



American Planning Association
Planning and Law Division

Making Great Communities Happen

CALL FOR APPLICATION SUBMISSIONS FOR

PLANNING & LAW DIVISION **DANIEL J. CURTIN, JR. FELLOWSHIP** **2026-2027 ACADEMIC YEAR**

Daniel J. Curtin

San Francisco native Daniel J. Curtin, Jr., a former member of the American Planning Association (“APA”); an expert on the California General Plan, planning law, and land use regulations; and retired partner and of counsel in the Walnut Creek office of Bingham McCutchen LLP, died in 2006. A well-known author, his long list of publications — frequently cited by the California Courts — includes *Curtin's California Land Use and Planning Law*, a preeminent treatise on California land use law, which is in its 40th edition; and *Bargaining for Development: A Handbook on Development Agreements, Annexation Agreements, Land Development Conditions, Vested Rights, and the Provision of Public Facilities*, with David L. Callies and Julie A. Tappendorf (Environmental Law Institute, 2003). (Source: Northern California APA website).

The Program

The Planning and Law Division (“PLD”) of the APA serves those who seek to understand the diverse legal issues that affect the planning profession. The legal issues underlying the planning of our cities and communities are important and essential components in the education and training of those who would become professional planners and land use practitioners. The purpose of the PLD’s Daniel J. Curtin, Jr. Fellowship Program (“Fellowship Program”) is to foster increased interest in the study of land use planning and its interrelationship with the law at the advanced undergraduate, graduate, and law school levels. This will provide increased participation in the planning profession, and ultimately, greater service to communities across the nation. The Fellowship Program is open to third and fourth year undergraduate students, master’s degree students, and certain law students. One fellowship with a stipend of \$4,000 is awarded per academic year. The stipend includes a \$2,000 award and a \$2,000 APA membership and Annual Conference stipend. The term of the fellowship is approximately ten months (the typical length of two semesters or three quarters), from mid-October to mid-August, and will include approximately 100 to 200 total hours of work. The fellow will conduct his/her fellowship duties remotely, *i.e.*, from where he/she lives or attends school.

Fellowship Responsibilities & Benefits

If selected for an award by the PLD Fellowship Committee, the fellow's responsibilities may include, but are not limited to, assisting with PLD membership recruitment and retention activities, and creating web-based educational resources for membership. Fellowship benefits include contact with a network of nationally recognized leaders in the field; access to newsletters, webinars, educational sessions and online resources featuring current legal issues and trends relevant to planning; participation in planning and law networking events; and opportunities for leadership and volunteerism in the planning and law field.

Eligibility

Eligible applicants shall be students who intend to work as practicing planners or legal practitioners in the public or private sector and are:

- Citizens of the United States; and
- Students during the **2026-27** academic year who are:
 - Third or fourth year undergraduate students enrolled in a planning program accredited by the PAB ("Planning Accreditation Board");
 - First or second year graduate students enrolled in a planning program accredited by the PAB; or
 - First or second year students enrolled in a three-year ABA-accredited law school program.**
 - First, second, or third year students enrolled in a four-year ABA-accredited law school program.**

******Law students entering their final year of law school may not apply due to conflicts between bar exam studies and the ability to complete the fellowship.

Application Requirements

Applicants for the Fellowship Program shall complete the attached application form and shall submit all of the following electronically, except for the official transcript:

- A personal and background statement written by the student, describing his/her interest in a career in planning and the law, and describing what impact the student wants to make in the planning and law field. The statement should be single-spaced, with one-inch margins and 12-point font, and no longer than 1,000 words.
- One letter of recommendation in support of the student's application and career goals;
- Transcripts of current course of study: Students should include an unofficial transcript in the electronic application and have an official transcript sent under separate cover by mail. Second year law students should submit law school transcripts, second year planning students should submit planning school transcripts, and first year law or planning students should submit undergraduate transcripts. Students should request official transcripts with adequate time for receipt by the PLD Fellowship Program Administrator no later than **September 30, 2026**;

- Verification of student enrollment (for current students) or a copy of an acceptance letter from a PAB accredited graduate planning school or a law school (for incoming students);
- A resume of work experience and background; and
- The student's signature on the application form.

Incomplete applications will not be reviewed by the PLD Fellowship Committee. To verify the status of your application, send a request to the PLD Fellowship Program Administrator, Erin Lapeyrolierie at elapeyrolierie@goldfarbclipman.com.

Selection Criteria

The PLD Fellowship Committee, appointed by the PLD Chair, will review applications and determine the award winner. Applications will be judged using the following criteria, listed in order of importance:

- Commitment to planning and the law as reflected in personal statement and resume;
- Academic achievement and/or improvement;
- Letter of recommendation; and
- Professional presentation.

As part of the selection process and at the sole option of the PLD Fellowship Committee, the top five applicants may be required to participate in a virtual interview with members of the PLD Fellowship Committee. If required by the PLD Fellowship Committee, the applicant's performance in the virtual interview will serve as an additional criterion for determination of the award.

The Award Process

- The PLD Fellowship Committee meets in October to review applications and to identify and award a fellowship recipient.
- An alternate is chosen in the event the selected recipient for a PLD fellowship is unable to return to school or if a student recipient fails to submit a written acceptance within the stated period after being notified of award.
- Award recipient is required to provide a written acceptance of the award to the PLD Chair within ten (10) days of receiving an award notification letter.
- The PLD Fellowship Program Administrator will announce the name of the award recipient by **October 30, 2026**.
- Upon receipt of these required materials, the first \$750.00 of the award will be paid to the student by PLD. The next \$750.00 of the award will be paid to the student at the beginning of the Spring 2027 semester (or at the mid-point of the Winter quarter, if the student is on the quarter system), contingent upon the student maintaining a satisfactory level of work in the Fellowship Program, as determined by the PLD Chair. The remaining balance of the award (\$500.00) will be paid in the last month of the fellowship term, contingent upon (a) if requested, receipt by the PLD Chair of a written report from

the school stating that the student is still enrolled, and (b) the student maintaining a satisfactory level of work in the Fellowship Program, as determined by the PLD Chair.

- It is the responsibility of the applicant/recipient to notify PLD of any change in address for any and all notices and student membership services.
- Staff will notify the appropriate APA Chapter President of fellowship recipient in their area. Chapters are encouraged to involve recipients in Chapter activities and provide mentoring.

Deadline

The application submittal deadline for the Fellowship Program is **September 30, 2026**. All application information must be received by the PLD Fellowship Program Administrator by that date. Applications must be submitted electronically in a single PDF file and emailed to Erin Lapeyrolerie, Secretary/Treasurer of the PLD, at elapeyrolerie@goldfarblipman.com. PDF files should be titled in accordance with the following example: "JDoeCurtinFellowApp2026." Additionally, official transcript must be received by **September 30, 2026** at the following address:

Cory Rutz
Otten Johnson Robinson Neff + Ragonetti, P.C.
950 17th Street, Suite 1600
Denver, CO 80202

Incomplete applications will not be reviewed by the PLD Fellowship Committee.