

2024

# Empowering Change

Best Practices  
Guide for RESULTS  
Organizing and  
Advocacy Fellowship

# RESULTS Organizing & Advocacy Fellowship



# Greetings from fellowship manager Yolanda Gordon

First, thank you for shepherding a community of leaders for the past ten years. The fellowship would not be a success without your support. Your support has been immeasurable as well as invaluable. As you welcome your fellow(s), they eagerly anticipate working with you and standing by your side to end poverty. I am here to support you and our fellow(s) through the next 11 months. We will need your knowledge, support, and wisdom for the next 11 months as we face a challenging Congress in an election year. My job is not to interfere with the operation of your group. It is to support your group through this journey.

Fellows come from all walks of life and socioeconomic backgrounds. Many of them are first time advocates and they chose RESULTS to begin their journey. As advocates, it is our duty to ensure that we provide fellows with guidance and to ensure that they know that we have their backs 100 percent. I have been in this position for four years, and I have produced a few things that are best practices.

## **Do not turn on the fire hose**

- As advocates, in our excitement to have new faces, we sometimes try to bring the fellow(s) up to speed on everything. This is the firehose. How we engage with volunteers can make or break their experience with us.
- As volunteers, we have come into a new volunteer position, and we have been flooded with calls and emails. (Fellows will get an abridged version of what our state of play is in their welcome/handbook packet.) Consider the frequency of communication first and find a rhythm that works to maximize responses.

## **Fellows will receive homework assignments, please familiarize yourself with these a bit**

- Fellows are responsible for assignments and participation in webinars and group meetings.
- Fellows are responsible for several assignments that I have added to the grid in this document.
- The assignments that require group participation will be marked.
- I will provide group leaders the information about assignments that require group participation. (More than likely interviewing a group member.)

## **Fellows have busy schedules; communicate with them often and in advance**

- When a fellow begins, I encourage them to communicate with their group leader about changes in their schedules and to be responsive to all communications that leaders send.
- When they join your group, the best practice is to ask them for their schedules so that you can work together to ensure needs are met. This will assist group leaders and new advocate mentors to schedule time with the fellow.
- As I repeat to the fellows, communication is key, and it is also drilled into fellows to communicate.

## **Storytelling is okay, but not always primary for advocacy**

- For years, our volunteers with lived experience have focused on storytelling. We encourage our volunteers to tell stories from scars not from wounds, but I have learned by becoming trauma informed, that even if it is a scar, it can retraumatize individuals.
- Sometimes storytelling can be tokenizing. Let the fellow offer their experience when they are comfortable.

## **Communicate with the fellowship manager**

- When a fellow misses two meetings, please reach out to the fellowship manager. You are not alone in this.
- Use the fellowship manager as a resource and assist in further communication with fellows to get a response when they are unresponsive.
- **The fellowship manager will ensure open communication and that you are a part of the process.**
  - Group leaders will be notified if a fellow drops from the fellowship roster.
  - In the event the fellow decides to end participation with your group, the fellow should notify you in writing. The fellowship manager will also reach out to you.
- **The fellowship manager will support lobby meetings, group planning, and in-person events.**
  - Any request for assistance with lobby meetings or group planning should be made within 24 hours of scheduling.

- Group in-person meetings, the fellowship manager should be notified within two to four weeks for planning.
- Fellows are required to assist in organizing an in-person or organizing event.

## Lobby meetings:

Fellows are to take a role in four different lobbying meetings.

1. Scheduling the meeting
2. Take notes
3. Leading the meeting
4. Follow up and thank you note.

This will give them the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the process.

If you need anything, please email [fellowship@results.org](mailto:fellowship@results.org). This email address is dedicated to the fellowship and will ensure that your message is received quickly. Happy 2024!

**Yolanda M. Gordon**  
*Manager, Fellowship Program and Advocacy*



# Fellowship Webinar Dates

Fellowship Dates	Notes	Key
January 10	Welcome: The fundamentals of advocacy	Grassroots
January 24	Meet the Policy Team	Policy
February 7	Intro to media advocacy	Assignment
February 21	Budget and appropriations: What you need to know	Policy
March 6	Housing: Historical context of housing	Policy
March 20	Global health: Tuberculosis	Policy
April 3	Housing listening session	Assignment
April 17	Global nutrition and maternal and child health	Policy
May 3-7	RESULTS Organizing and Advocacy Fellowship Leadership Conference (Event)	Event
May 22	Tax presentation: Economic justice in the tax code	Policy
June 5	Fundamentals of organizing	Grassroots
June 26	Storytelling: Creating your own narrative	Assignment
July 10	Place-based advocacy: It is more than the optics represented	Grassroots
July 24	Global education	Policy
August 7	Oppression: How it continues to shape the world	Grassroots
August 21	Global Speaker (with Canadian fellows)	Policy
September 11	How to use Census poverty numbers to create media	Grassroots
September 25	Movements: Analog and digital	Grassroots
October 9	Self-care in the digital age	Grassroots
October 23	Overview of what is at stake: Why we vote	Policy
November 6	Fellowship closing: Life after the fellowship	Misc



## Still have questions?

If you still have questions about the fellowship that are not covered in this guide, please email Yolanda Gordon, Manager, Fellowship Program and Advocacy at **[fellowship@results.org](mailto:fellowship@results.org)**.