

# **Thank you for your interest in the**

# **Press Pass NYC**

## **Journalism Teacher/Adviser Fellowship**

### **2025-26 Fellowship Overview**

This fellowship program is designed to develop a cohort of educators to start and sustain student-led, mission-driven, community-centered journalism programs at their schools - as well as support the whole school community in this endeavor.

We know that sustainable student news publications depend on dedicated advisers as well as students, and we invest in educators as well as student training because:

- Teachers know their students best and can adapt a journalism program to fit their school's needs
- Teachers provide stability and continuity, serving as anchors for the journalism program even after the founding students graduate

We also believe that scholastic journalism is most meaningful when it's mission-driven, community-focused publishing by students. Our goal is for each school we work with to have the strongest possible student news publication powered by the most passionate student journalists with the support of the whole school community behind them!

#### **Teacher/Adviser Fellows Will Receive:**

- One-week virtual August adviser "bootcamp" designed to equip fellows to start the year with a plan of action, foundational skills and resources (including curriculum recommendations).
- Monthly virtual workshops on journalism advising, teaching and best practices.
- A \$500 stipend upon completion of the summer bootcamp plus grants for materials and national conference attendance. Participants receive another \$500 grant at the end of the school year.
- A one-on-one mentor, plus a network of like-minded educators with whom to share ideas, provide feedback and offer support
- An invitation to recommend students to the Press Pass NYC **Student Editor Bootcamp** (for the following summer) and **Student Journalism Leaders Fellowship** program during the school year.
- An invitation to continue attending all Press Pass NYC professional development events in future years free of charge

**Fellows Will Commit to:**

- Scheduling a meeting in advance of the program with Press Pass NYC and their school administration.
- Attending the August virtual bootcamp, all monthly virtual meetings and requesting permission from their administration to attend all in-person professional development days. Educators may only skip these events if they alert Press Pass NYC in advance.
- Meeting at least monthly with their assigned mentor (and alerting Press Pass NYC if they would like to request a change).
- Starting a school news publication online or in print along the recommended timeline.
- Continuing their student journalism program for at least two more years past the initial fellowship year (and alerting Press Pass NYC in a timely manner of any obstacles and complications, so we can help keep the publication on track).

**School Administrators Will Commit to:**

- Scheduling a meeting in the spring of 2025 to meet with Press Pass NYC and learn more about the program.
- Reaching out to Press Pass NYC with any additional questions or concerns, knowing their role is to support their teachers and students in learning journalism by doing it.
- Familiarizing themselves with the [Principal's Guide to Scholastic Journalism](#).
- Fully supporting the adviser fellow and their students' vision for their journalism program by ensuring that there is a consistent and reliable time and space to come together and work — uninterrupted by change of semesters or schedules — and for students to participate beyond one year
- Fully appreciating not only the myriad benefits of a journalism program, but also the significant time and effort required of students and teachers.
- Providing the fellow with the time, facilities and funds necessary to put their learning into practice in order to achieve this vision. This requires a minimum of at least three years for the publication to grow, attract readers and recruit students who will sustain it.
- Granting students the opportunity to visit local news rooms (professional and college), attend conferences and meet other journalists — both student and professional.
- Allowing the student newspaper staff (under the faculty fellow's guidance) editorial autonomy/no prior review. We are deeply committed to student voice.
- Celebrating and promoting the mission and the work of the journalism staff and program (see suggestions below).
- Working with Press Pass NYC to heighten awareness among the student body of the student news publication, and giving student journalists the ability to interview their peers, their teachers and administrators about the topics that interest them.

**Some other ways administrators can show their support once the program begins:**

- Schedule a visit to the newsroom once it starts to praise the staff and let them present all they've accomplished so far and their plans for the next semester. And ask them how you can best support them.

- Devote a bulletin board to the publication where the staff can post their photos and bios and print-outs of the latest articles or issue. They should also be able to post information about joining the newspaper or club, any audience polls, surveys and contests.
- Invite the news team to make an announcement to the school in the morning whenever new articles are published.
- Encourage other staff to have their own classes take time to read the newspaper or news site and write letters to the editors.
- Encourage other teachers to read a local/neighborhood newspaper or news site during class and write letters to the editor about topics of concern to teens.

***We are looking to work with schools that are eager to provide a responsible forum for student voice and true experiential learning — and who are willing to invest the time and effort necessary into starting a successful and sustainable program. Please see our FAQ section below for more details about the financial commitment and ways to manage student newspaper expenses.***

#### **Application Process:**

You can access our application [here](#). Applications are due **April 11**, and Press Pass NYC will inform finalists by **April 25**. Finalists will be asked to schedule meetings with Press Pass NYC and their administration before the fellowship officially begins in June.

#### **Program Costs:**

Press Pass NYC is now charging a scalable fee of up to \$25,000 over three years to those schools that are able to pay. This sliding scale fee is determined by going over each school's individual needs and demographics. Once a fee is determined, up to 50% is due at program start (July 2025); the remaining 50% is due over the course of the next two years.

Checks should be made payable to The Fund for the City of New York, a NYCDOE Approved Vendor, and please note "Press Pass NYC" (SLP) on check or in accompanying letter; mail check to:

Fund for the City of New York  
Attn: Chrysoula Kapelonis  
121 Sixth Avenue, 6th Floor  
New York, NY 10013

#### **Eligibility Requirements:**

- Applicants must work at a New York City public school (Department of Education or charter). Private schools and other organizations may also apply, however full fee for service will be charged.
- Applicants must plan on remaining at their schools for at least three years.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What traits are you looking for in fellows? What makes a strong application?**

We are looking for candidates/applications with the following characteristics:

- A sincere appreciation for journalism and for the ways a school news publication can positively impact both individual students and a whole school community
- A firm belief in empowering students as leaders and communicators
- Experience within a school community and a commitment to remaining at that school for several more years
- A clear and well thought out vision for the school journalism program and how it will be sustained over the years, considering costs, student engagement, and scheduling. We expect (and encourage!) fellows' ideas to evolve throughout the fellowship, but we are looking for those who have put in the time to craft a detailed proposal as a starting point.
- Experience teaching English Language Arts, journalism, or related subjects is a plus but not required

### **What are the fellowship workshop dates, and where will they take place?**

We are still finalizing our full school year calendar, but the virtual summer bootcamp will be August 11-15, 2024, and monthly virtual cohort meetings will be held the second week of the month, September-June, after school hours. Professional development days will be official PD days per the NYCDOE calendar: November 5 (Election Day, with a special Election Day program); January tbd and June 5-6). Additional PD days for advisers AND their staffs will be scheduled at the start of each semester.

### **I'm worried I might have a conflict with some of the dates. Should I still apply?**

We require participation in all fellowship activities, but all virtual programs will be recorded and available in case of extenuating circumstances. If you're worried about your availability in one particular month, please still apply and describe the potential conflict at the end of your application. If you have ongoing conflicts (for instance, if you are enrolled in a graduate program that meets after school), please reach out to us and we can discuss whether it makes sense for you to apply.

### **Do you have a preference for print versus online publishing?**

We are equally excited by both! We are looking for thoughtful proposals that make the case for why one format (or a combination) is the best fit for your specific school context. This rationale could be based on cost, audience, available resources, student interest, etc. (Be aware, though, that printing can cost hundreds of dollars per issue while online publishing costs far less, and while Press Pass NYC can subsidize online printing expenses in some cases, we cannot sustain ongoing printing costs. If print is your preference, please check costs and confirm this expense can be covered indefinitely. A pros/cons evaluation with your students is a good place to start. **Note: publishing costs, online or print, are the full responsibility of the participating school.**

### **Do you have a preference for during-school or after-school programming?**

Again, we are open to any format - and ideally a combination of formats, including in-school elective classes, extracurricular clubs, or other time slots (e.g. during lunch or before school). Be creative! Please clearly explain why the format you chose works best for your school in terms of scheduling, student involvement, cost, etc.

### **Some critical things we've learned, however:**

- Elective classes to which students are randomly assigned do not work; for a successful newspaper program, student choice is paramount.
- Elective classes for seniors do not work; senioritis is a real thing...plus once those seniors graduate, all the skills they learn graduate with them.
- Even with a scheduled class, additional scheduled extracurricular club time provides students with much needed extra time and camaraderie and enables students whose class schedules conflict but who can be a real asset to participate, too - so we highly recommend both.
- Journalism units can easily be integrated into all ELA classes, much to the benefit of a student newspaper program.
- Journalism can also be incorporated into a work-based-learning or CTE program or Seal of Civic Readiness pathways.
- Relying solely on a club that meets just once a week is unfortunately rarely a successful model. Inevitably, students have to miss meetings or meetings have to be cancelled and establishing a productive - and fun - rhythm is quite hard. We realize, though, this can be a reasonable first, fellowship year option, allowing teachers time to get a feel for a new and different subject and students time to become more enthusiastic about choosing an elective class the following year.

### **Can I apply with another staff member at my school if we want to run the journalism program together?**

We will gladly consider applications from pairs of educators at a single school. In your application, please make the case for why you would be a strong team, including how you would share responsibilities and what experiences and perspectives you each bring to the table. Please note that our fellowship stipend is distributed per school, not per fellow, so you would need to split the funding if applying as a team of two.

### **Can I apply if my school already has a journalism program, one that I would like to revamp or expand?**

The goal of the fellowship is to support the creation of robust, thriving journalism publishing programs that have a deep and sustained impact on their school communities. If you believe your school's existing program is not meeting that goal and have a vision for how to improve the program's current structure, we encourage you to apply to the fellowship. In your application, please explain why a dramatic redesign of the program is necessary and describe what these changes would look like in as much detail as possible.

**Can I apply if I want to start a literary magazine or other type of publication?**

Right now, our program is solely focused on news publications. However, your publication could include a creative section featuring students' stories, personal essays, and artwork. Please feel free to pitch out-of-the-box ideas for what types of writing your publication might highlight, so long as it will be first and foremost a journalistic publication.

**Do I need my school's approval in order to apply?**

Not to apply, but you will need to collaborate with your administration (in terms of scheduling, funding, etc.) if selected. We view principals as dedicated partners in starting thriving school journalism programs and ensuring teachers are fully supported. Therefore, we recommend that applicants discuss this fellowship with school administration in advance, and if you're accepted, we will schedule a meeting with you and your administration and they will need to sign an official partner school agreement.

**How much funding will Press Pass NYC provide me and/or the newspaper program, and what will this fellowship cost my school?**

Press Pass NYC highly values teachers' work and are committed to providing financial support in the form of two stipends:

- \$1000 for participation (not to be in place of any per session or overtime compensation)
- Grants for club/class expenses (for example: equipment, snacks, travel, materials) and Journalism Conference registration

As an organization, we will also try to negotiate bulk discounts for relevant services (e.g. printing) when applicable.

Beyond that, the school will be responsible for the ongoing costs of maintaining a student news publication (including any additional costs incurred during the fellowship year). These costs might include printing fees, a SNOsites subscription or website domain hosting, and a standard teacher stipend or per session pay for running something far more demanding than your average after-school club

**What if my school can't commit to financially supporting a publication?**

We don't want a school's inability to pay to affect its participation in the fellowship, but we cannot provide any funding beyond the amounts detailed above. We also want your school to demonstrate a real commitment to a student news publishing program, and making a financial investment is an important way to do that. We would be glad to brainstorm ways to make a news publishing program financially feasible for your school (in addition to the ideas in the previous response); please reach out to Press Pass NY Director, [Lara Bergen](#).

**How many fellows will be selected for the fellowship cohort?**

The final number of fellows will depend on the number of strong applications received and the resources we as an organization are able to access. We expect the fellowship to include a maximum of fifteen teachers.

### **Why the three-year commitment (fellowship year + two additional years)?**

We want to set clear expectations that establishing a sustainable journalism program plus a meaningful student news publication that is truly part of the school culture requires at least three years, and we want to invest in schools with a long term vision and know that even if a teacher or administrator leaves or funding circumstances change, student journalism will continue. After three years, our goal is for the program to be an established feature of the school, like any other long-running club or program, and Press Pass NYC's support will no longer be needed.

Our vision is further that at the end of year one, fellows will nominate one or two students to participate in the year-round Student Journalism Leadership Fellowship program the following school year.

### **What does a full three-year cycle of working with Press Pass NYC look like?**

#### **SCHOOL YEAR 1: EDUCATORS PARTICIPATE IN THE ADVISER FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM**

**August:** "Beginner" Adviser Bootcamp - 5 days

**Sept - June:**

For Advisers: PD Days / Monthly Zooms / Mentor / Volunteers / Stipend

For Students: Opportunity to attend PPNYC Saturday Student Journalism Workshops

**June:** Recommend students for summer stipended Student Editor Bootcamp and next year's Student Journalism Leaders Fellowship

#### **SCHOOL YEAR 2: INTERESTED STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN EDITOR BOOTCAMP AND STUDENT JOURNALISM LEADERS FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM; ADVISER FELLOWS ARE ENCOURAGED TO PARTICIPATE IN YEAR 2 PROGRAMMING**

**August:**

For Advisers: "Intermediate" Adviser Bootcamp - 3 days

For Students: Student Editor Bootcamp - open to any interested students (Student Fellows will be selected from these participants)

**Sept - June:**

For Advisers: PD Days, volunteers & mentors

For Students: Editors are invited to apply for our stipend Fall or Spring Student Journalism Leaders Fellowship program Fellows meet virtually, every two weeks; monthly student workshops open to any interested students.

#### **SCHOOL YEAR 3: INTERESTED STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN EDITOR BOOTCAMP AND STUDENT JOURNALISM LEADERS FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM; ADVISER FELLOWS ARE ENCOURAGED TO CONTINUE TO ATTEND VIRTUAL AND IN-PERSON EVENTS**

**Can I apply if I work at an elementary school?**

Unfortunately we are not yet offering programming for elementary school educators. If that changes, we will post an announcement on our website. We still encourage you to [email us](#) to express your interest!

**Can I apply if I work at a private school?**

Private schools and other organizations may also apply, however full fee for service (\$10,000 per year) will be charged.

**Can I still work with Press Pass NYC if I am not selected for the fellowship program?**

Press Pass NYC's mission is to help ALL schools start and sustain student journalism programs—so yes!—and we are happy to consult and assist as much as possible and include you in our newsletter and fee-for-service programs such as P.D. days. It will simply be on the part of the teacher/adviser to be proactive and reach out to us for support as much or as little as necessary and to schedule and pay for their own journalism conferences and other professional development programs.

**Who will lead the workshops?**

The workshops will be led by a variety of professionals in the education and journalism worlds along with Press Pass NYC staff. Please see our [website](#) for names and bios of our wonderful educational consultants and program leaders.

**I would like to support the fellowship. What are my options?**

First of all, thank you! We welcome both monetary and in-kind donations including journalism supplies (reporters' notebooks, office supplies, cameras, voice recorders, etc.) to space where we could host our workshops. (We are a nonprofit corporation and a fiscally sponsored project of the Fund for the City of New York, a 501(c)(3) organization, and all contributions are fully tax-deductible.) Please reach out to Fellowship Director [Lara Bergen](#) if you would like to discuss ways to contribute to our work.

We would also appreciate your help in spreading the word about this opportunity—feel free to post about the fellowship ([application linked here](#)) on social media and in your networks.

**Who should I reach out to with additional questions about the fellowship, or if I would like to get involved as a workshop leader?**

Please contact Press Pass NYC Founder and CEO Lara Bergen at [lara@presspassnyc.org](mailto:lara@presspassnyc.org).