

2026 Brandeis/Heller Segal Fellowship

Application Information, Guidelines & Policies Packet for Fall 2025

"When my father spoke of young people he mentored, his eyes would sparkle. He deeply believed that they could make our country better, a place where everyone can thrive. If he were alive today, he would feel more urgent than ever for the next generation to step up as citizen leaders - that's what the Segal program is all about."

~ Mora Segal (Chair, Segal Program Advisory Board)

Deadline for submission of application materials:
Monday, November 3rd, 2025 by 11:59 p.m. (EST)
(This is a firm deadline.)

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Guidelines and Policies

MISSION: The mission of The Eli J. & Phyllis N. Segal Citizen Leadership Program at Brandeis is to inspire and activate generations of civic and community leaders across sectors, issue areas, and lived experiences. Our lifelong Fellows are citizens of the world who uplift equitable systems and create a more just world through connection and action, continuing the work of Eli ('64) and Phyllis Segal.

As a part of their Segal Fellowship, the 2026 Brandeis/Heller Segal Fellows will have access to a meaningful Segal Summer Internship with a mission-driven organization that is committed to working for the common good and that exemplifies the characteristics of citizen leadership, public and community service, civic engagement, and social entrepreneurship. Those selected also become lifelong Fellows in the Segal Program, which supports its Segal Fellows by providing opportunities for personal and professional growth, networking, and leadership development before, during, and after the summer of 2026... across a Fellow's lifetime.

INTERNSHIP PURPOSE: As a part of the Summer Internship, stipends are awarded to students to support structured, supervised citizen leader internship experiences that provide an opportunity to participate in meaningful work at a mission-driven host organization. Host organizations can be in any sector, including government, non-profit or for-profit who are committed to making a positive impact in society through their work. They do need to be domestic/US organizations or agencies. Examples of this include direct service, policy, advocacy and/or public-private partnerships. Students can intern in many fields. The common link between our host organizations is a commitment to bettering society.

INTERNSHIP STIPEND: In 2026, the Segal Program will award a \$6,000 stipend to undergraduates and a \$7,000 stipend to graduate students, unless a Fellow chooses to accept funding from their host site instead. The purpose of the stipends is to help defray the cost of living during the internship. Usually, the stipend is disbursed in two installments, one by the end of May for 75% and the second for the remainder by the end of June. The Segal Program does not request a budget on how the stipend will be spent, however it is expected that it may be used for expenses such as travel, lodging, food, bills and any other needs during the summer. While this stipend is not taxed when given, it may be considered taxable income to be claimed on 2026 tax forms. The student is responsible for using the stipend and any additional necessary funds to book travel or attain summer housing themselves.

ELIGIBILITY: Undergraduates must be Brandeis sophomores or juniors, from any academic program, or "4+1" seniors continuing at Brandeis the following fall, when they apply. Graduate students must be enrolled in the Heller School for Social Policy and Management's Master in Public Policy (MPP) Program. To be eligible applicants must be available to intern for at least 8 weeks during the summer of 2026 and be continuing their studies at the University in the fall of 2026 (whether on campus or abroad). Additionally, we will be checking University conduct/discipline records. The presence of a record will not automatically eliminate you from the process, but please be prepared to address any concerns in your application and/or interview. International students with questions about their eligibility to receive the stipend should check with the International Students and Scholars Office, as authorization to do paid work in the US is required. You do not need to be a US citizen to apply.

PARTICIPATION: The Segal Program is dedicated to developing and supporting citizen leaders' continuous improvement and Segal engagement throughout their lifetime. We seek individuals who are prepared to make engagement with the Program a priority over a lifetime, beyond their first year.

The opportunities uniquely provided to Segal Fellows include events, workshops, leadership roles within the Program and Network, community support, discussions, mentorship and much more. We expect Segal Fellows to participate in efforts to improve the Segal Program before, during and after their citizen leader internships. These efforts may include engaging with Program Staff and other Network participants, building community with those in the Network, being an ambassador for the Program, attending periodic meetings and events, and participating in Segal Program projects.

This allows our Segal Fellows to have a vested interest in the longevity of the Program by building upon the community, as well as developing individual citizen leadership core competencies. Additionally, after experiencing their first year, Fellows become integral parts in supporting incoming cohorts of Fellows as they explore their interests, passions and pathways for citizen leadership.

Program Requirements

Before the Citizen Leader Summer Experience

- ☐ Segal Program Staff help match students with domestic organizations that will provide a mission-driven internship experience focused on working for the common good and exemplifying the characteristics of citizen leadership, public and community service, civic engagement, or social entrepreneurship. The Segal Program will try to accommodate location preference and topical/site preference as much as possible. Some Fellows prefer to be placed in areas where we have a significant Segal presence (Boston, New York City and D.C.). However, we have and will continue to work with those who want to be placed elsewhere in the U.S. Segal internships take place with domestic organizations/agencies (US). Depending on COVID safety/guidelines and host site preferences, internships may be hybrid or in-person.
- ☐ Citizen Leader Internships last at least 8 weeks during the summer of 2026 (280 hours minimum) and are usually full time. Options for flexible scheduling should be discussed with the Segal Program Staff and the host organization. The final internship placement decision will be made by the Segal Staff and Segal Fellow, based on host organization offers.
- ☐ New Segal Fellows will be matched with a Segal Fellow Buddy (current Segal Fellows chosen in years past) to support their internship experience and first year in the Program. You will be expected to communicate with your Buddy before, during, and after your internship.
- ☐ New Segal Fellows will be required to attend all pre-internship meetings and trainings. This includes orientation and introductory meetings to the Segal Network. These meetings are a unique opportunity to introduce new Segal Fellows to other members of the Segal Network and develop their citizen leader core competencies. Brandeis 2026 Segal Fellows will meet ~7-8 times over the spring as a cohort to complete our Citizen Leadership curriculum (non-credit-bearing) and develop relationships with other Fellows. **In order to apply to the Program, you must be able to attend mandatory 1.5 hour meetings ~every 2 weeks (not including vacations) in January-April 2026.** (If the cohort is only able to find common time for 1-hour, then meetings will be more frequent, approximately weekly, instead of bi-weekly.)

During Citizen Leader Summer Experience

- ☐ New Segal Fellows will be expected to:
 - o Complete, at minimum, 280 hours with their Segal internship organization.
 - o Join ~bi-weekly calls with a Segal Program Staff member and/or other Segal Fellows to reflect on their work and continue their leadership development.
 - o Communicate regularly with Segal Staff, their buddy, and other Network members.

After Citizen Leader Summer Experience

- ☐ Segal Fellows must:
 - o Complete a survey about their citizen leader summer experience.
 - o Prepare a presentation on their experience for members of the Segal Network and others in the Brandeis community in the fall.
 - o Attend ~2-3 debrief sessions with the other Segal Fellows and Segal Program Staff during the 2026-27 school year (mostly fall semester).
 - ☐ Students going abroad immediately after the citizen leader summer must make acceptable alternative arrangements with the Segal Program Staff in advance and fulfill the above requirements as possible (virtually, etc.).
 - ☐ Segal Fellows must commit to being an **active lifelong member** of the Segal Network after their citizen leadership Summer Internship by attending as many meetings and events as possible, as well as engaging in activities that further Segal Program goals and individual citizen leadership development. This includes our Segal Fellow Retreat, which is held approximately every other year, next happening in October 2026.
 - ☐ Segal Fellows will be paired with individual Segal Advisors (mentors) to assist in their career and Citizen Leadership development and provide additional support during the 1-2 years after their internship. New Fellows will be expected to communicate with Segal Advisors per an agreement between paired Segal Fellow and Segal Advisors. This will include, but is not limited to, in-person meetings, virtual meetings, emails, and/or phone calls.
 - ☐ Segal Fellows are expected to be Ambassadors for the Segal Program upon completion of the Citizen Leader Summer Experiences and assist with future recruitment.
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Selections Process

- *Monday, November 3rd* – Complete Application Due Online by 11:59p.m. EST
Complete Application Includes:
 - o [General Online Application](#)
 - Long and short answer questions
 - List of 2 (undergraduate) or 3 (MPP) leadership references
 - Resume
 - Unofficial transcript (undergraduates/non-first-year MPP) or class list (first-year MPP)
 - o 1 Outside (Non-Brandeis) Letter of Recommendation (undergraduate and MPP)
 - o 1 Brandeis Letter of Recommendation (undergraduates only)
- *By November 26* – Notifications sent regarding final round interviews

This first round application evaluation is completed after a thorough examination of each application by a select team of Segal Fellows and Segal Program Staff and reviewed by the full Selections Committee. During this time, we may meet with various campus partners, on-campus Fellows and other stakeholders to ascertain necessary information. This includes the mandatory conduct review completed by the University and shared with the Segal Director. Finalists will be contacted regarding the scheduling of finalist interviews.

- *December 8-11 (exact dates TBA)*– Individual interviews for Finalists
These interviews are approximately 45-minutes long with our Selections Committee. This Committee is composed of Segal Program Staff, Fellows, Advisory Board Members, Founders and Family members. It is usually no larger than 5-6 people. Interviews may take place virtually.
 - *By December 19* – Finalists are notified of their status.
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Citizen Leader Internship Opportunities and Process

As noted previously, students will conduct their citizen leadership internships with organizations that are committed to working for the common good and exemplify the characteristics of citizen leadership, public and community service, civic engagement, and social entrepreneurship.

- ❑ A list of some of our past internship sites is available on the [Segal website](#). In the application, the applicant must state their interest and availability for internships in Boston, New York, and Washington, DC. Applicants may also list other locations within the US. Internships may be in-person or hybrid, depending on host site and other factors.
- ❑ We expect that Segal Fellows will spend at least eight weeks interning with their host organization. Past sites have specialized in health, youth development, environment, education, public service, business, communications, women's rights, democracy and governance, technology, arts, and other efforts to promote racial and social justice in the U.S. Segal internships take place in the U.S.
- ❑ Indication of location preference will be taken into consideration but cannot be guaranteed. Applicants who cannot relocate to a city should indicate this on the application.
- ❑ The process to get matched for a summer internship is individualized to the Fellow. It is a multi-step process that depends on what stage a Fellow is currently in with finding a summer internship. Once initial mutual interest for Fellow and organization has been developed, an interview is scheduled between the two. The Director will help finalize an opportunity/scope of work that ensures well-aligned projects and opportunities for growth.
- ❑ The Fellow is expected to be involved in this process and prepare accordingly. While the Staff acts as an advocate for the Fellow, does outreach, and helps decide on final internship locations, the Fellow helps finalize the placement, and it is important for them to share their hopes, needs, and thoughts openly. With this model, we have been able to ensure excellent placements that allow the organization to find a top summer candidate and the Fellow to intern at a well-matched organization. All internship partners are carefully vetted to allow for fit and connection to Segal guidelines and Core Skills & Shared Values.
- ❑ As part of the Segal structure, the Segal Staff are a primary point of contact for both parties

in order to create long-lasting partnerships with each organization. This may include discussions of organization's contributions to allow the Segal Program to continue to place Fellows in dedicated organizations across the U.S. Generally, **if Fellows choose to receive funding from their host site partner directly, then they forgo the Segal stipend.**

Segal Citizen Leadership Brandeis Curriculum

Each Segal Fellow begins our unique [Citizen Leadership Curriculum](#) upon entrance into the Segal Program. This curriculum will run over ~8 mandatory 1.5 hour sessions in January-April 2025. (If the cohort can only find a common 1-hour time block, then meetings will be more frequent, approximately weekly, instead of biweekly.) The curriculum is aligned with our [Core Skills & Shared Values](#), allows Fellows to explore their personal history and connection to social change, leadership styles, and goals, and builds skills related to communication, evaluation, and mentorship, as well as assessing personal strengths and areas for future growth. The Segal Curriculum is a co-curricular (not-for-credit) experience.

We believe that the opportunity to explore one's passion, values, and interests will allow our Fellows to create citizen leadership trajectories which will inform their career paths and interests, as well as the ways in which they will be change agents in their communities. These sessions will be focused on collective learning in a workshop-style format to ensure individualized experiential opportunities, while creating meaningful relationships amongst the cohort of other Fellows selected from Brandeis University this year.

The curriculum will be supplemented with additional opportunities to engage with our larger Network in order to learn about the Segal Program and develop personal networks for social impact. This curriculum and first year experience are the starting point to developing lifelong relationships that will allow our Fellows to collaborate across sectors and issue areas to create lasting solutions for today's social problems.

Application Checklist

| Application Piece <i>All required for application to be considered complete</i> | Student Type | Notes | Check When Complete (<input type="checkbox"/>) |
|---|---------------------------|---|--|
| List of 2-3 Leadership References (on-line application) | Undergraduate & MPP | Those we may contact for a conversation about your candidacy. <i>*MPPs must submit a Heller Staff or Faculty as a 3rd reference, whom the Segal Staff will meet with when considering your application. (Not the same people as your letter writers.)</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Short and Long-Answer Application Questions (on-line application) | Undergraduate & MPP | PDF version on the Segal Program website for preparation purposes, but <i>must be submitted via the online application link.</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Resume (on-line application) | Undergraduate & MPP | Current; no more than 2 pages | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Unofficial transcript (on-line application) | Undergraduate Only | (Grades through Spring 2025, list of enrolled classes through Fall 2025) May be unofficial Brandeis/Workday version | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| List of Fall 2025 Enrolled Classes (on-line application) | MPP Only | Via Workday printout. <i>Returning Heller students who are not first years should include their transcript from prior years.</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Letter of Recommendation from outside of Brandeis/Heller** | Undergraduate & MPP | See References Overview page in Guidelines and Policies packet (Different from other listed references) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Letter of Recommendation by a Faculty/Staff member from Brandeis University** | Undergraduate Only | Or other University attended within last 3 years | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Applications must be submitted [online](#).

****Recommendation Letters submitted separately by recommender online.**
Writers should upload their letters directly online. Details for recommenders on pages 9-10.

Questions? Contact:

Susie Flug-Silva, Segal Program Director, at flugsilva@brandeis.edu or 781-736-3933, or
Carmela Belizaire, Segal Program Assistant Director, at carmelajmb@brandeis.edu.

Citizen Leadership Essay Questions

Please respond in the [online application](#) to the following essay questions, as prompted.

- ***You may not submit any work generated by an AI program as your own. If you include material generated by an AI program, it should be cited like any other reference material. We are seeking your personal/individualized responses here, not any one “correct” or overly academic response.***

We recommend that you draft your responses in a separate Word or Google document and then copy and paste those answers into the online application. Please make sure that you self-monitor to **limit your responses in your citizen leadership essay questions to a maximum of 2,000 characters each per question** (NOTE: 2,000 CHARACTERS per question, NOT WORDS).

- Please describe yourself as a Citizen Leader. Include how you connect your leadership strengths to what you're passionate about, and what kind of skills and knowledge you want to improve. Also include what levers *you* feel you can push to help make change happen, and include what it means for you to be a leader at this particular moment in time. (Please remember that for us “citizen leader” has nothing to do with one’s legal status in a country.)
- Think about past and current movements (e.g. civil rights, Black Lives Matter, women's rights, MeToo, LGBTQ, immigration, climate justice) and people within those movements who you think are Citizen/Community Leaders. How have those movements and leaders influenced your own thinking and actions around solving pressing social and political issues?
- The Segal Program holds pursuing equity, inclusion, and racial justice as core values. Please share how these values are entwined in your life and leadership. How do you, or will you, leverage your leadership towards action around racial justice and antiracism? What would you like to share about your own antiracism journey?
- Briefly describe a time when you worked on a social issue or problem. What was your vision? What resources did you bring to bear on the issue? Looking back, what lessons, tools, and/or skills were learned or strengthened as a result of this experience?
- Either thinking more about your experience above, or another time, describe a time you were not meeting a goal: How did you realize this, and how did you change course to improve the outcome?
- Why are you interested in and committed to being part of a lifelong network focused on leadership development? In what ways can the Segal Program help you accomplish your goals as a leader? How do you imagine wanting to stay involved over time, both giving to and receiving from the Network?
- *(Optional)* Are there any other important pieces of information that you would like to share that you feel the Selections Committee should consider when reviewing your application? Please keep any responses brief.

The online application also asks you for biographical information, as well as the following:

- Segal Summer internship sites are domestic (US) organizations (in any sector) who are committed to making a positive impact in society through their work. Examples include direct service, policy, advocacy and/or public-private partnerships. Segal Fellows can intern in any field including, but not limited to health, youth development, racial justice, immigration, scientific research, business, environment, economic equality, LGBTQIA+ advocacy, technology, the arts, and education. The Program and our host organizations share a commitment to bettering society.
 - Please indicate the kind of organization(s), topic area(s), and role(s) you would like to pursue for your Citizen Leader Fellowship summer internship.

2026 Segal Fellow Application - Information for Recommenders

References Overview

Applicant: *Please give this page to those writing your letters of recommendation or acting as a reference and make sure that those writing letters of recommendation have the online upload link:*
https://brandeis.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6SErKRCqvXZUYOa.

Brief Summary of the Eli J. & Phyllis N. Segal Citizen Leadership Program

The Eli J. & Phyllis N. Segal Citizen Leadership Program was established at Brandeis University in 2007, to honor and continue the work of Eli J. Segal, who is best known for his leadership in developing AmeriCorps and other initiatives in the Clinton Administration and for his talent for inspiring and mentoring young people. During Eli's memorial, President Clinton explained that if someone wanted something done during his administration, they went to Eli. The Segal Program commemorates his legacy of "getting things done" by advancing citizen engagement and continuing his and his wife Phyllis' commitment to developing new generations of citizen leaders.

The mission of the Eli J. & Phyllis N. Segal Citizen Leadership Program at Brandeis is to inspire and activate generations of civic and community leaders across sectors, issue areas, and lived experiences. Our lifelong Fellows are citizens of the world who uplift equitable systems and create a more just world through connection and action.

The Program is designed to make the experience of being a Segal Fellow a recognized and valued credential – signifying important citizen leadership core skills, developmental experiences, and the support of a network of talented people dedicated to Segal Fellows success.

The Segal Citizen Leadership Network includes over 170 Segal Fellows, ranging in age from their early twenties to mid-sixties, who live in 25 states and 3 countries who support each other in their efforts to advance social justice. Segal Fellows come into the Program through Brandeis University, AmeriCorps (formerly the Corporation for National & Community Service), and AmeriCorps Alums @ Service Year Alliance. The Network also includes many of the Segal Founders who helped to create and sustain the Segal Program, as well as others who have joined to contribute expertise and resources, supporting the development of the next generation of citizen leaders. Segal Fellows assume leadership roles within the Segal Program to help ensure the Program is continuously improving and being sustained. The Segal Network provides new Segal Fellows with mentors to assist in their leadership development – these mentors are both Segal Fellows and Founders or Friends who have expertise to share, providing an opportunity to give back by supporting others in much the same way that Eli Segal did for so many.

Brandeis Segal Fellows are selected through a highly competitive process after which they complete a rigorous experiential learning opportunity through a citizen leader summer internship at private, nonprofit, and public U.S. organizations committed to making a difference. Each Brandeis Segal Fellow is supported during their first-year summer internship by a \$6,000 stipend for undergraduate students and \$7,000 stipend for Master's in Public Policy students. They are meant to support five (total) Brandeis undergraduate students and Master's in Public Policy students from the Heller School for Social Policy and Management pursuing meaningful citizen leadership summer internships at organizations that are committed to working for the common good and exemplify the characteristics of citizen leadership, public and community service, civic engagement, or social entrepreneurship. Beyond the summer internship, awardees become **lifelong** Segal Fellows, with a cohort-based first-year citizen leadership curriculum and ongoing mentorship, professional development opportunities, and networking, over the course of their lives and careers.

Written Letter of Recommendation Instructions

In your recommendation, please indicate how you know the applicant and provide an evaluation of his/her work, maturity, sense of purpose, leadership potential, and how they could benefit from a Fellowship and Network like this over the future course of their career. We are looking for people who are committed to actively working for the common good and being a citizen leader and who will stay engaged over a lifetime as a lifelong Fellow. We are particularly looking for mature students who can prioritize effectively, follow through with commitments and who would be excellent ambassadors of Brandeis and the Segal legacy of commitment to social justice and “getting things done.”

Please review the [Segal Citizen Leadership Program Core Skills & Shared Values](#) below and comment on how the applicant has demonstrated their capacity or areas for growth. Examples of an applicant staying engaged in a community over time are also encouraged.

Both concrete examples and general impressions/evaluations are useful to the Selection Committee. When applicable, also comment on the applicant’s ability to flourish in a self-directed, professional work environment. Recommendations should include the applicant’s name and your name. They should be no longer than 2 pages and should be uploaded directly by you, the recommender.

Recommendations must be [uploaded online](#) by 11:59 p.m. (EST), Monday, November 3rd.

Questions can be sent to:

Susie Flug-Silva, Director, Eli J. & Phyllis N. Segal Citizen Leadership Program

- Email: flugsilva@brandeis.edu
- Phone: 781-736-3933

ELI J. & PHYLLIS N. SEGAL CITIZEN LEADERSHIP PROGRAM CORE SKILLS & SHARED VALUES

Mission

Our mission is to inspire and activate generations of civic and community leaders across sectors, issue areas, and lived experiences. Our lifelong Fellows are citizens of the world who uplift equitable systems and create a more just world through connection and action, continuing the work of Eli and Phyllis Segal.

Core Skills & Shared Values:

As active members of their communities seeking to create justice and sustainable change, Segal Leaders aim to:

1. **Collaborate across lines of difference** to build common ground, recognizing the impact of history and current events.
2. **Listen to and honor diversity** of individuals, their thoughts, and experiences, making space for people to show up as their full, authentic selves.
3. **Take action to eliminate systemic inequities**, understanding and challenging the role of power and privilege, and prioritizing inclusion across all isms, while centering racial justice and antiracism.
4. **Engage civically**, seeking to protect and amplify rights and voices.
5. **Pursue visionary and sustainable goals**, with an eye toward continuous improvement and prioritizing self and community care.
6. **Inspire leadership in themselves and others** through mentorship and meaningful engagement in their communities and in the Segal Network.