

Yale University

President's Public Service Fellowship

Proposal for Fellowship Placement Summer 2024

Organization information

<i>Name of organization</i>	Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services (IRIS)
<i>Full street address</i>	235 Nicoll St. New Haven, CT 06511
<i>Website or link to social media page</i>	https://irisct.org https://www.instagram.com/irisct https://www.facebook.com/irisct.org

PPSF Fellow's direct supervisor

<i>Name</i>	Imani Jean-Gilles
<i>Title</i>	Education Program Coordinator
<i>Cell phone number</i>	(860) 365-2724
<i>E-mail address</i>	IJeanGilles@irisct.org

What is the best way for prospective student applicants to contact you with questions about your proposal?

- Send an e-mail with questions

or

- Send an e-mail to set up a 15-meeting phone call to discuss

Placement dates (8-11 weeks between Tuesday, May 28, 2024 through Friday, August 9, 2024)

May 28, 2024--August 2nd, 2024

Are placement dates flexible? Are there any dates on which your Fellow must work?

The start date is flexible. However, the Fellow may start no later than June 3rd.

Proposed work schedule (*work week should equal (and not exceed) 37.5 hours per week*)

Before the Summer Learning Program begins on June 24th, the Fellow is expected to be available Monday through Friday, 9:00 am to 5:00 p.m. Historically, however, the Fellow has not been expected to work past 2:00 or 3:00 most days. Once the program begins, the Fellow will be expected to work from 8:00 to 2:00, Monday through Friday, with some days going until 3:00.

If a hybrid schedule is offered at your site, please describe:

Prior to the start of the Summer Learning Program on June 24th, the Fellow is permitted to do some of their work remotely. Starting on June 24th, however, they must be available to work in person.

Organization description

Since 1982, IRIS has helped refugees and immigrants establish new lives, regain hope, and contribute to the vitality of their communities. With a combination of wrap-around services and direct support, IRIS gives refugees and immigrants the tools they need to become economically self-sufficient, well-integrated members of society. In recent years, IRIS has also begun to assist non-refugee immigrants, including asylum seekers, humanitarian parolees, Special Immigrant Visa holders, DACA recipients, and undocumented immigrants. Since 2017, IRIS has welcomed clients from 64 different countries, with the majority coming from Afghanistan, Ukraine, Syria, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. All of IRIS' clients are low-or-middle-income.

Write a 1-2 sentence summary of the work that the Fellow would be conducting .

IRIS is seeking a Fellow to assist with our annual Summer Learning Program, a seven-week program of enrichment and academic support for recently-arrived K-12 refugee and immigrant students. The Fellow would help with recruitment and registration of students as well as with the planning and implementation of the program itself. The ideal candidate has excellent communication skills, is highly organized, and is passionate about education, equity, and immigration.

Write a more complete description of the specific project you propose and list the duties/outcomes expected of the Fellow.

IRIS' Summer Learning Program (SLP) equips refugee and immigrant children with the tools they need to thrive in the American education system. With a focus on English language skills, SLP provides a combination of academic instruction, artistic exploration, and personal enrichment. The program, which takes place at Wilbur Cross High School, runs 9:00am - 12:30pm Monday through Friday for six weeks during the summer. On Wednesdays the program runs until 2:00 to accommodate weekly field trips. Every student is provided with breakfast and lunch.

The Summer Learning Program is specifically designed to address the needs of refugee and immigrant children, many of whom have lacked the educational opportunities of their peers. Only 63% of refugee children have had a primary education, falling well short of the global average of 91%. The picture is even bleaker for adolescents: only 24% of refugee adolescents have attended secondary school, as opposed to the global average of 84%. Many have had their schooling interrupted by war and persecution, and face associated psychological and emotional challenges. The schools to which our clients have access often lack the resources to address these challenges, leaving refugee and immigrant children at risk of falling behind academically.

The Summer Learning Program addresses this risk by providing a much needed on-ramp to American education. The SLP academic curriculum, which our teachers modify to address the needs of each student, stresses individual and small-group engagement with phonics, reading, writing, and math. Students follow the scope and sequence laid out in Core Progress Reading and Core Progress Math, which are empirically validated learning progressions. Practice in these areas is supplemented with math board games, shared reading and discussion of short texts, and scaffolded writing exercises that center on personal and creative expression. In addition to this academic instruction, the students participate in enrichment activities such as art, robotics, poetry, dance, and music. Further enrichment is provided by weekly field trips and by visits from local artists, activists, and speakers. To ensure the emotional and mental well-being of our students, SLP partners with experts from the Post Traumatic Stress Center and the Connecticut Mental Health Center who conduct weekly workshops for children in the program.

The Fellow's responsibilities would fall into two phases: pre-program and program. In the pre-program phase, before SLP has officially begun, the Fellow would assist with the recruitment and registration of students and families. This

would involve reaching out to refugee and immigrant families to gauge interest, assess eligibility, and help with the registration process. Once a family decides they do want to register their child, the Fellow would work with them to make sure that all necessary paperwork is completed and submitted in a timely manner. This process may at times require making use of IRIS' translation services. The Fellow would also be involved in the planning of the Summer Learning Program, and may be asked to brainstorm enrichment activities, research field trip opportunities, and liaise with potential speakers and guests. In the program phase, once SLP has begun, the Fellow would be responsible for a range of implementation and coordination tasks, including but not limited to tracking and organizing attendance data, communicating with field-trip sites, organizing transportation, coordinating guest speakers, and fielding questions from parents and families. If the Fellow so desires, they may also have opportunities to work directly with students as a tutor or enrichment facilitator.

List any specific skills/experience required for the project

- Excellent organizational skills
- Excellent communication skills
- Experience working with people from non-Western cultures
- Cultural humility and a willingness to work with a diverse population
- Versatility and a willingness to help where help is needed
- Willingness to take initiative in meeting and developing rapport with refugees
- Ability to work independently and manage time effectively
- Proficiency with google sheets, docs, and slides
- Ability to practice creative problem solving
- Interest in or knowledge of youth education
- Proficiency in a language spoken by refugee clients (Arabic, Dari, Farsi, Tigrinya, Kiswahili, etc.) is a plus, but not a requirement

Additional requirements

The Fellow is required to go through a background check, which IRIS will facilitate prior to the start of the program. Having a car and license is a plus, but is not required.

Briefly describe any work that Yale PPSF Fellows and/or Yale students have done with your organization.

IRIS has a long history of hosting Yale PPSF Fellows who have helped to facilitate the Summer Learning Program and have been instrumental in its success. Beyond YPPSF, IRIS has worked with a wide range of Yale

undergraduate and graduate students as interns and volunteers throughout the organization.