



Janice Nittoli Practitioner Fellowship at the Urban Institute

Funded by the Rockefeller Foundation

DEADLINE: Friday, November 3, 2017

STIPEND: \$70,000

What would it take in your community to eliminate racial disparities in diabetes outcomes, transform community-police relationships, or end homelessness among LGBTQ youth? To cut the eviction rate? To make high school graduation the norm regardless of income?

Leaders working to alleviate inequalities and support social mobility are often keenly aware of questions that, if answered, could result in significant improvements in policy and practice. Yet they rarely have the time or support necessary to fully explore these questions and produce answers that benefit their work and that of the field. In its second year at Urban, the Janice Nittoli Practitioner Fellowship offers a unique opportunity for leading practitioners and their home organizations to advance evidence-based solutions, in partnership with senior researchers at the Urban Institute.

THE NITTOLI PRACTITIONER FELLOWSHIP AIMS TO:

- Empower a practitioner in the government, nonprofit, and/or social enterprise sectors to partner with researchers on a research concept with significant potential to reduce inequalities and promote social mobility;
- Engage nationally recognized researchers to evaluate and synthesize the best evidence available to shed light on the issues raised by the practitioner;
- Generate actionable insights that can inform policy and build the capacity of the practitioner's home organization and others in the field to conduct transformative work; and
- Foster a culture of researcher-practitioner collaboration so that more research draws on experience from the field, and more organizations make decisions grounded in evidence.

The Urban Institute invites applications from practitioners working in leadership roles in a state or local government agency, a nonprofit organization, or a social enterprise who have a critical “what would it take” question about work in the field that can be answered—at least in part—by rigorous research, analysis, and evaluation. The selected fellow will work closely with a team of Urban researchers to explore the question, disseminate findings, and produce evidence-based commentary on issues related to the project. In addition, the fellow will meet with a wide range of Urban scholars and experts across disciplines to help prompt innovative research questions and strategies that are informed by the fellow's on-the-ground knowledge. A member of Urban's senior leadership team will lead the research team and coordinate the fellowship.

HONORING JANICE NITTOLI

The Janice Nittoli Practitioner Fellowship was developed with support from the Rockefeller Foundation to honor the late Janice Nittoli, the Foundation's former associate vice president and managing partner. During her distinguished career, Nittoli provided leadership and strategic direction for the Rockefeller Foundation's Campaign for American Workers, which focused on repairing and strengthening the work-based safety net. She also served as a senior executive at the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the nation's largest private foundation dedicated to improving the lives of poor children, their families, and communities. Nittoli also held several positions in New York City government, including senior positions in the Department of Health, where she managed the health system for the city's correctional facilities. She retired as the President of the Century Foundation in 2014 due to illness.

Throughout Nittoli's career, she combined a strong commitment to removing barriers to opportunity with an abiding belief that rigorous research and evidence-based decision-making could contribute to that cause. In honor of her life's work, the Nittoli Practitioner Fellowship will support practitioners working toward social change and provide them with research and strategies to improve their workplace and communities of practice.

ABOUT THE URBAN INSTITUTE

The nonprofit Urban Institute is dedicated to elevating the debate on social and economic policy. We believe in the power of evidence to improve lives and strengthen communities. We conduct research to understand and solve real-world challenges, engaging communities at multiple levels—city, state, and country—as we gather data and evaluate programs. Urban Institute scholars blend academic rigor with on-the-ground collaboration, teaming with policymakers, community leaders, practitioners, and the private sector to diagnose problems and find solutions. Our research sparks solutions in programs and practice. Our analyses and recommendations help expand opportunities for all people, reduce hardship among the most vulnerable, and strengthen the effectiveness of the public sector.

ABOUT MANMEET KAUR, INAUGURAL NITTOLI PRACTITIONER FELLOW 2017

For the inaugural year of the Janice Nittoli Solutions Fellowship, the Urban Institute selected Manmeet Kaur, executive director and founder of the Harlem-based community health organization, City Health Works (CHW). CHW works to create healthier, stronger neighborhoods while reducing health disparities and health care spending through health coaching and care coordination. Working at the intersection of policy and practice, City Health Works' vision is to implement a high-quality community health system at scale. Throughout the course of this year's Fellowship, we are applying Ms. Kaur's practical insights and data toward policy efforts that sharpen the national dialogue regarding ways to improve health care and address the social determinants of health. We will publish the results of our findings after the inaugural fellowship ends in early 2018.

WHO SHOULD APPLY?

We encourage mid- to senior-level leaders who are seeking to drive change in their organizations, communities, or fields to apply. The ideal candidate will have extensive professional experience (10+ years) working in the government, nonprofit, and/or social enterprise sectors, and a strong track record of success in helping vulnerable populations overcome barriers to opportunity and mobility. A master's degree is strongly preferred. Practitioners should demonstrate that their work focuses on reducing one or more dimensions of inequality. Some areas ripe for the fellowship could include (but are not limited to):

- poverty alleviation
- criminal justice reform
- housing justice
- racial and ethnic disparities
- LGBTQ rights
- workforce and workplace development
- entrepreneurship in vulnerable communities

PROGRAM TIMELINE AND EXPECTATIONS

The 2018 fellowship will begin in February and end in February 2019. The Urban Institute encourages the fellow to spend a minimum of one month (30 days) in residence at the Urban Institute, but the time spent in residency does not need to be consecutive.

Specific activities will depend on the fellow's chosen topic. In general, the work will focus on developing the evidence for innovative and ambitious solutions for the problem posed by the fellow. The fellow will be expected to:

- Collaborate with senior Urban researchers to refine the question posed during the application process and consult on an approach for developing evidence during the course of the fellowship project;
- Assist in developing and evaluating sources of information by, for example, providing data from the home organization or identifying stakeholders for interviews;
- Participate in team meetings and relevant site visits and exchanges to discuss emerging findings and share insights from the field;
- Consult with other Urban research teams who are working on intersecting issues to offer a practitioner perspective;
- Involve stakeholders at the home organization to collaborate on the research concept with the fellow and Urban research teams;
- Co-author a paper that presents the problem being addressed, a proposed solution, and the evidence base; and
- Develop and help implement a collaborative strategy for sharing research findings with the fellow's home organization, policymakers, other practitioners in the field, and other key audiences.

FELLOWSHIP STIPEND AND EXPENSES

The fellow will receive a stipend of \$70,000 over the duration of the fellowship. They will also receive funds to cover related travel and lodging expenses.

APPLICATION PROCESS

The application process for the 2018 fellowship year is an open call. A written application is required and is due by **Friday, November 3, 2017 by 12:00AM EST**. Finalists will be chosen and interviewed by a committee of Urban researchers via videoconference throughout the month of **November**. The final fellowship decision will be made by **December 15, 2017**.

For your written application, please prepare responses to the two prompts below. Responses for each prompt should not exceed 3-5 pages.

- (3-5 pages) Define a primary motivating “what would it take” question from your field and address the following topics:
 - » Why is your question critical for improving outcomes for vulnerable individuals in your community?
 - » How do you believe your work could be advanced by an active partnership with urban researchers to mine and expand the evidence base for defining problems and crafting solutions?
 - » What sources of information and insight could you bring forward to contribute to exploring your proposed research question? For example, does your organization have administrative data that could be analyzed? Are there key experts in the field you would recommend the research team consult? Is there a current or proposed intervention for which you would like to develop an evaluation plan? Have you or your home organization contributed to research that the Urban Institute could extend or complement? We do not expect you to be a researcher or have engaged in prior work but want to understand the context for the fellowship’s research objectives.
- (3-5 pages) Discuss your ability to successfully participate in a fellowship and to help disseminate insights from the research, specifically:
 - » Describe your unique qualifications for the fellowship. For example, we would be interested in your track record in overcoming challenges and catalyzing change; life experiences that inform your commitment to addressing inequalities; evidence of leadership skills; and capacity to work with people from diverse fields and backgrounds to achieve results.
 - » Identify concrete ways in which the fellowship work might be translated into changes on the ground, including potential policy or practice changes in your home organization and/or community (including geographic community, community of practice, and potential application in other settings). If appropriate, discuss how you would involve other stakeholders at your organization in this process.
 - » Confirm your ability to spend some period of the fellowship year (up to four months) on site at Urban and propose a residency plan and ways of maintaining engagement with the project when not at Urban.
 - » Discuss ideas for communicating project insights to your home organization, other professionals in your field, and a broader policy audience and suggest ways to do so from your perspective. Dissemination activities might include blogs, policy briefs, or scholarly papers that you would co-

author with Urban researchers; convenings at the Urban Institute or your home organization; and/or speaking opportunities and other communication channels available through your home organization, professional associations, or networks.

- » Describe any organizational and personal challenges in completing the fellowship and discuss how these might be addressed.

In addition to the written application, please submit:

- The most current version of your Curriculum Vitae (CV); and
- Contact information for three professional references (references will not be contacted without your prior knowledge)

The application process for the 2018 fellowship year is an open call. Please submit your full application to Megan Thompson at mthompson@urban.org no later than **Friday, November 3, 2017 by 12:00AM EST**. You can direct any questions about the fellowship or the application process to Ms. Thompson at the address above.

The Urban Institute strives to be a vibrant, creative community of skilled and committed people who bring to their work a wide range of different experiences. Accordingly, Urban is committed to Equal Employment Opportunity without regard for race, ethnicity, gender, protected veteran status, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or any other protected status under applicable law.

The Urban Institute is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer Minorities/Women/Disabilities/Veterans.

The Janice Nittoli Practitioner Fellowship is made possible by generous support from the Rockefeller Foundation. We are grateful to the Rockefeller Foundation and to all our funders, who make it possible for Urban to advance its mission.
