we leave it to the applicants to 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. OSF will 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: OSUSFellowships@opensocietyfoundations.org.

We will do our best to respond to all email inquiries within a week of their receipt. Applicants should send an email inquiry no later than January 24, 2023.

Open Society Foundations Network

Fellows are invited to join the rich and diverse OSF community. They are encouraged to take advantage of the Foundations' expansive reach and bring new people and fresh ideas into the organization's domain. Fellows will work from their home-base of operations, but will be invited, on occasion, to participate in activities virtually or at the organization's main offices in New York and in other places around the United States, subject to OSF's COVID-19 safety protocols. Fellows are encouraged to participate in conferences and program events, as well as seminars involving Foundations' staff and outside colleagues. In most cases, Open Society—U.S. will advise fellows on ways to communicate their work to a broader audience and influence current debates. OSF staff will also work to integrate fellows into our network of individuals and organizations and expect fellows to make this a priority.

Fellowship Term

The Leadership in Government Fellowships 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. The Leadership in Government Fellowships will inform applicants of their selection as prospective fellows in early-May 2023 and award grants, contingent on OSF compliance review, for fellowships to start in early-June 2023. Work must begin by the end of June 2023, with a possibility to start the fellowship as early as May 15. Fellows cannot have full-time employment and cannot run for public office during the term of the fellowship.

Fellowship Award

Fellows will receive a stipend in a general range of $110,000 - $150,000 depending on percentage of time committed to the project. Fellowship stipend 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.

Grants to fellows are considered public information and the fellow's name and project description will be included in OSF's tax returns, as per IRS regulations.

Lobbying and Political Campaign Activity Restriction

Projects that include lobbying or political campaign activities will not be funded. Please carefully review OSF's Tax Law Lobbying Rules before submitting an application.

In addition, the entity within the Open Society Foundations that will issue these fellowships is a U.S. private foundation. As a U.S. private foundation, it is prohibited from participating or intervening in any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to a candidate for public office. This prohibition applies to direct action by the foundation and to action funded through its grants. As a result, fellows may not use grant funds for prohibited political campaign intervention.

If awarded a fellowship, applicants are required to attend a training session on the tax law lobbying regulations and political activity prohibition, conducted by the OSF General Counsel's Office. Applicants must also agree to refrain from engaging in restricted lobbying and political campaign activities during the term of the fellowship.

Selection Process

The selection committee will evaluate applications in consultation with OSF colleagues and outside experts. Reviewers 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 career

trajectory. The committee will also consider how well the topic of the project aligns with Open Society—U.S.' strategic goal of building and supporting a multi-racial democarcy, and how the proposed work product will advance our and our partners' 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 mid-April with the selection committee. From the pool of finalists, a small number of applicants will be awarded fellowships.

Under certain circumstances, 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 January 31, 2023 (12:00pm EST). Incomplete applications will not be given full consideration.

Online Submission

Applications must be submitted online via the Open Society Foundations Grantee Communities Portal (the Portal), which can also be accessed through the Leadership in Government Fellowship website. Please register on the Portal and follow the instructions. A step-by-step guide and helpful information on how to use the Portal can be found on this online support resource.

All communications with applicants will be sent to the email used to register with the Portal, so applicants should ensure that emails from the Open Society Foundations do not end up in their "Junk Mail" or "Spam" folder.

For technical assistance and support using the Portal, email: granteefeedback@opensocietyfoundations.org.

Three important notes regarding the Portal

1. When you register, please be sure to click "Individual" and not "Organization."

2. Once registered, please do not fill out the information for the "Bank Accounts," "Academic History," and "Work Experience" tabs in your user Profile.

3. You can start applications and come back to continue working on applications by logging back into the Portal. Please make sure to hit submit when you are ready to submit your completed application to the Open Society Foundations.

Content of Complete Application

The Portal will begin accepting materials on November 18 2022. When using the Portal, applicants will need to fill out personal information and must upload two documents:

1. Resume

2. Completed Cover Page and Proposal (downloaded from the Open Society [website](#))

Your proposal will consist of responses to the nine questions listed below and should be answered by using the proposal template attached to the cover page which can be downloaded from the OSF website. 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.

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?

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. Explain how the project is expected to advance an issue (or set of issues) related to the Open Society Foundations and Open Society—U.S.'s goals or priorities and how will it inform public discourse and understanding on the chosen issue.

3. Project Activities and Timeline (400 Words)

Please provide a succinct explanation of your major project activities and include a corresponding quarterly timeline.

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.)

5. Meeting the Current Moment in the U.S. (400 Words)

We are living in what feel to many like unprecedented times, where toxic narratives, erosion of democratic norms, racialized anxiety, economic insecurity, and an ongoing health pandemic have reinforced divisions and the systems that perpetuate inequities? How does your project address the unprecedented challenges and opportunities facing our country?

6. 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?

7. 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.

8. **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 the Open Society Foundations.

9. **Question 9: 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 OSUSFellowships@opensocietyfoundations.org by January 24, 2023. Please do not submit an email inquiry before reviewing the appropriate fellowships' guidelines.

Selection Timeline*

Application Deadline	January 31, 2023 (11:59 P.M. EST)
Finalists Notified	Early April 2023 (All applicants will be notified via email whether they have been selected as a finalist. Feedback will not be given to those not selected for an interview.)
Finalist Interviews	Week of April 17, 2023 (All finalist interviews will be held virtually.)
Selected Fellows Notified	Early-May 2023
Fellowship Start	Early-June 2023

* Selection timeline subject to change. The application deadline will remain January 31, 2023, in all cirumstances.