

## The Harvard Kennedy School Government Performance Lab Summer Fellowship

### About the Government Performance Lab

The Government Performance Lab (GPL) at the Harvard Kennedy School conducts research on how governments can improve the results they achieve for their citizens and make more rapid progress in addressing challenging social problems. An important part of this research model involves providing pro bono technical assistance to state and local governments. Through this hands-on involvement, the GPL gains insights into the barriers that governments face and the solutions that can overcome these barriers. Our technical assistance helps governments advance in three key areas:

#### *Performance Improvement*

The GPL is providing technical assistance to states and cities seeking to improve the core operations of government agencies so that they can achieve better results. This assistance helps governments target which clients to connect with which services; supports the development of frameworks to make procurement, budget, and programmatic decisions based on performance data; and enables rigorous evaluation of management and policy reforms. The GPL also helps governments implement systematic change in specific policy areas such as homelessness, early childhood, behavioral health, child welfare, criminal justice, and workforce development.

#### *Results-Driven Contracting*

The GPL was selected by Bloomberg Philanthropies to join its “What Works Cities” Initiative, through which the GPL is providing technical assistance to 20 cities that seek to adopt results-driven contracting strategies for their critical contracts, grants, and procurements. These strategies include clearly defining performance goals, measuring outcomes, tying payments to successful outcomes, and using performance data to inform management of ongoing contracts and future procurement decisions.

#### *Pay for Success*

The GPL assists state and local governments in developing pay for success (PFS) contracts—often involving “social impact bonds” (SIBs)—to address important social challenges. Policy areas include early education, criminal justice, behavioral health, and child welfare, among others. To date the GPL has awarded technical assistance to over 20 jurisdictions and has helped launch 10 of the 14 existing PFS projects in the US.

### Position Overview

The GPL is seeking up to three summer fellows to help support ongoing projects. While the GPL has projects throughout the country, internships are most likely to be located in San Francisco / the Bay Area, Boston, Providence, and New York City. The fellows will be integrated into an existing team and be responsible for over one to two major projects over the course of the summer. Fellows will report to an experienced GPL team member and will be integrated into broader Government Performance Lab calls, meetings, trainings, etc.

While the exact scope of work will vary depending on the interests of the fellow and the progression of existing projects between now and the start of the summer fellowship, potential topics include:

- Supporting a jurisdiction in the development of a Social Impact Bond/Pay for Success contract
- Working with a government to develop systems that use performance data to inform procurement, budget, and programmatic decisions
- Supporting cities in adopting results-driven contracting strategies as part of the Lab’s role in Bloomberg Philanthropies’ What Works Cities initiative

Depending on the nature of the project, fellows should have the opportunity to develop substantial policy-area expertise, hands-on project management experience, technical skills related to benefit-cost analysis, financing, and evaluation, and a deep familiarity with government processes.

## **Qualifications**

- Demonstrated passion for improving government performance and solving social problems.
- Outstanding quantitative and analytical skills, with experience generating and using data to drive insights.
- Excellence in both written and verbal communications, including policy memos, slide decks, and public speaking.
- Exceptional project management capabilities and creativity in problem solving.
- Track record of adeptly navigating complex organizations, developing trust with senior leaders, and building relationships among diverse groups of stakeholders.
- Self-motivated with an orientation towards results over process and a track record of driving results with limited supervisory direction.
- Willingness to learn, attention to detail, and ability to multi-task are critical.
- At least two years of professional work experience is highly preferred.
- An understanding of program evaluation concepts is highly preferred.

## **Additional Information**

This summer fellowship position is expected to last 8-10 weeks. This is a graduate-level position intended for current students pursuing degrees in public policy, business, law, health, planning, economics, or other relevant fields, although exceptionally qualified applicants of any background may be considered. The start date is flexible between June 1<sup>st</sup> and July 1<sup>st</sup>. Working hours will typically be 9am to 5pm, but fellows may occasionally be asked to join a call or meeting outside that time frame. Fellows will be paid a stipend for the summer that reflects an hourly wage of \$20-\$25 depending on experience.

## **Application Instructions**

To apply, please submit a brief cover letter, a writing sample (up to 7 pages), a current resume/CV, and transcript to [govlab@hks.harvard.edu](mailto:govlab@hks.harvard.edu). Please include "Summer Fellowship" in the subject line. All materials should be submitted as PDF or MS Word documents with the applicant's name in all filenames. The cover letter should detail how the applicant's skills and experiences meet the qualifications of the position, and should indicate which geographies the applicant is interested in. Please note that successful candidates may be asked to complete a background check and/or drug test.

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis; we encourage interested applicants to submit their materials as soon as possible.

For more information on the Government Performance Lab, please visit <http://govlab.hks.harvard.edu>.

*Harvard University is an equal opportunity employer and all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability status, protected veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law.*