

ESAL

Engineers & Scientists Acting Locally

Playbook Guide - ESAL Playbook: Apply for a Local Policy Fellowship

Purpose

- Provide expertise and in-person guidance directly to policymakers on important local issues, often as a member of their staff or a legislative body.
- Make a substantial commitment to engagement. Most state-level fellowships are for Ph.D.-level scientists and engineers, run for one year, and require a move to the state capitol.

Ideal Outcomes

- Substantive impact on policy decisions at the local level

Auxiliary Benefits

- Gain a deeper understanding of the local policymaking process
- Build a network of policy professionals as peers within the fellowship
- Learn to establish and maintain relationships with representatives

Step-by-Step Guide

- 1. Identify which fellowship you're interested in.**
 - Find out about [background information](#) on these fellowships
 - Visit the [State Science and Technology Policy Fellowship Program Interest LinkedIn Group](#) to learn about existing opportunities
 - Ask yourself why this is the [best fellowship](#) for you
- 2. Research how the fellowship operates.**
 - [Four elements are necessary](#) for these fellowships: champions, a non-profit home, a liaison within the state legislature, and funding
 - Funding may come from a regional foundation, there may be a state legislature champion, and state agencies may also contribute depending on the economic times
 - Read our [blog post](#) on local fellowships
- 3. Apply for the fellowship by the deadlines.**
 - As these fellowships are fairly competitive, it will be important to stand out with a [compelling personal statement](#)
 - Research the timing of the fellowship applications, as it will likely take you some time to write the necessary statements and obtain letters of recommendation
 - See our [blog post](#) for a few fellowship deadlines
- 4. Prepare for the interview.**
 - If you are [selected for the interview](#), ask as many former fellows as possible about their experience, and you can also ask them to read your application materials prior to the interview itself
 - Think about why you are interested in this particular fellowship, how it ties in with your

long-term goals, and how you will specifically contribute to the policy-making process

5. Prepare to begin the fellowship.

- If you are selected as a fellow, congratulations! Prepare with enough time ahead allowing you to move and find your living arrangements, as you will have to move to that particular state.
- Read orientation materials and prepare the necessary documents to begin your fellowship

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