

CITP – PIT-UN Grant Narrative Report
Grant Period: November 01, 2021 - August 31, 2022

1. Summary of Key Results

1. We successfully created another year where a diverse group of fellows had meaningful experiences despite participating in a hybrid program because of the lingering pandemic. We attracted qualified and talented students and paired them with host agencies that had them working on cutting-edge challenges related to tech policy.

2. Background and Problem Definition

- 2.1. The project was designed to give students first-hand experience working with the government on developing and regulating public interest technology. This is the third year of the program.
- 2.2. Our goal was to match the interests of students with technical backgrounds who wanted exposure to public interest technology with the government agencies who had to understand the value that students could bring to their work. This helps build a pipeline for talent by exposing these students and agencies to the possibilities of working together.
- 2.3. There are other institutions are working on similar projects to create opportunities for technologists to work in public service. To our knowledge, we fill a unique niche of matching students with federal, state, and local agencies and wrapping that within a co-curricular educational program where students can learn from experts and from each other.
- 2.4. We worked with a wide range of universities to canvas student participation. We selected a cohort of 19 students from 11 universities, who were placed in 6 host agencies.
- 2.5. We defined diversity, equity, and inclusion broadly and consciously sought to expand opportunities for historically underrepresented students in our programs.

3. Development

1. We recruited students from a broad range of universities. Simultaneously, we reached out to several different government agencies to serve as potential hosts for the students. This year we increased the number of students and host agencies participating in the program.

2. We evaluate the success of the project based on the feedback from the students as well as from the host agencies. We were pleased that our students recommended the program to their peers. Equally, we were happy to see that the

host agencies agreed to participate again in the following year, and that they were willing to help recruit other agencies to serve as potential hosts.

3. We were also able to use funds to finally bring the students together in August 2022 for a two-day workshop in Princeton. (We also invited alumni from the 2020 and 2021 cohorts as they had not met in person.) This had an enormously valuable role in building connections and defining the community. We hope to continue bringing back alumni and current students to build the community.

4. The next steps in the project are to offer the program in the following year to a broader group of students and to a broader range of host agencies.

4. **Challenges**

1. The expected challenges concerned the recruiting talented students and interested potential host agencies. We addressed the student recruitment challenge by partnering with the PIT-UN network to broadly disseminate our fellowship offering and by encouraging students to apply to our program. That said, we did not get as many applications from a diverse range of schools.

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4. The challenge for our host partners primarily concerned convincing them that the students could be effective in supporting their work and convincing them to take the time to mentor those students.

5. **Lessons Learned**

1. There is a lot more work involved in recruiting and maintaining relationships with host agencies. Having a steady pipeline of funding will give them a better sense for what to expect.

6. **Possibilities to Replicate**

6.1 There are possibilities for other programs to replicate this experience for their students with local agency partners during the semester. There is, however, value to having students connect across universities to build cohorts and a more diverse set of offerings.

7. General Information

1. For more information, please contact Mihir Kshirsagar – mihir@princeton.edu.
2. The project is entering its fourth year.

8. Annexes & Publications

1. Links

1. <https://citp.princeton.edu/programs/pit-summer-fellowship/>



3. <https://citp.princeton.edu/citps-public-interest-tech-fellows-meet-face-to-face-and-share-fellowship-experiences/>