Applicant FAQ

Funding and Amenities

1. Is the fellowship remunerated?
   - Funding for Digital Policy Hub fellowships is as follows:
     - Undergraduate: $22.29–$25.52/hour (depending on the candidate’s current year of study).
     - Master’s: $42,000 annually/pro-rated.
     - Ph.D.: $52,000 annually/pro-rated.
     - Post-Doctoral: $60,000 annually/pro-rated.
     - Interchange (visiting) fellows: At this time, interchange/visiting fellows must have full financial support from the organization or workplace they are affiliated with during their tenure at the Digital Policy Hub. CIGI provides onsite amenities such as office space, parking, and a laptop, if needed.

2. What amenities are offered?
   - For all fellows, office space with Wi-Fi access and parking is available at the CIGI Campus.
   - A laptop to use for the duration of your fellowship, if needed.
   - Please note: All participants in the Hub are required to spend some time during their fellowship at the CIGI Campus; however, the mix of hybrid and remote work is negotiable.

3. Are travel expenses covered by CIGI?
   - CIGI will cover core expenses for a return trip between the home institution and the CIGI Campus.

4. What housing/accommodations are offered?
   - All fellows are expected to arrange their own accommodations should they wish to live in Waterloo during their fellowship. There is no additional funding for local accommodation or living expenses beyond the fellowship remuneration levels listed above.

5. Will I be provided with a CIGI/Hub email address?
   - Depending on a number of factors, fellows may be given a CIGI email address to use during the duration of their fellowship. Regardless, fellows will have to access to shared documents and CIGI will support access to research tools, as needed/possible.

6. What are the personal costs associated with the fellowship?
   - There are no tuition costs to fellows to participate in the program and all fellowships are funded.
   - CIGI may cover travel expenses, if needed, for some special activities or events.
   - Onsite amenities include office space, Wi-Fi, parking at CIGI Campus, and a laptop to use for the duration of your fellowship, if needed.
Eligibility and Application Processes

1. Who is eligible?
   - **Students:** Canadian, permanent resident, and international undergraduate, master’s and Ph.D. students based at a Canadian academic institution and with existing legal status in Canada are welcome to apply.
   - **Graduates:** Recent graduates with a doctorate are encouraged to apply as post-doctoral fellows.
   - **Government and private sector professionals:** Government practitioners and private sector professionals are also encouraged to apply and will serve as self-funded visiting fellows (interchange).
   - Students and post-doctoral candidates must have a supervisor at their academic institution who is willing to supervise them on this project and administer the funds through the home institution.
   - All academic disciplines will be considered.
   - All participants in the Hub are required to spend some part of their fellowship at the CIGI Campus; however, the mix of hybrid and remote work is negotiable. Preference will be given to participants who propose to spend more time at the CIGI Campus.
   - **Please note:** CIGI intends to expand the Digital Policy Hub to be an international program in the future. At this time, funding only allows for applicants based in Canada and CIGI is not able to sponsor participants for legal status in Canada. The latest information on the Digital Policy Hub program will be regularly posted to our website.

2. What documents are required for the application?
   - Applications must include a CV outlining your qualifications; a document of two to three pages describing your proposed research and how it relates to one or more of the Hub’s focus areas (2-3 pages); and a cover letter indicating your desired start date.
   - In addition, you must submit two letters of support:
     - For student and post-doctoral applicants, one letter must show, beyond their recommendation, the supporter’s intent to provide at least broad research supervision during the duration of your tenure at the Digital Policy Hub.
     - For interchange applicants, one letter must be from the current employer showing support for participation in the Hub program in conjunction with their current responsibilities.
     - Letters of support must be uploaded in the online application – please ensure you have both letters at the time of filling out your application.
   - To apply, please complete the application via the instructions found on the Hub’s call for applications on CIGI’s Careers page.

3. When is the application deadline?
   - The application deadline to be considered for the **January 2024 cohort is Friday, September 22nd, 2023.**
   - Please check our website for deadlines and any updates regarding application processes.

4. How are candidates selected?
   - Hub candidates will be screened first by determining whether they meet the basic eligibility criteria outlined above.
   - Applicants who pass this stage will then be reviewed by the Hub Admissions Committee. Suitable candidates will be chosen on the strength of their letter of intent/research proposal, the fit of their experiences outlined in their CVs with the Hub’s overarching goals, and their
letters of support. For student and post-doctoral candidates, the confirmation of their supervisory and institutional support is also key.

- Research proposals will be evaluated on several criteria, including alignment with Hub research themes, clarity, originality, policy relevance, academic or professional experience with the topic, and appropriateness given the academic experience of the applicant. The Hub also seeks to build a diverse cohort, including across topic and academic discipline.
- Applicants may need to provide additional information to finalize their research proposals before starting.

5. What is the expected length of the research project proposal to be submitted with supporting documents?
   - Research proposals must be two to three pages in length, describing your proposed research and how it relates to one or more of the Hub’s focus areas. While we do not have a formal template, please be sure to include the following items in your proposal:
     o Clear articulation of research question
     o Alignment to Hub research areas
     o Research topic background
     o Research methods
     o Policy relevance

6. When can I expect a response to my application?
   - You can expect to receive a response approximately 6 weeks following the submission of your application.

7. Does the research proposal for the Digital Policy Hub require that the research be the same as what I am pursuing in my academic program? / Can the proposed research be in a different area than what I am focusing on in my academic program?
   - **Re: Keeping same research focus(es):** Hub research can be aligned with the topic(s) your research focuses on in your current academic program. However, research produced for the Hub (i.e., papers submitted for the Hub’s virtual space; any additional projects worked on during your tenure at the Hub) must be original and not re-submitted to your home institution for credit. Any instance of plagiarism, including self-plagiarism, will be taken seriously.
   - **Re: Diverting from current research focus(es):** Research outlined in your proposal does not need to be exactly aligned with what you focus on in your current academic program; however, your references must touch upon how you are a good candidate to pursue the new stream of research in their letters of support.

8. What administrative and supervisory support from my home academic institution is required?
   - **Academic supervisor requirements:**
     o Only one supervisor is required per fellow.
     o The academic supervisor must be at the same institution as the fellow.
     o The academic supervisor must be eligible to hold tri-council funding at their institution (funding will be provided to the academic institution to distribute payment to the fellow).
     o The supervisor can be from any academic discipline.
     o Supervisors can contact us with any questions at digitalhub@cigionline.org.
   - **Administrative support:** Supervisors must be able to hold an account and accept tri-council funding at their academic institution, and must agree to accept funding to administer to the fellow. Supervisors also agree to serve as the institutional point of contact for the fellow.
- **Research supervision and support**: Supervisors ultimately determine the extent of participation they would like to have. They are welcome and encouraged to engage in research supervision and support through activities such as reviewing the Hub fellow’s research project(s), providing guidance as to structure, content, and resources utilized for their research, and other activities as they see fit. Please note that overall research supervision, collaboration and feedback will be provided by the Hub team, cohort and mentors, as key features of the program.

- The time commitment expected by supervisors will therefore be determined on a case-by-case basis, and depend on the supervisor’s external commitments.

9. Can I apply even though I am studying at an academic institution outside of Canada?

   - CIGI intends to expand the Digital Policy Hub to be an international program in the near future. At this time, funding only allows for applicants based at a Canadian academic institution, who already have legal status to work in Canada. Information on the expansion of the Hub program will be posted to our forthcoming website — we certainly hope you apply once this program expands and will be happy to answer any questions or concerns you have in the meantime.

10. I currently work full-time or part-time. Can I still apply?

   - CIGI’s expectation is that fellows will be primarily focused on their research with the Hub while engaged as a fellow. Fellows will need to manage their time and commitments responsibly.

   - Participants may pursue outside part-time employment, as long as they are able to complete the requirements for both and engage fully in Hub activities. If you are employed full time, we encourage you to pursue an application as an interchange fellow.

   - Admittance to the Hub for those who are currently employed more than half their time will be rare. These applications will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and will require written approval from the employer.

### Duration of Program

1. What is the duration of a Digital Policy Hub fellowship?

   - The Hub will operate and host fellowships year-round. While the start date and length of fellowship can be negotiated, the general length of each fellowship is as follows:
     - **Undergraduate**: 4 months (Fall or Spring semester)
     - **Master’s**: 4 months (Fall or Spring semester)
     - **Ph.D.**: 4 months (Fall or Spring semester), 8 months (academic year) or 12 months.
     - **Post-Doctoral**: 4 months (Fall or Spring semester), 8 months (academic year) or 12 months.
     - **Interchange fellows**: 4 months (Fall or Spring semester), 8 months (academic year) or 12 months.
     - **Extensions will be rare and considered on a case-by-case basis**.

2. How many days, if at all, am I expected to be at the Hub in person?

   - Participation in the Hub may be in person, hybrid or virtual; this will be determined on a case-by-case basis. There are benefits to in-person participation such as onsite office space and meeting your cohort face to face. All fellows will meet (with the option to do so in person or virtually) at a joint biweekly seminar, approximately two hours in length, with additional opportunities to engage and connect.
**Program Structure**

1. **What is the structure of the program?**
   - All fellows will meet (with the option to do so in person or virtually) at a joint biweekly seminar, approximately two hours in length, where they will share, compare and develop research (through presentations, etc.). The seminars will also feature a guest speaker, who will discuss their detailed research and field experience aligning with one or more of the Hub's core research areas.
   - There will be additional sessions with guest speakers, review of research projects, and/or presentations within the group.
   - In addition to these seminars and sessions, Hub participants are to prepare research papers for publication during their tenure (minimum one paper for every four months of the fellowship), which will be made available on the Hub's forthcoming virtual space.
   - CIGI is also open to negotiating the structure of research requirements if there is a strong case.

2. **What is the time commitment for the program?**
   - For those who are pursuing a Hub fellowship in addition to active course work, for example at the undergraduate or master's level, or early stages PhD level, participation will typically take a minimum of 20 hours per week.
   - The expected time commitment is higher (35 hours) for PhD, post-doc Hub fellows, and undergraduate co-op students, for whom this should be their primary commitment.
   - Specifics can be negotiated on a case-by-case basis, as applicable.

3. **Are there teaching requirements for post-docs?**
   - No — there are no teaching requirements for any of the Hub fellowship tiers.

4. **What are the research output expectations?**
   In addition to the biweekly joint seminar (which can be attended either remotely or in person), Hub participants are to prepare research papers for publication during their tenure, which will be made available on the Hub’s forthcoming virtual space. Four-month fellowships would be expected to produce one publication to showcase on the Hub's virtual space, and fellowships beyond four months would be expected to produce a new publication every four months for the duration of their participation in the Hub. That said, we would also be open to negotiating the structure of research requirements, if there is a strong case.

5. **What networking opportunities are part of the fellowship?**
   - Networking opportunities include research collaboration; events hosted by CIGI and the Digital Policy Hub team; and access to the private LinkedIn Hub fellows’ group, to connect with past, present and future Hub fellows.

**Hub Virtual Space**

1. **What is the Hub’s website?**
   - The Digital Policy Hub website is forthcoming.
Collaboration with the Hub

1. How can we partner with the Hub?
   - For all Hub-related inquiries, including partnerships, please contact us at digitalhub@cigionline.org.