

2023 Fellowship Advancement Fund

Guidelines and Application

Summary

Open Society–United States, through its Fellowship Advancement Fund, seeks applications from past fellows for funding to support their continued development and sustainability. Funding requests will be accepted on a monthly basis and are due the fourth Wednesday of each month in 2023. Requests can range from \$1,000 to \$75,000.

Applications are due by the fourth Wednesday every month. The first application deadline in 2023 is May 24 (11:59 pm EDT). Applications must be submitted online through the application portal, which can be accessed through the [Fellowship Advancement Fund website](#).

General

Transformation into a truly just society requires longer term investments in the people who have a track record of developing winning strategies, telling important but often overlooked stories, and leading change in their communities. Fellows' contributions to the fields and movements of which they are a part, through their fellowship projects and beyond, have demonstrated their ability to make a difference, even with limited supports. The Fellowship Advancement Fund is an effort to increase that support.

The **Fellowship Advancement Fund** seeks to deepen our investment in past Open Society-U.S. fellowship recipients by supporting their ongoing leadership, the elevation and expansion of their work, and their sustainability and impact in movements and organizations across various fields. This fund promotes education of communities and individuals working to end inequality and injustice within the United States and the world beyond.

We understand that post-fellowship, alumni continue to have needs, confront challenges, and find themselves in positions to advance their work. Until now, we have not had a mechanism to resource these needs and opportunities. We aim to use this fund as a way to reaffirm our commitment to support the ongoing work of our fellows and their continued development and sustainability.

We will fund requests 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. Any request should explicitly state the issue that will be addressed, and why it is important and how the project will impact their intended audience.

1. Guidelines

The Fellowship Advancement Fund will support past fellowship recipients from the following Open Society-U.S. fellowships programs:

- Baltimore Community Fellowships
- Leadership in Government Fellowship
- Puerto Rico Youth Fellowship
- Soros Equality Fellowship
- Soros Justice Fellowships

To be eligible for support from the Fellowship Advancement Fund, an applicant must have previously received a fellowship from one of the Open Society – U.S. fellowship programs listed above (i.e., people currently undertaking their fellowship projects are not eligible to apply). We expect your project to reflect deep knowledge and understanding for the challenges facing your audience or community.

The Fund will support requests for funding that will advance an alum's efforts to:

- support and promote their **individual capacity and sustainability as a leader**, as well as the capacity and sustainability of the work of which they are a part
- seize upon a moment or opportunity to **significantly advance**,

elevate, or expand their work in creative, timely, and strategic ways

- foster **learning, connection, and collaboration** with others in their work

The Fund will not support the following requests:

- sabbaticals (i.e., purely “living” stipends)
- projects containing partisan political activities on behalf of specific parties or individuals
- lobbying activities
- individuals acting solely on behalf of organizations
- enrollment for degree or nondegree study at academic institutions, including thesis or dissertation research
- Requests from people currently undertaking Open Society – United States fellowships

1.1 Awards

Funding requests may range from \$1,000 to \$75,000.

This fund is a new venture for Open Society-U.S., and as such adjustments to our policies may occur throughout this initial year. In particular, we have limited funds for the year. If funds are expended, we will notify Fellows and suspend applications until the new calendar year.

Requests will be fulfilled on a monthly basis.

1.2 Application Due Dates and Selection Process

Applications are due by **the fourth Wednesday of each month beginning May 24, 2023**. The remaining due dates for 2023 are:

- **June 28**
- **July 26**
- **August 30** (*This is the last date to submit requests requiring payment in 2023*)
- **September 27** (*For requests submitted on this date, funds will be paid in 2024*)

Any application received after each deadline will be included in the following selection round.

Each application will be reviewed by a selection committee comprised of staff from Open Society-U.S. and will be evaluated based on the eligibility requirements listed above. Though we may need to reach out for additional information, funding decisions will presumptively be based on the application alone. We will not hold interviews.

Unsuccessful applicants can, upon request, have their applications included in the following selection round. You may update or resubmit your application if the circumstances of your request change during the selection period.

The Fellowship Advancement Fund will aim to make payment to successful applicants within 6 - 8 weeks of the date the application was submitted. Please note, applications for larger requests may require additional time for decision and payment.

While there is no limit on how many times an individual may apply, the selection committee will prioritize spreading resources throughout the Fellowship alumni community and fulfilling a diverse array of funding requests.

PLEASE SEE NEXT PAGE FOR INFORMATION ON HOW TO APPLY

2. Application

Applications are due by **the fourth Wednesday of each month beginning May 24, 2023**. The remaining due dates for 2023 are:

- **June 28**
- **July 26**
- **August 30** (*This is the last date to submit requests requiring payment in 2023*)
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Online Submission

Applications must be submitted online via the application portal, which can be accessed through the [Fellowship Advancement Fund](#).

All communications with applicants will be sent to the email used to register with the online system, so applicants should ensure that emails from us do not end up in their “Junk Mail” or “Spam” folder.

Content of Complete Applications

We have structured this fund to be as flexible as possible as we trust fellowship alums to best understand their needs. We, therefore, encourage applicants to simply strive to make the most compelling case for why your funding request should be fulfilled.

Fellowship alums are best positioned to know the supports needed to continue this work; therefore, when identifying your funding request, we encourage you to use this opportunity to ask for what you need.

Complete applications consist of certain documents that must be uploaded to the online application system: Funding Request/Proposal, Project Budget (if applicable), and Resume or CV.

- For your **PROPOSAL**, please upload a **Word or PDF document**. Please limit responses to 600 words or less. The length and detail of your response should be commensurate with the amount and complexity of the request. It should also clearly state the intended audience who will benefit should you receive

these funds and the expected results of this endeavor. It should also contain responses to the prompts below:

- Please describe the purpose of your request and impact you expect to achieve.
- Why is this support important for you and/or the work of which you're a part?
- The **PROJECT BUDGET** is optional. It is an opportunity to provide additional context related to your funding request.