

Call for Proposals

Policy Research and Advocacy Fellowship Initiative 2015. European Integration and Promotion of Democratic Reform in Armenia.

The Policy Fellowship Initiative of the OSF-Armenia invites applications from junior and senior policy researchers eager to carry out rigorous and innovative study identifying the most critical open society challenges, developing practical policy solutions and working towards implementation of those. Aims of the fellowship are:

- to enhance the capacity of researchers to influence the public policy-making process.
- to encourage proactive cooperation between independent policy researchers, civil society organizations and policy makers to reach higher quality of policy research and higher quality of data based policy dialogue amongst wider stakeholders.
- to consolidate policy research and advocacy capacity in EU integration issues.

Eligibility

The fellowship program is open for civil society representatives, university faculty, policy researchers, analysts, policy advisers and related specialists. An advanced university degree in Political Science, Public Policy and Administration, Law, Economics, International Relations, or related field is required. Experience in policy formulation and analysis, advocacy, and implementation is desirable. Strong and proven research writing and methodological skills are highly desirable. Availability of the fellows to devote significant time to the fellowship is a must. Fellowship applications for projects that may last up to 5 months will be accepted both from individuals and groups. Group projects are highly desired and will be given a priority in the context of limited time and comprehensiveness of issues under study. Please note that during the selection process preference will be given to applicants who previously have not held OSFA Fellowship/s.

Fellowship expectations and work product

The Fellowship seeks for proactive people able to challenge conventional wisdom, identify avenues for democratic reform promotion in the context of EU integration, promote and advocate for human rights conditionality implementation through EU structures, with a strong determination to communicate results of their work to broader audiences. The Foundation will work to integrate Fellows into the individual and organizational networks of partner civil society actors and grantees. It is expected that fellows will produce policy papers within the constraints of the 10,000 word limit with concrete policy recommendations. Most importantly it is expected that recommendations will be used as advocacy tools to start consultations with respective decision makers and actively promote their implementation. **Pure research projects will not be funded. Policy research and advocacy projects shall be accompanied by strong and detailed advocacy plan that takes into account existing openings in the policy making process.** Depending on the chosen topic fellows may produce a variety of work products, including policy reports, shorter formatted series of articles, expert roundups, interactive, innovative public-education projects, media campaigns etc. **Projects containing advanced tools of policy advocacy and relying on own previously collected data or on summary and systematization of existing data will be given a preference.**

Expected Results

Prospective fellows are expected to make efficient use of available or collected policy analytical materials to make proactive interference in the policy making cycle. Methods for that may include active media campaigns, partnering with organizations working in the field, coalition building, advocacy groups, consultations with the government and shall not be limited to public discussions and/or presentations only. Additional funding for large scale, innovative advocacy projects can be considered on a case by case basis.

General Theme. EU integration and promotion of democratic reform.

Fellows are expected to identify and evaluate a selected aspect of EU led democratic reform policy in Armenia designed to promote human rights and democratic governance, actual measures and performance indicators attached to each, as well as practical policy recommendations to obtain impact oriented reform deliverables on the ground. General subthemes may include but are not limited to policy suggestions on the direction and implementation structure of EU Armenia engagement i.e. human rights promotion in the European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plan Implementation programs, Single Support Framework 2014-17, direct budget support in the field of human rights and its performance measures, visa liberalisation process in view of antidiscrimination legislation, personal data protection, anticorruption measures and police reform, revised public finance management strategy.

OSF Armenia will also be interested to have a comparative look on policies, practices and tendencies implemented in specific areas of rights protection envisioned by the two schemes of European and Eurasian regional integration. For example, it would be interesting to study Eurasian Economic Union policies and their effects on preferential exports regime (GSP plus), on World Trade Organization membership and liberalization of trade policies.

The Policy Research Fellowship offers this general guiding theme to introduce applicants to the key areas where the Foundation seeks informed and data based policy advocacy results. As the theme is much wider than its proposed description, prospective applicants are welcome to propose a policy research and advocacy project focusing on their own chosen aspect of the general theme.

Application submission

All interested applicants are required to submit fellowship proposals and supporting materials to OSF-Armenia via register@osi.am by **17.00, March 20, 2015**. Electronic submission of application is a must, while additional, not mandatory hard copies are also being

accepted by the address: 7/1 Tumanyan str., 2nd cul-de-sac. You have to receive an electronic confirmation of your application receipt to your e-mail, in a period of two working days after submission; if you don't please contact us. For questions and additional information you can contact Policy Fellowship Program Coordinator, Mariam Matevosyan via tel. 53-38-62; 53-67-58 or email: mmariam@osi.am.

Application checklist

Filled in policy research proposal form (see appendix 1) (required).

Resume, listing previous publications and relevant research experience (required).

Sample of relevant previous work (optional).

Seminar will be held to answer questions from potential applicants at 17.00, March 13, in Verdi hall, Royal Golden Tulip Hotel, 14 Abovian St., 0001 Yerevan.



Policy Fellowship Initiative. Armenia. 2014 Proposal

This application form is designed to simplify the research proposal submission process and offer specific framework for proposal submission and evaluation. It highlights some of the key sections that a robust policy research proposal shall contain. Each section needs to be carefully addressed. Word limits are not meant as rigid rules but are expected to be taken into account. Preciseness, concision, clarity and clear cut scope are seen as an advantage of a potentially successful proposal.

Policy Research Project's Title and Abstract

Brief overview of your proposal: What do you intend to examine? What is the motivation /reason for your study? What is the current reform relevance? What are the questions you seek to answer and the existing policy(s)/policy alternative(s) that your paper will argue for? (150-200 words)

Problem description and research justification

Discuss the current state of the art in your proposed field of study, research/publications/policy alternatives in the field of your planned research, indicating the novelty of your project and its anticipated contribution to the field. (400-450 words)

Research questions

What are your policy research questions? What puzzles you? (80-100 words)

Policy options and argumentation

In response to your research question, what is your preferred/suggested primary policy option/alternative? Why do you think your preferred/suggested policy option/alternative is more effective? Hypothesize on that. (350-400 words)

Methodology

Please describe your research methodology. Be as concise as possible. Outline potential obstacles and show how you'll overcome those (300-350 words).

Deliverables

Please describe your research outputs i.e. policy papers, briefs, infographics, presentations and debates, audio visual materials etc. (80-100 words)

Advocacy Strategy

Describe beyond the typical research presentations, how can you envisage making an impact? What resources and tools could you develop to disseminate your policy paper, and how will it be useful to the targeted communities? How would you disseminate them? What are the risk factors associated with the implementation of your advocacy strategy? Describe the list of target policy-makers and policy-implementers that you intend to contact and (500-650 words).

Project Timetable

Provide the timeframe for the planned project and the key activities in a table. Please note that maximum duration of projects can last from 4 to 6 months.

Budget

Please list all the costs in an itemized budget table which can cover such expenses as honorarium, fieldwork, advocacy costs (i.e. presentation and publication of the report), and/or other necessary expenses. Note that the budget shall not exceed 4000 USD.