

ARIZONA SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY POLICY FELLOWSHIP

Enabling scientists, engineers, and public health experts to directly serve the Arizona Legislature.



Program Summary

Arizona recognizes the need to incorporate scientific knowledge into state and local governance, due to the significant impact of science and technology (S&T)-related industries on its economy and residents' well-being. Currently, legislative staff often lack scientific or technical backgrounds, and there's a gap in state-level programs that connect academia with public service.

We propose to establish a S&T Policy Fellowship Program to address Arizona's unique needs. This program will facilitate communication between academia and government, making scientific perspectives available to inform policymaking, providing evidence-based solutions for consideration, and leveraging Arizona's growing S&T sector to improve policy decisions and outcomes for its residents.

Fellow Roles & Responsibilities

- Serve as honest brokers and provide direct access to academic expertise;
- Provide nonpartisan science, engineering, technology, and health information upon request;
- Perform and translate research to support analysis and technical fact checking.

Duration & Timeline

Fellows will be appointed to full-time, 12-month positions.

June	<i>Applications Open</i>
October	<i>Finalist Interviews</i>
November	<i>Fellows Selected & Trained</i>
January	<i>Fellowship Begins with Legislative Session</i>

Fellow Qualifications

Individuals with a doctoral-level degree in the natural, health, or social sciences, engineering, computer science, or mathematics, or a master's degree in engineering with at least three years' work experience.

Fellow Placement

Fellows will operate out of the Arizona Legislative Council, co-supervised by a University supervisor for prioritization of requests, quality assurances, and training, and by a Legislative Council staff member for nontechnical administrative support.

Program Contributions

Arizona Government (Legislative Council)

- Office space and internet access
- Computer and technical equipment
- Potential website for Fellow products
- Training in Arizona Legislature procedures

Arizona Universities

- Salary and employee benefits
- University library and resource access
- Position advertising, recruiting, and hiring
- Fellow training in science policy

Fellow Contributions

Fellows will respond to direct requests for information from members, committees, or caucuses. Fellows will carry out independent research of the current literature and contact relevant experts, as identified in consultation with the Fellowship Program supervisor. Additional contacts may include existing legislative staff or executive branch agencies when applicable. Fellows will summarize findings by:

- Providing short Science Notes summarizing findings for the requestee(s);
- Providing briefings or testimony in committee hearings;
- Being available for “Lunch and Learn” or similar information events with legislators;
- Holding individual meetings with members and their staff(s).

Out of session, Fellows also may work on long-term projects supporting specific legislation, at members’ request. This work may support agenda setting and developing responses to constituent concerns.

Honest Brokers

Fellows will provide nonpartisan current science and technology information solely upon the request of legislators. Under Arizona law and Arizona Board of Regents policy, university employees may not engage in political activity during working hours or using University or Government resources. In no instance shall the Fellows advocate, promote, or propose any specific legislation or idea for legislation.

Furthermore, Fellows will make every effort to respond equitably to requests from both chambers and parties. Priorities of any given member, committee, caucus, party, or chamber should not outweigh requests of others. To this end, Fellows’ tasks will typically be addressed on a “first in, first out” principle. If necessary, Fellows will work with their University supervisor to prioritize responses.

Science Notes will be kept confidential unless specified otherwise.

“I believe I have the opportunity to make **a real impact** with my work, which is both **meaningful** to me and **exciting**.”

— *Liana Vaccari,*
2020 Eagleton Science Fellow,
New Jersey

Two thirds of Missouri policymakers use **scientific** and **technical information** to make decisions **daily or weekly**.

— *Survey of returning Missouri legislators by Prusaczyk, Canfield, and Owen, 2020 (unpublished)*

“In my current job, I can apply my experience with **energy risks** and resilience to **resilience** planning in other industries... I wouldn’t be able to do such impactful work without the **fellowship experience**.”

— *Veronika Vazhnik, Ph.D.,*
2020 Idaho S&T Policy Fellow



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Please tell us your thoughts!

Contact us at: azscipol@arizona.edu

Help us show the value of this program to potential funders! Please add your name to our list of program supporters here:

