

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

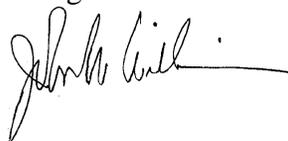
Farm Service Agency
Washington, DC 20250

Notice PM-2372

For: FAS National Office Employees

2004 LEGIS Fellows Program

Approved by: Deputy Administrator, Management



1 Overview

A Purpose

This notice informs employees that HRD, Training and Development Branch (TDB) is accepting nominations for the 2004 LEGIS Fellows Program.

B Contact

If there are any questions about this notice, contact Regina Duncan, TDB, on 202-418-9053 or TDD 202-418-9107.

2 LEGIS Fellows Program Information

A LEGIS Fellows Program Overview

The Brookings Institution offers an outstanding learning experience for federal employees with management potential who would benefit from a comprehensive understanding of how the U.S. Congress operates. The LEGIS Fellows Program enables Executive Branch employees to take full-time assignments in the Legislative Branch for 7 or 12 months, working on the staff of a member of Congress or a congressional committee.

Disposal Date	Distribution
May 1, 2004	FAS National Office Employees

2 **LEGIS Fellows Program Information (Continued)**

A **LEGIS Fellows Program Overview (Continued)**

FAS will announce the fellowship for the **1-year session** and **require the applicant to spend approximately 2 ½ months before departure for the fellowship in the Legislative Affairs Office. FAS also expects the selectee to return to the Legislative Affairs Office for 6 months before resuming duties in another part of the agency (total program would be approximately 21 months).** Duties would be wide-ranging, with emphasis on liaison with Capitol Hill, on monitoring, analyzing, and providing information on trade legislation to FAS staff and appropriate USDA officials, and coordinating FAS congressional activity.

Note: An information session will be held, the date and time will be announced. Watch FAS News for upcoming announcements.

The LEGIS Fellowship is for a calendar year; **therefore, the employee would most likely return to a regular assignment through the WPP process, but could also apply for other vacancies,** after the employee completes the 6-month assignment in the Legislative Affairs Office. **The position held by the employee at the time the fellowship is taken would be announced as a regular vacancy for backfill and not be held for the employee. Civil Service employees are guaranteed a position at grade.**

This fellowship is for employees at the **GS 13 through 15 level and FO-equivalent, with at least 2 years of service in the Executive Branch.** The Brookings Institute, LEGIS Fellows Program includes the following program elements:

- a full-time assignment for 12 months on the staff of a member of Congress or a congressional committee in Washington, D.C.
- an intensive orientation program, including sessions on the legislative process and keys to being an effective staffer
- assistance in identifying an assignment on Capitol Hill and on-going guidance throughout the fellowship
- access to Brookings resources, including its scholars, seminars, briefings, and publications.

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2 LEGIS Fellows Program Information (Continued)

B Program Cost

Tuition cost for the 12-month fellowship is \$5,450.

Note: Tuition for FAS employees shall be paid from the Agency-wide management fund. Any travel expenses to the district of the legislator or committee field hearings will be paid by the division.

C Program Dates

Following are major dates for the 2004 Fellows Program.

2004 LEGIS Fellows Program	Dates
All nomination packages due in TDB	September 9, 2003
Selected nominee's package is forwarded to Brookings	No later than September 23, 2003
Brookings makes final selection	On or about October 3, 2003
Begin working in Legislative Affairs Office	No later than October 20, 2003
Two-week orientation session starts (Mandatory)	January 5, 2004
End of Fellows Program with Brookings	December 10, 2004

Note: Assignments begin following the 2-week orientation.

D Accommodation

Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to participate in this training should contact Regina Duncan at 202-418-9053 or TDD 202-418-9107 by October 31, 2003.

3 Nomination Process

A Nominee Prerequisites

Nominees must:

- be grades GS/GM 13 through 15 or equivalent level
- career employees in FAS National Office
- be interested in an in-depth knowledge of Legislative Branch processes and culture
- have ability to work independently with minimum supervision
- be willing to explore new ways of working to achieve results
- have demonstrated flexibility in work habits
- have held at least 2 different assignments, that is, served in at least 2 distinct parts of a division.

B Nomination Packages

To be considered for the Fellows Program, eligible employees must submit a nomination package containing the following:

- a completed 2004 Brookings Institution, Legis Fellows Program Nomination Form (Exhibit 1), including supervisory signature

Note: The nomination form will be available on the FFAS Employee Forms OnlineWebsite at <http://165.221.16.90/DAM/ffasforms/forms.html>.

- current SF-171, OF-612, or detailed resume signed and dated by applicant with a current home address

3 Nomination Process (Continued)

B Nomination Packages (Continued)

- a written statement of up to 2 pages addressing how the following abilities or competencies in the following areas are supported in your current position

Note: When providing the written statements address the following abilities or competencies individually:

- oral communications skills
 - written communications skills
 - interpersonal skills
 - leadership skills
 - initiative (particularly the ability to function with minimal supervision and in an unstructured environment)
 - technical competence (particularly the applicant's knowledge of policy and operations of the agency).
- a written statement describing the need for this training, the relevance of this training to career goals, and how this training will be used by the agency
 - a statement written by the first-line supervisor describing the applicant's executive potential, his/her potential in this program and need for this training, including the ability to apply the knowledge gained to future FAS assignments.

Note: If the applicant has been in his/her position for less than 6 months he/she may add an evaluation from the previous supervisor.

- a list all formal courses taken in the last 5 years.

Only employees who follow the Agency's nomination procedures in this notice will be considered for selection to participate in this program. **Do not apply directly to the Brookings Institution. Mail, FedEx, or hand deliver** all nomination packages to Regina Duncan. **Because of major mail delays, it is recommended that the applicant send the original and 2 copies of the completed nomination package using FedEx or hand delivery.**

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3 Nomination Process (Continued)

C Sending Nomination Forms

Send the original and 2 copies according to the following table.

Method of Delivery	Address
U.S. Mail	Regina Duncan, USDA/FSA/HRD/TDB STOP 0574, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, DC 20250-0574
FedEx	Regina Duncan 2101 L Street NW Suite 303-A Washington, DC 20037
Hand Deliver	Regina Duncan 2101 L Street NW Suite 303-A Washington, DC 20037

Note: Faxed copies of nomination packages will **not** be accepted.

D Deadline

HRD, TDB **must receive** all complete nomination packages by **COB September 9, 2003**. **Nominations received after this date will not be considered. Substitution of items will not be permitted after the deadline.**

4 Agency Nomination Process

A Number of Participants

FAS may support 1 nominee for a 12-month fellowship.

Note: The nominee selected by FAS is forwarded to the Brookings Institution for final selection.

B Participant Selection

An HRD, TDB specialist will assemble an Assessment Panel to select participants. The panel will consist of at least 2 members who occupy positions at a grade level not lower than the full performance level of the Long Term Training Program (LTTP) being filled. There will be an EEO (nonvoting) observer present and there may be a union (nonvoting) representative observing during this process.

4 Agency Nomination Process (Continued)

C Panel Membership

The Assessment Panel:

- will review and rank employee nominations using criteria established Agency-wide for LTTP's
- has the final responsibility for determining best qualified candidates based on valid LTTP related criteria and employee's application package.

Notes: The Assessment Panel will refer the best qualified candidates to the Executive Advisory Group which makes the selection recommendations to the FAS Administrator or designee who selects final participants.

No panel will be held if the number of nominations received does not exceed the number of slots available.

USDA prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) This agency provides reasonable accommodations to applicants with disabilities. The decision on granting reasonable accommodation will be on a case-by-case basis.

The work of candidates while on official time, performing labor relations representational functions, must be viewed with neutrality.

D Agency Nomination

HRD, TDB notifies employees of the nomination decision and submits a completed nomination package to The Brookings Institution for review and selection decision.

5 Selection Process

A The Brookings Institution

The Brookings Institution selects Fellows as follows:

- reviews each nomination package
- makes the selections for fellowships
- notifies Agency and employees of their selection
- once the employee is in the program, works to match individual's skills, experience, and preferences with the requirements of Congressional offices.

B Labor Management Obligations

Where exclusive representation exists, bargaining may be requested to the extent allowed by applicable statutes. Where contract language already addresses these policies and procedures for bargaining unit employees, contract language prevails.

AD-2008, 2004 LEGIS Fellows Program Nomination Form

This form is available electronically.

AD-2008
(08-19-03)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

**2004 LEGIS FELLOWS PROGRAM
NOMINATION FORM**

Note: Deadline September 9, 2003

1. Name	2. Division/Staff (Include Office Address)		3. Room Number and Stop Code
4. E-mail Address			
5. Title	6. Grade	7. Full-Time Federal Employee?	8. Telephone Number (Include Area Code)
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	9. FAX Number (Include Area Code)

10. Please notify your supervisor that you are submitting your name for consideration of the training listed above. Have your supervisor sign below to indicate that they have been notified.

A. Supervisor's Signature	B. Date (MM-DD-YYYY)	C. Supervisor's Telephone Number (Include Area Code)
D. Print Supervisor's Name and Title	E. Supervisor's Mailing Address	

11. Other required information to be included with this nomination form:

A. Written statement of up to 2 pages addressing how this training will also improve performance in current and expected job assignments. Emphasis should be on how your abilities or competencies in the following area contributed to your success.

- oral
- written
- interpersonal communication
- leadership
- initiative
- technical competence.

B. A written statement describing the need for this training, relevance to career goals and how this training will be used by the agency.

C. Current OF-612 or SF-171 or resume signed and dated by the applicant with current home address.

D. List of all formal training courses taken in the last 5 years.

E. A statement written by the first-line supervisor assessing the applicant's potential for supervisory or managerial responsibilities.

12. Please submit this nomination form, and all other information listed in Item 11 (the original and 2 copies), by September 9, 2003, to:

Regular Mail:	Regina Duncan USDA, FSA, HRD, TDB Stop 0574 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, DC 20250-0574	Or Fed Ex:	Regina Duncan USDA, FSA, HRD, TDB Suite 303-A 2101 L Street, NW Washington, DC 20037-1526
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