



POLICY DESTINATION AREA
Call for 2022-2023 Research Applications
Applications Due: **SEPTEMBER 20, 2022**

The Policy Destination Area (PDA) solicits applications from Virginia Tech faculty who wish to pursue research projects with policy relevance. The overarching goal of the PDA is to integrate, connect, and expand policy knowledge—broadly defined—across disciplines. This call supports two initiatives : the *+Policy Fellows* program, now in its 5th year; and a new opportunity, the *Policy Scholars* program, designed to enable researchers without policy expertise to obtain tailored guidance by collaborating with a faculty expert.

Please apply to only ONE of these programs.

1. **+Policy Fellows Program.** This Program is designed to help researchers with policy expertise (a) join or collaborate with an extant or newly forming interdisciplinary research team that otherwise lacks a member with policy knowledge; or (b) to help to extend a policy scholar's expertise into a new area. Accordingly, the award will support either collaboration between a policy researcher (the Fellow) and members of a research team, or an individual policy scholar collaborating with a content expert to develop his/her expertise in that individual's area. Priority will be given to applications from interdisciplinary teams or, if a single scholar, interdisciplinary research, a mentoring/collaboration plan and clear plans for future inquiry.

All Fellow proposals are expected to result in external funding proposals within three years post-award. Other deliverables may include team publication(s) or presentations, a policy brief and/or extensive or high-impact public dissemination of research findings. We ask that the Fellow provide the PDA with a brief written progress report, suitable for website posting at the end of the first year and by 2025 or project completion, whichever occurs first, a 3-5 page policy brief or summary of the project with an outline of its policy implications.

2. **Policy Scholar Professional Development Program.** This initiative is designed to assist researchers who lack policy expertise, but who wish to address policy questions or pursue a policy focus in their work. The Scholar will collaborate with a Virginia Tech faculty member who will serve as policy coach or mentor. Examples of possible activities and deliverables include:

- Collaborating on a joint article or grant proposal that has policy relevance;
- Collaborating on developing and disseminating a policy brief or research tool with policy relevance;
- Engaging in regular coaching/mentoring sessions that lead to a Scholar-authored article or grant proposal.

The Virginia Tech faculty member serving as policy collaborator or mentor can be someone the Scholar has worked with before or may represent a new relationship. If the applicant does not have a policy colleague in mind applicants may contact the PDA for suggestions. The PDA will hold a "Meet & Greet" event September 6, 4-6 pm, at the Institute for Society, Culture and Environment, which will provide an opportunity to network with policy-oriented colleagues.

The policy expert will provide guidance and otherwise assist the Scholar in developing their policy-related knowledge. For example, Scholars and mentors might fully collaborate on a policy study; Scholars might consult with their mentors as they develop their project research designs; mentors might help Scholars understand possible theoretical explanations or expectations in the policy context in which they will be working or consider different audiences

and applications for their findings. Mentors may also serve as co-authors. As such, applications must include a brief expected collaboration/mentorship plan in their applications. The budget request should reflect an allocation of resources to both Scholar and mentor, with a larger sum assigned to the Scholar (see Application Guidelines, Budget, for details).

Deliverables may include one or more of the following, within 3 years of award: (1) external funding proposal that incorporates a significant policy dimension; (2) academic publication or (3) policy brief. We also ask that Scholars provide the PDA with a brief written progress report at the end of the first year suitable for website posting and by 2025 or research completion, whichever occurs earlier, a policy brief OR summary of the project with a policy implications section.

Because this is a new program, the PDA will check-in with Scholar-mentor pairs at the start of the spring 2023 semester (unless an earlier conversation appears warranted) and we anticipate conducting exit interviews with the Scholar and mentor-collaborator approximately one-year post-award as a part of evaluating this initiative. Both Scholar and mentor-collaborator are welcome to consult with members of the PDA Research Committee throughout their grant period, as desired.

General guidance and expectations of award use. Participants selected for the PDA +Policy Research Fellowship are expected:

- To devote time during AY 2022-23 and early summer 2023 to jointly determined activities;
- To submit a progress and budget report by July 2023 to the PDA, with follow-up progress reporting annually for the following two years so that the group can track its investments (3 progress reports total);
- To submit a 3–5-page policy brief describing project outcomes upon project completion or by the end of 2025, whichever occurs earliest, for posting on the Policy DA website;
- To present a seminar concerning the funded work to the Science, Technology and Engineering in Policy (STEP) seminar series or another PDA forum as appropriate.

The selection committee will accord priority to initiatives that advance the aims of the Policy Destination Area. These include research related to one of our four research pillars (health, cyber, environmental or energy policy) or the COVID Impacts and Influences Database of Databases <https://sites.google.com/vt.edu/covid-19-data-lake/home>.

Funding is available for up to two research proposals). The program is open to all faculty members at Virginia Tech with continuous or multi-year appointments (tenure-track/tenured, collegiate, research). Maximum awards are \$10,500.

Application Guidelines

Applications must include: (a) signed cover sheet, including approval of Fellow's department head/chair regarding summer stipend or an internal buy-out for Spring semester 2023 if requested (attached); (b) title of project; (c) Fellow or Scholar applicant information together with that of team members and/or mentors; (d) A research narrative of up to 2 pages; and (e) budget and budget narrative. Policy Scholar and Fellow proposals for developing expertise in a new content area must also include a paragraph describing their expected mentoring or learning plan.

In addition, proposals for both programs should address:

- Significance of the issue, problem, or situation under study;
- Goal(s) of the research and an explanation of how the +Policy Fellowship or the Policy Scholar award will strengthen or enhance an extant research project or a scholar's ability to become competitive in a new area of inquiry;
- Brief justification for each item of the proposed budget (separate page).

For +Policy Fellows only, proposals should also include:

- Plans for securing external funds in support of research with a policy dimension.

For all Scholar and mentored +Policy Fellow proposals only, please also include:

- How the applicant will gain experience with or learn about policy research (Scholar), or learn a new content area (Fellow), e.g. expected mentoring plan.

Applications will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- Clearly described, reasonable and attainable (aims) and approach
- Distinctive policy content
- Potential impact of deliverables
- Potential for securing external funds (for +Policy Fellow proposals)
- Expected mentoring plan (for Scholar proposals and +Policy Fellows addressing a new content area)
- The PDA reserves the right not to consider proposals that are unresponsive to the particulars of this call.

Budget Guidelines: Maximum grant award is \$10,500.

Funds can be used for

- Summer stipend or stipends not to exceed \$8,000 inclusive of fringe benefits; <https://policies.vt.edu/4296.pdf>. Any summer stipend for mentors or research team members cannot exceed that provided the Fellow or Scholar.
- Spring 2023 course release up to \$8,000 for Fellows or Scholars, with amount determined by home department buy-out rates and up to \$2,500 for collaborating research team or mentor(s);
- Research assistant support;
- Collaborating research team activities that promote the team and + Policy Fellow collaboration are acceptable, such as coordination expenses, research assistant support, consultation with funding agencies, external consultants/speakers, and so on.
- If two faculty members plan to collaborate on proposed research, the applicant for +Policy Fellow and the partnering content expert, or the Policy Scholar and partnering mentor, should submit a budget appropriate for the proposed project.

Submission Requirements and Deadline

Applications should be prepared using 1-inch margins and Arial 11 font or larger. Submit an e-copy of the complete application and signed cover sheet to Isabel Bradburn (isbrad@vt.edu) by September 20, 2022 at 5:00 p.m. Acknowledgement of receipt of Applications will be acknowledged within 48 hours and funding decisions communicated no later than September 30, 2022.

Visit the PDA webpage on the ISCE website <https://www.isce.vt.edu/policysga/research.html> to download an electronic copy of the application form.

Notification of Award/Availability of Funds

Funds will be dispersed upon approval of a +Policy Fellow or Policy Scholar project. Any unencumbered funds as of June 1, 2023 must be returned to the PDA.

Questions? We encourage questions or discussion about ideas, tracks and any aspect of this call. Please contact the PDA Program Director Isabel Bradburn (isbrad@vt.edu) or PDA Research Committee Chairperson Max Stephenson (mstephen@vt.edu).

(Cover page next page)

POLICY DESTINATION AREA
+Policy Fellow/Policy Scholar Research Application
 Application Cover Sheet
 (please print or type)

Name of applicant:	Please check which program you are applying for: <input type="checkbox"/> + Policy Fellow <input type="checkbox"/> Policy Scholar
Rank/Title:	Email Address:
College:	Telephone Number:
Department:	Campus Address:
Description of the research project and goal of the fellowship or scholar program (one sentence each):	
Support requested for: <input type="checkbox"/> Summer stipend 2023 <input type="checkbox"/> Course buyout spring 2023 <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate Student <input type="checkbox"/> Other (list)	Total Amount Requested:
Signature of proposed Fellow or Scholar Date	
Signature of mentor (if appropriate)	

When relying on internal funds, the cost of release time to allow faculty members in my department to pursue research/scholarly activities ranges from: \$ _____ to \$ _____ per course. The department is willing to accept funds within this range should the applicant receive the research award. The department understands that the Policy Destination Area cannot carryover unspent funds from this award. If allowable within their college, the Department may carry over any remaining funds for the faculty's use in the next fiscal year in order to complete their PDA research.

Name of Department Head/Chair (print)

Signature

Date