

European Fund for the Balkans

Bringing the Western Balkans closer to the European Union

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

Fellowship Programme for Young Government Officials from the Western Balkans - **Supporting Excellence and Leadership in Governance**

April 2014 – July 2014

We are looking for the decision-makers of tomorrow who want to shape regional and European collaboration using their energy and enthusiasm

Applications will be accepted from **July 20 – September 20, 2013**

➤ PURPOSE

The Programme aims to contribute to the development of effective and efficient state administrations in the region by offering a tailor-made fellowship and training programme for highly qualified young professionals from the central government (including entity and cantonal level government in Bosnia Herzegovina and regional level government of Vojvodina in Serbia) of the countries of the Western Balkans.

➤ AWARD

Up to 20 scholarships are made available for civil servants from the Western Balkans to spend **a three-month fellowship in government institutions in Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain.**

By participating in the Programme, the Fellows have the opportunity to:

- ❖ get professional experience in EU countries' federal or state government agencies,
- ❖ gain peer-to-peer exchange of experience,
- ❖ receive training on EU (and other international) issues,
- ❖ receive training on their respective field of expertise,
- ❖ acquire leadership and management skills at seminars,
- ❖ have an opportunity to get closely acquainted with their colleagues from the region as well as the EU, and thus
- ❖ create links between administrations through individual networks,
- ❖ serve as ambassadors of their respective countries,
- ❖ learn a foreign language and
- ❖ participate in the alumni network.

➤ WHO ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

Civil Servants of ministries in the Western Balkan countries can apply.

The Programme is specifically designed for civil servants¹ from the central government (including entity and cantonal level government in Bosnia Herzegovina and regional level government of Vojvodina in Serbia) who have several years of professional experience in public administration and have already assumed initial managerial responsibilities or are preparing for a position of leadership. Basic knowledge of the workings of the European Union is required and personal enthusiasm for the European idea is essential.

➤ PREREQUISITES FOR APPLICATION

- ❖ national of one of the Western Balkan countries,
- ❖ maximum age of 40,
- ❖ at least 3 (ideally 5) years of professional experience upon completing studies,
- ❖ at least 2 years as a civil servant for state authority,
- ❖ initial managerial experience or prospects of assuming leadership responsibilities,
- ❖ excellent academic qualifications,
- ❖ very good knowledge of English,
- ❖ ideally basic knowledge of the language of the host country,
- ❖ sound knowledge of national and international politics and economics,
- ❖ strong interest in the political development of Europe,
- ❖ negotiating skills,
- ❖ team-work skills,
- ❖ initiative and definite readiness to perform,
- ❖ excellent writing skills,
- ❖ ability and readiness to acquaint oneself with various different topics in a short period of time,
- ❖ ability and readiness to complete inter-disciplinary work in inter-departmental working groups,
- ❖ ability and readiness to organise one's own life arrangements in a new environment.

¹ Applications from candidates in political positions will NOT be accepted

➤ HOW TO APPLY

The application process for the Fellowship Programme consists of three phases:

- Online application
- Submitting additional documents via E-mail (upon request)
- Interview

Applications will be made **exclusively** through the **online application form** and **must be submitted before September 20, 2013 CET**.

Please refer to the Guidelines for Applicants for more details regarding the application procedure.

SELECTION PROCEDURE

After the deadline, the applications will be evaluated by the European Fund for the Balkans. The **pre-selection** will be conducted on the basis of the online application and short-listed candidates will be notified of the results **by e-mail at the end of September/beginning of October 2013, with an invitation for an interview**. The candidates will need to **confirm their attendance at the interview within a week of receiving the notice**.

The **final selection** will take into account the candidates' application, and the results of the interview. It will be conducted by an independent Selection Committee composed of the European Fund for the Balkans and external experts. The interviews will be carried out **in October 2013 in Belgrade and Skopje**.

➤ FINANCE AND BENEFITS

The costs for participation in the Programme will be covered by the European Fund for the Balkans. Throughout the Fellowship Programme, fellows will receive a monthly stipend, in addition to a relocation fee. The costs for language training are reimbursed up to a fixed amount. Travel, accommodation, visa fees and health insurance (if necessary) and any other essential maintenance costs relating to seminars and other compulsory events are also covered. The EFB supports the fellows with organisational issues.

➤ PROGRAMME SCHEDULE

Intensive language training:	January – End of March 2014 (two - three months maximum within this period)
Introduction seminar:	April 2014, 10 days
Working phase I:	April – Mid May 2014
Intermediary seminar:	Mid May 2014, 3 days
Working phase II:	May – June 2014
Final Seminar:	Beginning of July 2014, 5 days

➤ PRACTICAL INFO

Interested candidates can apply **from July 20 – September 20 2013**. Deadline for application is **September 20**. Applications received after this date will not be accepted.

Only applications received **online** can be accepted. Candidates will have to submit a **letter of approval from their supervisors for leave of absence for the whole duration of the Programme (April 2014 – beginning of July 2014)**. Candidates will also have to indicate **two references** who are willing to be contacted by e-mail. In addition, candidates will have to submit a **'motivation letter'** including detailed written presentation of the motive for applying for the fellowship programme as well as medium and long-term professional goals and expectations about the stay in the host institution. **Please refer to the Guidelines for Applicants for more details regarding the application procedure.**

The candidates may be required to submit copy of their university and professional certificates.

The successful candidates will need to confirm their participation within a week of receiving notification of their selection.

Participants **are expected to be available** during **the overall period of the Programme (April 2014 – beginning of July 2014)** and to attend each planned activity (the ten-days introductory seminar, on-the-job training in a host institution, the three-day visiting programme in Brussels and the five-day final seminar). **All of the activities of the Programme require a full-time presence.**

➤ PROGRAMME

The official Programme starts in April 2014 with an introductory seminar. Fellows will take an intensive language course in their home country, prior to the departure for the introductory seminar - **January to the end of March 2014 (2 - 3 months maximum within this period)**

Ten days Introductory Seminar, April 2014

The ten-day Introductory Seminar in Berlin and Potsdam in cooperation with the University of Potsdam and the Potsdam Center for Policy and Management will offer participants an insight into current social, political, economic and security challenges in the EU and in different host countries through presentations and meetings with senior decision makers. The fellows will have the chance to discuss their plans for their fellowship, receive individual advice, present their professional and personal goals and prepare themselves for the fellowship programme. The Introductory Seminar will serve as a platform for discussion of current political and social challenges and for exchange of ideas.

Fellowship in host institution: Working phase I (mid April - mid May 2014) and Working phase II (mid May – end of June 2014)

Following the Introductory Seminar, between April 2014 and June 2014, each fellow will be placed in a government institution in **Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain.**

During their stay in a host institution, fellows will gain peer-to-peer exchange of experience, and will familiarise themselves with administrative structures and forms of policy making in a host institution. The quality and intensity of the cooperation with the authorities of a host institution is crucial for the success of the fellowship.

The choice of a government institution is made on a case by case basis taking into consideration the preferences outlined in the application form, the profile of the fellow, professional interests, language skills, and the strategic interest of the employer. **The final decision about the choice of a host institution is made after the participant has been accepted to the programme.** Each fellow is requested to provide alternatives to the preferred host institution for the case of not-acceptance by the first choice.

Three day Intermediary Seminar, Brussels, mid May 2014

Half way through the fellowship, participants will meet with high-ranking officials of NATO and European Union institutions and learn about the current developments in the EU,

familiarise themselves with the political culture of the EU and link their work in their home country with the one in the host institution. The seminar also offers an opportunity to monitor individual goals, plan steps for development over the coming months and exchange experience of the host institution with fellow participants.

Five day Final Seminar, beginning of July 2014

At the end of the Programme, the European Fund for the Balkans will invite the fellows to a final review meeting presenting the results of their work and evaluating the fellowship programme. The final seminar will also include trainings in rhetoric, strategic decision-making as well as in leadership and managerial skills.

Contact

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The European Fund for the Balkans is a joint initiative of European foundations designed to undertake and support initiatives aimed at **bringing the Western Balkans closer to the European Union** through grant-giving and operational programmes and, as such, is focused on individuals and organisations from Western Balkan countries.

As a direct follow-up to the International Commission on the Balkans (2004-2006), the Fund embodies the *"member-state building strategy"* with the *development of functioning state administrations* and *constituency-building* as its main priorities.

The European Fund for the Balkans has been initiated by four European Foundations including the Robert Bosch Stiftung, the King Baudouin Foundation, the Compagnia di San Paolo and the ERSTE Foundation. It is hosted by NEF.
