



HARVARD Kennedy School

Government Performance Lab

**Harvard Kennedy School Government Performance Lab
Research & Writing Fellow**

The mission of the Harvard Kennedy School Government Performance Lab (GPL) is to accelerate progress on difficult social problems by improving how state and local governments across the country function. We hire and train full-time team members to collaborate closely with government innovators in developing and testing initiatives that lead to the creation of more just and effective service systems in areas including child and family wellbeing, criminal justice, homelessness and housing, and procurement. GPL staff advance key initiatives through applied research and technical assistance, including identifying high-impact areas for systems re-engineering, implementing pilot projects to demonstrate innovative methods, and building government capacity for sustained change.

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

Position Overview

The GPL seeks to hire fellows with a passion for improving government performance and solving social problems. Research & Writing fellows do so through the development of publications and other resources that elevate and spread insights from GPL project work to governments across the country.

Research & Writing Project Examples

GPL Research & Writing fellows manage a dynamic portfolio of projects, including research reports, policy frameworks, project briefs, learning series calls and recaps, and grant reports and proposals. Examples include:

- [Mayor to Mayor: Taking the Lead on Police Accountability](#) (Research Report)
- [The Journey to a Well-Being-Oriented System](#) (Policy Framework)
- [Culturally Responsive Family Support Services in Washington State](#) (Project Brief)
- [How to Build a System that Never Stops Looking for Kin](#) (Learning Series Recap)

For the 2024-2025 project year, Research & Writing fellows may work on projects similar to the ones listed above, as well as new lines of work. These might include: using qualitative and other research methods to develop reports on police accountability and/or community safety; conducting landscape analyses on criminal justice topics, such as alternative 911 emergency response; creating tools and templates for child and family well-being practitioners in areas such as kin-first care; documenting early findings and lessons from the GPL's homelessness and housing projects; and supporting GPL enterprise needs, including website content development and distribution strategies.

Research & Writing fellows' responsibilities may include:

Writing & Editing

- Create clear and compelling content that captures key insights, evidence, and lessons learned from GPL projects. This may include both original content (long-form pieces, case studies, technical guides, policy briefs, and more) and derivative content (syntheses of findings from internal GPL materials, blog posts, social media posts, etc.).
- Provide written and verbal feedback to GPL senior leaders and other staff on external-facing work products, such as blog posts, grant reports, and conference presentations.

Research & Analysis

- Collect and analyze quantitative and qualitative research data and synthesize findings for work products, including internal memos and external publications.
- Generate ideas for high-potential external resources through analysis of internal materials and data from GPL projects.
- Support impact measurement and tracking across policy areas and enterprise-wide.

Project Management

- Manage and coordinate all aspects of the research and writing project lifecycle from brainstorm through distribution. This includes navigating complex organizational structures, developing workplans, and balancing multiple workstreams within the GPL and in collaboration with various government entities.
- Track progress and provide operational support for GPL enterprise projects, such as website upgrades and contact management tools.

Stakeholder Management

- Plan and facilitate meetings with GPL policy leads and other staff to develop and advance research and writing projects.
- Collaborate closely with policy staff and external stakeholders to identify and refine GPL insights to share through publications and other materials.
- Act as a thought partner to GPL senior staff on external strategy.

Qualifications

Required

- **Research Translation:** Ability to identify core findings and most valuable insights from a complex set of materials and synthesize them into clear, plain language descriptions.
- **Clear and Insightful Writing:** Ability to write and edit actionable and strategically aligned work products consistently.
- **Project Management:** Capacity to independently manage projects from start to finish, establish priorities among simultaneous deadlines, and respond quickly to shifting timelines and requests.
- **Stakeholder Management:** Ability to navigate complex organizations, develop trust with senior leaders, and build relationships among diverse groups of stakeholders.
- **Passion:** Passion for improving government performance and solving social problems.

- **Learning Mindset:** Self-motivated approach with a learning mindset and an orientation towards results. Continuous learning is a key part of the fellowship experience.

Many kinds of experiences could prepare an individual to thrive in this role. We expect candidates to have many, but not all, of the qualifications listed below:

Preferred

- **Graduate-Level Training:** Graduate-level training in public policy, journalism, law, economics, social work, teaching, or related fields. Please note that applicants without training in those fields are encouraged to apply.
- **Relevant Professional Experience:** At least two years of relevant professional work experience. This may include producing online publications and/or solutions-oriented journalism, working with state and local government practitioners, and more.
- **Graphic Design:** Experience creating data visualizations, infographics, and publication templates using InDesign and other tools.
- **Awareness and Sensitivity:** Awareness of and sensitivity to the needs and concerns of individuals from diverse cultures, backgrounds, and orientations.

Additional Information and Application Instructions

Compensation: GPL Research & Writing fellows will be funded for one year at a salary of \$90,000 plus benefits. Fellows based in the states where Harvard is registered to do business—California, Connecticut, Georgia, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, and Washington State—will have their pay and benefits administered through Harvard. Fellows residing in other states will have their pay and benefits, including medical insurance, administered through Harvard’s payroll service provider, DZConnex, and will formally be an employee of DZConnex. Regardless of the state of residence, successful applicants will receive Harvard appointments as “fellows” at the GPL.

Location: All Research & Writing team members at the GPL work remotely; GPL staff require access to major U.S. airports for occasional travel.

Application Instructions: Candidates may submit an application using the **GPL’s [Online Application Form](#) by Sunday, February 25, 2024, at 11:59pm ET. The application includes two short answer questions and a request for 2-3 writing samples.** Writing samples should be solely authored by the candidate. If a writing sample was edited by someone other than the candidate, please indicate. Samples can include:

- An excerpt of a research translation piece that synthesizes insights from multiple sources (e.g., literature review)
- A policy-oriented written product (e.g. policy brief, memo, academic paper)
- A digital media product (e.g. article, op-ed, press release, blog post, and/or social media post)
- A graphic design product (e.g., slide deck, website graphics, or publication layout)

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 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 with 100 jurisdictions spread across 36 states and has conducted more than 242 projects shifting more than \$6.2B in government spending towards results. For more information on the GPL, 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, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy and pregnancy-related conditions, or any other characteristic protected by law.