Become an MRS Congressional Science and Engineering Fellow

It’s a transformative experience!
Greetings from the Chair

“When I applied for the Fellowship, I knew it would be a once-in-a-lifetime experience. I didn’t realize it would change the course of my career. Spending a year on Capitol Hill gives you the opportunity to step outside the research lab and apply your scientific expertise in a new context to make immediate and broad-reaching impact. At the same time, you’ll develop your communications skills, knowledge of policy making, and understanding of the federal government. The Fellowship helped me find my passion in combining policy and communications in the service of science, and opened doors to career paths I previously hadn’t known existed.

Regardless of where your career takes you next, the experience of being an MRS Congressional Fellow will have a lasting impact. I encourage you to take the opportunity to apply!”

Ashley White
Director of Communications
Advanced Light Source
Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory
2010-2011 MRS Congressional Science and Engineering Fellow
Office of Senator Al Franken

Eric Werwa
Legislative Director
Congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard
2001-2002 MRS Congressional Science and Engineering Fellow
Office of Congressman Mike Honda

“Many Americans probably regard the post-September 11th period that I spent as a Fellow as one of the most amazing in recent history. I feel incredibly privileged to have been able to spend that time as a Fellow in Washington D.C., at the center of all the activity. While there were some days when I wondered whether it wouldn’t be smarter to live somewhere else, I wouldn’t trade the experience for anything. It was especially heartening for a scientist to see that, even in a time of national crisis, the contributions that science and technology can make to meeting the challenges faced by our nation are recognized by our leaders.”

Intimately experience the inner working of federal government
The MRS/OSA Congressional Fellowship is a one-of-a-kind learning experience on how the U.S. Government works, how policies are negotiated, and how we, as scientists, can contribute. The Fellowship provides a unique opportunity to play an active role at the nexus of science and policy—a role that most scientists don’t experience and many don’t fully appreciate.

Become a conduit between policy and science

“Academia taught me how to think, but the MRS Congressional Fellowship taught me how to get things done. Never have I had such leverage, such opportunities to commingle with dignitaries, to structure agreements and broker deals, as I did in that year. I learned how to navigate past armies of secretaries shielding a VIP, enlist military support for a project, take a rough idea and make it law, and fashion an event into a sound bite and then watch it propagate across the news. I learned to take data and present it in such a way that it gravitated, almost of its own accord, all the way up to the Vice President of the United States. These are skills anyone who is going anywhere, can use.”

Jennifer Nekuda Malik
Freelance Science Writer and Policy Consultant
2011-2012 MRS Congressional Science and Engineering Fellow
Office of Chairman Jeff Bingaman

“My Fellowship experience has been invaluable in many ways. Through my committee work I have had the opportunity to meet and work with many key people in Congress, the Executive Branch, industry, and academia. Through the AAAS Fellows network I have also connected with many current and former Fellows who have chosen a variety of different career paths. The experience and network I gained there have broadened my understanding of policy and allowed me to meet and work with people who are at the forefront of many of the most important issues facing our country. That experience will play a significant role in my career because it has changed the way I think about policy, the role of science in policy, and the role and responsibility of scientists in communicating science to the public.”

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Freelance Science Writer and Policy Consultant
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Merrilea Mayo
Founder
Mayo Enterprises, LLC.
1998-1999 MRS Congressional Science and Engineering Fellow
Office of Senator Joseph Lieberman

Amit Mistry
Senior Scientist
Fogarty International Center
National Institutes of Health
2008-2009 MRS Congressional Science and Engineering Fellow
Office of Congressman Edward J. Markey
Drive policy at the federal level

To learn more about the MRS Congressional Science and Engineering Fellowship Program and how you can apply, visit mrs.org/congressional-fellows.

Apply Today and Make a Difference!

The United States Congress is one of the primary policy drivers affecting the progress of science, technology and society. MRS Congressional Science and Engineering Fellows leverage their scientific and technical experience to shape and inform policy made in the Legislative Branch. Now’s your chance to make a difference!

The Materials Research Society sponsors one materials scientist to engage in the federal policy making process, while learning firsthand about the intersection of science and policy.

During your one year as a Fellow you will:

• be fully immersed in congressional policy making through placement in a specific congressional office
• contribute widely to the effective use of materials science knowledge in government
• broaden awareness about the value of scientist- and engineer-government interaction among society members and within government
• network with more than 300 other participants of science and technology fellowship programs

Application Criteria

A prospective Fellow must demonstrate:

• a record of success in research or scholarship in a field relevant to materials science and technology and/or optical science and technology
• passion for applying scientific and technical knowledge to United States public policy issues
• the ability to work quickly and communicate effectively with both scientific and non-scientific audiences on a wide variety of topics
• a cooperative spirit necessary to work with individuals having diverse backgrounds and viewpoints.

Applicants must be members of MRS or partner sponsor organization and must have a PhD by September 1 of the fellowship year. U.S. citizenship is not required, however, applicants must be authorized to work in the United States.