



HARVARD Kennedy School

Government Performance Lab

Harvard Kennedy School Government Performance Lab Research & Writing Fellow

Summary:

The Government Performance Lab (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.

The Research & Writing fellow hired in this round will initially be assigned to work with the [Children & Families team](#) in addition to working on GPL-wide projects and activities.

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

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

Research & Writing fellows' responsibilities:

Writing, Editing, and Dissemination Strategy

- Write clear, compelling, accessible, error-free content that captures key insights, evidence, and lessons learned from GPL projects. Examples (from across our three policy areas) include:
 - Using qualitative and other research methods to develop policy-relevant reports on police accountability
 - Conducting landscape analyses on state reform efforts and 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
 - Supporting GPL-wide needs in website content development
- Support policy team members in mapping audiences, sharpening goals for publications, crafting dissemination plans, and otherwise developing the strategy, purpose, and plan for written publications.
- Offer peer editing support to other members of the R&W team.
- Provide drafting and editing support to GPL senior leaders for resources such as blog posts, grant reports, and conference presentations.
- Incorporate edits from peers and senior leaders on written products and facilitate conversations among stakeholders to reach consensus on edits.

Research & Analysis

- Work with policy teams to generate ideas for impactful publications that build on existing knowledge and highlight new findings. This process may include:
 - Conducting literature reviews and background research
 - Interviewing stakeholders to gather insights
 - Synthesizing findings from GPL projects
- Measure and track the impact of publications.

Project Management

- Manage and coordinate all aspects of the research and writing project lifecycle from brainstorming through distribution. This includes managing stakeholders, developing workplans, enforcing timelines, and balancing multiple project workstreams simultaneously and in a timely manner.
- Help to manage GPL-wide communications tools such as email lists, newsletters, and the GPL website.

Stakeholder Management

- Plan and facilitate meetings with GPL policy leads and other staff to develop and advance research and writing projects.
- Act as a thought partner to GPL senior staff on external strategy.

Required Qualifications:

Many kinds of experiences could prepare an individual to thrive in this role. Illustrative examples include writing or editing policy-oriented publications; working in solutions-oriented journalism; working at a think tank; working with state and local government to produce tools and written products; holding a leadership role in a high-volume university newspaper or magazine; developing training materials for practitioners; and more.

Qualified applicants will have several years of relevant work experience, either through full-time positions or through substantial student experience that demonstrates readiness for the role. Please apply if you think you are a good fit!

Additional required qualifications include:

- **Research Translation:** Ability to identify core insights from complex project work and synthesize them into clear messages tailored to strategic audiences.
- **Clear and Insightful Writing:** Ability to write error-free, professional, actionable, and strategically aligned work products. Our audiences are often government practitioners who value concise, accessible language.
- **Project Management:** Capacity to independently manage projects from start to finish, establish priorities among simultaneous deadlines, remain organized across several projects, and respond quickly to shifting timelines and requests.
- **Relevant Professional Experience:** Significant experience producing policy-oriented or similar written products in a fast-paced and professional environment.
- **Stakeholder Management:** Ability to develop trust with senior leaders, build relationships among diverse groups of stakeholders, and troubleshoot differences of opinion in the writing process.
- **Passion:** Passion for improving government performance and solving social problems.
- **Learning Mindset:** Self-motivated approach with a learning mindset and an orientation toward results. Continuous learning is a key part of the fellowship experience.
- **Awareness and Sensitivity:** Ability to collaborate with people from diverse cultures, backgrounds, and orientations.

Compensation: This role is funded at an annual salary of \$92,000 plus benefits. This position is a term appointment ending one year from date of hire, with the possibility of renewal. The role will receive a Harvard appointment as a Fellow.

Fellows based in the states where Harvard is registered to do business—CA, CT, GA, IL, ME, MD, MA, NH, NJ, NY, RI, VT, VA, and WA—will have their pay and benefits administered through Harvard. Team members 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 a Fellow at the GPL.

Location: Flexible. Requires access to a major U.S. airport for occasional travel.

Start date: Candidates will ideally be able to start by early November. We will review applications on a rolling basis.

To apply: Submit an application using the [GPL's online application form](#). The application includes one short answer question and a request for a resume and three relevant writing samples totaling no more than 15 pages. Please submit writing samples that are solely authored by the candidate; if that is not possible, please indicate if a sample was co-written. Samples can include:

- A policy-oriented written product (e.g., policy brief, memo, case study, handout, etc.)
- A digital media product (e.g., online article, op-ed, press release, newsletter, blog post, etc.)
- A research translation piece that synthesizes insights from multiple sources

Please note: We will only review the first 15 pages of submitted writing samples. If your writing samples are longer than this, please indicate which specific 15 pages you would like us to read. We value conciseness!

About the Government Performance Lab

The mission of the Harvard Kennedy School Government Performance Lab is to accelerate progress on difficult social problems by improving how state and local governments across the country function. Our team collaborates closely with government innovators in developing and testing ways to create more just and effective service systems in areas including child and family wellbeing, safety and justice, and homelessness and housing. To date, the GPL has engaged with 112 jurisdictions across 38 states and has conducted more than 278 projects shifting more than \$7B in government spending toward results.

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.