Getting your foot in the door: How to find jobs & fellowships in science policy

Jaime Yassif
STEP Seminar • September 16, 2010
Outline

1. General Approach
2. Government Fellowships/Jobs
3. Academic Postdocs
4. Conferences & Summer Training
5. Additional Resources
I. General Approach

• There are many paths into science policy. Career trajectory not straightforward.

• Two categories of jobs:
  – Analytical work, research & writing papers
  – Hands on work, often in government

• Strategy: start small and work your way up
II. Gov’t Fellowships

• AAAS Fellowship
• Presidential Management Fellowship
• Christine Mirzayan Fellowship
AAAS Fellowship

• “The Fellowships help to establish and nurture critical links between federal decision-makers and scientific professionals to support public policy that benefits the wellbeing of the nation and the planet.”

• 1 year fellowship in U.S. Government -- fellowships.aaas.org

• 4 areas
  – Congressional*
    • Member Offices & Committees
  – Diplomacy, Security & Development
    • DoD, DHS, State, USAID
  – Energy, Environment, Agriculture & Natural Resources
    • DOE, EPA, NOAA
  – Health, Education, & Human Services
    • HHS, NIH
AAAS Fellowship

- **Eligibility**
  - Completed PhD or equivalent (including dissertation) at time of application
  - US Citizenship

- **Deadline: 12/5/2010**

- **Application Requirements:**
  - Online application, candidate statement, CV and 3 references
  - Demonstrate: Scientific Competence, Leadership, Communication

- **Timeline:**
  - Notification of Interview: February 2011
  - Briefing Memo Due: February
  - Interviews: February - March
  - Placement Week: April
  - Fellowships Begin: September
Presidential Management Fellowship

• 2 year position in the US government -- executive branch
• Career development, rotations in different agencies
• ** You can only apply the year you graduate. **

• Eligibility – meet all graduate degree requirements between 9/01/2010 – 8/31/2011
• Science training can help you stand out.

• www.pmf.opm.gov
Presidential Management Fellowship

Selection process:
1. Application – Due October 15th
2. Nomination – Due October 31st
   Applicants must be nominated by their department's "Nomination Official".

3. Assessment & Finalist Selection

4. Search for a position
   – PMF Job Fair in Washington, DC
   – Agencies contact finalists based on online resume
   – Finalists can search for appointments via online database or contact agencies of interest.
Christine Mirzayan Fellowship

- The National Academies – Independent entity that conducts studies for the US government -- examine technical issues and how they affect policy.

- 12 week fellowship with stipend
- Before or after completing graduate degree

- Excellent way to get your first science-policy experience. Many AAAS fellows started here.

- sites.nationalacademies.org/PGA/policyfellows/index.htm
Christine Mirzayan Fellowship

2 Sessions:
• Winter 2011: January - April
  Application Deadline: October 15, 2010
• Fall 2011: August - November
  Application Deadline: May 1, 2011
III. Academic Postdocs

- CISAC, Stanford
- The Earth Institute, Columbia
- Belfer Center, Harvard
CISAC, Stanford

- Center for International Security and Cooperation
- 1 year fellowships in Science, Technology & International Security

- Research scientific & technical aspects of a security topic, eg:
  - nuclear weapons, non-proliferation
  - energy, food & water security
  - security issues related to climate change

- Deadline: Feb. 1st
- Additional opportunities for postdocs, predocs, mid-career
- cisac.stanford.edu/fellowships

- CISAC seminar series open to public
Earth Institute, Columbia

- 2 year fellows program focused on scientific and social issues related to meeting global sustainable development goals.

- Eligibility: Recent doctorates in the natural, social, engineering and health sciences

- Application: Submit research proposal linked to one of the Institute’s focus areas

- Deadline: December 1

- Sample research topics:
  - Disease Dynamics in Fragmented Landscapes
  - Modeling the Impacts of Climate Change on Agricultural Production in the Millennium Villages

- www.earth.columbia.edu/articles/view/55
Belfer Center, Harvard

• 1 year fellowships in Science, Technology & Public Policy program

• Interdisciplinary research in two areas:
  – Managing the Atom Project
  – Energy Technology Innovation Policy research group

• Eligibility: Recent PhD in the natural, social, engineering and health sciences or a JD. Pre-doctoral opportunities also available.

• Deadline: January 14, 2011

• Application: Research proposal, CV, 3 letters of recommendation, writing sample. (Predocs also need transcripts.)

• http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/fellowships/
IV. Conferences & Summer Training

- UCS Summer Symposium on Science & World Affairs
  July -- www.summersymposium.org

- Science & Technology in Society Conference
  April -- www.stglobal.org

** Good context for students to develop and present ideas.

- Public Policy and Nuclear Threats, Summer Training, UCSD
  igcc.ucsd.edu/cprograms/PPNT/PPNTparticipants2009.php

- Public Policy and Biological Threats, UCSD
  igcc.ucsd.edu/PPBT.php
V. Additional Resources

• Additional Opportunities
  – California Science & Technology Policy Fellowship
    fellows.ccst.us/what.php
  – Google Policy Fellowship
    www.google.com/policyfellowship/
  – PNNL Nonproliferation Graduate Fellowship
    ngfp.pnl.gov

• Organizations
  – Federation of American Scientists  www.fas.org
  – Union of Concerned Scientists  www.ucsusa.org
  – Policy branch of your professional society
V. Additional Resources

• Listservs & Online Resources
  – CSTSPnet  cstsp.aaas.org/news.html
  – BERC Announce  berc.berkeley.edu/email

  – UCS Career Resources  
    www.summersymposium.org/sscareerfrontpg.html

  – kammen.berkeley.edu/EnergyJobs.htm
Thank you.