

The Harvard Kennedy School Government Performance Lab

Fellow Positions

The mission of the Harvard Kennedy School Government Performance Lab (GPL) is to accelerate U.S. progress on difficult social problems by improving how state and local governments function. We hire and train full-time team members to collaborate closely with government innovators in leading intensive reform projects. GPL staff advance key initiatives through technical assistance, including carrying out rigorous data analysis, identifying high-impact areas for systems re-engineering, implementing pilot projects to demonstrate innovative methods, and building government capacity for sustained change. Most of these projects are focused on solving difficult social problems such as criminal justice reform, child wellbeing, economic mobility in historically marginalized communities, among many others.

Because many of the challenges we work on are rooted in historic and systemic wrongs, particularly systemic racism, we know that addressing them requires solutions that center diversity, equity, and inclusion. We are committed to increasing diversity, improving equity, and fostering inclusion (DEI) in our internal and external work – from the methods we use to hire and train our staff to the way we select and execute projects in the field.

Position Overview

The GPL is seeking to hire a cohort of Fellows with a passion for improving government performance and solving social problems. Fellows function as day-to-day project managers, shepherding important reform projects from conceptualization through design and implementation. Successful Fellows come from a variety of backgrounds and are typically:

- Creative problem solvers
- Strong project managers
- Thoughtful relationship builders
- Strong analytical thinkers
- Capable of navigating complex organizations and stakeholders
- Comfortable driving work forward independently and working on a geographically dispersed team

Fellows may be placed on site with the government office or agency that is spearheading a project or provide support remotely to one or more jurisdictions; oversight is provided by a manager at the Government Performance Lab as well as by the government policy lead. Fellow responsibilities vary from project to project and frequently include:

1. Diagnosing challenges in government functions and service delivery
2. Crafting operationally feasible, high impact solutions to those challenges
3. Helping governments implement solutions to produce meaningful changes in client outcomes and make frequent adjustments to implementation based on results
4. Building buy-in for reforms and government capacity to sustain them
5. Contributing to spreading demonstrated solutions nationwide

In undertaking these responsibilities, Fellows' day-to-day work often involves:

Project Management

- Manage and coordinate reform projects while navigating complex organizational structures.

- Develop, introduce, and oversee performance management systems to enable government and service providers to better collaborate on service delivery.

Communications and Relationship Building

- Conduct interviews and site visits with government officials, community stakeholders, and people with lived experience to uncover service delivery barriers and inform solutions.
- Facilitate meetings, trainings, and workshops to advance project work and build capacity; provide coaching to permanent government staff.
- Brief agency leaders and solicit decisions from them at key project milestones.
- Write memos, presentations, training documents, and procurement solicitations with the aim of making complex information easy to understand.

Research and Data Analysis

- Help governments match and analyze administrative data to measure population outcomes, understand cost-effectiveness, and form insights that can improve service delivery.
- Use continuous improvement tools to analyze existing processes and design new processes that enable agencies to better serve constituents.
- Apply a lens of diversity, equity, and inclusion to government service delivery challenges.
- Understand program evaluation principles and use them to improve government operations.
- Review research literature, government documents, and best practices to inform project work.

Community of Practice

- Share insights with colleagues, helping to spread lessons and best practices across the GPL.
- Draft blog posts, project features, and policy briefs to help the GPL share its work broadly.

Learning is a key part of the experience. Fellows are part of a coast-to-coast community of GPL team members dedicated to sharing lessons learned, building organizational expertise, and refining GPL tools, models, and frameworks. Through project work and regular engagement with the broader GPL community, Fellows will develop substantial policy area expertise, hands-on project management experience, and a deep familiarity with government and nonprofit organization processes.

Preferred Qualifications

- Passion for improving government performance and solving social problems.
- Self-motivated with an orientation towards results.
- Excellent written and verbal communications, including memos, slide decks, and public speaking
- Strong project management capabilities.
- Awareness and sensitivity to the needs and concerns of individuals from diverse cultures, backgrounds, and orientations, and ability to apply that to their work.
- Sound quantitative and analytical skills, with experience generating and using data to drive insights and communicating those insights to others.
- Ability to navigate complex organizations, develop trust with senior leaders, and build relationships among diverse groups of stakeholders.
- Graduate-level training in public policy, business, law, economics, social work, or related fields is preferred.
- At least two years of professional work experience is preferred.

- For some locations, a willingness to travel is required.

Additional Information and Application Instructions

Compensation: GPL Fellows will be funded for one year at a salary of \$82,000 plus benefits. Depending on project status, there are sometimes opportunities to extend the position.

Possible projects include the following:

- Fellowship opportunity to work in Michigan (Detroit or Lansing).
- Fellowship opportunity to work remotely (the location is flexible, but it requires access to a major U.S. airport for occasional travel).
- Fellowship opportunity to work remotely (the location is flexible, but it requires access to a major U.S. airport for occasional domestic and international travel). This position requires a Spanish and/or Portuguese speaker as the project will be conducted entirely in these languages.

More information on projects will be available during the interview process.

Start date: We aim for these Fellows to start in January or February 2022.

Application instructions: To apply, please submit your application using the [GPL's Online Application Form](#) by **Monday, December 13 at 12 pm EST**.

About the Government Performance Lab

The Government Performance Lab at the Harvard Kennedy School conducts research on how governments can improve the results they achieve for their residents. An important part of this research model involves providing technical assistance to state and local governments. We improve how governments function and how services are delivered, speed up progress on difficult social problems, and ultimately make a meaningful difference in the lives of vulnerable people across the United States. To date, the GPL has engaged in more than 200 projects with 89 jurisdictions spread across 35 states. We are a team of 50—the majority of whom are working directly with governments around the country providing technical assistance. For more information on the GPL, please visit <http://govlab.hks.harvard.edu>.

Harvard University is an equal opportunity employer and we are committed to diversity and welcome applications from individuals who share our commitment to a diverse and inclusive workplace. 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.