

2026 Robert Lee Ellis Civic Fellowship Application Guide

The Robert Lee Ellis Civic Fellowship--administered by the Community Engagement and Leadership Education (CELE) Center--offers financial support to incoming undergraduate students who are committed to community engagement, social responsibility, and personal leadership development throughout their UW experience.

Eligibility requirements:

- Class Standing, you must be either:
 - a. An incoming student at the Seattle campus in your first year as a full-time student at UW with an anticipated graduation date in 2030 (or beyond), or
 - b. An incoming transfer student at the Seattle campus who is planning to enroll full-time at the UW this year and who has an anticipated graduation date in 2028 (or beyond).
- Demonstrated financial need as determined by the Financial Aid Office.

Most students fill this requirement by filing a FAFSA or WAFSA for the current academic year. We also accept applications from those who are not eligible to file for federal or state financial aid and can document financial need.
- Commitment to weaving public service and civic leadership development into your Husky Experience--including effort to connect your academic pursuits with community-engaged learning.

Financial Support:

Student Status	1 st Year Award	2 nd Year Award	3 rd Year Award	4 th Year Award	Total
Freshman	\$2,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$4,000	\$12,000
Transfer	\$2,000	\$4,000	No Award	No Award	\$6,000

Expectations for Ellis Fellows:

All Years

1. Maintain a regular volunteer commitment with a community organization each quarter you are enrolled at the UW. This is often done as part of a community-engaged learning course or a community-based internship program.
2. Meet at least twice a year with CELE Center staff to discuss your progress through fellowship requirements.
3. Actively participate in the Civic Health Scorecard and NextGen Civic Leader Badge programs.
4. Integrate service with your academic experiences by taking community-engaged and/or leadership practice courses.
5. Pursue the Leadership OR Public Policy minor in addition to major coursework. (You'll receive advice and support in order to meet this requirement.)
6. Participate in program networking events including quarterly fellowship gatherings, signature events, service projects, and spring culmination events. (Dates of events provided quarterly.)

Culminating Year(s)

1. Engage in reflection on your own leadership development process by applying for and completing the Husky Leadership Certificate (HLC) during your final year at UW.
2. Identify a faculty and community mentor during your time at UW. As part of the process of identifying these mentors, you will conduct informational interviews with community and academic representatives in your anticipated career field. Many graduating fellows will find their mentor through completion of the HLC.
3. Present a capstone presentation at Spring CELEbration during your senior year, reflecting on your growth and journey from Ellis Civic Fellow to Ellis Civic Leader. With guidance from CELE Fellowship advisors, community members, and faculty mentors, you will share your experiences and insights, showcasing how your work has contributed to both personal development and community impact.

Application Process

Applications are due by 11:59pm on Monday, October 12, 2026! [Submit your application here.](#)

You will submit all information via this application form. Please save documents for upload with your last name and “activities” or “essays” as the file name. (If you have a common last name—i.e, Nguyen, Smith, Williams, etc.—please include your first name as well; e.g. Swift_Taylor_Essays.)

Applicants will receive notification of whether they have been selected for an interview by Wednesday, October 28.

The final portion of the selection process is a group interview: There is only one interview date and we are unable to make accommodations for schedule conflicts. The small group interview will be held on **Thursday, November 5 from 5-7pm**. (We encourage all applicants to hold this time in their calendar to avoid conflicts. The interview will be in person in Mary Gates Hall; remote access is not an option.)

Information that you'll need to complete the online application:

Name (First, Last)	Pronouns
Student #	Hometown (where you consider/ed home before UW)
Phone Number	Email Address
Anticipated area of study	Anticipated graduation year

A resume or curated list with brief descriptions of significant service, volunteer, leadership, paid work roles, honors or awards, including the dates that the role was held or award was received.

For example: *Stewardship Club Vice President (September 2025-June 2026): As Stewardship Club Vice President, I scheduled club meetings, occasionally filled in for the president as meeting facilitator, helped to organize an environmental sustainability fair, coordinated two guest speakers, and worked with the club treasurer to plan the club budget and place food orders.

If there are any special considerations or additional information you feel necessary to your application, please include it at the end of your essay document (separate from your essay answers).

Please list any other scholarships or fellowships—including the annual award amount—that you will receive as a UW student.

You do not need to detail your financial aid package or include information about Husky Promise funding—include only outside scholarships, fellowships, and awards that will support your UW education. *For example:* Gates Millennium Scholarship (average award is \$5000 per year), Washington State Opportunity Scholarship (\$2500-\$7500), College Bound Scholarship (approximately \$6000 per year), Local Rotary Club Scholarship (\$1000, first year only), etc.

****The selection committee does not review outside scholarship information when evaluating applications, but the information may be used as one factor among many during the selection process.****

Responses to three essay prompts

The Fellowship selection committee will pay particular attention to these personal statements. It may be useful to review the [CELE Center values and learning outcomes](#) to frame your response to this prompts.

- 1. Describe aspects of your background/identity that contribute to your commitment to public service and civic leadership. What personal strengths and experiences do you draw on for inspiration as you lead and serve?** **Please keep your response to less than 400 words.*
- 2. Tell us about one social issue that has touched/impacted you personally. How have you been involved with the issue and/or how will you use your time at the UW to hone your leadership skills to address this social issue's impact on your community?** (Your response may draw upon your answer to the question above.) **Please keep your response to less than 400 words.*
- 3. How will the Ellis Fellowship help you build networks and refine your commitment to public service?** The Fellowship was created to fund students who have a commitment to public service AND unmet financial need; it provides modest support across your four years at the University but is not enough to close significant funding gaps. We are interested in how this award might allow you to prioritize community-engaged learning and civic leadership development. Beyond financial support, will the program shape your goals and activities during your time at UW? **Please keep your response to less than 300 words.*

Please email celecenter@uw.edu with any questions or for application support.