



# ASPEN TECH POLICY HUB



THE ASPEN INSTITUTE

## The Fellowship Program

Our program mixes the best of both Washington and Silicon Valley, bringing together stakeholders in policy and technology to train the next generation of policy entrepreneurs.

At the Aspen Tech Policy Hub, we take tech experts, teach them the policy process through an in-person fellowship program in the Bay Area, and encourage them to develop outside-the-box solutions to society's problems. We model ourselves after tech incubators like Y Combinator, but train new policy thinkers and focus the impact of their ideas. We're building new ideas for policymaking — every fellow must complete one practical policy output during their time with us — and an alumni base of technologists who understand policy and want to engage with it.

Before applying, please carefully review the fellowship details, eligibility, and the Frequently Asked Questions on our website. Please take your time and fill out the application thoughtfully; we recommend writing and editing drafts before transferring them to the application form. No decisions will be made about any applications before the application deadline.

If you have additional questions, we have several recruitment events you can join.

We will host a Q&A based webinar on July 24, 2019 at 9am PST/12pm EST ([register here](#)), and August 7, 2019 at 12pm PST/3pm EST ([register here](#)).

For Bay Area residents, we will also host a Q&A session at our goodbye event for the current fellow class on July 21 in San Francisco. Kara Swisher will be a special guest of the program. [Please sign up here](#).

## Fellowship Details

Incubator fellows will spend a minimum of 2 months with us for mandatory programming, approximately from January 2 to March 6 2020. See the FAQ below for more details.

This is an intense, full time program, and we expect fellows' full attention while they are participating. Fellows will be paid a stipend of \$7,500/month for 2 months to defray their living costs in the Bay Area,

with an option to apply for a 3rd month of stipend funding if the fellow is available to remain in residence for an additional month after formal programming concludes. (We will provide office space, but fellows will need to find their own housing if they are not already local.) We also have limited funds to assist with relocation to the Bay Area if needed.

During residence, fellows will be required to create at least one practical policy output—for instance, mock legislation, toolkits for policymakers, white papers, op-eds, or an app. Fellows have to propose a possible project in their application for the fellowship, but they are not tied to working on that project once in residence. In fact, we encourage fellows to work together to identify new ideas for projects on arrival. Fellows will also be asked to participate in at least one annual public event in which we reveal the results of the fellowship; these will be held in both Washington DC and San Francisco.

Programming to support the development of policy outputs during the fellowship will include:

- An orientation introducing fellows to the fellowship, to the other fellows, and to the policymaking process;
- Regular classes exploring what policy is, how to identify problems, defining alternatives, developing relevant outputs, and communicating to stakeholders;
- Action-oriented practical exercises, such as ‘how to write a policy memo’ or ‘how to give an elevator pitch’, founded on real world problems provided by our partners;
- Mandatory morning pitch meetings for sharing ideas in progress;
- Partnerships with experienced policy mentors who can help provide project guidance;
- Practical resources, including designers, copy editors, legal experts, and communications specialists to facilitate projects; and
- Evening dinners with top corporate and government policy experts, sharing off the record experiences about how things get done.

To ‘exit’ the program at the conclusion of the fellowship, we will help Hub fellows share their outputs during a meeting with a relevant stakeholder, which could be a federal or state government employee, company employee, standards body, or other stakeholder relevant to the issue. (Travel will be paid if these stakeholders are outside the Bay Area.)

## Eligibility

We are looking for people with three key characteristics:

### **1) Applicants should have significant professional experience with technology.**

For instance, applicants might work as an engineer, computer scientist, or business executive at a technology company; might be trained as a data scientist or in human-computer interaction; might work at a university or at a think tank studying cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, or the Internet of Things; or might have professional technology experience such as serving as a patent lawyer. Please note these are just illustrative examples; they are not intended to limit eligibility to these categories.

### **2) Applicants should show potential to apply their technology experience to affecting policy and social change.**

They should be passionate about solving the world's problems, and should be able to clearly articulate creative, innovative ideas about the ways in which they want to make a difference and how their experience will help them do that. We are particularly interested in applicants who are passionate about problems in four priority areas:

- Cybersecurity;
- The effects of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things, autonomous vehicles, and quantum computing;
- Protecting democracy, combating disinformation or misinformation, and election security; and
- Using technology to help at-risk populations or encourage social justice.

### **3) Applicants have not yet significantly explored their potential to enact change through policy.**

This is an introductory program to the policymaking process, and applicants with significant past policy experience are likely to be too advanced for this program. While all are welcome to apply, we will prioritize applicants who do not have significant previous policy experience (e.g., a master's in public policy; past experience working in a policy role)

#### **Other requirements for the program include:**

- Applicant(s) must be at least 21 years of age by the start of the program.
- Applicant(s) must be fluent in English.
- Applicant(s) must be able to make a full-time commitment to the incubator process for a minimum of 2 months in early 2020, and be able to reside in person in the Bay Area during that time.
- Applicant(s) must have legal status to work and reside in the United States.

Applicants must have a passion for changing the world, and an interest in learning how technology and policy can work together to achieve change.

Students are eligible to apply, but please note that, due to the requirement for significant professional experience in technology, students without work experience are unlikely to be strong candidates for acceptance. (This being said, this is a pilot program and all assumptions are just that — assumptions. So we urge you to apply and prove us wrong!)

If you are ineligible for the program but still would like to get involved with the Aspen Tech Policy Hub, please email [aspentechpolicyhub@aspeninstitute.org](mailto:aspentechpolicyhub@aspeninstitute.org) or sign up for our [listserv](#). We hope to diversify the types of fellows we can accept in future cohorts.

## **Application**

Please completely fill out the application below. We encourage candidates to express themselves simply and clearly. For advice on developing a clear writing style, please see [this blog post from Y Combinator](#).

Applications are due by 11:59pm PST on August 15, 2019. Applicants will be notified no later than October 15 if they are finalists for the fellowship. Finalists will undergo Skype interviews in October. Final decisions will be made no later than November 1, pending reference checks. Please contact us at [aspentechpolicyhub@aspeninstitute.org](mailto:aspentechpolicyhub@aspeninstitute.org) if you receive a competing offer that requires expedited consideration.

[Apply](#)