



# The White House Fellows Application Frequently Asked Questions

## APPLICATION PROCESS

### **How does one begin an application for the White House Fellowship?**

The first step is an online written application that will be open on the White House website starting on November 2, 2020 and closing on January 6, 2021.

See: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/get-involved/fellows/>

### **Is there an age range for White House Fellows?**

There are no formal age restrictions to becoming a White House Fellow. However, the Fellowship program was created to give selected Americans the experience of government service early in their careers.

### **Does one have to be a US citizen to apply?**

Yes, only US citizens may apply for the Fellowship.

### **Is there a degree requirement?**

Applicants must have a Bachelor's degree before applying.

### **How many years of professional work experience must a person have to apply?**

There is no set amount of work experience, however strong applicants have already demonstrated a record of remarkable achievement and leadership in their chosen field.

### **Can military reservists or members of the national guard apply?**

Absolutely, however please coordinate with your chain of command before applying.

### **Can I apply if I am a federal employee?**

Federal employees are not eligible because the Fellowship is designed to bring people from outside government service into the government for one year. Active duty military members are allowed to apply.



### **What is on the written application?**

The application has six major sections:

1. Personal Information
2. Recommendations
3. Declarations
4. Resume
5. Essays
6. Certification

The six essays topics, each with specific word limits, include: current employment; most significant professional achievement; most significant community service achievement; lifetime goals; a memorandum for the President; and motivation for becoming a White House Fellow.

The on-line application will allow you to revise and save your work in draft form until you are ready to submit your final application prior to the deadline in January.

### **What are the selection criteria?**

Selection as a White House Fellow is based on a combination of the following criteria:

- A record of remarkable professional achievement early in one's career
- Evidence of leadership skills and the potential for further growth
- A demonstrated commitment to public service
- The skills to succeed at the highest levels of the Federal government, and the ability to work effectively as part of a team

All these qualities combined with the strength of one's character, a positive attitude, and the ability to work well with others are taken into consideration when selecting a class of White House Fellows.

### **What comes after the written application?**

The White House Fellows Program office processes the applications and former Fellows screen the applications to identify the most promising candidates.

Approximately 100 of the most qualified applicants are selected to be Regional Finalists and are interviewed by eight to ten Regional Panels across the country.



Based on the results of the interviews, the Regional Panels select approximately thirty candidates to proceed to the final round of interviews in June of each year, as National Finalists.

National Finalists participate in "Selection Weekend," which includes three evenings and two days of interviews with members of the President's Commission on White House Fellowships. After spending Selection Weekend interviewing, interacting with, and observing the National Finalists, the Commissioners recommend those individuals (between 11 and 19) it finds most qualified for the Fellowship to the President for appointment as White House Fellows.

## **AFTER SELECTION**

### **How many White House Fellows serve per year?**

Each Fellowship class is between 11-19 Fellows.

### **Is the Fellowship a full-time job?**

Yes, the Fellowship is full-time position. Those selected as White House Fellows spend a year serving as special assistants to senior government officials in Washington, D.C.

### **Are Fellows paid?**

Yes. Fellows are paid at the rate of GS-14 Step 3; with the exception of active duty military, who are paid according to their current rank and grade.

### **Where do Fellows work? Who do they work under?**

Fellows may be placed in any Federal department, agency, or White House Office. Typically, each Fellow has a unique placement. Fellows serve under politically appointed senior leaders.

### **Do Fellows get to choose their assignment or whom they work for?**

Each Fellow will be asked to prioritize the list of potential assignments. In parallel, each office that wishes to have a Fellow will rank order the Fellows based on their backgrounds, capability, and expertise. Following the placement interviews, the Director of the President's Commission on White House Fellowships, in



consultation with White House, Department, and Agency officials, will determine the work placement for each Fellow.

**Are moving expenses covered for the Fellowship?**

No, moving expenses are the responsibility of the Fellow, with the exception of active military members whose Fellowship is considered a “permanent change of station” by the Department of Defense.

**Do Fellows receive a security clearance?**

All Fellows will be investigated for Top Secret security clearance. Anyone unable to achieve Top Secret clearance will be ineligible to become a Fellow.

**Between which dates do Fellows serve their year?**

The Fellowship follows a traditional academic year, beginning in late August or early September and ending after 365 days.

**If you are not selected, can you apply again?**

Yes! Many Fellows apply more than once before they are selected.