

# Call for Applications

## Just Tech Fellowship

### OVERVIEW

The Social Science Research Council seeks applicants for the third cohort of its Just Tech Fellowship. This fellowship supports and mobilizes diverse and cross-sector cohorts of practitioners to imagine and create more just, equitable, and representative technological futures. Fellows have committed to identifying and challenging injustices emerging from new technologies and pursuing solutions that advance social, political, and economic rights.

Fellows receive two-year awards of \$100,000 annually, robust supplementary funding to subsidize additional expenses, and seed funding to collaborate with other Just Tech Fellows. The fellowship believes that this model of *whole-person support* provides the space and time necessary for deep reflection, an engaged community, and opportunities for ambitious co-creation.

To complete the online application, you must provide the following information and documentation:

- **Résumé/CV:** Up to two pages.
- **Personal Statement:** Applicants should submit a written or recorded (video) personal statement of up to 500 words (written) OR four (4) minutes (video).
- **Work Proposal:** Applicants should submit a proposal for a project focused on the intersection of technology and social justice. The work proposal can be submitted as a written document (max 1,500 words) or project deck. Applicants with artistic or design backgrounds are encouraged to submit a creative slide deck representing their proposed project.

**The application portal will open on November 17, 2023.** Completed applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. The last day to submit Application Materials is **January 31, 2024, at 11:59 p.m. EST.**

## FELLOWSHIP DESCRIPTION

We find ourselves at a critical juncture where technology rapidly alters the fabric of what we once knew. History has shown us that policymakers and Big Tech titans should not be the only forces guiding our trajectory in these times of change. Investigations into technology's uneven political and social impacts must be better understood by the general public and included in policy decisions.

The Just Tech Fellowship recognizes that our communities are home to brilliant artists, activists, technologists, and thinkers who have laid fertile soil for equitable change. They need an ecosystem of care to continue their work. As the world reckons with a global legacy of systemic discrimination, we can reimagine the limits and potential of new technology and ensure that expertise and experiential knowledge inform efforts to produce structural change. The Just Tech Fellowship and its fellows seek to build technological futures that celebrate and manifest justice, equity, agency, knowledge, and joy.

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### Who are the Just Tech Fellows?

**Just Tech Fellows** are practitioners who systematically collect and uncover evidence to answer critical questions about public interest technology and implement programming and other activations to strengthen or educate communities impacted by these technologies.

**Just Tech Fellows** come from diverse backgrounds and work across various fields and practices, including the arts, journalism, community organizing, the social sciences, the humanities, and computer science.

For a sense of who was awarded the fellowship in the past, visit the Just Tech platform for the list of [2022](#) and [2023](#) Just Tech Fellows.

The Just Tech Fellowship experience will be collaborative, seeking active participation points as it evolves. Through regular convenings and workshops, as well as purposeful engagement with external stakeholders and peer organizations, the fellowship will establish lasting personal and professional connections and offer practical support and learning opportunities to match the needs and suggestions of the fellows' community.

The Just Tech program will administer two-year awards of \$100,000 annually, augmented by robust supplementary funding packages to subsidize expenses related to dependent care, healthcare, workspace, technical equipment, project materials, communications, or other needs. These innovative awards are designed to support a researcher's work, invest in their entire person, and build a supportive and collaborative community. Fellows may apply for additional funding to seed collaborative projects within or across Just Tech cohorts.

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## The Just Tech Fellowship has several related goals

- **Champion** vital investigation into tech's impact and its potential for both harm and benefit
- **Center** historically marginalized perspectives
- **Build and sustain** a diverse community of researchers and practitioners
- **Reimagine** how to invest in people to build and sustain communities of care and collaboration
- **Envision and build** toward technological futures that celebrate and manifest justice, agency, knowledge, and joy

## APPLICATION AND SELECTION TIMELINE

- Application Portal Opens – November 17, 2023
- Applications Portal Closes – January 31, 2024
- Announcement of Selected Fellows – May 2024
- Fellowship Begins – August 2023

## ELIGIBILITY

**Positionality:** This fellowship seeks to center the perspectives of individuals from social, racial, or ethnic groups that have been historically marginalized, oppressed, or excluded by emerging technologies, such as Black/African Americans, Latinx/Hispanics, Indigenous peoples, or Alaska Native groups, AAPI individuals, religious minorities, gender nonconforming individuals, LGBTQIA+ individuals, and people with disabilities.

**Residency:** Citizens of any country may apply, but fellows will be expected to reside in the United States during their fellowship term. The SSRC will not sponsor visas and may not be indicated as an affiliate or sponsor of visa applications. Please refer to the [US State Department](#) to learn more about visa requirements.

**Education:** There are no formal education requirements. Applicants may hold academic credentials, such as a degree in the arts, fine arts, or sciences, OR a demonstrated track record of success in their respective fields.

**Commitment:** Full-time must be dedicated to the fellowship (36 hours/week). Candidates with teaching or other permanent positions must be able to take leave or obtain course buyouts for at least one year during their time as a fellow.

**Experience:** Candidates are encouraged to have a track record and experience working on the intersection of digital and novel technologies, power, and social justice. We also invite early career applicants and those who successfully demonstrate a strong potential to contribute to a desired field of research and practice.

## SELECTION CRITERIA

Fellows will be selected based on a rigorous review process. We will evaluate applications according to the following criteria:

**Alignment with Fellowship Goals:** Applicants must champion vital research into tech's impact and its potential for both harm and benefit; must center historically minoritized or racialized perspectives; must show commitment to building and sustaining a diverse community of researchers and practitioners; and must demonstrate a commitment to vision and build toward technological futures that manifest justice, agency, knowledge, joy, care, and interdependence.

**Scope of Work:** The project must address the relationship between digital and novel technologies, power, and social justice. While you may apply to the fellowship under this particular project, we also recognize that your modality of achieving the end goal may change, and we accept whatever emerges. Understand that the timeline of your project does not need to fit within two years, but make sure to articulate what aspects of the project are achievable within this timeline.

**Clarity of Purpose:** Applicants should communicate how they would use their time as a fellow to systematically uncover evidence, build understanding, and shape public interest solutions to advance the goals of Just Tech.

**Public Impact:** Applicants should communicate how their proposed work will contribute to equity and social justice. Applicants should also demonstrate a track record of successful, public-facing work that engages broad audiences through different forms of media or organizing.

**Collaboration:** Applicants should demonstrate a track record of successful collaboration, as well as a willingness to share, learn, and create with others.

## TO APPLY

The application portal will open on November 17, 2023. Please look out for an announcement. Complete applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. The last day to submit Full Application Materials is January 31, 2024, at 11:59 p.m. EST. Check the [fellowship home page](#) and [FAQ page](#) for more details. For further questions, contact us at [just-tech@ssrc.org](mailto:just-tech@ssrc.org).

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