



Opportunity Fund Fellowship Call – Barriers to Broadband

Applications Due **September 15, 2024** // Email questions to research@benton.org

About Us:

The Benton Institute for Broadband & Society believes we need to build resilient, high-speed broadband infrastructure that reaches everywhere in the United States; to connect everyone to affordable internet service and equip people with the devices and the skills they need to use these connections; and to ensure broadband applications serve opportunity and equity for all. We accomplish our goals by making sure people have the timely information, rigorous evidence, and practical guidance they need to implement a ‘broadband for all’ agenda.

About the Fellowship:

Through the [Marjorie & Charles Benton Opportunity Fund](#), we aim to support a new generation of broadband scholars, practitioners, and advocates working on broadband access, adoption, application, and equity. Our Opportunity Fund fellows—within academia, nonprofits and government agencies—**conduct research and document best practices** on critical questions about the future of the internet in our communities.

For the 2024-25 fellowship cycle—when an historic level of federal funds will flow to states to build infrastructure and implement digital equity plans—we are focused on identifying what the obstacles are that can hamper the success of the initiative and how we can address them. We are interested in questions such as:

What obstacles prevent people from subscribing to broadband? How does the cost of broadband service impact adoption? Does a concern for privacy and safety dissuade people from using the internet? How might climate change adversely impact building broadband infrastructure? What national or state policies could delay or disrupt broadband deployment and/or digital equity efforts?

These questions are merely prompts and **not an exclusive or exhaustive list**. Please propose other approaches and questions to the overarching theme of *barriers to building and using broadband networks*. We especially welcome applications that focus on historically marginalized communities. Proposed projects can yield either practice or research-focused publications or multimedia content. Fellowships will range from \$5,000-\$20,000, with a tenure ranging from 6 months to 2 years.

Application Guidelines:

To apply, please submit a resume or CV (no more than 3 pages) and a project proposal (no more than 1000 words). The proposal should include:

- A research question or project topic and an explanation of how your project will support the goals of the fellowship program
- A description of the research methods or the work you’ll do over the fellowship tenure
- A rough timeline, budget, and whether you are applying as an individual or affiliated with an organization (see note below).
- Proposed outputs (reports/toolkits/webinars/podcasts)

Submit the documents as PDFs by email to research@benton.org **by September 15, 2024**. Email us if you have questions about the fellowship, your eligibility, and the application process.