

BERTELSMANN FOUNDATION
Fellowship

**WASHINGTON D.C.
DECEMBER 2023
CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS**

**Bertelsmann Foundation Fellowship 2024:
Defending Democracy**

OVERVIEW

The 2024 Bertelsmann Foundation Fellowship will bring together individuals from European Institutions, German government, U.S. government and the private sector for a 4-month hybrid exchange on innovative approaches to defending democracy.

Over the course of the program, fellows will meet with diverse, high-level stakeholders to discuss the various contours of this critical topic. Participants will meet with government officials, industry stakeholders, civil society, academia, community leaders, and subject-matter experts. In addition to virtual and in-person meetings, fellows will contribute to a publication with an expected release date of January 2025.

The Bertelsmann Foundation will select six public sector participants, evenly divided between the U.S. and Europe, and four private sector or academic participants from both sides of the Atlantic. Fellows will travel to both Brussels and Washington, DC to enrich their fellowship experience. The Bertelsmann Foundation will cover travel, accommodation, transportation, and meals of the program.

Individuals with backgrounds in the following fields are encouraged to apply:

- Democracy
- Political Science
- Foreign Policy
- Technology Policy
- Public Administration & Governance
- Advocacy
- Criminal Justice

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FELLOWSHIP EXPECTATIONS:

The Fellowship will take place during the months of May, June, July, and September 2024.

Virtual sessions will be held on Zoom in May (3 virtual sessions), June (3 virtual sessions), and September (2 virtual sessions.) Prior to these sessions, fellows will be expected to read a short article or engage with multimedia content (videos, podcasts, etc.) that shed light on the topics selected. Each session will be centered around a specific angle related to tackling threats and opportunities in the democracy space. Sessions will last for one hour, with experts providing short presentations, followed by a Q & A period driven by the fellows. Sessions will be moderated by the fellows on a rotating basis and assigned ahead of time.

Fellows will travel to Washington D.C. for the week of July 21st. This will be a six-day trip (7/21-7/27) with various expert sessions.

Fellows will then travel to Brussels for the week of September 30th. This will be a five-day trip (9/30-10/4) with a range of interactive experiences with experts, institutions and the city itself.

Fellows will be expected to contribute to a publication with an expected release date of January 2025.

Final agenda details will be provided a month before the fellowship is set to start. The aim is for Fellows to build a strategic toolbox on how to future-proof democracy from internal and external threats on the horizon.

Potential themes or topic areas include, but are not limited to:

- *How might lifelong learning help inform citizens and forge a stronger democracy?*
- *How do we encourage debate in deeply polarized societies?*
- *How do we manage the challenges posed by online information space?*
- *Does transparency lead to better governance?*
- *How to combat the appeal of populism?*

BREAKDOWN:

- ➔ Virtual Sessions with selected international & transatlantic experts
- ➔ Travel to Brussels & Washington DC with in-person sessions
- ➔ Final publication

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ELEGIBILITY

Applicants for this exchange program must:

- Be mid-level to senior-level in their organizations and have expertise relevant to the subject of the fellowship
- MUST attend both travel components
- Be able to actively participate in the virtual components
- Contribute to the final publication
- Have sufficient knowledge of English (written and spoken)

Most importantly, applicants should be excited to actively contribute to the design of the program itself. Prior to formally kicking off, Fellows will schedule one-on-one calls to discuss what speakers, readings, themes they would like to see throughout the program. This Fellowship is unique in that it is reflective of the individuals who are participating in the program: it is not a one-size-fits-all approach.

APPLICATION PROCESS

To apply, please send a CV (in English) as well as short writing sample (less than a thousand words, in English and preferably related to the topic at hand) by e-mail to the Bertelsmann Foundation Manager of Transatlantic Relations, Chloe Ladd: chloe.ladd@bfna.org

Once your resume is received, a short application will be sent for you to complete. Finalists will be interviewed in February 2024. Final decisions will be made by February 23rd 2024.

Applications close February 2,2024.

If you are interested in learning more about the Fellowship itself, watch this [short video](#). Past program details can also be found on [our website](#).