



WRCOG

Public Service Fellowship Program (2020-2021) Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is WRCOG?

The Western Riverside Council of Governments (WRCOG) is a regional, member-driven planning agency that seeks to unify Western Riverside County so that it can speak with a collective voice on important issues that affect the subregion.

2. What are the minimum qualifications for being a Fellow?

Fellows must be enrolled as a college senior or master's candidate in the 2020-2021 Academic Calendar or be a recent graduate (undergraduate or masters degree). All Fellows must have a minimum 3.0 GPA in their undergraduate or graduate education. Candidates must also demonstrate a connection to Western Riverside County, ways to do that include answering "yes" to any of the following: Are you from the area? Did you attend or are you currently attending school in the area? Do you now or have you previously worked in the area?

3. What is needed to apply to be a WRCOG Fellow?

Applicants must submit all of the following components to Rachel Singer rsinger@wrcog.us by July 31, 2020: Fellowship Application, cover letter, resume, college transcripts, letter of recommendation and a personal essay response.

4. What is the interview and placement process like?

Upon review of all candidate applications, WRCOG will invite qualified applicants to a brief, in-person interview. Depending on the candidate's performance in the interview, WRCOG staff will tentatively match the candidate with a host agency based on the candidate's interests and background as well as the agency's staffing need. WRCOG will then email the candidate and request that him/her to schedule an interview with the host site. Depending on the candidate's performance in the second interview, WRCOG will finalize the placement or recommend an alternate host site, if available.

5. When do applicants receive notification of their selection for interviews?

All applicants will receive a confirmation that the application has been received. After the July 31, 2020 application deadline, applicants will be notified of their application status (whether they will be invited to advance to the interview phase) by email.

6. How do you decide which member agency I am placed in?

Member agency placement is based on applicant interests and qualifications, as well as the host agency's needs. WRCOG, the applicant, and the host agencies work closely

together to ensure a mutually beneficial match. Please note that WRCOG cannot guarantee an applicant placement with any specific agency based on the criteria above.

7. Who do Fellows report to on a day-to-day basis?

Fellows will be assigned an on-site supervisor at their host agency, whom they will report to regarding daily assignments. Fellows report to WRCOG once a month for routine Professional Development Sessions and for a variety of administrative items including payroll.

8. What are Professional Development Sessions?

Professional Development Sessions occur on a monthly basis. They are sponsored by WRCOG and include the opportunity for Fellows to meet and learn from a variety of individuals from the different fields in the public sector. Past Professional Development Sessions have featured guest speakers including city managers, elected officials, department directors, and others. Previous presentation formats also include an elected official's panel, a bus tour of the subregion, a young professional's panel, and more! Attending WRCOG's monthly sessions is mandatory for Fellows.

9. Are Fellows reimbursed for transportation?

WRCOG or the host agency will reimburse Fellows for approved work trips assigned to them by their host agency only when a Fellow takes his or her personal vehicle to attend a work-related event or meeting. WRCOG does not reimburse a Fellow's everyday commute to and from work.

10. Does the Fellowship provide housing options?

The Fellowship Program does not provide housing options.

11. If selected, when do I start?

Due to the impacts of COVID-19, WRCOG has decided to postpone the start of the 2020/2021 Fellowship cohort to September 2020. Fellows will still receive 9-months of training in host agencies so the updated timeline of the Program is September 2020 to May 2021.

12. How many hours per week do Fellows spend at the host agency?

Fellows can complete 20-30 hours a week at their host agency, depending on whether they are recruited as a part-time or full-time participant.

13. What is the overall timespan of the program?

The Fellowship is a nine-month program beginning in July and ending in March of the following year. Fellows work a minimum of 20 hours per week and a maximum of 30 hours a week.

14. How are previously scheduled commitments – such as vacation – handled during the program?

Time off is predominantly scheduled and coordinated with a Fellow's host agency first, then confirmed with WRCOG.

15. What's the difference between being a Fellow and an Intern?

The WRCOG Fellowship Program requires a higher caliber of commitment, professionalism, and initiative than traditional internship opportunities, and in-turn offers greater career development opportunities. The Program exists to develop young professionals that are ready to enter the public sector workforce upon completion of the Program.

16. What kind of projects do Fellows work on?

Projects will vary depending on the agency where a Fellow is placed. Examples of past projects include legislative research, bill tracking, social media content management and creation, communications, government relations, drafting staff reports, researching potential ordinances, and more. For a more in-depth look at what a few former Fellows have worked on, please see our Featured Fellows [here](#).

17. Is it better to be placed in a large or small agency?

There are benefits of working in both! Completing a Fellowship in a larger agency allows you to see day to day functions on a large scale. However, small cities are equally impactful as they typically have a smaller staff and therefore welcome more involvement from their Fellow, which can also lead to more ownership over projects. For a full list and map of WRCOG's member agencies, which are all potential host sites for Fellows, please click [here](#).

18. Am I compensated for the Fellowship?

Yes, Fellows receive \$15/hour for up 960 hours.

19. When is training?

Fellow candidates who are selected to participate in the program will be notified via email for orientation/training information. Orientation will likely be held at the end of May or beginning of June.

20. Where can I direct additional questions?

Additional questions can be directed to Rachel Singer at rsinger@wrcog.us or (951) 405-6754.