

Job Title: Fellow, U.S. Social and Behavioral Sciences Team
Department: General Services Administration
Agency: Office of Government-wide Policy, Performance Improvement Council
Deadline: Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis until filled

The U.S. Social and Behavioral Sciences Team (SBST) seeks exceptionally qualified individuals to serve as Fellows for 2014–2015. Individuals who can secure continued financial support from their home institution or other outside funding are especially encouraged to apply.

JOB SUMMARY:

The SBST helps federal agencies increase the efficiency and efficacy of their programs and policies, by harnessing research methods and findings from the social and behavioral sciences. The team works closely with agencies across the federal government, thinking creatively about how to translate social and behavioral science insights into concrete interventions that are likely to improve federal outcomes and designing rigorous field trials to test the impact of these recommendations.

The SBST is a small, multi-disciplinary group of experts, coordinated by the Office of Science and Technology Policy and organized under the Performance Improvement Council at the General Services Administration (GSA). Collectively, the team has a diverse mixture of scientific expertise from fields such as economics, psychology, and statistics, as well as experience performing rigorous evaluations in complex operational settings. As the SBST works to pursue the agencies' priority goals, policy areas include health, education, tax and finance, housing, environment, criminal justice, and so forth (see <http://www.usa.gov/directory/federal/> to learn about federal departments and agencies).

Fellows must possess a unique set of technical and professional skills. This includes extensive knowledge of at least one field within the social and behavioral sciences, the ability to creatively apply research knowledge within the federal government setting, the ability to manage the day-to-day operations of a field trial, and exceptional communication and interpersonal skills. (Duties and qualifications are further elaborated below.)

The position lasts for one year beginning in August or September 2014 (precise start date negotiable), with the possibility of renewal. Fellows will be located in the GSA building at 1800 F Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20405. GSA has been named repeatedly by the Partnership for Public Service as one of the “Best Places to Work in the Federal Government.”

DUTIES:

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Your major duties and responsibilities are as follows:

- Learn about select federal agency priorities and design human-centered policies and programs to better serve citizens;
- Creatively translate insights from the social and behavioral sciences into concrete recommendations for how to improve those federal programs, policies, and organizations;
- Work closely with agency partners to design rigorous experimental trials capable of testing the relative efficiency and efficacy of proposed interventions;
- Communicate regularly with agency partners, and any outside collaborators, in order to: ensure the rationale behind intervention ideas and trial design are clearly understood and meet agency goals; ensure that field experiments are implemented as planned; share updates on trial status; and discuss the implications of results;
- Effectively manage the operations of select field experiments, for example, ensuring that the design, implementation, and results are properly documented and shared;

- Perform data analyses and interpretation;
- Write project reports and policy memos for academic, agency, and public audiences;
- Assist, as needed, on additional projects being managed by other SBST members;
- Attend weekly SBST meetings, provide updates on trial status, and be generally available to collaborate on and contribute to internal tasks; and
- Attend and potentially present at conferences and workshops.

QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED:

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- Ph.D. in a social and behavioral sciences field (e.g., economics, psychology, political science, statistics, sociology, public policy, etc.), or a Master's Degree plus two or more years of relevant experience.
- Two or more years of experience designing, implementing and analyzing experiments.
- General knowledge of behavioral economics, and highly specialized knowledge of at least one domain of a study within the social and behavioral sciences.
- Ability to think creatively about how insights from the social and behavioral sciences can be translated into concrete interventions that are practically feasible within specific federal programs, policies, or organizations.
- Statistical competency, including use of at least one programming language (e.g., R, Matlab, SAS, Stata, etc..).
- Ability to effectively explain technical concepts to a broad range of audiences, both orally and in writing.
- Strong writing skills, including under tight deadlines.
- Excellent management and organizational skills.
- Flexibility, self-motivation, and the ability to manage multiple tasks efficiently as a team player.
- Curiosity and willingness to learn about federal agencies and the unique practical and regulatory constraints they face.

ADDITIONAL PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS:

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- Two or more years of experience conducting randomized controlled trials within complex field settings.
- Experience working with the federal government.
- Advanced statistical skills, including experience handling large administrative data sets.

Application Instructions:

- Email your C.V. and a relevant writing sample to natalie.vasquez@gsa.gov, with "SBST Fellow Application" in the subject line. Please also include a 1-page cover letter introducing yourself and explaining your interest in being a Fellow.
- The final deadline to submit is July 25, 2014, although applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis.
- Finalists will be invited to a multi-stage interview process.