

USDN 2020 Equity Diversity Inclusion (EDI) Fellowship Program

Overview

The Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN) is pleased to offer summer 2020 fellowship opportunities with local governments. Fellows will receive a valuable learning experience while helping local governments advance sustainability and inclusion goals.

2020 fellowships are available with the City of Columbia (MO), the City of Fort Collins (CO), the City of Lawrence and Douglas County (KS), Miami-Dade County (FL), the City of San Diego (CA), and the City of Tempe (AZ). USDN anticipates offering up to two additional fellowship positions in late April or early May. We are accepting applications on a rolling basis, with priority given to applications received by May 8.

In response to the coronavirus pandemic, the 2020 fellowships will be variable and flexible. USDN and host sites will work with selected candidates to identify start and end dates, remote versus in person work status, and part-time versus full-time schedules.



2019 USDN EDI Fellows presenting their work at the USDN Annual Meeting

All fellowship positions include:

- A living wage or higher for the fellowship location
- A flexible employment timeline, with up to 480 hours of work throughout summer (and potentially fall) 2020 (start and end dates TBD by host and fellows)

- The experience of working in a local government sustainability program on a well-defined project that advances a community's sustainability and equity goals
- A project that is inclusive of underserved and under-represented communities and responsive to their needs and priorities
- Mentorship from Desiree Williams Rajee and participation in a national learning cohort of USDN EDI fellows
- Access to all USDN member discussions and products
- Membership in an informal network of past and current EDI fellows

Requirements

Broad requirements for all fellowship projects are listed below. Each local government project also has specific requirements.

- Be passionate about sustainability and/or the environment
- Be new to the sustainability field of work or interested in exploring a career in sustainability
- Have the skills required to match the needs of the projects for which you apply
- Have excellent written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to relate to, communicate with, and learn from racially, ethnically, and socioeconomically diverse communities
- Have experience working with multiple communities, including communities of color
- Have experience considering the impacts of projects on multiple communities, including communities of color
- Commit to working for the entire duration of the fellowship
- Commit to participating actively in the cohort learning and mentoring programs
- Commit to maintaining the privacy of cohort and USDN discussions
- Complete a one-page summary blog post and program evaluation form at the conclusion of the fellowship to reflect on your experience
- Make a presentation on your work to USDN members

To Apply

Applications should be sent to the Urban Sustainability Directors Network at <fellowship@usdn.org>. Please include the name of the community or communities with which you are seeking a fellowship in the email subject line. People of color are encouraged to apply.

Applications should include:

- Completed and signed application form available for download [here](#)
- Current resume

Application review will occur on a rolling basis, with priority given to applications received by May 8. All applicants will be notified of selection decisions.

Thank you for your interest!

USDN Fellowship with the City of Columbia, MO

Columbia CAAPtains Fellowship, Office of Sustainability

Fellowship Summary

The Office of Sustainability team wishes to build greater diversity among the internal and external stakeholders working on climate action and adaptation by building relationships with our underserved and under-represented communities. The Climate Equity Fellow will explore the impacts of climate change on frontline communities, locally and nationally and work with City staff to design a community leadership program designed to bring climate action and resilience training to the neighbor-to-neighbor level.

Project Background

In Columbia, climate action and adaptation work is often viewed as being promoted by and benefiting a small elite. A clear connection between racial and environmental justice is often missed by decision-makers and community partners. Because the effects of climate change disproportionately affect frontline communities, this connection needs to be made in Columbia. Additionally, people of color are rarely represented in the departments and organizations that shape plans and policies designed to mitigate climate change. We believe that a Climate Equity Fellow can help to address these issues, and help staff to develop best practices that can be employed throughout City government.

The City of Columbia Office of Sustainability is responsible for coordinating the implementation of the Climate Action & Adaptation Plan (CAAP). The CAAP lays out a vision and strategy to address risks posed by climate change and contributes to international efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Office of Sustainability is partnering with the Columbia / Boone County Public Health and Human Services Department, the Inclusive Impact Institute and the Climate & Environment Commission to create a climate leadership program - CAAPtains. This community leadership program will be designed to bring climate action and resilience training to a neighbor-to-neighbor level. It is our intent that the Climate Equity Fellow would play a key role in designing this program. Our goal for the CAAPtains program is to achieve greater diversity among the internal and external stakeholders who are working on climate action and adaptation, by building relationships with our underserved and under-represented communities.

Achieving our racial equity and climate action goals requires motivating staff, developing funding for strategies, and inspiring community members to make key changes and sustain momentum. The Climate Equity Fellow and the work they will do in our CAAPtains program will foster the community engagement and participation required to achieve the emission reduction targets outlined in the CAAP. The Climate Equity fellow will help fulfill CAAP Implementation Goal 3: "Strengthen City capacity to support community climate action". Specifically, they will address Strategy I-3.3: "Develop community leadership capacity for and involvement in climate action."

Relevant websites links:

- [Dashboard](#) for Climate Action & Adaptation Plan (CAAP)
- [Principles of Community](#)
- Office of Sustainability [website](#)

Team Description

The Climate Equity Fellow will be a member of the Office of Sustainability staff. The Office of Sustainability's mission is to work with all City departments and the community to optimize resource use efficiency and improve economic, environmental and social wellbeing. We do this through planning, monitoring, educating, and communicating internally and externally. The fellow will be supporting the Office of Sustainability staff, reporting to the Sustainability Manager, as designer of a community leadership program. Representatives from Columbia / Boone County Public Health and Human Services Department, the Inclusive Impact Institute and the Climate & Environment Commission will serve as advisors on the project's development and as mentors throughout the summer.

Job Description

Goals for the Climate Equity Fellow include:

- Explore the impact of climate change on frontline communities, locally and nationally.
- Enhance existing relationships, and establish new relationships, between the Office of Sustainability and community organizations representing underserved and under-represented communities.
- Design criteria for a community leadership program designed to bring climate action and resilience training to the neighbor-to-neighbor level.
- Make recommendations on piloting community leadership program.
- Present on the results of the disproportionate effects of climate change on communities of color at the 2020 State of Inclusivity Conference and results of the summer's research.

Timeline

The following timeline sets a realistic goal for the Climate Equity Fellow to develop a report on local impacts of Climate Change and design a community ambassador program:

Weeks 1-2

Introduction to the City and the program goals. Fellow begins work for the City of Columbia and the project team hosts onboarding opportunities. Mentor is identified. Research into the program area takes place during this time, as well.

Week 3 and thereafter

Outreach and Engagement with project team to underserved and under-represented communities begins. Climate Equity Fellow will attend meetings with the project team and help brainstorm non-traditional ideas for outreach.

Weeks 4-10

Design community leadership program from results of outreach and engagement – including focus groups, as applicable. Research other similar programs and develop criteria for Columbia's program.

Weeks 8-12

Report and Celebrate the research results and plans for future implementation with a presentation to the project team and community partners before presenting the final results at the 2020 State of Inclusion (August 6).

Desired Skills

The ideal candidate for this position will have a unique combination of work and/or volunteer experience and acquired life skills that have resulted in personal qualities such as taking initiative, intellectual curiosity, empathy, flexibility, and a sense of humor. Specific desired experience and skills for this fellowship include:

- Experience working directly with people from diverse racial, ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic backgrounds
- Demonstrated history of community involvement through charitable organizations, volunteer groups, religious organizations, etc.
- Understanding of and comfort with communicating about institutional and structural racism and bias
- Experience developing communication materials for diverse audiences and presenting information to large and small groups

Successful candidates will be able to demonstrate some combination of the following skills, experiences, and abilities:

- Ability to work closely with a diverse team from multiple different organizations
- Creative and clear communication skills
- Skills in qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis
- Ability to conduct and drive conversations in individual interviews and focus groups
- Ability to write clearly and concisely
- Curiosity about systems, organizations, and structures
- An ability to independently research and proactively learn needed skills

Professional Development and Support

It is the project team's intent to have weekly check-ins between the fellow and supervisor on how things are going. Also setting up check-ins with project team leads for mentoring. As part of the onboarding and continuing work, the Office of Sustainability staff will also provide tours of City operations and programs.

Pay Rate and Housing

The pay rate for the fellowship is \$18.27 / hour. If relocating to Columbia, the Office of Sustainability will connect the fellow with our partners who maintain listings of housing opportunities. As a University town, there are always a variety of options for rental housing.