



Association for Institutional Research



***Improving Institutional Research in
Postsecondary Educational Institutions***



***2009 Fellowship Program in
Institutional Research***



Application Deadline: April 20, 2009



Overview

The Association for Institutional Research (AIR) announces the Fellowship Program in Institutional Research to support improved quality of institutional research in U.S. postsecondary education. Fellowships are intended to support persons pursuing a career in institutional research in building a strong set of data and analytical skills, thereby increasing the accuracy of data collection and reporting conducted at their institution. Funding for the fellowships is provided by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).

Fellowships will fund coursework to develop institutional research (IR) skills. Relevant courses include graduate or certificate-level courses such as statistics, data management, introduction to institutional research, higher education policy, and data reporting.

Fellowships are available to:

- Institutional research professionals who wish to improve their skills through IR coursework while continuing employment in an institutional research position;
- Second-year graduate students (Masters or Doctoral) who are pursuing a program of study in preparation for a career in institutional research; or
- First-year graduate students who have prior experience in an IR position, and who are pursuing a program of study in preparation for a career in institutional research.*

**Awards will not be made to first-year graduate students with no prior IR work experience.*

Fellowships may cover a minimum of one academic year to a maximum of three academic years of study. Fellowships are available for part-time (at least one course/three credit hours during fall and spring) or full-time (three courses/nine credit hours during fall and spring) study. Applicants may request up to \$3,000 per year for part-time study (maximum of \$9,000 over three years) or up to \$10,000 per year for full-time fellowships (maximum of \$30,000 over three years).

Applicants must demonstrate a career interest in institutional research and propose a plan of study that addresses competencies in the field. Awards will be made by a selection committee of national experts based on an application that presents a:

- Strong commitment to institutional research as a future career;

- Proven record of coursework and/or IR work experience;
- Thoughtful plan to strengthen existing and develop new IR skills; and
- Commitment to share knowledge and learn from others in the institutional research community.

Fellows are encouraged to develop fluency in using the NCES datasets and analysis tools. Attendance at the National Summer Data Policy Institute, an intensive study of NCES and National Science Foundation datasets, is required during the Fellowship period. Travel and expenses are provided in addition to the Fellowship.

Applications must be submitted online at <http://airweb.org/FellowshipOverview.html> by midnight Eastern Daylight Saving Time on the evening of April 20, 2009. Notification of awards will be made during the first week of July 2009.

A complete application is comprised of 8 components.

1. Contact information
2. Statement of career goals and interests
3. Education plan
4. Personal statement of institutional research skills
5. Support documents
6. Resume or Curriculum Vita
7. Budget
8. Statement of agreement to participate in the National Summer Data Policy Institute

Application Details

1. Contact Information

Contact information is required for the:

- a. Applicant (include name, address, telephone, fax, e-mail and name of the postsecondary institution)
- b. authorized institutional financial representative (typically a staff member in the financial aid office)

2. Statement of Career Goals and Interests

Describe your career goals and identify areas of institutional research that are of greatest interest to you. (limit 300 words)

3. Education Plan

Describe your proposed course of study, including any educational activities such as conference attendance, and explain how these will build competencies and skills for your career in institutional research. Include a timeline to completion. (*See below for examples of IR competencies and skills.*) (limit 400 words)

Examples of institutional research competencies and skills:

- Analytical and statistical expertise
- Assess and measure student learning and development
- Institutional management (finance, budgeting, etc.)
- Technological skills and software expertise
- Database management in postsecondary education
- Knowledge of state and federal higher education data, policies and issues

4. Personal Statement of Institutional Research Skills

Provide a self-assessment of current institutional research competencies and skills and describe how they were obtained. (limit 900 words)

5. Support Documents

- Institutional research professionals must submit a letter of support from their supervisor.
- Second-year graduate students must submit a transcript and letter of support from a faculty advisor.
- First-year graduate students with prior institutional research experience must submit a letter of support from their faculty advisor and previous institutional research employer.

Application Process

6. Abbreviated Resume or Curriculum Vita (no more than 3 pages)

Provide a resume or Curriculum Vita, including any previous or current IR experience.

7. Budget

Fellowship funds may be used for tuition, educational fees, and travel and attendance at meetings and conferences. Fellowship monies may not be used to purchase computer hardware or for living expenses.

8. Statement of Agreement of Participation in the National Summer Data Policy Institute

Complete the online application agreement and indicate which year you intend to participate in the National Summer Data Policy Institute.

STEP 1: Individuals are encouraged to begin the application process as soon as possible by providing initial contact information as the first step: name, e-mail address, physical address, institutional affiliation and institutional financial representative. Providing this information assures that updates and deadline reminders will be sent to individuals via the e-mail address provided. Providing contact information does not commit an individual to submit an application.

STEP 2: Review the *Fellowship Program Guidelines*.

STEP 3: Individuals will use the unique Web address sent to them via e-mail after completing Step 1. **It is recommended that applicants write each section using word processing software and, when finalized, cut and paste the text into the online application.**

Note: Applicants can save parts of their application and return later, via their unique Web address, to update and/or edit their information until either they finalize their application or the application process closes at midnight Eastern Daylight Saving Time the evening April 20, 2009.

If the e-mail with the unique Web address is misplaced, please contact the AIR grant staff at air@airweb.org or 850-385-4155 x200.

STEP 4: Submit the online application. When an application is successfully submitted a confirmation message will be sent to the applicant. It is the applicant's responsibility to submit the final application and save the confirmation notice as receipt of a successful online submission.

The Fellowship application will not be considered complete and ready for review by the Fellowship Review Panel until a transcript and/or support letters are received by AIR. Please refer to the application detail under Support Documents. For questions and assistance please contact the AIR grant staff at air@airweb.org or 850-385-4155 x200.

An application may be withdrawn at any time before the final funding decision is made. A request for withdrawal must be sent to air@airweb.org. Confirmation of the withdrawal request will be sent to the applicant.

Selection Process

Applications will be reviewed by a panel of national experts. A minimum of three panel members will read and evaluate each application.

If any significant change in the education plan develops after the application is submitted, the applicant is responsible for notifying the AIR staff as soon as possible. AIR may allow a revision of the application after the application deadline or the new information may be presented to the review panel as an addendum to the original submission. A revised budget may also need to be submitted.

Award Announcement

Applicants will be notified of the status of the application during the first week of July. The institutional financial representative will be copied on the award notification. Fellowship recipient names and institutional affiliations are part of the public record that is provided to NCES and listed on the AIR Web site.

Fellowship Program in Institutional Research Rating Rubric

Section 1: Qualifying Criteria

Reviewers use the criteria below to rate applications. One or more answers of “No” will disqualify the application. Items that are “unclear or missing” must be resolved by AIR staff prior to funding but will not stop an application from being fully reviewed and considered.

| | | | |
|---|------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| Is the applicant affiliated with a U.S. postsecondary institution? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear/Missing | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Statement of Agreement to attend Summer Data Policy Institute is provided? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear/Missing | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <p>Eligibility Documentation (one or more)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> For institutional research professionals: a letter of support from current supervisor</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> For second year graduate students: a transcript and letter of support from faculty member</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> For first-year graduate students with prior institutional experience: letter of support from faculty advisor and a letter of support from prior supervisor</p> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear/Missing | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

Section 2: Rating the Application

Score

Statement of Career Goals and Interests:

To what extent does the applicant demonstrate a commitment to a future career in institutional research?

Low Marginal Acceptable High Very High
 1 2 3 4 5

To what extent are the stated interests aligned with a career in institutional research?

Low Marginal Acceptable High Very High
 1 2 3 4 5

Education Plan:

To what extent are the proposed education plan and timeline appropriate, realistic and focused for career preparation in institutional research?

Low Marginal Acceptable High Very High
 1 2 3 4 5

To what extent does the education plan specifically address skills and competencies that are required for daily work in institutional research?

Low Marginal Acceptable High Very High
 1 2 3 4 5

Personal Statement of Institutional Research Skills:

To what extent does the applicant provide a thoughtful self-appraisal of current institutional research skills?

Low Marginal Acceptable High Very High
 1 2 3 4 5

To what extent does the applicant's prior or current course work and/or work experiences demonstrate a commitment to a career in institutional research?

Low Marginal Acceptable High Very High
 1 2 3 4 5

Budget :

To what extent is the budget aligned with and appropriate for the courses and plan described in the application narrative?

Low Marginal Acceptable High Very High
 1 2 3 4 5

Total Score:

Section 3. Funding Recommendation

Should AIR award a Fellowship to this applicant?

- Award
- Consider Awarding
- Do Not Award

Budget

Tuition and Educational fees:

Year 1: _____

Year 2: _____

Year 3: _____

Travel:

Year 1: _____

Year 2: _____

Year 3: _____

Miscellaneous educational expenses:

Year 1: _____

Year 2: _____

Year 3: _____

Total Requested For Each Year:

Year 1: _____

Year 2: _____

Year 3: _____

Total Fellowship Amount: _____