



*Advancement of the Highest Quality Education Research and
Its Use in Policy Formation and Practice*

July 2010

Dear Applicant:

Below you will find instructions and an application for the National Academy of Education/Spencer Postdoctoral Fellowship.

This postdoctoral fellowship was established in 1986 by the National Academy of Education (NAEd) with a grant from the Spencer Foundation. The fellowship program is intended to support early career scholars working in critical areas of education research. To that end, the NAEd seeks to fund proposals that promise to make significant scholarly contributions to the field of education and to advance the careers of the recipients.

Applications are reviewed by NAEd members and judged on the applicant's past research record, career trajectory, and the quality of the project described in the application. To date, the Academy has funded more than 680 postdoctoral fellows. This year we anticipate receiving over 200 applications, and will be awarding up to twenty fellowships to begin during the 2011 – 2012 academic year.

The fellowships of \$55,000 are intended as salary replacement for one year and to cover other research expenses outlined in the proposal. Fellows must not receive other funding in support of their proposed research during the grant period. Fellows will also receive additional funds to attend required fellowship retreats and NAEd meetings.

Please read all of the enclosed materials carefully as you prepare your application, and feel free to contact us by e-mail at info@naeducation.org if you have questions.

Sincerely,

Gregory White
Executive Director

Jennifer Tinch
Director, Membership &
Professional Development Programs

**2011 NATIONAL ACADEMY OF EDUCATION/SPENCER
POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM**

INSTRUCTIONS TO APPLICANT

Please read carefully before submitting an application

Purpose

The National Academy of Education/Spencer Postdoctoral Fellowship supports early career scholars working in critical areas of education research. This nonresidential postdoctoral fellowship funds proposals that make significant scholarly contributions to the field of education. The program also develops the careers of its recipients through professional development activities involving National Academy of Education (NAEd) members.

Eligibility

- Applicants must have received their PhD, EdD, or equivalent research degree between January 1, 2005, and December 31, 2010.
- Applications must be made by the individual applying for the fellowship. Group applications will not be accepted.
- The proposed project must be a research project.
- Applicants may not be employees of the Spencer Foundation or the National Academy of Education.

Stipulations

- Fellows may not receive other concurrent funding for their project during the tenure of their fellowship. Also, Fellows may not hold a separate grant from the Spencer Foundation during their fellowship period.
- Fellows must receive approval for their project from a human subjects review board prior to release of fellowship funds.

Award

The fellowship of \$55,000 will be awarded to up to twenty scholars in 2011. Fellows may elect to take the fellowship full-time over one year or half-time over two years. This is a non-residential fellowship. Scholars may conduct their research at their home institution or at another research site that they have arranged. During their fellowship tenure, fellows are required to attend professional development retreats hosted by the NAEd and to make a formal presentation of their research to the Academy. The NAEd provides additional travel funds for fellows to attend these meetings.

Selection Process

Complete and eligible applications will be reviewed by a selection committee of members of the National Academy of Education. Forty to fifty semifinalists will be selected and notified of their

status in March 2011. Semifinalist applications will be reviewed by two additional NAEd members and finalists will be notified of the award in May 2011.

Preparing the Application

Please submit **six (6) collated copies** of the complete application package. The items to be included are listed below. You may use paper clips, binder clips or rubber bands to keep your sets of **collated** materials together. *Do not staple, bind materials, or use folders.* Submit only **SINGLE** sided materials.

*In addition to sending hard copies of the application, you must submit **one electronic version** of your **complete application** (in PDF format) to info@naeducation.org. Specific details are listed under application components.*

Be sure to use only current 2011 application materials. Use only white paper. Please do not use type smaller than 12 point Times New Roman (250 words per double-spaced page) and do not reduce your documents—the selection committee members must be able to read what you send. All applications and documents **MUST** be submitted in English.

Do not include cover letters, a table of contents, or any additional materials.

Please Note: The selection committee has recommended that the National Academy of Education reject, upon arrival, any application that does not conform to these guidelines. *Please read and follow the guidelines carefully to insure that your application is not rejected prior to review.* Please pay close attention to word and page limits.

Application Components:

1. **APPLICATION FORM:** Only applications from individuals will be accepted. For legibility, type or print clearly in black ink. Be sure to sign the original application in **blue** ink.
2. Provide an **ABSTRACT** of no more than **200 words** (one page, double-spaced) of the proposed research project.
3. Provide a **PROJECT DESCRIPTION** of no more than **2,500 words** (ten pages, double-spaced). You may attach one extra page (single-spaced) for references. Include the goals of the project, its contribution to the field, and the significance of the work, especially as it relates to education. Provide evidence that you have a solid plan for conducting the proposed study. Describe the research methods, data analysis, and interpretation techniques. Describe the manner in which the outlined inquiry is part of a larger context of work, and give examples of that larger context. Your project description will be read by educators with varying backgrounds; please write your description in terms understood by a broad educational audience and avoid the use of esoteric terminology. Please refer to the “Guidelines for Writing a Proposal for the National Academy of Education/Spencer Postdoctoral Fellowship” below for suggestions.
4. Provide a **CAREER STATEMENT** of no more than **500 words** (two pages, double-spaced) in narrative, describing the professional autobiographical context in which the interests to be pursued in your proposal have developed. Indicate your future plans as far as they have been formulated, and the ways in which the proposed research contributes to your long-term professional goals.

5. Provide an **EXAMPLE OF YOUR PAST RESEARCH RELEVANT TO EDUCATION** that you believe demonstrates your promise as a researcher and your ability to complete the proposed project. The example is limited to a total of **twenty (20) double-spaced pages** (including references). You may submit a chapter of a book, an article, or other research. Your writing sample may be published or unpublished. If you do not have an example that is within the twenty-page limit, you may edit a longer piece. You must submit English translations of your "Example of Past Research" if it was published in any other language.

6. Provide a **CURRICULUM VITAE/RESUME**. Please include all of the following items or your application will be considered incomplete:

- **Education** beyond high school (include any professional education beyond the highest earned degree), beginning with most recent program of study; do not use acronyms. Be sure to include name of institution, location, major/minor, degree, and date awarded.
- Previous related **employment**, beginning with most recent; do not use acronyms. Be sure to include title, organization name, location, and dates.
- List **honors**, awards or fellowships received; do not use acronyms. Please include title and date.
- List of **publications** and research relevant to education.

7. **REPEAT APPLICANTS ONLY: PROJECT SUMMARY**. Repeat applicants must provide title and one paragraph summary of their previous proposal(s) for every year applied. Collate this information within the six copies of the current year materials behind your curriculum vitae/resume.

8. **REFERENCE LETTERS**. Send a copy of the **Evaluation Instructions and Optional Form** and your project description (not one of the six you send to us) to each of three individuals of your choice; be sure to write your name on these forms. Have each referee seal their evaluation in an envelope and sign the back of the envelope across the seal.

- Preferred method: Collect the envelopes and include all three sealed envelopes as part of your application. You should reassure your referees that their recommendations will remain confidential once returned to you in the sealed envelope.
- Alternate method: If your recommenders prefer to send their recommendations directly to our office, we will accept them separately from your application, but letters **must** be postmarked by the **November 5, 2010** deadline for your application to remain eligible.

Only three referee evaluations will be used. If you request more than three, we will use **ONLY** the first three received in our office. Please mail your referee forms to your recommenders early. You need to allow sufficient time to insure that your referees return their evaluations to you in time to meet our application deadline. We must receive original reference letters. Reference letters should *not* be sent via email or fax.

9. Please stamp and self-address a **REPLY POSTCARD** (applicant supplies); we will return it to you as an acknowledgment of our receipt of your application. We will not send acknowledgments without a stamp affixed to the reply postcard, with the exception of foreign applications.

ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION OF THE COMPLETE APPLICATION: In addition to sending hard copies of the application, you must submit **one electronic version** of the **complete application** (excluding reference letters) in PDF format to the following email address: info@naeducation.org. Use the following format for the PDF file name: YourLastName.NAEDSP.pdf.

Please note, due to the volume of applications received, NAEEd cannot confirm receipt of your package via telephone, and it may take several weeks before you receive your reply postcard. We suggest sending your materials via an expedited mail carrier and tracking your package directly through those services.

FOREIGN APPLICATIONS: This is a NON-RESIDENTIAL FELLOWSHIP; international applicants are encouraged. We recommend that foreign applications be mailed at least one month in advance of the deadline via first-class airmail, or via an express carrier service that guarantees delivery by our due date.

All materials must be postmarked by no later than **November 5, 2010**.

LATE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.

Send six collated copies of the full application, three completed referee forms, and a postcard to:

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF EDUCATION
Postdoctoral Fellowship Program
500 Fifth Street NW, #307
Washington, DC 20001

Please see checklist on page 11.

GUIDELINES FOR WRITING A PROPOSAL FOR THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF EDUCATION/SPENCER POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP

Below are some of the questions that the Selection Committee uses in its discussions of applications:

- I. Is the application appropriate for this program?
 - a. Is the project an education research project?
 - b. Does the proposal meet the fellowship's goals and purpose?

- II. Does the proposal show an in-depth knowledge of relevant educational research in the field?
 - a. Does it review and critique relevant and important previous studies in the area of the proposal's research?
 - b. If the applicant might profit from access to particular individuals and resources, does the proposal mention who/what they are?

- III. Does the proposal specify an appropriate research design and method to collect and analyze the data?
 - a. Is the design and are the methods appropriate to the research question?
 - b. Will that design allow the researcher to find the answers to the research questions posed?
 - c. Is there clarity and specificity regarding the proposed analyses?
 - d. To the extent possible, does the proposal anticipate the shape of possible findings or the results of the inquiry, and indicate what conclusions could be drawn?

- IV. Does the proposal specify how the project will contribute to and extend educational knowledge?
 - a. What relevance does the project have to education?
 - b. Does the project address an important educational issue?
 - c. Will the project enhance educational knowledge in a critical way? Does it explain why this knowledge is worth pursuing or how will it benefit education?

- V. Can the project be completed within the time frame the fellowship allows?
(One year full-time or two years half-time.)

- VI. Is this a well-written proposal?
 - a. Is the proposal written for a general academic audience and not for specialists in one discipline/research area?
 - b. Is the organization and structure of the proposal clear? Does it define terms and procedures, etc.?

- VII. Does the proposal have a new way of thinking about or fresh approach to a persistent and important educational problem or issue?

Before submitting your proposal it can be very helpful to get feedback from colleagues you know and respect, people who can provide constructive criticism and who are not your mentor or your immediate collaborator. It may be especially helpful to enlist a colleague whose focus is different from your own to ensure your proposal can be understood by readers from a different disciplinary background.

We also recommend reading "The Art of Writing Proposals," an article published by the Social Science Research Council which is available on their website at:

http://www.ssrc.org/fellowships/art_of_writing_proposals.page

13. Please tell us where you learned about this program: Ad (Please specify publication) _____
Brochure Person Internet (Please specify website) _____ Other _____

14. In fifty words or fewer, explain why this study is needed and important:

15. In fifty words or fewer, complete the sentence: Most scholars in the field now believe...; as a result of my study...

16. Names, addresses, and phone numbers of the referees to whom you have sent referee forms and proposals:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

If awarded a National Academy of Education/Spencer Postdoctoral Fellowship, I agree: to sign a written agreement to perform the research described in this application; that no funds will be used for overhead or indirect costs and that I will work to complete the proposed project full-time for one year or half-time for two contiguous years; that I will attend up to three meetings as requested by the National Academy of Education (NAEd); that I will provide reprints, progress reports, and financial reports as requested by NAEd; and, to release any information contained in my application or attachments to NAEd. I understand that I am expected to engage in no other work or to devote half-time to the project I propose, and that I may not be the recipient of any other financial award to support the project described in my application during the fellowship period. I understand that I am solely responsible for complying with federal regulations pertaining to human subjects review and must provide NAEd with written approval of a review if I am awarded a fellowship. I attest that the information provided in this application is true to the best of my knowledge.

(SIGNATURE) *Send copy with original signature in blue ink—application will not be accepted otherwise* (DATE)

Send six (6) SIGNED copies of this application (one copy should be an original) and required attachments to:

<p>National Academy of Education Postdoctoral Fellowship Program 500 Fifth Street NW, #307 Washington, DC 20001</p>
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The electronic version of your complete application should be sent to: info@naeducation.org.

Application and all materials must be postmarked by **November 5, 2010**.
We will not accept late applications. (www)

List of Categories for Use on Application Form Questions #5 and #12

Please choose the one category for each question that best describes your project and enter your selection on the application form. These categories are used for statistical analysis, so please do not select more than one.

For Question 5: What is your special interest/field of study within education?

- Administration
- Adult/Vocational Education
- Anthropology
- Art Education
- Citizenship/Civic Education
- Cognitive Development
- Cognitive Sciences
- Comparative Education
- Copyright Law and Policy
- Curriculum & Instruction
- Early Childhood Education
- Economics of Education
- Educational Policy
- Educational Psychology
- Foundations/Philosophy
- Gender Studies
- Higher Education
- History of Education
- Human Development
- Human Rights Education
- Information Technology
- International Education
- Learning Sciences
- Linguistics
- Literacy, Language & English Education
- Mathematics Education
- Medical Education
- Music Education
- Philosophy of Education
- Physical Education
- Politics of Education
- Research Methodology-Measurement
- School Reform
- Science Education
- Second Language Learning/Bilingual
- Social Studies
- Sociology of Education
- Special Education
- Teacher Education
- Urban Education
- Other Education (please specify)

For Question 12: In what discipline or field would you place this study?

- Anthropology/Ethnography
- Bilingual Education
- Behavioral Sciences
- Comparative Education
- Cultural Studies
- Economics
- Education
- Educational Leadership
- English/Literary Studies
- Geography
- Higher Education
- History
- Human Development
- Human Rights Education
- Law
- Linguistics
- Literacy Education/Reading/Language Development
- Mathematics Education
- Medicine
- Multicultural Education/Ethnic Studies
- Music Education
- Pedagogy
- Philosophy
- Physical Education
- Policy Studies
- Political Science
- Politics of Education
- Psychiatry
- Psychology
- Religion/Theology
- Science Education
- Social Work
- Sociology
- Special Education
- Statistics/Measurement/Research Methods
- Teacher Education
- Technology Studies
- Women's Studies
- Other Education (please specify)

2011 Letter of Reference Form

Name of Applicant: _____

To the Recommender:

The National Academy of Education would appreciate your opinion of the proposal of the above applicant for a fellowship award of \$55,000. **You may use this form or write a separate letter.** Please discuss both the project and the qualifications of the applicant to complete the proposed research. For legibility, please type or clearly print your comments in black ink.

If you choose to write a separate letter please be sure to include the following information:

- the applicant's name
- a numerical rating from 1 to 5 for the project
- your name and signature
- a numerical rating from 1 to 5 for the applicant.

Please seal your evaluation in an envelope, sign across the seal to insure confidentiality, and return it to the applicant well before the due date. If you prefer, you may send your recommendation directly to the NAEd office at the address below. Completed applications, including recommendations, must be postmarked by **November 5, 2010**. Thank you for taking the time to write this evaluation. Your candid assessment is an important part of the application and selection process.

PROJECT (importance, feasibility, expected contribution to education, etc.)

Please Circle One: 5 - outstanding; 4 - highly recommended; 3 - competitive; 2 - marginally acceptable; 1 - not recommended

APPLICANT (qualifications, promise, etc.)

Please Circle One: 5 - outstanding; 4 - highly recommended; 3 - competitive; 2 - marginally acceptable; 1 - not recommended

Name of Referee _____ Position of Referee _____

Institution _____

Date _____ Signature _____

**MAIL TO: National Academy of Education
Postdoctoral Fellowship Program
500 Fifth Street NW, #307
Washington, DC 20001**

2011 National Academy of Education/Spencer Postdoctoral Fellowship

CHECKLIST OF APPLICATION MATERIALS

▶ Gather together the following materials:

___ 6 copies APPLICATION FORM (including one original copy with original signature)

___ 6 copies ABSTRACT

___ 6 copies PROJECT DESCRIPTION

___ 6 copies CAREER HISTORY

___ 6 copies EXAMPLE OF PAST RESEARCH RELEVANT TO EDUCATION

___ 6 copies CURRICULUM VITAE/RESUME

___ 6 copies PREVIOUS APPLICATION PROJECT SUMMARY (repeat applicants only)

___ 3 signed and sealed envelopes containing REFEREE LETTERS

___ stamped and self-addressed POSTCARD

▶ Collate six (6) sets containing one of each item listed above in this order: APPLICATION FORM, ABSTRACT, PROJECT DESCRIPTION, CAREER HISTORY, EXAMPLE OF PAST RESEARCH, CURRICULUM VITAE/RESUME. If you are a repeat applicant, add your previous proposal(s) summary after your CV.

▶ Use binder clips or rubber bands to keep each set of materials together. *Please do not staple, bind materials, or use folders.* Submit only *SINGLE* sided materials.

▶ Please do not include additional materials including cover letters, a table of contents, etc.

▶ Mail all six (6) collated sets plus the three (3) completed referee forms and postcard to:

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF EDUCATION

Postdoctoral Fellowship Program

500 Fifth Street NW, #307

Washington, DC 20001

▶ In addition to the hard copies of the application, submit **one electronic version** of the **complete application** (excluding reference letters) in PDF format to the following email address: info@naeducation.org.

Please mail your packet early. We will NOT accept late applications. Consult with your package carrier service regarding guaranteed postmark by our due date of **November 5, 2010**.