REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Center for a Livable Future - Lerner Fellowship Program Fiscal Year 17

Application Deadline: Monday, March 7, 2016, 5pm EST
Date of Notification: Week of April 4-8, 2016

PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW

The Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future (CLF) is currently accepting applications for its Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 Center for a Livable Future – Lerner Fellowship Program. The program was established in 2003 to support doctoral students at the Johns Hopkins University who are committed to the discovery and/or application of knowledge about public health challenges associated with the current food system, and/or about the creation of a healthier, more equitable, and more resilient and sustainable food system.

The CLF-Lerner Fellowship award provides up to one year of support in an amount up to $67,000 to be used for tuition, stipend, and/or research expenses related to individual needs for students in their first through third year of support from the CLF-Lerner Fellowship. As of the FY16 awards, applicants entering their fourth year or greater of receiving CLF-Lerner Fellowship support will be eligible to apply for a maximum of $15,000 of support per year.

Johns Hopkins students from all divisions within the university (including joint degree programs) are encouraged to apply for support during any stage of their doctoral program. Current or former CLF-Lerner Fellows who apply for a FY17 CLF-Lerner Fellowship will be considered in equal competition among other applicants. While there is no official limit to the number of times an individual may be awarded a CLF-Lerner Fellowship, it is expected that students will actively and demonstratively seek and secure other (i.e., non-CLF) sources of funding support as they progress through their academic programs.

Preference will be given to applicants who will be in residence in the Baltimore area during all or most of the academic year for which they are seeking CLF-Lerner Fellowship support. We welcome applicants with domestic or global research interests and recognize that some students may need to be offsite or abroad conducting research during part of the Fellowship year. If applicants anticipate that offsite dissertation research will be a part of their educational plan, they should clearly describe the need to be offsite and the expected duration in section 4 (proposed research) of their application. Students who are offsite during some of the fellowship period will be expected to participate in fellowship activities to the extent possible.

An important component of the CLF-Lerner Fellowship Program is a series of “co-curricular” activities involving the cohort of fellows each year. These include a journal club, skills training, opportunities to meet with visiting experts, and participation in CLF program work as well as attending CLF-sponsored lectures and seminars. This series of activities provide opportunities to: learn about food system issues; improve translational research skills; cultivate community and camaraderie among fellows; learn from one another’s research experiences; and, expand professional networks.

In addition, each fellow is expected to work with CLF program staff to identify and participate in at least one activity that involves sharing expertise with the public and/or policymakers. Fellows and fellowship alumni may also be asked to serve as a scientific resource and/or technical advisor to CLF program staff, and may be invited to attend meetings or events on behalf of CLF. Fellows are also encouraged to take food system classes taught by CLF staff members and JHU faculty, with CLF-Lerner Fellows also often serving as TAs in these courses. Additionally, CLF-Lerner Fellows are encouraged to complete the new Food System, Environment and Public Health certificate program organized and managed by CLF.
NOTE: The Center for a Livable Future-Lerner Fellowship recipients will not be performing any services to benefit the University in exchange for receiving stipend payments. The activities performed during the Fellowship award period are for the benefit of the student’s independent study and training.

When publishing their work in peer reviewed literature, CLF-Lerner Fellows are strongly encouraged to seek open access options in order to facilitate wide dissemination of their findings. For publications directly related to the food systems aspects of work supported through the CLF-Lerner Fellowship, CLF will reimburse open access costs up to $2000. (To assure the costs will qualify for reimbursement, Fellows should reach out to CLF directly to discuss these costs prior to committing to the journal.)

EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF CLF-LERNER FELLOWS

Each application will be evaluated on the basis of the relevance of the proposed course of study and career goals with the stated purpose of the fellowship program, the applicant’s academic merit and achievement, and the feasibility of successfully pursuing that course of study at the Johns Hopkins University. Other criteria evaluated include life experience, recommendations, and communication skills. If the applicant is far enough along in their academic program, the scholarly merit and feasibility of a research proposal will be considered as part of the overall application. To the extent that funds are available, the CLF-Lerner Fellowship Program selection committee selects the candidates whose career plans and projects most closely align with the goals of the fellowship program through an evaluation process involving interviews and the careful review of applications.

AREAS OF STUDY

CLF-Lerner Fellowships support outstanding students conducting academic study involving the discovery and/or application of knowledge about challenges associated with the current food system, and/or the creation of a healthier, more equitable, and more resilient food system. CLF-Lerner Fellows conduct research and policy projects examining the complex relationships among food production, food security, diet and consumption, the environment and the public’s health – all within the reality of the multiple and ongoing challenges and pressures associated with the lack of equity, population growth, climate disruption, and resource depletion. For a detailed list of example topics that could be supported by the CLF-Lerner Fellowship please see Appendix A.

APPLICATION:

In order to be considered for the FY17 CLF-Lerner Fellowship, ALL application materials, including supporting documents, must be received by CLF via email attachment before 5:00 PM, Monday, March 7, 2016.

Applicants must submit the CLF-supplied Excel file for the proposal budget, and compile all other documents into a single Word or PDF file. Documents not available in electronic form (such as some transcripts or letters of recommendation) must be either hand-delivered to CLF (on or before March 7, 2016), or mailed (post-marked by March 5, 2016).

Note: All interested students, especially those who have not yet matriculated at JHU, should contact CLF (via Meg Burke: mbburke@jhu.edu, 410-502-7578) before applying to discuss how their interests may fit with the fellowship program objectives.

NOTE: Please do not include a cover letter, as all pertinent information should be included in the actual application.
Format of the application: double-spaced, in 12-point font with 1-inch margins. Specific page limits are noted in each section. In the upper right header of each page, please type: CLF-Lerner Fellowship – [Your last name]

1. COVER SHEET that provides the following information (1 Page):
   - Applicant’s name and full contact information (home address, school address, phone number & email);
   - Academic status at the time of this application (e.g., 1st year PhD, etc.);
   - Anticipated academic status for 2016-2017 (e.g., 2nd year DrPH, etc);
   - Department/division;
   - Name of departmental advisor;
   - Name of separate research advisor (if applicable);
   - Anticipated timeline indicating approximate dates for Oral Exams (Departmental and Schoolwide), IRB approval and completion of dissertation (if ready to provide);
     - Requests for dissertation research support will only be considered for work that will be performed following successful completion of Schoolwide Oral Exams, in compliance with University Graduate Board regulations.
   - Application topic(s) from the list in the Appendix (those with the closest fit).

2. Current Biographical Sketch (up to two pages)
   Each applicant should provide a description of his/her educational background (names of all post-secondary institutions attended, years attended, degrees received); and a list of any honors, awards, fellowships, employment, and publications. Applicants may submit this information on a CV, resume or using the NIH Biographical Sketch Form 398 format (minus the personal statement).

3. Personal statement (up to three pages)
   The personal statement should communicate the applicant’s interest in the CLF-Lerner Fellowship Program. This statement should include: a description of the applicant’s motivation, professional and personal interests, educational and career goals (both short- and long-term), a description of the applicant's planned program of study; and an example where the applicant demonstrated leadership or acted as a change agent to make a positive impact on campus, in a community or through the policy process.

   Applicants who have been CLF-Lerner Fellows previously should provide an additional statement (no more than one page) describing how their research and/or interests have evolved since the start of their involvement with the CLF-Lerner Fellowship program. This section should also include the top three things the applicant accomplished, learned or contributed to during their fellowship year.

4. Proposed Research (up to two pages):
   Applicants who have determined their dissertation research topics (usually, those who are close to their oral examinations or who have completed them) should briefly describe their proposed projects. Please use subtitles to highlight the following sections:
   - Background;
   - Aims and Hypotheses (or Research Questions), in italics;
   - Methods; and
   - The project’s Relevance to CLF and the fellowship topics listed in Appendix A.

   In addition, applicants should briefly discuss key literature gaps relevant to their research topics, and how the project will contribute to addressing these gaps. Finally, they should include comments regarding their qualifications for undertaking this work, including any additional coursework or preparation plans to fill in needed skills.

Please note:
   - Applicants who have not yet finalized their research topics should instead use the two pages of this
- If offsite dissertation research will be a part of their educational plans, applicants should specify their plans to be conducting research away from Baltimore and the expected duration of the trips in this section.

5. **Budget:**

Applicants must use the Excel template posted on the CLF-Lerner Fellowship web page. 

**NOTE:** For full time students in their first through third years of CLF support (regardless of years of attendance at JHU), the combined request for tuition, stipend and research cannot exceed $67,000. For students in their fourth or subsequent year(s) of support from CLF, the maximum combined request for tuition, stipend and research cannot exceed $15,000.

Students who are not requesting financial support are also eligible to apply to the CLF-Lerner Fellowship Program and should contact Meg Burke (mbburke@jhu.edu) to discuss their application.

Please provide a short explanation describing and justifying plans for using the funds (up to 1 page) and an itemization with the following topics:

- **Tuition:**
  Note: Only 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year doctoral students are eligible to receive full tuition support. Third and 4<sup>th</sup> year students may only apply for tuition support that reflects a shortfall in departmental tuition waivers and/or other support. See: [http://www.jhsph.edu/admissions/tuition-and-fees/](http://www.jhsph.edu/admissions/tuition-and-fees/)

- **Cost of attendance stipend:**
  Use the following categories: Room, Board, Transportation, Books & Supplies, Insurance and Personal. Maximum living stipend will be based on cost of living in Baltimore for 11 months for the 2016-2017 academic year. See: [http://www.jhsph.edu/student_affairs/financial/cost_living/](http://www.jhsph.edu/student_affairs/financial/cost_living/). **NOTE:** Applicants should use 2015-2016 rates until rates for 2016-2017 rates have been released by JHSPH.
  Please offer a rationale for the level of stipend requested and describe the amount and source of additional income during the period of the fellowship, known or anticipated. **NOTE:** Incoming first year PhD students should apply for full stipend coverage based on the 9 month figure listed on the Student Affairs website, due to the date of matriculation for incoming PhD students being September 1 instead of July 1.

- **Research costs:**
  Provide sufficient detail for reviewers to clearly understand the need. If the application is part of a larger research effort, indicate why this project should receive additional funding, and clearly distinguish how the new funds will be used for purposes distinct from existing funds and specifically related to the work of the Fellow. Note that funds for FY17 research-related expenses will not be released until the Fellow has successfully completed oral exams and IRB review if required.

- **Other:**
  List additional costs not included in the above. Include sufficient detail for the reviewers to understand the need. Travel costs are restricted to those incurred in conducting dissertation research. Travel to conferences is not supported.

- **Other sources of funding:**
  List other sources of funding (both secured and potential) for the applicant’s doctoral study, and list all pending applications for funding including amounts requested and expected notification dates.

6. **Transcripts:**

Please submit academic transcripts from all colleges, universities, graduate or professional schools attended. Applicants may submit official transcripts in hard copy format or student copies; electronic versions may be included in the applicant’s Word or PDF application.
NOTE: Applicants who have previously applied for a CLF-Lerner Fellowship, please indicate this in this year’s application and submit an official updated transcript from JHU. Resubmitting all previous transcripts is NOT required.

7. Letters of recommendation:
Please provide a list of all letters that will be included in the application. Letters may be submitted in hard copy in a sealed and signed envelope, OR sent via email directly from the recommender to mbburke@jhu.edu (applicants should NOT be copied on this email).

A) For students currently applying to begin a JHU doctoral program, please submit the following two letters:
   1. A letter of recommendation from one of the following:
      A. Past faculty advisor or research advisor OR
      B. Past work supervisor OR
      C. Mentor of community or student led project; AND
   2. A letter of recommendation from one of the following:
      A. The JHU faculty member who will serve as their advisor; OR,
      B. The Chair of the department to which they are applying, indicating support for their proposed educational plan and research ideas in terms of relevance and feasibility.

B) For currently enrolled doctoral students at JHU, please submit the following one or two letters:
   1. (Students NOT submitting research plans): One letter of recommendation from their current faculty advisor;
   2. (Students submitting research plans): One letter of recommendation from the faculty member who is supervising their research or has agreed to do so. This letter should indicate support for their proposed research idea and research methods in terms of relevance and feasibility, and describe the value of the applicant’s proposal. If this person is not their faculty advisor, please ALSO submit a letter of recommendation from their advisor.

Additional letters of support may also be submitted from individuals or programs whose assistance is needed for the applicant’s dissertation research.

The completed application must be received by 5:00 pm Monday, March 7, 2016 emailed with Word/PDF (one single file for all non-Excel documents) and Excel attachments. Hard copies of any items not available in electronic form should be hand-delivered to CLF by that time, or mailed with postmark by March 5, 2016. NOTE: Unless an extension was granted by CLF, items missing from an application by 5:00pm on Monday, March 7, 2016 will be considered grounds for dismissing the application.

We will interview selected applicants in person or by Skype (only if absolutely necessary), between 8:00am and 5:00pm on Monday, March 21, 2016 and Wednesday, March 23, 2016. Please note that if you live within 100 miles of Baltimore, MD, it is expected that you will interview in person. Please contact Meg Burke if participating in an interview on either date would not be possible.

Submit materials to:
Meg Burke
Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future
Bloomberg School of Public Health
615 North Wolfe Street, W7010
Baltimore, MD 21205-2179
Email: mbburke@jhu.edu

For further information contact:
Meg Burke
Tel: 410-502-7578   Fax: 410-502-7579   Email: mbburke@jhu.edu
Appendix A.

The following is an illustrative overview of the range of topics for doctoral study that could be supported by CLF-Lerner Fellowships. Interdisciplinary and systems approaches are encouraged. If unsure about whether a particular topic is a good fit, please contact Meg Burke to discuss.

- **Industrial Food Animal Production (IFAP)**, including:
  - Epidemiologic investigations of communities impacted by IFAP operations;
  - Impacts of IFAP operations on environmental and ecologic quality;
  - Impacts of IFAP operations on residents of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed ecosystem;
  - Justice issues (environmental, social, economic, other) and equity issues related to IFAP;
  - Veterinary drug use impacts on public health and policies;
  - Policy relevant to IFAP.

- **Industrial and/or Sustainable Aquaculture**, including:
  - Ecologic and public health implications of industrial aquaculture (e.g., industrial salmon, shrimp, catfish farming) and alternative production methods;
  - Environmental and occupational justice issues related to aquaculture production;
  - Barriers and policies, from local to international, that need to be addressed to increase use of sustainable aquaculture methods;
  - Effects of standards and/or third party certification systems (e.g., "eco-labels") on aquaculture production practices, and any public health implications;
  - Consumer food safety risks, consumer knowledge/attitudes, and community food security implications of different types of aquaculture production methods.

- The environmental, ecologic, economic, social, policy, and health impacts and drivers of current food production methods in the U.S. and/or abroad, including:
  - How climate, fuel, water and soil crises may impact food production;
  - How food production affects climate, fuel, water and soil;
  - Factors that shape how, where, and by whom food is produced in the U.S. and/or abroad; and
  - Occupational health considerations for food production, processing, and distribution workers;
  - Related equity concerns.

- More sustainable alternatives to current food production in the U.S. and/or abroad, including:
  - Analyses of sustainable food production methods;
  - Policy analyses, case studies, program evaluations, and other investigations relevant to improving the sustainability of the food system, including transitioning to sustainable food production, changing diets or addressing food waste;
  - Public and occupational health/safety implications of sustainable food production methods.

- **Public health, environmental, economic, and social impacts** of the current food system and food choices in the U.S. and/or abroad, including:
  - The effects of a high meat diet on human health and/or the environment;
  - Public health, economic, social, or environmental impacts of local/regional food production;
  - Economic, racial, social, health, equity, and environmental implications of current public and private food system structures and practices;
  - Food system analysis including mapping and other techniques, for purposes including gauging geographic risk factors for health outcomes and seeking to understand the history and evolution of today’s food system; and
  - Current federal, state and local laws, and/or international laws and trade agreements influencing the food system.
Interventions and explorations related to changing the food system and diets; and access to and demand for healthy and sustainably produced food, including health promotion, behavior change, economic and policy studies that take a systems approach:

- Evaluating health impacts of increasing access to healthy food choices or of altering a food environment (e.g., new store, neighborhood gardens, changing existing store, etc.);
- Cultural, societal, and environmental factors that influence food purchasing and waste;
- Benefits and/or challenges of community involvement in food system improvement;
- Examining federal, state and local policy development supporting changes in the food system;
- Program evaluation of a Meatless Monday campaign at an institutional setting;
- Efficacy of weekly messaging or prompts for influencing health knowledge, attitudes and behavior compared with prompts of other frequencies;
- Methods for communicating with the public and food suppliers about environmental impacts of food, and for quantifying these impacts;
- Effective health communication/social marketing approaches for influencing food purchasing and diet related behaviors (particular interest in approaches utilizing periodic messages and/or prompts);
- Ethical and moral factors influencing food policy and/or dietary behaviors; and
- Strategies for improving food security, particularly in light of ecological threats to water, fuel, soil and climate.