

Strong Cities, Strong Communities Fellowship Program – Overview

The German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF), in cooperation with Cleveland State University (CSU) and Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech) announces the launch of the Strong Cities, Strong Communities Fellowship Program (SC2). The fellowship program is a federal interagency pilot initiative that aims to strengthen neighborhoods, cities, and regions by enhancing the capacity of local governments to develop and implement economic visions and strategies. The fellowship program will place highly motivated, mid-career professionals in local government agencies for a two-year (24 month) fellowship period. Fellows will be placed in one of the seven pilot cities: Chester, PA; Detroit, MI; Fresno, CA; Memphis, TN; New Orleans, LA; Cleveland, OH and Youngstown, OH. As part of the program, fellows also will benefit from participating in professional development activities that include a high level public management academy led by CSU, periodic webinars, and other professional development activities.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) – For Prospective Fellows

Selection and Placement

Q. *What is the application deadline for the fellowship program?*

A. Applications for the fellowship program are due by March 30, 2012.

Q. *When will the SC2 fellowships begin?*

A. Depending on the fellowship selection process and needs of each city, the fellowships will begin on or before September 1, 2012.

Q. *What is the process for selecting fellows?*

A. The project team will select finalists from the initial pool of applicants. Finalists will be interviewed by the project team, representatives from the pilot cities, and possibly representatives of the federal SC2 team. The number of fellows selected will depend on the needs of the pilot cities and the availability of funding. There are five cities and one region (Cleveland and Youngstown, OH) participating in the SC2 fellowship program. As a result, the cities and region may host up to five fellows, although most places will likely host two to three fellows.

Q. *Will applicants be able to indicate a preference for placement from among the 7 cities?*

A. Yes, during the interview process, finalists will be asked to indicate their preferred placements, as well as any cities where they would not be willing to accept placement.

Q. *How will placement decisions be made?*

A. Fellow placement will be primarily based on the degree to which a fellow's qualifications match the particular needs of a given pilot city. These decisions will be made by the SC2 project team in close consultation with the each pilot city.

Q. *Will the fellows be expected to live in their placement cities?*

A. Yes, fellows will be expected to live in the metro area for the duration of the fellowship program.

Q. *Will fellows have an opportunity to remain in the placement city once the program is completed?*

A. Each city will make its own decisions about whether to offer continued employment to its fellows at the end of the program. Fellows are, of course, encouraged to consider accepting a position with the placement city if one is offered to them.

Training and Mentoring

Q. What is the format of the training that will be provided to the fellows?

A. Each fellow will participate in an 18-month training program (the “Fellows Academy”) managed by CSU. The Fellows Academy will consist of eight, three-day intensive training workshops, as well as in-depth project work.

Q. Where will the training workshops be offered?

A. Training workshops will be offered in six of the seven targeted cities (Cleveland OH, Memphis TN, Detroit MI, Chester PA, Fresno CA, and New Orleans LA). Actual sessions will be hosted by local partner institutions, such as a local university or community college.

Q. Who teaches the training workshops?

A. The training workshops will be taught primarily by faculty from CSU. Other instructors include practitioners from state and local government, as well as from the non-profit sector and from private universities.

Q. Can fellows receive CEU or PDH credit for participation in the training workshops?

A. Fellows may receive Continuing Education Units (CEU’s) or Professional Development Hours (PDH’s) for individual workshop participation. CSU’s Center for Leadership Development will provide the documentation.

Q. Are fellows required to complete a project as part of their training program?

A. Yes, each fellow will be required to complete a major project for their host city as part of their fellowship experience. Through the Fellows Academy, they will take part in project management workshops designed to support the project process and ensure a positive result. Project advisors will assist the fellows as they complete their projects.

Q. Who determines the scope of work for each fellow’s project?

A. The cities will determine the project scope based on their needs and in close consultation with the SC2 project team. Each city will develop detailed project scopes to ensure that the projects address important and timely community needs. Cities may identify team or individual projects, based on their needs.

Q. Will fellows receive additional mentoring support outside the scope of the training program?

A. Yes, each fellow will be assigned a “mentor” from the SC2 project team, who will be available to provide support throughout the fellowship period. The mentors will make periodic site visits to connect with each of the fellows and to undertake any necessary troubleshooting.

Compensation and Benefits

Q. What is the annual stipend?

A. The stipend for Fellows is set at \$60,000 per year. Fellows will be working full-time.

Q. Will any additional benefits be provided to Fellows over and above the annual stipend?

A. Fellows will receive \$4,000 annually toward health care insurance. If a fellow’s health care insurance costs less than \$4,000 annually, only the actual cost of the insurance will be provided.

Q. Will the fellowship cover moving expenses?

A. No, moving expenses will not be covered.

Q. Will travel costs to the cities where training workshops are being held be covered?

A. Travel costs for training workshops, including airfare and a per diem, will be paid for by GMF.

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