

## 2026 Gulf Research Program Science Policy Fellowship: Application Question Guidance Document and Review Criteria

### Application Question Guidance Document

The *Fellowship Application Question Guidance Document* is a resource to help applicants craft clear, thoughtful, and well-structured responses to fellowship application questions. It offers insights and guidance to ensure your responses align with the program's specific requirements and expectations. Use this document as a tool to strengthen your application, highlight your qualifications, and convey your genuine commitment to and fit for the fellowship opportunity.

#### **General tips on crafting a successful fellowship application:**

- **Start Early:** Begin well in advance for thorough research and revisions.
- **Research the Program:** Familiarize yourself with the fellowship program and incorporate this knowledge into your application to demonstrate your genuine interest.
- **Read Guidelines Carefully:** Thoroughly review the fellowship program's guidelines, requirements, and review criteria to ensure you understand what is expected and to make sure this fellowship is a good fit for you.
- **Customize Application:** Tailor your application to the GRP's Science Policy Fellowship. Highlight how your qualifications, goals, and values align with the program's mission.
- **Proofread and Edit:** Carefully proofread your application to eliminate errors in grammar and formatting. Consider seeking feedback from mentors or peers for editing assistance.
- **Submit Early:** Aim to submit your application before the deadline to account for any technical issues that may arise. Keep in mind - You will not be able to submit your application until all letters of recommendation have been uploaded. Please encourage your recommender to submit their letter well in advance of the application deadline.

## 2026 Science Policy Fellowship: Resume/CV Upload

**Task Instructions: At a minimum, your resume/CV should include education, research and professional experience, leadership experience, any relevant science communication or outreach experience, publications, and presentations. The resume/CV should be in PDF format and no longer than 5 pages. Documents longer than 5 pages will be truncated before being sent to reviewers.**

### Guidance:

When preparing your CV/Resume, please consider the following guidance to ensure it aligns effectively with this fellowship opportunity:

- **Tailoring for Relevance:** Customize your CV/Resume to specifically match the fellowship opportunity. Highlight experiences, skills, and achievements that directly correlate with the fellowship's objectives.
- **Comprehensive Content:** Include all pertinent details that are directly applicable to this opportunity. This encompasses scientific papers, conference/workshop presentations, roles that demonstrate your technical expertise, volunteer activities, outreach experiences, mentoring engagements, and any involvement indicating your interest in science policy and science communication.
- **No Photographs:** Please refrain from including a photograph of yourself in your CV/Resume. We focus solely on your qualifications and experiences.
- **Formatting Clarity:** Format your CV/Resume to ensure it's easy to read and follow. Employ clear headings, concise bullet points, and an organized structure for optimal readability.
- **Review Criteria Alignment:** Thoroughly review our complete review criteria to ensure your CV/Resume addresses as many relevant criteria as possible. Aligning with these criteria will strengthen your application's suitability.
- **Concise and Comprehensive:** Present information succinctly while ensuring all relevant details are included. Balance is key to conveying your qualifications effectively.
- **Language Precision:** Employ precise and clear language. Avoid jargon that might be unfamiliar to individuals outside your field.
- **Chronological Consistency:** Maintain chronological consistency, ensuring that timelines and dates are accurate and clearly presented.
- **Proofreading Excellence:** Before submission, meticulously proofread your CV/Resume for grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors. Attention to detail is essential. Consider seeking feedback from mentors or peers to refine your resume/CV and to ensure it is free from errors.

## 2026 Science Policy Fellowship: Personal Essay

### I. RELEVANCE:

**The mission of the Gulf Research Program is to “develop, translate, and apply science to enhance the safety of offshore energy, the environment, and the wellbeing of the people of the Gulf region for generations to come. It supports innovative science, guides data design and monitoring, and builds and sustains networks to generate long-term benefits for the Gulf region and the nation.”**

**Using language a non-scientist will understand, explain how your past work or graduate research is relevant to the mission of the Gulf Research Program. (500 word-limit)**

#### Guidance:

Use this section to illustrate how your background aligns with Gulf Research Program’s mission and vision. Include:

- **Past Research/Experience Relevance:** Highlight how your prior research or experience directly relates to one or more of GRP’s priority areas. Emphasize the skills and insights you can bring to address challenges in these fields.
- **Connection to the Region:** If you have a connection to the Gulf region, explain how it shapes your interest and understanding of its unique challenges. If not, demonstrate your knowledge and eagerness to learn more about the region and its issues.
- **Passion for Relevant Issues:** Communicate your passion for issues central to the Gulf region. Describe what drives you to contribute to the region's welfare, even if your connection is not direct.

### II. SELF-REFLECTION, GROWTH POTENTIAL, AND RESILIENCE:

**1. Describe a time outside a research or classroom setting when you helped to ensure a project or team accomplished its goals or achieved a successful outcome. (500 word-limit)**

#### Guidance:

Use this opportunity to exemplify skills with a past accomplishment outside of academia. Present an example or scenario showing:

- **Collaboration and Teamwork:** Highlight your ability to contribute effectively within a team context.
- **Initiative and Leadership:** include how you exhibited leadership traits by taking proactive steps. Explain how your actions influenced positive outcomes for the project or team.
- **Goal Attainment:** Illustrate your commitment to achieving goals and where your persistence led to successful results. Detail how you ensured objectives were met.
- **Navigating Challenges:** If relevant, detail an instance where you encountered and overcame challenges. Describe your problem-solving strategies and how they contributed to success.

- **Self-reflection and Learning from Past Experiences:** As you present your example, in addition to showcasing your strengths, also demonstrate your capacity for self-reflection and learning from both successes and failures and how they may have shaped your skills and character.

**2. How have your lived experiences, educational journey, and/or understanding of the world shaped your identity as a scientist? If applicable, we invite you to share your lived experiences of overcoming barriers related to your identity, along with the strategies you employed to overcome these challenges. (500 word-limit)**

#### Guidance:

This question invites you to reflect on how your lived experiences, educational journey, and understanding of the world have shaped your identity and perspective as a scientist. You may wish to describe formative experiences or influences that have guided your scientific approach, values, and career path.

If applicable, you are encouraged to discuss challenges or barriers related to your identity and how you have navigated them. The selection committee is interested in understanding the strategies you employed to overcome these obstacles, as well as how these experiences have contributed to your resilience, growth, and broader perspective as a scientist.

## II. PROFESSIONAL GOALS:

**Describe your professional goals and how this fellowship will help you achieve them.**

#### Guidance:

In this section, we invite you to articulate your career and professional objectives, while emphasizing how the fellowship aligns with and bolsters your ambitions. In your response, incorporate the various dimensions of the fellowship program that will act as catalysts toward your goals and highlight the skills and experiences you intend to acquire to propel you forward. By aligning your goals with what the fellowship is offering, you create a strong case for how this opportunity is an essential steppingstone in your journey.

## 2026 Science Policy Fellowship: Recommendation Requests

**Task Instructions: We encourage you to choose recommenders who know you well and can provide reviewers with insights about your experience, skills, and abilities beyond what can be gleaned from your resume/CV.**

**You will not be able to submit your application until all letters of recommendation have been uploaded. Please encourage your recommender to upload their letter well in advance of the**

**application deadline. Once both letters have been submitted, you must manually mark each task as complete.**

### Guidance:

When selecting recommenders, consider individuals who can offer a well-rounded perspective on your qualifications and character. This might include research advisors, supervisors, mentors, or collaborators who can speak to your professional growth, integrity, and potential for future impact.

To ensure strong and timely recommendations:

- Communicate early. Notify your recommenders as soon as possible and confirm their availability.
- Provide context. Share information about the fellowship's goals, your application materials, and the qualities you hope they will highlight.

Strong, personalized letters can greatly strengthen your application by providing insights that complement your written materials and help reviewers understand your readiness for the fellowship.

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## Review Criteria – Award Year 2026

In addition to the Application Questions Guidance Document, the fellowship program has established review criteria to assess each applicant's qualifications and overall fit for the fellowship. Applicants are encouraged to review these criteria carefully and use them as a framework to ensure their responses address the key standards and expectations outlined throughout the application.

While the review criteria correspond to specific sections of the application, reviewers will evaluate each submission holistically, considering the overall strength, coherence, and alignment of the applicant's experiences, goals, and potential with the fellowship's objectives.

### ***Relevance to the Gulf Research Program (30%)***

- The applicant's personal essays (through their past research and experiences) demonstrate clear relevance to the mission and vision of the Gulf Research Program.
- Applicant's personal essays demonstrate clear relevance and/or connection to the Gulf region.

### ***Technical Merit (15%)***

- Applicant demonstrates strong research skills and critical thinking through past education and employment.

- The quality, range, and quantity of publications is appropriate for the applicant's discipline and career stage.

### ***Community Impact (10%)***

- Applicant demonstrates evidence of collaborative work, an ability to lead or influence peers and superiors, and strong conflict resolution, mentoring, and coaching skills.
- Applicant serves on university committees or participates in community work, accepts opportunities to mentor and support students/peers, is involved in campus and/or community life and activities, and has a record of community engagement around social and civic issues.
- Applicant connects relevant experience and scientific knowledge, including experiences outside of the formal classroom (e.g., life experiences and academic experiences such as internships and travel abroad).

### ***Self-reflection, Growth Potential, and Resilience (20%)***

- Applicant demonstrates a sense of self as a learner and problem-solver, building on prior experiences to respond to new and challenging contexts.
- Applicant demonstrates evidence of pursuing or generating opportunities to expand knowledge, skills, and abilities; self-reflection over past successes and failures; and awareness of their own strengths and weaknesses.
- Applicant is prepared to learn from the fellowship and is likely to respond to challenges in an adaptive and flexible way.

### ***Professional Goals & Expectations for the Fellowship Opportunity (10%)***

- Applicant's goals and expectations for the fellowship are feasible, realistic, and achievable; applicant clearly describes their career goals and how the fellowship will support their future.

### ***Communication Skills (15%)***

- Applicant communicates complex ideas well in written formats, application materials are well-organized and cogent, and writing is free of grammatical and syntax errors.
- Application materials convey an understanding of context, audience, and purpose; materials are responsive to the questions asked.