



MARYLAND

SCIENCE POLICY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

Providing scientific, technical, and health knowledge to policymakers and benefiting the citizens of Maryland

The mission of the Maryland Science, Technology, Engineering, and Health Policy (MSTEHP) Fellowship is to enhance access of Maryland's policymakers to scientific, technical, and health expertise. Simultaneously, scientists, engineers, social scientists, and health professionals with graduate degrees will gain a better understanding of policymaking and the opportunities and challenges faced by the public.

Why is the MSTEHP Fellowship Program needed?

Many of today's public policy challenges are related to science and technology. Issues like cybersecurity, wastewater management, autonomous vehicles, and the opioid crisis are extremely complex and the amount of data and analysis available about them is growing at a tremendous rate. Legislators cannot be expected to cultivate expertise on all of these topics; MSTEHP fellows would possess the necessary expertise to research these complex issues and provide policymakers with unbiased, evidence-based conclusions.

In addition, it can be challenging to convince scientists, engineers, and health professionals at the graduate level to take on public service. However, in California, which has had a Science Fellows program since 2008, over 50% of fellows accepted positions within the state government after completing their fellowship.

What will MSTEHP fellows do?

MSTEHP fellows will work with staff members at the Department of Legislative Services or committees. At the direction of legislators, the MSTEHP fellows will participate in activities such as identifying and reviewing existing research; collecting and analyzing data; organizing roundtables with stakeholders; preparing for hearings; developing presentations, videos, social media and other communications; interacting with constituents and special interest groups; and writing policy memos and talking points.

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How will the MSTEHP Fellowship Program work?

The first year will serve as a pilot program, placing 2-3 fellows in the legislative branch. Fellows will work either directly with the Department of Legislative Services or serve as a science advisor within Committees and have a direct supervisor in the respective office. Fellows would begin in the summer and serve for a year. At the end of the fellowship, fellows and supervisors will be interviewed about the success and shortcomings in the fellowship and the program will be altered accordingly.

MSTEHP fellows will be hired as postdoctoral scholars by the Graduate School at the University of Maryland, College Park. The fellowship will be funded entirely using grant money from regional and national non-profit organizations. The Graduate School will supervise the program, oversee grants, and administer the full-time stipend (~\$50,000) and benefits, such as professional development funds and health insurance. An advisory committee with governmental, NGO, and business leadership from across the state will also provide support and input to the fellowship program.

The Graduate School will also manage the application and interview process. Anyone with an advanced terminal level degree in science, including social sciences, engineering, or health, from an accredited U.S. university, may apply to the program. Candidates can apply for a fellowship in a program area where relevant expertise is often needed: health, energy, environment, information technology, transportation, infrastructure, and other disciplines as determined by host offices. After vetting and prioritizing top candidates, each legislative committee and the Department of Legislative Services will have the opportunity to interview and rank candidates. The candidates will then do the same and rank the offices. The Graduate School will next match candidates to appropriate offices.

Once selected, each fellow will participate in an orientation program to enhance their understanding of public policy and the working of Maryland's legislative and executive branches fellows will also have the opportunity to participate in professional development activities throughout the fellowship period.

What Can I Do to Support MSTEHP?

We kindly ask community members to sign a letter of support and to contact their state elected representatives in support of MSTEHP. As we engage with community players and move towards acquiring funds, we welcome any feedback on potential funding sources, best fellow placement or nominations to serve on the advisory board. We are enthusiastic at the prospect to further evidence-based research that will best serve the interest of all Marylanders.

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