

The Commonwealth of Virginia Engineering & Science Fellowship

The COVES Fellowship program aims to strengthen ties between the scientific community and state government in the Commonwealth of Virginia while encouraging and equipping more scientists and engineers to be effective advisors for public policy in the state of Virginia.



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Commonwealth of Virginia Engineering and Science (COVES) Fellowship is a 12-week fellowship program of the Virginia Academy of Science, Engineering and Medicine (VASEM). Graduate student and postdoctoral fellows serve as science advisors in a variety of possible placements, including legislative offices, executive agencies, or prominent companies and nonprofits in the state of Virginia. Fellows gain experience by serving their host office and performing relevant tasks such as researching, drafting, and revising relevant policies. Fellows are also paired with a VASEM member who serves as an experienced science policy mentor throughout the fellowship.

ABOUT THE VIRGINIA ACADEMY OF SCIENCE, ENGINEERING & MEDICINE

VASEM is a resource for independent expertise to inform and assist with science and technology policy matters facing Virginia. VASEM is composed of elected members of one of the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine and other key individuals that reside and work throughout Virginia. Its nonpartisan network of experts provides rigorous analytical and scientific support to inform policy decisions that are critical to the future of the Commonwealth.

HOW THE FELLOWSHIP WORKS

The COVES Fellowship is a 12-week full-time (40 hrs/week) program that places graduate students and postdoctoral Fellows in a legislative office, executive agency, or policy office in a company or nonprofit in Virginia. COVES Fellows will be current STEM-H graduate students or postdoctoral fellows with a science or technical background from participating universities across the Commonwealth of Virginia, selected based on career interests, desire to learn, and scientific integrity. Fellows will be matched to offices that have agreed to accept a Fellow based on mutual interest and placement availability. During the first week of the Fellowship, Fellows will attend a science policy bootcamp and orientation that will offer training in science policy and communication and will provide an introduction to governance and policy-making in the Commonwealth of Virginia. In addition to their work in policy offices, COVES Fellows will be paired with a mentor from VASEM and will participate in VASEM briefings, committee meetings, and the annual summit. Fellows will participate in the orientation from May 21 – 23, 2025, and will serve from May 27 – August 15, 2025 and receive a minimum stipend of \$9,000 and \$2,000 professional development funds. The 2025 COVES Fellowship will primarily function in-person with limited to no remote opportunities and positions available. Relocation may be necessary.



IMPORTANT DATES FOR 2025 COVES FELLOWSHIP

Oct-Nov 2024	COVES Fellowship applications open to students (10/25) COVES Information Session #1 (11/8) COVES Information Session #2 (11/20)
Dec 2024	Applications deadlines (varies by University) Applications submitted to COVES Selection Committee (12/13)
Jan 2025	2025 COVES fellows announced (1/15)
Mar - Apr 2025	Fellows interview with potential host offices (3/17 – 4/2) COVES Fellows notified of placements in host offices (4/4)
May 2025	Fellowship begins with orientation and bootcamp (5/21 – 5/23) Fellows begin working in host offices after orientation (5/27)
May - Aug 2025	Fellows work full-time in host offices Bi-weekly COVES Fellow Professional Development Luncheons Fellows meet with VASEM mentor once per month
Aug 2025	Fellowship ends (8/15) Convocation event (8/29) Deliverables from Fellows due (8/31)