

Yale University

President's Public Service Fellowship

Proposal for Fellowship Placement Summer 2023

Organization information

<i>Name of organization</i>	City of New Haven Office of Climate and Sustainability
<i>Full street address</i>	165 Church St 2nd Floor Annex, New Haven, CT 06510
<i>Website or link to social media page</i>	www.newhavenct.gov/climate

PPSF Fellow's direct supervisor

The supervisor must be available to supervise Fellow on a daily basis.

<i>Name</i>	Steven Winter
<i>Title</i>	Executive Director of Climate and Sustainability
<i>Cell phone number</i>	(475) 331-3769
<i>E-mail address</i>	swinter@newhavenct.gov

Placement dates (8-11 weeks between Tuesday, May 30, 2023 through Friday, August 11, 2023)

The placement dates are flexible

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

Yes

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

9am to 5pm Mon- Friday with 1 hour lunch (35 hrs/week)

Organization description (*mission statement, population served. 1,000 characters or less*)

The Office of Climate and Sustainability works with City departments, community organizations, and New Haven residents to advance and coordinate city-wide climate and environmental sustainability policies, practices, and initiatives. The Office seeks to implement climate mitigation and adaptation solutions that intersect with and address the immediate challenges facing our residents: from finding safe and affordable housing, to accessing quality employment opportunities, to improving air quality and respiratory health. Our work is particularly focused on addressing the health and economic impacts of climate change in underserved communities that have been hit the hardest by COVID-19 and are still overcoming the legacy of redlining.

Write a 1-2 sentence summary of the work that the Fellow would be conducting (500 characters or less).

The Fellow will assist in organizing the City's community outreach and education campaign regarding residential energy efficiency and home electrification. Tasks would include organizing meetings with community groups, managing and participating in neighborhood-level canvasses, researching state and federal energy efficiency and clean energy incentives, and creating communications materials.

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

In 2019, the City formally recognized the urgency of the climate crisis through the declaration of a climate emergency and, in 2021, the City committed a community-wide electrification goal by the end of 2030. The built environment comprises 40% of carbon emissions. Attempting to reach the City's ambitious climate goals will entail leveraging both existing state programs supporting residential energy efficiency improvements and recently announced federal incentives for home energy efficiency, electrification, and clean energy.

Many New Haven residents are not aware of the significant resources available for energy-related home improvements, which can lower energy bills, improve air quality, and make one's home more comfortable. Free or low-cost energy audits and energy efficiency improvements are available through the state of Connecticut's Home Energy Solutions program. New federal subsidies from the Inflation Reduction Act have the potential to spur increased investment in clean energy and building electrification. As these programs are unfamiliar or new, community engagement and education on this issue is vital, particularly to help

low- and moderate-income residents access resources to reduce the financial burden of high energy bills.

The City of New Haven is preparing to launch a community-wide public engagement campaign to make renters and homeowners aware of state and federal programs subsidizing energy efficiency and clean energy improvements for their homes. The campaign will seek to connect these issues to pressing issues at the top of residents' minds, particularly housing affordability and respiratory health. The campaign will aim to both measurably increase residents' participation in energy efficiency programs and to identify barriers that prevent residents from participating. Particular focus will be placed on reaching residents in the city's underserved neighborhoods, where the twin burdens of high energy bills and air pollution harm most those who can afford them the least.

The Yale Fellow would be working directly with the Executive Director of Climate and Sustainability on this project. The Fellow's tasks include standing up the systems, managing the operations, and tracking the metrics of the outreach campaign. The Fellow will also participate directly in the campaign's community engagement activities: convening meetings with community partners, organizing and taking part in neighborhood-level canvasses, and creating communication materials. The Fellow will also track the development of state and federal policy to determine how state and federal incentives for energy efficiency and clean energy can assist New Haven's residents. Outcomes from this work have the potential to tangibly improve residents' health, comfort, and financial bottom lines.

Due to the hands-on nature of this work, the Fellow would need to conduct this work primarily in person. While some community meetings continue to take place on Zoom and a portion of the community engagement activities will take place over phone calls or email, working out of the Sustainability Office at City Hall and out in the neighborhood will be critical to succeeding in this role.

This is an excellent opportunity to see how changes in policy at the state and federal level reach (or, in some cases, fail to reach) the communities they are designed to serve. This Fellowship will also provide a valuable window in the role of municipal government and community partners in amplifying policy messages and connecting eligible residents to services that offer direct and tangible benefits. This is an exciting time to get involved and we hope you will join us!

List specific skills/experience required for the project

No specific skill is required but an interest and experience in community engagement and knowledge of energy and environmental/sustainability-field is preferred.

Additional requirements (e.g. a car or weekend working hours). If a car is required, include information regarding parking arrangements and mileage reimbursement.

N/A

Briefly describe any work that Yale PPSF Fellows have done with your organization in the past and present. If you have not worked with Yale Fellows, describe any work that Yale students have done with your organization.

During the summers of 2018, 2019, and 2022, the City's Engineering Department hosted PPSF fellows that worked on the implementation of the City's Climate and Sustainability Framework. The Fellows assisted the City in achieving certification through the Sustainable CT platform, a voluntary certification program for Connecticut municipalities. The City of New Haven was awarded silver certification (the highest possible) in 2019 (achieving the most points of any certified community in the state!) and was again awarded the silver certification in 2022. The team at the City has been very pleased with the initiative and enthusiasm displayed by our Fellows and look forward to working with new Fellows to improve the lives of New Haven's residents and achieve the City's climate and sustainability goals!