

White House Fellows Foundation and Association Reference Guide for Planning an Outreach and Recruiting Event

Purpose: This Reference Guide provides White House Fellow Alumni with guidance on how to plan and execute a successful “Outreach and Recruiting Event”. This Reference Guide is meant to be just that, a guide. It provides a recommended pathway. It is meant to be a living document and we welcome your inputs to improve this document over the years ahead.

Overarching Intent: The goal of conducting an Outreach and Recruiting event is to encourage prospective candidates to apply to the White House Fellows Program, either in the next open application period, or at some point in the future. These events can be conducted by individual WHF alumni, or individual Commissioners. They may also be conducted by groups of multiple WHF alumni and/or Commissioners.

Concept of Operations: This Reference Guide is constructed in a series of sections that would roughly parallel the steps that you would take to set up a recruiting and outreach event. Thus, we will begin with identifying a location and venue, enlisting the support of other WHFs to assist, sending out invitations, and so on. You are welcome to share this guide with other WHF alumni as you plan your event.

Identifying the time and location for your event: Time and place will both be significant for a successful event. Timing-wise, you may want to schedule your event in the early fall (i.e. September or October) to align your recruiting effort with the opening of the application window, which normally occurs on November 1st. However, there is much to be said for events in the spring as well (near the time of college graduation, at a University, for example). Given the long lead time some may need to prepare to apply there is really no “bad” time to hold a recruiting event. There may be opportunities to capitalize on having several WHFs together to help co-host an event with you; following a reading weekend, for example. Or perhaps in conjunction with a regional conference.

Regarding the location of the event, identifying a class room or conference room that you can use is normally about the right size venue for this type of event. You can usually make arrangements for access to such spaces free-of-charge. In addition to determining what is convenient for you (the conference room at your company, for example), also give some thought to what will be convenient to the people you are hoping to attract to the event. If you are hoping to encourage graduate students of a University to attend the event, you might want to arrange for space on campus, rather than downtown in an office building. If you are hoping to attract people from a particular organization (a large non-profit, for example) you might want to ask if they would let you use their conference room (and have you go to them, rather than vice-versa). Make it easy on your audience.

At the venue itself you may want to show slides, or just engage in discussion. You probably won't need much in terms of audio-visual support. What will probably be most compelling to

your audience will be the stories and experiences you can share from your fellowship, and how these affected your life and career.

Getting the word out: Once you've decided on a date, time, and location for your event the next thing to consider is how best to get the word out to prospective applicants. You will certainly want to leverage your existing networks. Email blasts are one method – if you have the addresses of a potentially interested group. Flyers posted in a physical location are another option – if the group you are targeting tends to congregate in a particular physical space. Social media is another option – posting a notice on Facebook, for example, if you think your network might be interested in attending. Perhaps best of all though is to use an existing network of someone who can reach directly to the group you're interested in. For example, the CEO of a company may not be willing to share with you the email addresses of everyone in her company, but she may be willing to send an email out to all her employees on your behalf. This goes back to the question of your network. Use it. Capitalize on it.

Suggested wording for an email or social media message:

For those interested in competing for an opportunity to serve at the highest levels of government, consider submitting an application to become a White House Fellow. White House Fellowships offer exceptional Americans first-hand experience working at the highest levels of the Federal government. Founded in 1964, the President's Commission on White House Fellowships is the nation's most prestigious program for leadership and public service. After a competitive application process, selected individuals spend a year in Washington, D.C. working as a full-time, paid Fellow to Cabinet Secretaries, senior White House staff, and other top-ranking government officials. Applications are due in January of each year, and those selected begin serving as Fellows the following September. To learn more: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/participate/fellows>

Partnering with another WHF: The obvious advantage of partnering with another WHF in your area is that you can share the workload in putting together the session, and potentially capitalize on multiple networks of potential candidates in your joint outreach. As you prepare for the event you may want to reach out to WHF alumni in your region to see if they can join you. If you have not used the WHFFA website to search for your “fellow Fellows” this would be a good time to give it a try. Simply go to: www.whff.org. Log in with your username and password. (If you have forgotten them, send me an email – david.moore@whff.org – and we can get your log in credentials re-set). Then go to Members → Member's Directory. You will see an option to “Narrow Your Search”. Use this to identify fellows in your area (by state, or by metro-area). Press “Search”. Then press “Select Action” à “Export to Excel”. You may then contact multiple WHFs via email, phone, or U.S. mail as you prefer.

Sample Invitation for a Recruiting Event:

**MAKE AN IMPACT:
BECOME A WHITE HOUSE FELLOW**

**You are cordially invited to an
INFORMATION SESSION on the
WHITE HOUSE FELLOWS PROGRAM**

(Date)

(Time)

(Location)

Please RSVP to (Host Name) at (Email/Phone) by (Date)

Founded in 1964, the President's Commission on White House Fellowships is the nation's most prestigious program for leadership and public service. White House Fellowships offer exceptional Americans first-hand experience working at the highest levels of the Federal government. After a competitive application process, selected individuals spend a year in Washington, DC working as a full-time, paid Fellow to Cabinet Secretaries, senior White House staff, and other top-ranking government officials. Fellows also participate in an education program consisting of roundtable discussions with renowned leaders from the private and public sectors. Fellowships are awarded on a strictly non-partisan basis.

Visit <https://www.whitehouse.gov/participate/fellows> to learn more.

Sample Recruiting Event Agenda:

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Attendee Introductions. If the group is small enough, ask the attendees to introduce themselves and tell the group why they are interested in the WHF Program.
3. Describe Key Elements of the Program (see suggested talking points below)
4. WHF Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8AHixStPibc>
5. Alumni Roundtable or Remarks. Ask each WHF alum in attendance to briefly describe his or her experience as a White House Fellow

6. Q&A. If there are any questions that cannot be answered “on site”, you can have the candidates contact the White House Fellows Commission Office at: whitehousefellows@who.eop.gov and/or 202-395-4522.

Suggested talking points: As you prepare your remarks for the event, feel free to use any of the suggested talking points below which you feel would be of interest:

- **What is the White House Fellows program?**
 - The White House Fellows program is America’s most prestigious program for leadership and public service, and was established in 1964 by Executive Order 11183 by President Lyndon Johnson.
 - This is a unique, non-partisan program with a rich history that has a powerful impact on the country.
- **History of the Program:**
 - In 1964, when President Johnson announced the conception of this program to the 230 college leaders gathered on the South Lawn of the White House, he told them that he wanted to give young leaders first-hand, high level experience with the workings of the Federal Government, increase their sense of participation in national affairs, and importantly, inspire them to action.
 - To execute this vision, each year we place 11-19 Fellows, from diverse professions and backgrounds, at the highest levels of the Federal government.
 - In October 2014, we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the program.
 - Since 1964, the program has selected 783 White House Fellows across 10 presidential administrations.
- **Alumni Achievements:**
 - Of those 783 alumni of the program, 85 have gone onto to hold senate-confirmed government positions, including Elaine Chao, the current Secretary of Transportation, and Henry Cisneros, former Secretary of Housing and Urban Development
 - 35 have become generals or flag officers, including General Wesley Clark and General Colin Powell
 - 26 have held positions as CEOs in the private sector
 - 24 have served as presidents or deans of prominent colleges
 - 7 have been appointed as ambassadors, including Bill Hagerty, the current U.S. Ambassador to Japan.
- **What is the typical experience of a White House Fellow?**
 - There are 4 components of the Fellowship: work placement, education program, service, and the Fellows’ community.
 - The primary aim of the Fellowship is to place the Fellows in a work environment where they have access to senior government leaders and are able to leverage their skill sets to further the mission of the agency or office. Fellows are not always assigned to a placement associated with the Fellow’s area of expertise, but the work placement will tap the Fellow’s full capacity and develop their abilities further.

- Work Placement:
 - For their work placement, they may be placed at a White House office, agency or department in the Federal government.
 - This year, we have Fellows placed at the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Defense, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Labor, the White House Office of American Innovation, the Office of the Vice President, and the Department of Veterans Affairs – to name a few.
- Work Placement Contributions:
 - White House Fellows make significant contributions at their placement. Recently Fellows have:
 - Provided specialized advice to ranking physicians at the Department of Defense about military’s traumatic brain injury policy
 - Used their cybersecurity expertise to expand focus on cyber-related issues, including electric grid security, at the Department of Energy
 - Led a joint effort with the U.S. Coast Guard to review response efforts related to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill
- Education Program:
 - The education program supplements the Fellows’ experience in their placements, providing off-the-record, candid discussions with distinguished leaders.
 - Through the education program, Fellows gain valuable insights into the decision-making processes that a diverse set of leaders use to solve complex issues.
 - Some of the speakers the 2017-18 Class of Fellows have met with include:
 - Wilbur Ross, Secretary of Commerce
 - Alex Acosta, Secretary of Labor
 - Linda McMahon, Administrator, Small Business Administration
 - General Colin Powell, Former Secretary of State
 - Anita McBride, Former Chief of Staff for First Lady Laura Bush
- Eligibility Requirements:
 - Applicants must be U.S. citizens
 - Federal government employees are not eligible, with the exception of career military personnel and some special government employees
 - Applicants must have completed their undergraduate education
 - Applications are available online in November and are due in January of each year and the Fellowship runs from August to August.
- Selection Criteria:
 - A record of remarkable professional achievement early in one’s career.
 - Evidence of leadership skills and the potential for further growth.
 - A demonstrated commitment to public service.
 - The skills to succeed at the highest levels of the Federal government, and the ability to work effectively as part of a team.

Program Flyer: to download a 1-page stand-alone flyer that can be used as a handout at a recruiting event, go to our homepage. Scroll down to Members Services (which you will see on

the right hand side of the homepage. Click on “Recruiting Materials”. From there you can download a flyer that can be printed and handed out at your recruiting event.

Lessons Learned: Please feel free to share any observations or insights that would improve this Reference Guide. You may also want to let the WHFFA and/or the Commission Office know those groups with which you have conducted recruiting events, any interesting findings, or suggestions for future events.