



Compagnia
di San Paolo



International
Affairs



The German Marshall Fund
of the United States

STRENGTHENING TRANSATLANTIC COOPERATION



The Urban and Regional Policy Fellowship

Pre-application Instructions 2016

The German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF) is pleased to grant a limited number of travel fellowships each year through its Urban and Regional Policy program, which focuses on the policy issues and challenges common to cities and metropolitan regions in the United States and Europe. Major funding for the fellowship program is provided by the Compagnia di San Paolo and the Bank of America Foundation.

Program Purpose and Overview

Cities and regions in the United States and Europe grapple with similar economic, environmental, and social challenges. Many of these challenges are tackled at local and regional government levels. Yet, there are limited opportunities for city and civic leaders to meet their counterparts in other countries to observe new approaches to persistent challenges and to develop best practices. The Urban and Regional Policy Fellowships provide practitioners and policymakers at the state and local levels the opportunity to conduct site visits, research, and interviews in cities throughout the United States and Europe in order to gather the information and perspective that will allow the fellows to adapt innovative strategies to their own communities.

The goal of the Urban and Regional Policy Fellowship Program is to allow fellows to expand their professional expertise, networks, and ability to effectively solve local challenges through a focused transatlantic learning experience.

Travel grants are available for individuals seeking new approaches and solutions to a concrete policy challenge in their home communities. Over three to five weeks, these fellows visit a maximum of three *non-domestic* cities for a series of site visits, interviews, and other research meetings. Where possible, GMF staff will work closely with each fellow prior to the start of the fellowship to provide assistance in making contacts and arranging logistics, but the responsibility for developing the fellowship itinerary ultimately rests with each fellow. With proper reasoning, fellows can divide their fellowship travel into two noncontiguous travel periods, but GMF cannot provide any additional funding for extra travel. Generally, GMF expects fellows to conduct their travel between October 2016 and August 2017. Fellowship travel must be completed by August 2017.

GMF awards up to \$8,000 per fellowship. Fellowship funds cover the costs incurred or directly related to carrying out the project and should be used for travel, lodging, meals and incidentals (including internet access, phone, research materials, and transportation). A detailed report to GMF on fellowship activities and financial expenditures is required at the end of the fellowship experience. Any unspent funds in excess of 10% of the budget will be returned to GMF with the final reports. Alternatively, fellows may request in writing that the excess funds be used to fund additional travel and research expenses that will further the fellow's research project.

2016-2017 Thematic Focus

For 2016-2017, the fellowship will exclusively support research proposals that explore strategies for enhancing equity and inclusion in transatlantic cities. Across the United States and Europe, cities are increasingly facing the challenge of rising inequality as a result of growth that is neither sustainable, nor inclusive. In many cases this is only exacerbating historic inequalities that have already left certain groups off of the pathway to economic opportunity and social cohesion. Inequality also manifests in city space. Historic urbanization patterns and urban planning regimes concentrated poverty in certain neighborhoods and left them disinvested. New urban growth and investment spurred on by globalization is reshaping cities spiking gentrification, displacement, and further spatial polarization. Thus, inequality is widely acknowledged as one of the most pressing issues facing cities and metropolitan regions. Whereas inequality describes the challenge, equity, which is defined as fair and just inclusion, offers a framework for change.

Research proposals for this round of the fellowship must explore urban and regional policies and/or planning solutions that support more equitable or inclusive cities. Specific policy dimensions of equity and inclusion of interest to URP include: economic, social, spatial, and political. Examples of potential policy or planning issues that align with these dimensions include: integrative place making; active inclusion of citizens in political life and public affairs through civic engagement strategies; efforts to advance equitable access to public goods and services such as education; physical development of city spaces that break down spatial isolation; or education and workforce development initiatives that improve economic opportunity and mobility. Research proposals should not duplicate topics already covered by previous URP fellows.

Program Requirements

As the main deliverable of the fellowship, fellows are required complete a “Centerpiece Product,” including (but not limited to) a policy brief that highlights the most significant lessons of their research, a series of journalistic articles, and/or multimedia project. Fellows are asked to disseminate their findings through oral and visual presentations (to be posted on GMF’s website) to a broader GMF audience and targeted stakeholders in their home communities. GMF also encourages fellows to publish their findings in a journal of their field.

In addition to a centerpiece product and the dissemination of findings, GMF has rigorous expectations for all fellows, including:

- Significant pre-trip scheduling and logistics. GMF will assist where possible, but the primary burden falls with the fellows. Upon selection, fellows will have to develop a detailed work plan.
- Regular correspondence with GMF staff before, during, and after fellowship travel.
- Fellows should want, and be prepared, to interact with each other given the focused topic for this year’s fellowship; following selection, the cohort of fellows and GMF will discuss the opportunities and scope of collaboration during the year.
- While traveling, write weekly progress reports to URP staff in the form of brief (600-800 word) blog post for potential use on GMF’s blog that shall reflect takeaways and lessons learned from each week’s meetings and site visits.

- Develop a brief case study (no more than 500 words) of a policy innovation based on their research to highlight key lessons for the URP network. The case study would be part of URPs ongoing “One Page to Change” case study series.
- Participation in GMF events, and/or presentation of research at GMF headquarters in Washington, DC or in other relevant conferences and events. This year, selected fellows will be invited to attend GMF’s BUILD urban policy and leadership convening in Bilbao, Spain from October 26-28. At BUILD, fellows will have the opportunity to meet alumni of the program, engage with the URP Advisory Committee and to participate in BUILD equity and inclusion programming. Successful fellows may also have the opportunity to share their research findings at BUILD 2017.

Throughout the year, fellows will also have the opportunity to connect to a growing alumni network that includes practitioners from across Europe and the United States. These past fellows can provide further first-hand guidance on the nuances and opportunities of transatlantic learning. Additionally, fellows make take advantage of GMF’s larger networks across U.S. and European cities.

Who Should Apply

GMF welcomes applications from mid-career professionals with an interest in gaining an understanding of how similar urban and regional challenges are approached in a policy context other than their own and an ability to translate lessons learned into policy action.

First, applicants must be policymakers or practitioners in state or local government, leaders from the private sector, or representatives of non-profit and policy organizations and have at least *seven years* of experience in their field. Though this fellowship is not intended for academic research, researchers with ongoing opportunities to actively influence local public policy may apply. Academic researchers should contact GMF staff prior to the completion of their application.

Second, applicants must have English language writing and speaking skills. European applicants concerned about their English language ability should contact GMF staff regarding possible submission of supplemental materials.

Third, research topics should be consistent with the 2016-2017 research theme described above. Pre-applications must explicitly explain how the proposal policy question directly relates to the theme and how the proposed research will help to address a key issue in the applicant’s home community.

Application Instructions

GMF employs a two-stage application process that begins with a pre-application. Applicants must apply online (see Technical Application Process below). To be reviewed, the pre-application must include:

- (1) curriculum vitae providing a summary of academic and professional history and achievements;
- (2) cover letter (up to 1,500 words) that includes the following required content – please use these questions as a guide for organizing the cover letter in order to facilitate review of the pre-application:
 - (a) the policy question that the applicant is attempting to answer through the fellowship and its significance to the applicant’s home city/region;

- (b) how this policy question directly addresses the fellowship theme;
- (c) the potential local significance of the research to addressing a pressing challenge or issue in the applicant's home city/region; and
- (d) an initial approach to conducting the research, including a short description of potential cities or research locations and why they are being suggested.

Pre-applications for 2016 will open on May 16, 2016 and close on June 17, 2016. Applications will be evaluated using selection criteria (see below). If successful, **GMF will invite applicants to submit a full application** on or before June 27, 2016, with final submission of the full application by August 26, 2016. Selection and notification will be completed on or before by September 26, 2016. Generally, GMF expects fellows to begin their travel between October 2016 and August 2017. Fellowship travel must be completed by August 2017.

Technical Application Process

Using Internet Explorer, Firefox, or Safari web browsers, please go to <http://easygrants.gmfus.org/> and register as a new user. Please choose one email address to serve as your login, and please note that your password is case sensitive. You will also need to disable your pop-up blocker.

Once registered, please click the following link: 'Apply for Funding.' Then choose the following Available Funding Opportunity: 2016 - Urban & Regional Policy Program Fellowship.

To begin your application, click the hyperlink 'Submit Application - Urban & Regional Policy Program Fellowship' located under the 'To Do - Application' section. You can save your application, log out, and return at any time. To save your application, click the 'Save and Close' button. To access your application again, simply click 'Submit Application - Urban & Regional Policy Program Fellowship' again. Once you have started an application, do not click on the link 'Click here to start a new application' again. This will cause you to initiate new applications, rather than accessing your initial application.

Please be sure to read and follow all instructions provided for each step of the application process.

Once all information is received, you must submit your application by logging in and clicking "submit". You will receive email notifications once your letters of recommendation have been received. All applications must be submitted online by June 17, 2016 for consideration.

Selection Criteria

For 2016-2017, GMF will award three fellowships through a competitive application process that will include a thorough review by the Urban and Regional Policy program's staff and Advisory Committee. Finalists will be required to participate in at least one interview with members of the committee prior to the awarding of fellowships.

Provided that applicants meet fellowship requirements, GMF will judge applicants on their ability to argue that the proposed project meets the following criteria:

- The research question addresses a concrete, timely public policy problem or obstacle in the applicant's home community that strongly aligns with at least one five required fellowship themes;

- The proposed case studies can provide original insights on the research question than other potential sources of information;
- The proposed methodology is feasible and coherent;
- Based on the depth of professional experience and strength of professional network, the applicant has strong potential to successfully complete the fellowship and disseminate his or her findings;
- Additionally, the Advisory Committee members will consider the proposal's alignment with the Urban and Regional Policy Program's initiatives and the geographic and thematic diversity of the candidates and their projects in making the final determination.

To apply, please click [here](#). For further questions about the fellowship, see our FAQ or contact:

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