



2020 Aspen Tech Policy Hub Fellowship | Application Instructions

Apply To Join Our Second Summer Cohort of Incubator Fellows

At the Aspen Tech Policy Hub, we take tech experts, teach them the policy process through an in-residence fellowship program in the Bay Area, and encourage them to develop outside-the-box solutions to society's problems. We model ourselves after tech incubators like Y-Combinator, but train new policy thinkers and focus the impact of their ideas. We're building new ideas for policymaking—every fellow must complete one practical policy output as part of their residence—and an alumni base of technologists who understand policy and want to engage with it.

Before applying, [please carefully review the fellowship details, eligibility, and Frequently Asked Questions below.](#) If you have additional questions, we will host a Q&A based webinar on **January 13 from 12pm-1pm PST/3pm-4pm EST** ([register here](#)); **January 29 from 9am-10am PST/12pm-1pm EST** ([register here](#)); and **February 10 from 12pm-1pm PST/3pm-4pm EST** ([register here](#)). For Bay Area residents, we will also host an introductory event from **5pm-7pm on January 8, 2019** at Manny's (3092 16th St, San Francisco). Please [register here](#). Finally, for Seattle area residents, we will host an info session on **January 31** (time and date TBA).

Fellowship Details

Incubator fellows will spend a minimum of 10 weeks with us for mandatory programming, running approximately June 11 to August 21, 2020. See the FAQ below for more details.

This is an intense, full time program, and we expect fellows' full attention while they are participating. Fellows will be paid a stipend of \$18,000 to defray their living costs in the Bay Area for the program. (We will provide office space, but fellows will need to find their own housing if they are not already local.) We also have limited funds to assist with relocation to the Bay Area if needed.

During residence, fellows will be required to create at least one practical policy output—for instance, mock legislation, toolkits for policymakers, white papers, op-eds, or an app. Fellows have to propose a possible project in their application for the fellowship, but they are not tied to working on that project once in residence. In fact, we encourage fellows to work together to identify new ideas for projects on arrival. Fellows will also be asked to participate in at least one annual public event in which we reveal the results of the fellowship; these will be held in both Washington DC and San Francisco.

Programming to support fellows will include:

- An orientation introducing fellows to the fellowship, to the other fellows, and to the policymaking process;
- Regular classes exploring what policy is, how to identify problems, defining alternatives, developing relevant outputs, and communicating to stakeholders;
- Action-oriented practical exercises, such as ‘how to write a policy memo’ or ‘how to give an elevator pitch’, founded on real world problems provided by our partners;
- Mandatory morning pitch meetings for sharing ideas in progress;
- Partnerships with experienced policy mentors who can help provide project guidance;
- Practical resources, including designers, copy editors, legal experts, and communications specialists to facilitate projects. and
- Evening dinners with top corporate and government policy experts, sharing off the record experiences about how things get done.

To ‘exit’ the program at the conclusion of the fellowship, we will help Hub fellows share their outputs during a meeting with a relevant stakeholder, which could be a federal or state government employee, company employee, standards body, or other stakeholder relevant to the issue. (Travel will be paid if these stakeholders are outside the Bay Area.)

Eligibility

We are looking for people with three key characteristics:

- a) **Applicants should have significant professional experience with technology.** For instance, applicants might work as an engineer, computer scientist, or business executive at a technology company; might be trained as a data scientist or in human-computer interaction; might work at a university or at a think tank studying cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, or the Internet of Things; or might have professional technology experience such as serving as a patent lawyer. Please note these are just illustrative examples; they are not intended to limit eligibility to these categories.
- b) **Applicants should show *potential* to apply their technology experience to affecting policy and social change.** They should be passionate about solving the world’s problems, and should be able to clearly articulate creative, innovative ideas about the ways in which they want to make a difference and how their experience will help them do that. We are particularly interested in applicants who are passionate about problems in four priority areas:
 - a. Cybersecurity;
 - b. The effects of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things, autonomous vehicles, and quantum computing;
 - c. Protecting democracy, combating disinformation or misinformation, and election security; and
 - d. Using technology to help at-risk populations or encourage social justice.

- c) **Applicants have *not yet* significantly explored their potential to enact change through policy.** This is an introductory program to the policymaking process, and applicants with significant past policy experience are likely to be too advanced for this program. While all are welcome to apply, we will prioritize applicants who do not have significant previous policy experience (e.g., a master's in public policy; past experience working in a policy role).

Other requirements for the program include:

- Applicant(s) must be at least 21 years of age by the start of the program.
- Applicant(s) must be fluent in English.
- Applicant(s) must be able to make a full-time commitment to the incubator process between June 2020 and August 2020 and be able to reside in person in the Bay Area during that time.
- Applicant(s) must have legal status to work and reside in the United States.
- Applicants must have a passion for changing the world, and an interest in learning how technology and policy can work together to achieve change.

Students are eligible to apply, but please note that, due to the requirement for significant professional experience in technology, students without work experience are unlikely to be strong candidates for acceptance.

If you are ineligible for the program but still would like to get involved with the Aspen Tech Policy Hub, please email aspentechpolicyhub@aspeninstitute.org or [sign up for our listserv](#). We hope to diversify the types of fellows we can accept in future cohorts.

Application

Please completely fill out the application on our [website](#). We encourage candidates to express themselves simply and clearly. For advice on developing a clear writing style, please see [this blog post from Y Combinator](#).

Applications are due by 11:59pm PST on February 13, 2020. Finalists will be notified by the end of March, and decisions made by the end of April following Skype interviews. Please contact us at aspentechpolicyhub@aspeninstitute.org if you receive a competing offer that requires expedited consideration.