CIGI | Digital Policy Hub

Digital Policy Hub Program FAQ

Funding and Amenities

1. Is the fellowship remunerated?
   - Funding for Digital Policy Hub fellowships is as follows:
     - **Undergraduate**: $23,000 per academic year (8 months).
     - **Master's**: $25,000 per academic year (8 months).
     - **Doctoral**: $52,000 annually/pro-rated.
     - **Post-Doctoral**: $60,000 annually/pro-rated.
     - **Visiting fellows**: At this time, visiting fellows must have full support from the organization or workplace they are affiliated with during their tenure at the Digital Policy Hub. CIGI provides on-site amenities such as shared office space and parking. CIGI does not provide funding for visiting fellows and there is no charge to participate.

2. What amenities are offered?
   - For all fellows, shared office space with Wi-Fi access and parking is available at the CIGI Campus.
   - **Please note:** All participants in the Hub are required to spend some part of their fellowship at the CIGI Campus, to include the end-of-term research conferences. However, the mix of hybrid and remote work is negotiable to facilitate geographic diversity in the cohort.

3. Are travel expenses covered by CIGI?
   - CIGI will cover core expenses for one return trip between the home institution and the CIGI Campus. Generally, this will be for the research conference at the end of the term, unless a fellow is relocating to Waterloo for the length of the fellowship and wishes to travel earlier. We will consider other options on a case-by-case basis.

4. What housing/accommodations are offered?
   - All fellows are expected to arrange their own accommodations should they wish to live in Waterloo during their fellowship. There is no additional funding for local accommodation or living expenses beyond the fellowship remuneration levels listed above.

5. Will I be provided with a CIGI/Hub email address?
   - Depending on a number of factors, fellows may be given a CIGI email address to use during the duration of their fellowship. Fellows will have access to shared documents and CIGI will support access to research tools, as needed.

6. What are the personal costs associated with the fellowship?
   - There are no tuition costs for Hub fellows to participate in the program and all fellowships are funded (with the exception of visiting fellows).
   - CIGI may cover travel expenses, if needed, for some special activities or events.

- On-site amenities include shared office space, Wi-Fi and parking at the CIGI Campus.

<u>Eligibility and Application Processes</u>

1. Who is eligible?
    - **Students:** Canadian, permanent resident, and international undergraduate, master's and doctoral students based at a Canadian academic institution and with existing eligibility to work in Canada are welcome to apply.
    - **Graduates:** Recent graduates with a doctorate are encouraged to apply as post-doctoral fellows (must have graduated within the past four years to be eligible for funding).
    - Students and post-doctoral applicants must have a supervisor at their academic institution who is willing to supervise them on this project and administer the funds through the home institution (they must be eligible to hold tri-council funding, as funding from the Digital Policy Hub's external funding partner qualifies as a research grant).
    - **Government and private sector professionals:** Government practitioners and private sector professionals are also encouraged to apply and will serve as unfunded visiting fellows.
    - All academic disciplines will be considered.
    - All participants in the Hub are required to spend some part of their fellowship at [CIGI Campus](), to include the end-of-term research conferences. However, the mix of hybrid and remote work is negotiable to facilitate geographic diversity in the cohort.
    - **International applicants and Canadians based at an academic institution abroad please note:** At this time, **funding only allows for applicants based in Canada and CIGI is not able to sponsor participants for legal status in Canada**. The latest information on the Digital Policy Hub program will be regularly posted to our website.

2. What documents are required for the application?
    - Candidates must provide a cover letter and CV outlining their qualifications, a description of their proposed research and how it relates to the Hub's focus areas, in addition to two letters of support.
    - Requirements for the **two** letters of support:
        o For students and post-doctoral applicants, one letter must show, beyond their recommendation, the supporter's intent to provide at least broad research supervision during the duration of your tenure at the Digital Policy Hub.
        o For visiting applicants, one letter must be from your current employer showing support for participation in the Hub program in conjunction with your current responsibilities.
        o Letters of support should be uploaded in the online application — if your references feel more comfortable sending in their letter directly, please have them send it to [digitalhubinquiries@cigionline.org.]() Please ensure you have arranged to have all submitted letters at the time of filling out your application. **Applications are not considered complete until the Hub team has received all letters.**
    - To apply to the next Digital Policy Hub cohort, please complete the application via the instructions found on the Hub's call for applications on [the Digital Policy Hub website](). Applications are open periodically and information on openings will be posted to our website.

3. When is the application deadline?
   - **The deadline to apply for the 2024–2025 academic year cohort is Friday, March 1, 2024, at 11:59 p.m. EST**. Please check our website for deadlines and any updates regarding application processes.

4. How are candidates selected?
   - Hub candidates will be screened first by determining whether they meet the basic eligibility criteria outlined above.
   - Applicants who pass this stage will then be reviewed by the Hub Admissions Committee. Suitable candidates will be chosen on the strength of their letter of intent/research proposal, the fit of their experience outlined in their CVs with the Hub's overarching goals, and their letters of support. For student and post-doctoral candidates, the confirmation of their supervisory and institutional support is also key.
   - Research proposals will be evaluated on several criteria, including alignment with Hub research themes, clarity, originality, policy relevance, academic or professional experience with the topic, and appropriateness given the academic experience of the applicant. The Hub also seeks to build a diverse cohort, including across topic and academic discipline.
   - Some candidates may also be invited for an interview.
   - Applicants may need to provide additional information to finalize their research proposals before starting.

5. What is the expected length of the research project proposal to be submitted with supporting documents?
   - Research proposals must be two to three pages in length, describing your proposed research and how it relates to one or more of the Hub's focus areas. While we do not have a formal template, please be sure to include the following items in your proposal:
     o clear articulation of research question;
     o alignment to Hub research areas;
     o research topic background;
     o research methods; and
     o policy relevance.

6. When can I expect a response to my application?
   - You can expect to receive a response approximately 10 weeks following the application deadline.

7. Does the research proposal for the Digital Policy Hub require that the research be the same as what I am pursuing in my academic program? / Can the proposed research be in a different area than what I am focusing on in my academic program?
   - **Re: Keeping same research focus(es):** Hub research can be aligned with the topic(s) your research focuses on in your current academic program. However, research produced for the Hub (i.e., papers submitted for the Hub's virtual space; any additional projects worked on during your tenure at the Hub) must be original and not resubmitted to your home institution for credit. Any instance of plagiarism will be taken seriously.
   - **Re: Diverting from current research focus(es):** Research outlined in your proposal does not need to be exactly aligned with what you focus on in your current academic program; however, your references must touch upon how you are a good candidate to pursue the new stream of research in their letters of support.

8. What administrative and supervisory support from my home academic institution is required?
   - **Academic supervisor requirements:**
     o Only one supervisor is required per Digital Policy Hub fellow.
     o The academic supervisor must be at the same institution as the fellow.
     o For students and post-doctoral Hub fellows, the academic supervisor must be eligible to hold tri-council funding at their institution (funding will be provided to the academic institution to distribute payment to the fellow).
     o The supervisor can be from any academic discipline.
     o Supervisors can contact us with any questions at digitalhubinquiries@cigionline.org.
   - **Administrative support (students and post-doctoral Hub fellows)**: Supervisors must be eligible to hold an account and accept tri-council funding at their academic institution and must agree to accept funding to administer to the fellow. Supervisors also agree to serve as the institutional point of contact for the fellow.
   - **Research supervision and support**: Supervisors ultimately determine the extent of participation they would like to have. They will be the primary source of research supervision and support through activities such as reviewing the Hub fellow's research project(s), providing guidance as to structure, content and resources utilized for their research, and other activities as they see fit. Please note that additional research supervision, collaboration and feedback will be provided by the Hub team, cohort and mentors, as key features of the program.
   - Supervisors will be invited to participate (unfunded) in Digital Policy events hosted by CIGI such as the end-of-term research conference, either in person or online.
   - The time commitment expected by supervisors will therefore largely be determined on a case-by-case basis and depend on the supervisor's external commitments.

9. Can I apply even though I am studying at an academic institution outside of Canada?
   - At this time, funding only allows for applicants based at a Canadian academic institution who already have legal status to work in Canada.

10. I currently work full time or part time. Can I still apply?
    - CIGI's expectation is that fellows will be primarily focused on their research with the Hub while engaged as a Digital Policy Hub fellow (with the exception of undergraduate and master's Hub fellows, who will participate on a part time basis with the expectation that they are also engaged in coursework). All Hub fellows will need to manage their time and commitments responsibly.
    - Participants may pursue outside part time employment, as long as they are able to complete the requirements for both and engage fully in Hub activities. If you are employed full time, we encourage you to apply as a visiting fellow.
    - Admittance to the Hub for those who are currently employed more than half their time will be rare. These applications will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and will require written approval from the employer.

Duration of Program

1. What is the duration of a Digital Policy Hub fellowship?
   - The Hub will operate and host fellowships year round. While the length of fellowship can be negotiated, the general length of each fellowship is as follows:
     o **Undergraduate**: eight months (academic year).

- o **Master's**: eight months (academic year).
- o **Doctoral:** 12 months.
- o **Post-Doctoral**: 12 months.
- o **Visiting fellows**: To be determined on a case-by-case basis, generally aligned to the four-month terms of the academic calendar.

2. How many days, if at all, am I expected to be at the Hub in person?
   - All fellows will meet (with the option to do so in person or virtually) at a joint biweekly seminar, two hours in length, with additional opportunities to engage and connect.
   - Participation in the Hub may be in person, hybrid or virtual; this will be determined on a case-by-case basis.
   - As there are benefits to in-person participation such as shared office space and meeting your cohort face to face, we strongly urge fellows within commuting distance to attend seminars and events on-site.

Program Structure

1. What is the structure of the program?
   - All fellows will meet (with the option to do so in person or virtually) at a joint biweekly seminar held Tuesday afternoons (Eastern time), two hours in length, where they will share, compare and develop research (through presentations, etc.). The seminars will also feature a guest speaker, who will discuss their research and field experience aligning with one or more of the Hub's core research areas.
   - During alternate weeks, there will be additional special sessions/professional development sessions with CIGI experts and external guest speakers; review of research projects; and presentations within the group that are optional but highly encouraged.
   - In addition to seminars and additional sessions, Hub participants are to prepare research papers for publication during their tenure (minimum one paper for every four months of the fellowship), which will be made available on the Hub's virtual space.
   - CIGI is also open to negotiating the structure of research requirements if there is a strong case.

2. What is the time commitment for the program?
   - For those who are pursuing a Hub fellowship in addition to active course work, for example at the undergraduate or master's level, participation will typically involve 20-25 hours per week.
   - The expected time commitment is higher (approximately 30 hours per week) for doctoral and post-doctoral Hub fellows, for whom this should be their primary commitment.
   - Specifics can be negotiated on a case-by-case basis, as applicable.
   - Generally, the requirement of this fellowship is incompatible with full time employment unless the applicant is sponsored by their employer as a visiting fellow.

3. Are there teaching requirements for post-docs?
   - No, there are no teaching requirements for any of the Hub fellowship tiers.

4. What are the research output expectations?
   - In addition to the biweekly joint seminar (which can be attended either remotely or in person), Hub participants are to prepare research papers written during the fellowship that will be published on the Hub's virtual space, related to the program's identified themes. Fellows are

expected to produce one working paper every four months for the duration of their time in the Hub.
- Specificities on research output expectations based on fellowship tier (word/page count, style, etc.) are shared once the fellowship begins, and all works must adhere to CIGI's Style Guide. The program offers opportunities to become familiar with the Style Guide with ample time for Hub fellows to plan for their submissions (e.g., a Style Guide walkthrough with the organization's Publications team).

5. What networking opportunities are part of the fellowship?
   - Networking opportunities include active community-building within the cohort through events hosted by CIGI and the Digital Policy Hub team; peer review from experts within the CIGI community; and access to the private LinkedIn Hub fellows' group, to connect with past, present and future Hub fellows.

6. Is the Hub program active during the summer months?
   - The Digital Policy Hub will have limited programming during the summer months (May–August). This is to allow typical travel/vacation taken during this time for CIGI staff and Hub fellows, and in anticipation of limited availability of guest speakers. Working papers will still be due at the end of August for those with fellowships that remain active during the summer months, and we expect fellows to stay on top of their research while seminars are paused.
   - The program may still offer periodic special sessions, depending on guest speaker availability.
   - Hub fellows are free to arrange optional drop-in sessions with the cohort should that be of interest.

Hub Virtual Space

1. What is the Hub's website?
   - The Digital Policy Hub website is: https://www.cigionline.org/digital-policy-hub/.

Collaboration with the Hub

1. How can we partner with the Hub?
   - For all Hub-related inquiries, including partnerships, please contact the Digital Policy Hub team at digitalhubinquiries@cigionline.org.