



## **AAAS SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY POLICY FELLOWSHIPS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

The AAAS Fellowships Department conducts a year-long professional development program that includes an orientation, monthly seminars, career-enhancement sessions, skill-building workshops, and networking events that benefit both the Fellows and their host offices. The activities help to enhance the Fellows' knowledge and capabilities, and also to foster interaction and collaborative connections within the fellowship cohort. Following are details on the various activities.

### **ORIENTATION:**

New Fellows are required to attend a two-week orientation program that AAAS operates in September at the start of the fellowship year. The aim is to provide Fellows with essential facts about legislative and executive branch operations, to help define their roles as Fellows, and to offer information and contacts useful to Fellows in their assignments throughout the year. The orientation assists in clarifying objectives and prepares Fellows to be more effective in their new positions. The sessions offer context and background rather than detailed information about how to work in specific fellowship assignments.

AAAS's reputation and extensive collaborations help attract outstanding senior-level professionals as orientation speakers and resources for new Fellows. The orientation also includes many former Fellows who serve as speakers, resources, and mentors.

### **EDUCATIONAL SEMINARS:**

Fellows participate in monthly educational seminars and activities. The program includes at least one seminar or special activity each month (from October through July), designed to expose Fellows to a range of issues related to science and policy. Sessions and tours have been arranged addressing topics as diverse as the budget process, communicating science in the media, welfare reform, and the laboratory capabilities and research conducted by various agencies.

### **CAPACITY-BUILDING WORKSHOPS AND CAREER-ENHANCEMENT SESSIONS:**

AAAS offers skill-building sessions for Fellows at the mid-year gathering. The workshops serve to expand the Fellows' professional capacity in such areas as public speaking, negotiation and building consensus, communicating science, project management, facilitating meetings, multi-stakeholder interactions, social marketing, and managing interdisciplinary teams.

Career-enhancement sessions are also conducted at least four times a year, covering a range of issues such as developing and using a scope of work, soliciting and applying feedback from mentors and supervisors, creating a personal career plan, strategies to network successfully, and writing achievement statements.

### **NETWORKING & OUTREACH EVENTS:**

Fellows benefit from annual activities sponsored by AAAS that support networking within and across cohorts, and with the broader scientific community. These include the AAAS Annual Meeting held each February, attended by more than 5,000 scientists, engineers, and policymakers from around the world. The Fellowships Department sponsors a networking event for current and alumni Fellows to interact with science policy specialists at the meeting, and a career workshop on the program to recruit future candidates.

AAAS holds the Forum on Science & Technology Policy each spring in Washington, DC, providing a venue for discussion and debate about budget and policy issues facing the science and technology policy community. Since its beginning in 1976, it has grown to draw nearly 500 of the nation's top science and technology experts and has

established itself as the major public meeting in the United States on science and technology policy issues. AAAS subsidizes Fellows to attend the event.

The AAAS Fellowships department also hosts a networking event each autumn for all former Fellows to gather to welcome the new cohort of Fellows, and to begin to establish relationships that support the new class and develop collaborative connections. In addition, professional networking gatherings are held in conjunction with the monthly seminars.

#### **ANNUAL RETREAT:**

AAAS organizes a year-end, day-long retreat for Fellows to provide a time for reconnecting with their full cohort, for reflection on the fellowship year, for discussion and sharing of resources for future career plans, and for feedback on the fellowships.

Beyond these efforts, the Fellowships Department endeavors to foster contact between current and former Fellows to help fuse them into a strong union within and across cohorts during and after their fellowship year, and to support Fellows to establish and maintain contacts with host agency staff and other partner organizations. The Fellows benefit by sharing information and experiences, alerting each other to events, opportunities to provide scientific input, receiving feedback and advice, and forming collaborations. AAAS maintains the following activities to encourage active and ongoing exchange:

#### **WEB SITE AND ONLINE DIRECTORY:**

The AAAS website includes a section dedicated to the Fellowships ([fellowships.aaas.org](http://fellowships.aaas.org)), which displays articles on Fellows and their assignments, and provides segments on Fellows in the News, and highlights of special activities, such as the annual Barnard Environmental Lecture.

The AAAS website also will support Fellows' networking via an online, interactive, searchable directory of 1,800+ Fellowship alumni.

#### **ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER:**

The current print newsletter, *Fellowship Focus*, will transition to an electronic format that will be distributed three times each year. It will feature AAAS Fellow profiles, outreach activities, outcomes and policy implications, Fellows' articles, recent publications, and noteworthy news items. Current and former Fellows, as well as program partners and advisors, professional societies, and collaborative partner organizations will receive the newsletter in the new format. The newsletter will serve as a regular and timely means of communicating AAAS Fellowships announcements and updates, promoting Fellows' news and achievements, announcing availability of Fellows' articles and op-ed pieces, presenting trends/news in the science policy realm, and providing information on funding opportunities and other resources.

#### **LISTSERVS:**

AAAS will continue to distribute its listservs for current, past and DC-area Fellows to maintain ongoing communication. Accessible only by Fellows, these serve as an open forum to discuss issues of interest. The listservs provide a platform for dialog on science policy issues, enable Fellows to exchange experiences, share successes and concerns, seek and provide information and advice, and inform each other of special events, conferences, publications, and funding and career opportunities.

AAAS Fellowship staff also facilitate collaborations with external organizations and have made many connections over the 33 years of program operation. As a result, many former Fellows now hold leadership positions in these organizations. Fellows also have benefited through the participation of professionals from these groups on selection committees and advisory bodies, as speakers at orientation sessions and educational seminars, and through invitations to events sponsored by these entities. In addition, many of these organizations may provide career opportunities for Fellows. AAAS Fellowships staff actively conduct outreach to these and additional groups to maintain and expand partnerships.