

**Commonwealth of Virginia Engineering and Science (COVES) Policy Fellowship**  
*Hosted by the Virginia Academy of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine*

**Summer 2025 COVES Fellowship Application**  
**George Mason University**  
**GMU application deadline: December 2, 2024**

**Applicant Information:**

Applicant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Applicant Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

GMU College or School: \_\_\_\_\_

Department or Field of Study: \_\_\_\_\_

Program (eg. MS, PhD, postdoc): \_\_\_\_\_

Year in Program and expected date of completion: \_\_\_\_\_

**Overview:** The [Commonwealth of Virginia Engineering and Science \(COVES\) Policy Fellowship](#) is a 12-week summer fellowship program of the Virginia Academy of Science, Engineering and Medicine (VASEM). Its goal is to strengthen ties between the scientific community and state government in the Commonwealth of Virginia, while encouraging and equipping early-career scientists and engineers to consider careers in public service.

Current George Mason University graduate students and postdoctoral fellows in the sciences and engineering are eligible for the COVES Fellowship program after completing at least one year of STEM-H graduate studies or postdoctoral appointment at Mason; practical STEM-H work experience is also considered an asset in the selection and placement process. If selected, fellows serve as science advisors in legislative offices, executive agencies, or prominent companies and nonprofits in the Commonwealth of Virginia to gain experience creating and translating state policies related to science and engineering.

**Commitment:** The COVES Fellowship is a full-time commitment. Fellows are required to set aside other professional activities for the duration, including their Mason academic responsibilities. The fellowship begins with the required, in-person orientation in Richmond VA from May 21 to 23. Fellowships are in-person (not virtual) assignments with host institutions and run from May 27 to August 15, 2025, with a fellowship convocation on August 29.

George Mason University provides its fellows with an allowance of \$15,500: \$13,500 is allocated for all living and associated program expenses; and \$2,000 is allocated for fellowship travel and professional development at the fellow's discretion.

The GMU application deadline for the 2025 competition is December 2, 2024. Fellows are announced by VASEM on January 15, 2025, and interviews are conducted with host offices from mid-March to early April, 2025. Fellowships cannot be deferred to a subsequent year.

**Instructions for Fellowship Application Submission and Reporting:** The following documents are required to accompany the COVES Fellowship application. They will be used both in COVES Fellowship selection and (*with the exception of the academic transcript*

*required*) in Fellowship placement. Applicants should bear this in mind in preparing their submissions. All application documents – except for the academic transcript -- should be consolidated into a single pdf file for a single electronic attachment submission; the academic transcript should be submitted at the same time, but as a separate document. Submissions should be emailed to Dr. Megan Bruening [mbruenin@gmu.edu](mailto:mbruenin@gmu.edu) by December 2, 2024, marked in the email subject line as: **COVES 2025 Fellowship Application – (your name)**.

- 1) **Résumé:** One page maximum.
- 2) **References:** Contact information (name, affiliation, position, email and phone number) for two professional references. These can be from academia, industry, or other professional experiences and may include current or past professional references.
- 3) **Advisor and Budgeting Authority Letter of Support:** This confirmation of support (p3 of this application) must be signed by the applicant’s faculty advisor and confirmation of COVES Fellowship matching support by the applicant’s GMU college budgeting authority.
- 4) **Personal Statement:** Statement of one page or less to address the following points:
  - Applicant’s areas of interest in state-level science, engineering policy and why.
  - How the COVES Fellowship will contribute to the applicant’s career goals.
  - Essential skills and experiences the applicant would bring to COVES.
  - Any additional relevant remarks.
- 5) **Science Policy in Virginia:** In one page or less, the applicant’s summary of one of their science and engineering policy interest areas, including the implications for the Commonwealth of Virginia. This should be written for a non-technical audience, such as an informed citizen or policy maker.
- 6) **Diversity Statement:** In 250 words or less, a statement of how the applicant’s identity or background influences their interest in science policy.
- 7) **Additional statements from the applicant:**
  - A statement that, if selected, the applicant commits to full-time participation in the COVES Fellowship from May 27 to August 15; the orientation on May 21 through 23; and the fellowship convocation on August 29.
  - A statement that, if selected, the applicant agrees to submit a report (not exceeding two pages) on the COVES Fellowship experience by September 30, 2025 to Dr. Megan Bruening [mbruenin@gmu.edu](mailto:mbruenin@gmu.edu).
  - A statement that the applicant is a U.S. citizen or otherwise confirms that they possess a status in the U.S. that permits them to undertake the COVES Fellowship. Non-U.S. citizens are referred to GMU’s [Office of International Programs and Services](#) for clarification of eligibility.
  - Optional self-identification by applicants who are members of excluded communities, as defined by VASEM [here](#).
- 8) **Academic transcript** for current GMU program (either official or unofficial transcript).

**Advisor and Budgeting Authority Letter of Support for the  
Commonwealth of Virginia Engineering and Science (COVES) Policy 2025 Fellowship**  
*Hosted by the Virginia Academy of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine*

**Applicant's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

As the Applicant's advisor, I agree to the terms of the COVES Fellowship listed below.

Advisor's name and email: \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Confirmation of COVES Fellowship support (\$7,750/selected fellow) by the applicant's GMU college budgeting authority, if selected:

Budgeting authority's name and email: \_\_\_\_\_

Budgeting authority's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Fellowship Work Commitment:** [The Commonwealth of Virginia Engineering and Science \(COVES\) Policy Fellowship](#) is a 12-week fellowship program of the Virginia Academy of Science, Engineering and Medicine (VASEM). The COVES Fellowship is a full time, in-person commitment and Fellows should not have significant obligations to their academic lab or institution during their time in the Fellowship program (May 21 – August 15, 2025, including orientation on August 29).

**Financial Commitment of the Fellow's College/Department:** If selected, a \$15,500 stipend is provided to each Fellow to assist with living, travel, professional development and program expenses during the Fellowship period. The fellow's home department or college is required to commit \$7,750 toward the fellow's stipend and the remaining \$7,750 is contributed by GMU's Office of the Provost.

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**Program Summary:** The Commonwealth of Virginia Engineering and Science (COVES) Policy Fellowship is a 12-week fellowship program of the Virginia Academy of Science, Engineering and Medicine (VASEM). The goal of the COVES Fellowship program is to strengthen ties between the scientific community and state government in the Commonwealth of Virginia, while encouraging and equipping early career scientists and engineers to enter public service. Selected graduate student and postdoctoral Fellows from universities across Virginia will serve as science advisors in legislative offices, executive agencies, or prominent companies and nonprofits in the state of Virginia where they will gain experience in the creation and translation of state policies related to science and engineering. Fellows will be matched to host offices based on mutual interest, complementary backgrounds in science, engineering and/or healthcare, and placement availability. Prior to the Fellowship, Fellows will attend science communication training and orientation in Richmond, VA to introduce them to governance and policy-making in the Commonwealth. In addition, COVES Fellows will be paired with a mentor from VASEM and will participate in VASEM briefings, committee meetings, and the annual summit.

**The Virginia Academy of Science, Engineering & Medicine (VASEM):** VASEM is a resource for nonpartisan independent expertise to inform and assist with science and technology policy matters facing Virginia. VASEM is comprised of elected members of one of the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine and other key individuals who reside and work throughout Virginia.