



WORLD  
MOVEMENT  
FOR  
DEMOCRACY

## **Hurford Youth Fellows Program**

*- Building Youth Activists' Leadership Skills -*

# **INFORMATION BOOKLET AND APPLICATION GUIDELINES**

## **Fellowship Term**

March 1 – May 31, 2025

**Application Deadline: July 31, 2024**



SUPPORTING FREEDOM AROUND THE WORLD

# About the Host and Sponsor Organization

## **NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR DEMOCRACY**

The National Endowment for Democracy (NED) is a private, nonprofit organization created in 1983 to strengthen democratic institutions around the world through nongovernmental efforts. NED is governed by an independent, nonpartisan board of directors. With its annual congressional appropriation, it makes hundreds of grants each year to support pro-democracy groups in Africa, Asia, Eurasia, Latin America, and the Middle East.

## **WORLD MOVEMENT FOR DEMOCRACY**

The World Movement for Democracy is a global network that brings together democracy activists, practitioners, academics, policy makers, and funders. NED initiated this nongovernmental effort in February 1999 at a global Assembly in New Delhi, India, to strengthen democracy where it is weak, to reform and invigorate democracy even where it is longstanding, and to bolster pro-democracy groups in countries that have not yet entered into a process of democratic transition.

## **THE HURFORD FOUNDATION**

The Hurford Foundation was established to honor the late John B. Hurford (1938 – 2000), an internationalist and philanthropist who played an important role in helping to conceptualize and realize the World Movement for Democracy. For many years, the Hurford Foundation has been an important supporter of the World Movement for Democracy. The Hurford Foundation generously supports the Hurford Youth Fellows Program.

## **INTERNATIONAL FORUM FOR DEMOCRATIC STUDIES**

NED established the International Forum for Democratic Studies (the Forum) in 1994 in response to the need for sustained and serious analysis of democracy's problems and prospects throughout the world. Since then, the Forum has become the preeminent center for the study of the theoretical and practical aspects of democratic development worldwide. Through its fellowship programs, its publication of the quarterly *Journal of Democracy*, and its public seminars and symposia, the Forum enhances efforts to foster and improve democracy while also making important contributions to the field of comparative democratic studies.

# About the Program

## HURFORD YOUTH FELLOWS PROGRAM

The Hurford Youth Fellows Program seeks to build the leadership skills, enhance the organizational talents and harness the potential of emerging democracy leaders from around the world. Through the Fellowship program, youth activists spend three months in Washington D.C., during which they expand their global network, learn lessons from activists from democracy movements around the world, and contribute to the development of the World Movement for Democracy. Fellows will be expected to organize online discussions to generate active engagement among youth activists around the world. Hurford Youth Fellows will engage in strategic meetings, conduct research, and organize and lead presentations, and information-sharing sessions on the following specific areas outlined in the “What’s Next? Youth Declaration:”

- **Expanding Civic Space for Young People**
- **Countering Disinformation**
- **Building Citizen-Centric Accountability**
- **Delivering Democracy**

Please read more about the Youth Declaration and the Call for Action themes [here](#).

Specifically, each fellow will engage in the following activities:

- Conduct research on a topic related to the democracy themes above.
- Develop online resources, such as a collection of related publications and training materials.
- Facilitate online discussions.
- Contribute to the World Movement social media posts.
- Take part in planning and implementing other activities of the World Movement.
- Participate in relevant events and discussions in Washington, D.C., to deepen understanding of issues and build working relationships.
- Identify, compile, present, and creatively share discussion materials and results.

Each fellow will also make at least one formal presentation of their work during their fellowship. Presentations may be open to the public or geared to a more select audience and will typically focus on the fellow’s project topic.

Upon the successful completion of each fellowship at NED, the fellow will serve as a regional/country focal point, working with the Hurford Youth Fellowship Alumni Network to remain involved and take the lead in facilitating World Movement for Democracy youth initiatives.

**Eligibility:** Applicants interested in the Hurford Youth Fellows Program must be no older than 30 years of age. They must demonstrate a strong interest in democratic activism and in the advancement of democracy in their respective communities, as well as worldwide. Youth affiliated with civil society organizations are especially encouraged to apply.

*Please Note: The Hurford Youth Fellows Program is open to applicants from any country. It does not provide scholarship funds or any other type of financial aid to university or graduate students, nor is*

*it designed to support postdoctoral research. The program is not an educational program offering academic courses leading toward a degree. In addition, it does not provide financial support to those seeking to complete professional training programs, attend conferences, or pursue internships at other organizations.*

**English Language Requirement:** A working knowledge of English is an important prerequisite for participation in the program for general communication purposes. All application materials must be submitted in English.

**Selection Process:** Fellows will be selected by the World Movement Secretariat staff, NED regional program staff, and the Hurford Youth Fellowship Alumni Network following an application process. Selection will be based on a set of criteria including demonstrated activism or interest in the advancement of democracy, a desire to network with others, and a clear explanation of how the fellowship will benefit their own efforts for advancing democracy.

**Residency Requirements:** Fellows are expected to work full-time on their fellowship projects at the NED office in Washington, D.C." Fellows may not hold any other fellowships or be otherwise employed during the fellowship period without the express permission of World Movement Secretariat staff. Additional fellowships or work opportunities that coincide with the fellowship period must be brought to the attention of World Movement Secretariat staff prior to the candidate's acceptance of a Hurford Fellowship. Failure to do so may result in the revocation of the fellowship.

Hurford Youth fellowships are not designed to support extensive fieldwork outside the Washington, D.C., area. The program recognizes the importance of establishing ties with counterparts elsewhere in the United States and abroad and understands that professional obligations may sometimes necessitate domestic or international travel. However, no funds will be available to support fellows' professional travel. Fellows are expected to be in residence at the NED for the entirety of the fellowship period in order to take full advantage of the professional resources available in D.C..

**Fellowship Support and Services:** Each fellow will receive a monthly stipend for living expenses, plus basic health insurance and roundtrip travel to and from Washington, D.C.. Stipends take into account the cost of living in Washington, D.C.. Fellows are provided with fully equipped office space, including internet and email access, and a limited budget for fellowship-related long-distance phone calls.

The World Movement Secretariat staff plays a vital role in helping fellows realize their fellowship objectives by collaborating with them on their fellowship projects and engaging them in ongoing discussions about their work.

NED houses a Democracy Resource Center (DRC), which includes a library with some 20,000 works, including books, journals, grantee reports, and other publications on democracy. The DRC's expert staff members assist fellows with their research interests. Fellows may enjoy access to other local libraries as needed.

**Cost of Living and Dependents:** Applicants should bear in mind that the cost of living (housing, furniture, food, and other essential living expenses) in the Washington metropolitan area is very high, and that fellowship stipends are *not* calculated to cover the financial needs of a family. *Fellows who wish to bring family members with them to Washington, D.C. will be expected to cover the costs of their dependents' roundtrip travel and stay within the United States.*

**Visa Issues:** Prior to their arrival in the United States, prospective fellows who are neither citizens nor permanent residents of the United States must secure a J-1 exchange visitor visa. The International Forum for Democratic Studies assists fellows with the documentation needed to obtain visas.

**Office Location and Contact Information:** The National Endowment for Democracy is based in downtown Washington, D.C., at 1201 Pennsylvania Ave, NW, Suite 1100, Washington, DC 20004. Centrally located near the White House, the U.S. Congress, the National Mall, and the Smithsonian Institution, our office building sits above Metro Center, one of the major subway stations of the Washington metropolitan area.

For further information, please contact:

World Movement for Democracy Secretariat  
National Endowment for Democracy

E-mail: [youthfellows@ned.org](mailto:youthfellows@ned.org)

Website: [www.movedemocracy.org](http://www.movedemocracy.org)

# Application Guidelines

Fellowship Term  
March 3 – May 30, 2025

**Application Deadline:** All application materials must be submitted by **July 31, 2024**.

**Submitting Your Application:** Applicants are asked to submit the following:

- ✓ Applicant Form;
- ✓ C.V./Resume; and
- ✓ Two Letters of Recommendation

All application materials should be uploaded to the [application portal](#).

\*If you applied last year, you *may* need to create a new profile using a new email address.

**Preparing Your Application Materials:** The Applicant Form has four sections: (1) Personal Information; (2) Project Proposal; (3) Curriculum Vitae/Résumé; and (4) Two Letters of Recommendation. Each applicant must complete the entire form. Please note that incomplete application forms will not be reviewed.

Your project proposal is the most important part of your fellowship application. It should be clear, concise, and comprehensible to individuals outside your own field or concentration. Your proposal must correspond to one of the following action areas outlined in the Youth Declaration:

- Expanding Civic Space for Young People
- Countering Disinformation
- Building Citizen-Centric Accountability
- Delivering Democracy

Please read more about the Youth Declaration and the Call for Action themes [here](#).

Your proposal, in no more than 1200 words, should describe the steps you will take to organize and complete your fellowship project (online discussions, research, strategic meetings). Fellows are expected to use participatory research methods to conduct a project that aims to offer solutions and new ideas to help achieve the goals in the “What’s Next? Youth Declaration.” Please review the [Declaration](#) before applying.

Fellows are expected to develop new resources and identify, compile, present, and creatively share project materials. In your proposal, please ensure that you respond to the following specific questions:

1. What are three specific questions you will seek to answer during your project?
2. How would your research and project product (white paper, research essay, video series, toolkit, guidebook, etc.) work towards achieving one (or more) goals outlined in the Youth Declaration in your country or region?
3. How would you grow a network of young democracy advocates working to mobilize real change in their communities.?

**Strong proposals will exhibit the following characteristics:**

- A clear focus and rationale, with practical relevance for strengthening the participation of youth in democracies.
- The outline of well-defined approaches to your selected theme, with tangible benefits to colleagues and counterparts in your field.
- A concentration on two or more regions. **Remember this is a global fellowship where you are expected to learn from other democracy movements and cultivate relationships with your peers around the world.**

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR REFEREES**

Thank you for agreeing to write a letter of recommendation for an applicant to the Hurford Youth Fellows Program at the World Movement for Democracy. Your frank appraisal of the applicant and their fellowship project proposal will greatly help us in our selection process. For more information on the Hurford Youth Fellows Program, please go to [www.movedemocracy.org](http://www.movedemocracy.org)

**Letter of Recommendation Guidelines**

We would greatly appreciate your candid comments on the following:

- The length of time and context in which you have known the applicant.
- Your opinion of his or her background, qualifications, accomplishments, and experiences.
- Your appraisal of the proposed project and the applicant's ability to complete it on time.
- Your views on the suitability of the applicant and his/her project to the Hurford Youth Fellows Program.
- Any other information you feel is important to share concerning the candidate.

**Submit your letter of recommendation:**

Once the applicant identifies their referees and provides their email addresses within the application portal, an automated email will be sent to the referee's email address. The automated email will give the referees login credentials to access the application portal in order to upload the letters of recommendation. Letters of recommendation must be submitted in English or accompanied by an English translation. Please format your letter as an MS Word Document (.doc) or Adobe PDF (.pdf). Please note that letters of recommendation should not be shared with applicants.

**Deadline:** The deadline to submit your letter of recommendation is **July 31, 2024.**

For any technical problems, please email [youthfellows@ned.org](mailto:youthfellows@ned.org)

*For questions or further information, please contact:*

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National Endowment for Democracy

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