

ASPPH | USDA

Rural Health Fellowship

PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT

2025



ASPPH APPLIED LEARNING AND TRAINING PROGRAMS



CENTER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH
**WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT**
— ASPPH

2025 Fellowship Opportunity ASPPH/USDA Rural Health Fellowship Program

Program Announcement

The Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health (ASPPH) aims to strengthen the capacity of members by advancing leadership, excellence, and collaboration for academic public health. Our members are Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH)-accredited schools and programs of public health as well as schools and programs in applicant status for CEPH-accreditation.

ASPPH has partnered with United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development to offer an innovative training opportunity for early-career public health professionals. By participating in the **ASPPH/USDA Rural Health Fellowship Program**, the selected fellow will have the opportunity to contribute to USDA programs related to rural health, lead the development of tools to better understand and access USDA programs that can be used by federal and non-federal partners, prepare and implement rural health initiatives or strategies with USDA programs and federal and non-federal partners, and build and maintain relationships across USDA and between USDA and partners.

Eligibility

Eligible applicants must have received their Master's or Doctorate degree prior to the beginning of the fellowship (no later than June 2025) or within the last five years (no earlier than May 2020). Graduate degrees must come from CEPH-accredited schools and programs of public health that are ASPPH members. (For a list of ASPPH members, see the **ASPPH website**.) All applicants must be U.S. citizens or hold a visa permitting permanent residence ("Green Card") in the U.S. to be eligible for the fellowship program.

Period of Performance

The fellowship position is a full-time opportunity for a period of **one year**, June 16, 2025 – June 15, 2026, with the possibility to extend for one additional year.

Location

The fellowship is based at the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development in Washington, DC. However, the fellow may be remotely located within the U.S.

Funds Available

The training stipend for the fellowship position is **\$60,500 per year**. The fellowship training stipend is intended to cover all personal living expenses.

In addition to the fellowship training stipend, fellows will receive a **\$10,000 general expense allowance** to offset the cost of health insurance premium expenses and fellowship-related travel/training expenses incurred during the fellowship period.

Application Procedure

Applications are submitted through the ASPPH Fellowship Online Application System at <https://fellowships-internships.aspph.org>. The materials needed to complete an application are detailed on the application form. Incomplete applications are not accepted. Please see Page 3 for detailed application instructions.

Applications must be **submitted electronically** no later than **11:59 PM Eastern Time** on:

Thursday, January 9, 2025

Evaluation Criteria (updated)

The following criteria will be used to assess the applicant's ability to participate in the fellowship program.

<u>Evaluation Criteria</u>	<u>Maximum Points</u>
Quality of Essays*	50
Strength of Credentials	20
Previous Experience	10
Recommendations	20

**Special consideration will be given to candidates with exposure to a broad array of life experiences and viewpoints, and who can bring diverse perspectives and experiences to the fellowship project training area and public health in general. Applicants should highlight these attributes in their essays.*

Review & Final Selection


In January, an Objective Review Committee will complete the review of the applications based on the criteria described above. Candidates receiving a high score in Objective Review will advance to Technical Review at USDA. Early February through early March, applicants may be contacted by USDA staff and/or ASPPH staff for a telephone interview, additional information, and/or clarification of information relevant to the application. All final selections will be made by late March. Those applicants chosen will be immediately notified by phone and email. All other applicants will be notified by email.

Application Instructions

The **ASPPH Fellowship Online Application System** is a centralized application service offering a secure, easy, and convenient way for students/graduates of ASPPH member schools and programs of public health to apply to all ASPPH Fellowships and Internships. The online application is also accessible through the ASPPH website at www.aspph.org.

<https://fellowships-internships.aspph.org/>

To begin your online application, please click the "Sign Up" button below the Login button to create a password-protected account. Signing up is free and easy. If you already have an account, you can log in on this page as well.

After submission, applicants may edit applications by clicking on the pencil icon () in the “My Status” section at any time prior to the application deadline. The application may be edited as necessary at any time before the application deadline. **If you edit your application, you must resubmit it before the deadline, or it will not be reviewed.** Applications are reviewed only after the online application deadline has passed. Incomplete applications and those not submitted by the deadline will not be accepted.

- ❑ Faculty Advisor name, phone number, and email address if you have not yet graduated
 - ❖ *If you have not yet graduated, in Part 3 of the application, you will have the opportunity to generate an email to your Faculty Advisor at the same time as for your References. Verification of graduation date from your Faculty Advisor must be received by the application deadline.*

- ❑ Resume/CV (PDF only)

- ❑ Name, phone number, and email address of two references who will write your letters of recommendation
 - ❖ *Suggested references are individuals with whom the applicant has built a substantial relationship in the following areas: Academic, Public Health Practice, Volunteer or Community Service, or another professional that can effectively address the applicant’s skills, qualities, and personal attributes.*
 - ❖ *In part 3 of the application, you can generate emails to your Faculty Advisor (if you have not yet graduated) and your References before submitting your application. If you do not click “Send Now” in the application, the emails will go out when you submit your application. The deadline for your Faculty Advisor and References to submit their pieces is the same as the application deadline below. Therefore, we recommend utilizing the “Send Now” feature to generate the emails before submitting your application so that they have time to complete your recommendations before the deadline.*
 - ❖ *Letters of recommendation must be on the sender’s official letterhead with an original signature and include the reference’s name, degree(s), title, institution, and contact information.*

- ❑ You will have two essay prompts:
 - ❖ *Explain the ways in which your personal and professional interests, strengths, and qualifications match the fellowship assignment you are applying for, and how it will benefit your long-term career plans in the field of public/rural health. Special consideration will be given to candidates with exposure to a broad array of life experiences and viewpoints, and who can bring diverse perspectives and understandings to the fellowship project in particular and public health in general. Applicants should highlight these attributes in their essay.*
 - *Note: Max. 1,000 words for this essay; PDF format.*
 - ❖ *USDA’s Rural Health Priorities are described on their website: Addressing Climate Change and Environmental Justice; Advancing Racial Justice, Place-Based Equity, and Opportunity; and Creating More and Better Market Opportunities. Please review these priorities and describe what these values mean to you personally and/or professionally and your perspective on the priorities with respect to public health.*
 - *Note: Max. 850 words for this essay; PDF format.*

- ❑ Unofficial graduate transcripts (ASPPH Member School or Program of Public Health only; PDF only)
 - ❖ *If you are offered and accept a fellowship position, you will be required to provide an official graduate transcript.*

Applications must be submitted electronically through the [Online Application System](#),
by **11:59 PM Eastern Time on Thursday, January 9, 2025**.
Incomplete applications will not be accepted.

All questions regarding the application process should be sent to TrainingPrograms@aspph.org

Fellowship Project Description for 2025

Title of Fellowship:

ASPPH/USDA Rural Health Fellowship

Location:

The fellowship is based at the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development Office in Washington, DC; remote candidates will be considered.

Project Period:

June 2025 – June 2026, with possibility to extend

Purpose and Mission of the Sponsoring Agency:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is uniquely charged with providing effective, innovative, science-based public policy leadership in agriculture, food and nutrition, natural resource protection and management, rural development, and related issues. USDA is composed of 8 mission areas that focus in on these responsibilities. Rural Development (RD) is one of those mission areas charged with improving the economy and quality of life in rural America through support for economic development and essential services. The 2018 Farm Bill created the USDA Rural Health Liaison role (located in RD) to increase collaboration in support of rural health across USDA, between USDA and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and between USDA and other partners and customers.

Project description:

USDA is seeking a public health fellow to train with the Rural Health Liaison. The Rural Health Liaison works across USDA and between USDA and outside partners, especially HHS, to align rural health efforts and identify opportunities for connecting partners or leveraging resources to measure and improve rural health outcomes. The fellow will contribute to the Rural Health Liaison's efforts to maintain and adapt an inventory of USDA programs related to rural health, lead the development of tools to better understand and access USDA programs that can be used by federal and non-federal partners, prepare and implement rural health initiatives or strategies with USDA programs and federal and non-federal partners, and build and maintain relationships across USDA and between USDA and partners. For example, USDA has led multiple agencies in convening parties interested in Farm Stress, such as the department-wide USDA Mental Health and Farm Stress Workgroup, to discuss tools, experiences, current initiatives, and identify areas to leverage for additional opportunities. Many factors affect rural health, including healthcare quality and access, along with the Social Determinants of Health that include economic stability, education, social and community support, and neighborhood and built environment. The

fellowship project will address a need in rural communities for information, technical assistance and resources related to rural health and the needed community level supports to achieve those outcomes.

Expected Benefits:

This fellowship will provide the opportunity for the participant to gain practical public health experience with a focus on impacting rural areas at the federal level. Specifically, the participant will gain experience in project management, understanding the breadth of USDA programs and research products that can inform decision-making related to rural health, and relationship-building and management skills working with a wide range of partners to engage and join in outreach, initiatives, or projects. The participant will have the opportunity to work with data analytics, regulation and policy interpretation and management, customer experience, and strategic engagement in support of rural health.

Qualifications of Desired Applicant:

- Recent graduate (within 5 years) of an ASPPH-member institution masters' or doctoral program
- Ability to effectively multi-task and prioritize.
- Ability to work on projects independently and as a team player.
- Ability to identify, analyze, and propose resolutions for problems or issues.
- Strong analytical and technical writing skills.
- Effective oral and written communication skills, with an eye to tailoring writing and communication to the audience.
- Customer service orientation and interpersonal skills to work collaboratively as a member of multi-disciplinary and inter-agency teams.
- Experience or strong interest in working with rural communities and partners
- Proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint
- Certified in Public Health (CPH) Preferred



IMPORTANT NOTES:

The preceding statements for potential projects are intended to describe general activities associated with each fellowship project. They are not intended to be an exhaustive list of all activities, skills, or efforts associated with each fellowship.

ASPPH is committed to our core values of diversity, equity, and inclusion and actively works to integrate these core values into all elements of our work. ASPPH is an equal opportunity employer and highly encourages candidates from all backgrounds to apply, including people of color, ethnic minorities, new Americans (immigrants and refugees), LGBTQ+ individuals, people with alternate abilities, indigenous individuals, and veterans. ASPPH complies with all federal, state, and local laws providing equal employment opportunities, and all other employment laws and regulations. ASPPH maintains a work environment that is free of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation because of age, race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy, or any other protected characteristic as outlined by federal, state, or local laws.