

BERTELSMANN FOUNDATION

Fellowship

WASHINGTON D.C.
DECEMBER 2024
CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS

Bertelsmann Foundation Fellowship 2025: The Geopolitics of Space

OVERVIEW

The 2025 Bertelsmann Foundation Fellowship will bring together individuals from European Union Member States, European Union Institutions, United States Government, and the transatlantic private sector for a span of five months to discuss the geopolitics of space and to discuss the pivotal juncture the transatlantic alliance finds itself, balancing cooperation and competition in space exploration. The program itself will focus on EU-US Space Cooperation, regulatory alignment and industrial competitiveness.

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.

The Bertelsmann Foundation will select six public sector participants, evenly divided between the U.S. and Europe, and four private sector individuals from both sides of the Atlantic.¹ 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.²

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

- Law
- Security
- Technology
- Space Policy
- Space Industry
- International Relations
- Engineering
- Sustainability

¹ For the purpose of the Call for Applications: the term "private sector" encompasses a broad range of entities, including academia, non-profits, think tanks, industry professionals, and more.

² Subject to participant ethics approval.

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FELLOWSHIP EXPECTATIONS:

The Fellowship will take place during the months of May, June, July, September and October 2025. August is taken completely off.

Prior to kick-off, each Fellow will meet with the Bertelsmann Foundation Fellowship lead, Chloe Ladd, and help shape the program. The BFF program is uniquely tailored to the individuals involved, emphasizing active participation and personal commitment throughout the five-month journey to maximize its impact and value.

- Interviews will be held in **February**; final decisions will be sent by the end of the month.
- In **March and April**, Fellows will schedule a one-time call with Chloe Ladd to discuss what they would like out of the program.
- Virtual sessions will be held on Zoom starting at the end of April and run through early October.
 - **End of April:** Welcome Session
 - **May:** Three Virtual Sessions mapping out who the European Union's space players are and understanding geopolitical priorities for the EU in this sector.
 - **June:** Three Virtual Sessions mapping out who the United States' space players are and understanding geopolitical priorities for the US in this sector.
 - **September:** Two Virtual Sessions from experts in an EU Member State/US State.
 - **October:** Two Virtual Sessions from experts in an EU Member State/US State.

Prior to these virtual 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. 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.

- In-person programming will be held in July and October.
 - Fellows will travel to Washington, D.C. for **the week of July 21st 2025 (7/20 to 7/25.)** This will be a six-day trip, with four days of programming and two days accounted for traveling.
 - Fellows will travel to Brussels, Belgium for **the week of October 6th 2025 (10/5 to 10/10.)** This will be a six-day trip, with four days of programming and two days accounted for traveling.

Prior to these in-person sessions, fellows will be expected to read a short article or engage with multimedia content (videos, podcasts, etc.) for each of the sessions. Through interdisciplinary in-person discussions, fellows will gain insight into the evolving transatlantic strategies that will shape the future of space.

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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
- Have sufficient knowledge of English (written and spoken)

All Fellows, whether from the public or private sector, will be required to obtain ethics approval upon acceptance. For members of the U.S. House of Representatives or Senate, ethics guidelines restrict BFNA from covering fellowship costs beyond a specified minimum. Past congressional participants, now alumni, are available to share insights into their experience as “Congressional Fellows” within the Bertelsmann Foundation Fellowship.

APPLICATION PROCESS

To apply, please send a CV (in English) by e-mail to the Bertelsmann Foundation Senior Manager of Transatlantic Relations, Chloe Ladd: chloe.ladd@bfna.org

Deadline to submit your resume is February 3rd 2025.

Once your resume is received, an application will be sent for you to complete. Finalists will be interviewed in February 2025. **Final decisions will be made by February 28th 2025.**

If you are interested in learning more about the Fellowship itself, email Chloe Ladd (chloe.ladd@bfna.org) with any questions. Additional details can also be found on [our website](#).