

Rochester Urban Fellows: Frequently Asked Questions

Can international students serve as Urban Fellows?

Yes, but only a few. The Urban Fellows program greatly values the perspectives and experiences of our international student participants. The program is primarily funded by AmeriCorps VISTA, though, which limits involvement to US citizens and permanent residents. While we seek additional resources to open the opportunity to others, we have limited ability to do so.

Can I live off campus as an Urban Fellow?

Yes! While most Urban Fellows choose to take advantage of the free on-campus housing provided by the program, you are welcome to live off-campus if you prefer. Do note that this decision will not affect the value of your living allowance stipend.

Do I get to choose where I'll be working for the summer?

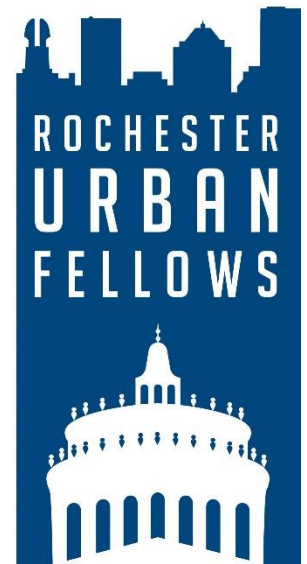
After a full cohort of Urban Fellows is selected, staff members will match Urban Fellows to community partner organizations based on several factors, including: students' interests, experience, and career goals; the needs of each community organization; and the nature of the proposed Urban Fellows projects.

What will my hours look like?

Your work hours will depend on the host site you're matched with and the needs of that particular organization. Many Urban Fellows work a typical 9-5 schedule M/T/R/F, but some do not. For example, an Urban Fellow serving at the Public Market will likely be expected to work on Saturdays. No Urban Fellow will work at their host site more than 30 hours per week, but exact working hours are determined in conversation with host site supervisors. Wednesdays are spent participating in urban issue seminars as a cohort, which brings the weekly commitment closer to 35-40 hours. Wednesday sessions run from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM. There are some required evening events.

Can I work a second job/take a class/do research while serving as an Urban Fellow?

We expect that all Urban Fellows will make their work at their host sites and all program activities their first priority. If you intend to work a second job/take a class/do research, you must clear it with your supervisor before beginning your term of service and your other commitment(s) must not interfere with your work at your host site or any other program-related activities.



What is an AmeriCorps VISTA Summer Associate?

The majority of program funding comes from the Corporation for National and Community Service, the federal agency that oversees AmeriCorps. Because of this, most Urban Fellows will serve as AmeriCorps VISTA Summer Associates. All this means, in practical terms, is that Urban Fellow benefits are consistent with AmeriCorps VISTA Summer Associates across the nation: modest living allowance, end-of-service education award OR cash stipend, professional development resources, and a network of AmeriCorps VISTA alumni. Regardless of whether an Urban Fellow serves as a Summer Associate or not, program expectations and benefits remain the same.

What does “modest living allowance” mean?

Urban Fellow living allowances are determined by the Corporation for National and Community Service and is varied according to the cost of living in the county Urban Fellows serve. In 2020, the Urban Fellow living allowance will be **\$2,395 (gross) paid biweekly**.

Program expectations include...

- Completing all assignments by provided deadlines (onboarding, pre-/post-surveys, Closing Ceremony bio, etc.)
- Serving 30 hours per week with your host organization and abiding by any expectations of that agency. This includes timeliness, dress, etc.
- Full participation in Urban Fellow sessions. This includes:
 - o Completing weekly readings prior to seminar
 - o Bringing weekly readings with you
 - o Participating in reflection conversations, seminar dialogues, and activities
- Participating in required weekend or evening events (Rochester City School District School Board meeting, Rochester City Council meeting, etc.)
- Volunteering 2+ times over the summer
- Completing weekly written reflections on time
- 10-minute presentation about your summer experience to your peers
- One final, comprehensive report
- Attendance at our Closing Ceremony