

ROBERT S. McNAMARA FELLOWSHIPS PROGRAM

*A program for young researchers to
participate in policy-relevant research to
effect development policy*





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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The [World Bank](#) Robert S. McNamara Fellowships Program (RSMFP) matches aspiring development economics researchers from developing countries with World Bank research economists, creating unique opportunities for the fellows to participate in rigorous policy-relevant research in the World Bank's [Development Economics](#) Vice Presidency (DEC). Fellows will be hosted at the World Bank in Washington, D.C. for 8 months (September to May each year) and work under the supervision of researchers in the World Bank's [Development Impact Evaluation \(DIME\)](#) and [Development Research Group](#) departments, engaging in high-quality and policy-relevant research projects.

By working with DEC researchers and their external academic collaborators from top universities, fellows will learn current research standards, acquire new econometric skills, and network with leading researchers in their field. They will have a unique opportunity to participate in rigorous policy-relevant research and widen their perspective on potential development questions, and how their research can address challenges in the developing world.



Application period will be open annually in March. More detailed information regarding the application can be found on [this website](#).

After completing the program, fellows will return to their home country or university to continue their studies and/or use their new skills to contribute to economic development issues.



BACKGROUND

The RSMFP program has provided support to young researchers since 1982, providing fellowships to developing country nationals to conduct PhD research on a wide variety of topics in development-related fields in a World Bank member country other than the fellow's home country or country of residence.

In November 2020, the World Bank approved the restructuring of the RSMFP, with the goal of increasing its ability to provide opportunities for young researchers to succeed in and contribute to the field of development economics. The new structure connects promising young researchers to World Bank research, data resources, and technical expertise.

Selected fellows are hosted as a cohort at the World Bank and work on World Bank DEC research projects, receive formal training, and participate in policy relevant research while expanding their professional network.

SELECTION

Young researchers will be selected from World Bank member countries, with preference for developing country nationals. They must have either completed master's level studies or be currently pursuing a PhD in Economics or other fields related to development, be fluent in English, and be no more than 35 years of age (by June 30th of the year the fellowship starts). In the selection process due consideration will be given to the criteria of gender diversity and geographical representation.





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The application period will open annually, between March and April, and all the selected fellows will start the fellowship in September of the same year as a cohort. Candidates should display a passion and commitment for international development research, possess outstanding academic credentials, and be available to relocate to Washington D.C., for the duration of the fellowship.

KEY PROGRAM FEATURES

World Bank's Development Economics (DEC) is among the top-ranked research departments in development economics. The RSMFP provides fellows with a unique opportunity to work with and learn from DEC researchers working on the frontlines of international development research, including research in Fragility, Conflict and Violence (FCV) and other challenging environments.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE: Fellows will work on World Bank projects under the direct supervision of World Bank DEC researchers and will be offered training on cutting-edge research practices and technologies and engage with the World Bank operations. Depending on the nature of projects, fellows may contribute to DEC's published work, co-author with DEC researchers, join field missions, or directly engage with World Bank clients.

CAPACITY BUILDING: Fellows will receive a one-week technical onboarding at the start of the program, including training on reproducible research practices. During the program, fellows will participate in hands-on trainings and seminars by top economists, to further build skills. Through their work with DEC economists, fellows will enhance their ability to identify, study, and write about important development policy questions.



RESEARCH DISSEMINATION: Fellows will be invited to write a blog based on their fellowship research in DEC. This is an opportunity to showcase their research and contribution to development policy discussions. Each year, the top 4 blogs will be published on DEC's [Let's Talk Development](#) blog.

COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

The RSMFP offers a competitive compensation, totaling \$42,750 net of income taxes per fellow for an 8-month fellowship (paid in monthly installments). Since the fellows will be hosted at the World Bank in Washington D.C., the World Bank's HR Operations unit will assist the selected candidates with their application for G4 visa.



Note: The fellowship does not cover travel expenses.

ABOUT DEC

The Development Economics Vice Presidency (DEC) increases understanding of development policies and programs by providing intellectual leadership and analytical services to the World Bank and the development community.

DEC is the premier research and data arm of the World Bank. With its cross-cutting expertise on a broad range of topics and countries, it is one of the most influential institutions of development research in the world.





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DEC experts are often cited by the media, the academic community, and other stake holders interested in international development. They provide support to the World Bank's Regions and Global Practices to help ensure that the institution's policy advice is firmly grounded in current knowledge. They also work directly with our government clients to support evidence-driven development. The work of our researchers appears in academic journals, the [Policy Research Working Papers](#), books, blogs, and special publications such as the [Policy Research Reports](#).

How To Apply

The application period will be open annually in March. More detailed information regarding the application can be found on [this website](#).

To be considered, applicants must submit:

- ☒ Resume
- ☒ A statement of purpose
- ☒ Contact details for letter of recommendation
- ☒ Writing sample in English (*optional*)
- ☒ Statistical software code sample (*optional*)

