U.S. Green Building Council Schneider Fellowships 2016

Summary

The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) is seeking two (2) Schneider Fellows for the summer of 2016. The Schneider Fellows will work with the USGBC Research Program and/or Public Policy Department.

Applicants should apply for the fellowship(s) that (s)he is best suited to fill. USGBC is a mission-based not-for-profit organization with a vision of transforming the way buildings and communities are designed, built and operated, enabling an environmentally and socially responsible, healthy, and prosperous environment that improves overall quality of life. USGBC’s vision is that buildings and communities will regenerate and sustain the health and vitality of all life within a generation.

Prospective Fellows should consider the two available areas of research and applied skills work and make it clear in the application which area(s) would be of primary interest. The first “Fellowship Focus Area” (i) is managed by USGBC’s research team. The second “Fellowship Focus Areas” (ii) and (iii) are managed by USGBC’s public policy team. Matching skills, interest and need, a summer fellowship may include a combination of the below opportunities.

2016 Fellowships Overview

• Fellowship duration: three months, in the summer of 2016

• Location: USGBC headquarters in Washington, D.C. and/or the GRESB.com office in Amsterdam, The Netherlands (depending on fellowship Focus Area and logistical considerations).

• Reports to: Vice President of Research, Technical Policy Director, or Senior Policy Counsel (depending on fellowship)

2 Fellowship Focus Areas (note your order of preference in the application)

(i) Interdisciplinary research on green building and global real estate investment. Summary: The selected Schneider Fellow will work with the Global Real Estate Sustainability Benchmark (www.GRESB.com) team to improve the representation of energy and related environmental, social, and governance issues in the annual GRESB assessment of real estate companies and funds. GRESB is a global information platform that informs over US $6 trillion in capital investment, including $2.3 trillion in real estate. The Schneider Fellow’s research will include targeted
improvements to the GRESB benchmark survey related to portfolio management or property operations to inform institutions such as pension funds, investment banks, and similar organizations.

**Concept:** The Fellow will help prepare for the 2016 release of the 2016 GRESB assessment data, identify process improvements, develop improved assessment criteria for energy efficiency and renewable energy, and assist with data analysis. Depending on the Fellow’s background and interest, the applied research may investigate novel applications of the GRESB framework, such assessment and scoring for school districts, affordable housing authorizes, and public portfolios.

**Applicable backgrounds:** real estate, finance, computer science, energy engineering, green building, building science, technical communication, business administration.

**Location:** This Fellowship Focus Area will require time in USGBC’s Washington, DC headquarters and/or in GRESB’s Amsterdam office in the Netherlands [TBD].

OR

(ii) **Interdisciplinary research on building benchmarking policy.**

**Summary:** The selected Schneider Fellow will work with the public policy and research teams on in-depth analysis of the effect of building energy benchmarking laws that are sweeping the nation. The Schneider Fellow’s research will focus on how cities and others are using this new data stream to advance energy efficiency and to maximize sustainability outcomes, including carbon emission reductions, in these jurisdictions. To the extent possible, the research will consider measurable improvements and trends over time across applicable building types, after a jurisdiction has adopted a benchmarking law. More info available at [http://www.usgbc.org/advocacy/campaigns/benchmarking](http://www.usgbc.org/advocacy/campaigns/benchmarking).

**Concept:** The Fellow will compile data from cities with building energy benchmarking laws; interview USGBC staff, city contacts, and partner organizations; develop an analysis of the different benchmarking requirements, how cities are using the data and the benefits achieved, and make recommendations for other cities considering such measures to support ongoing efforts by USGBC to expand and optimize effectiveness of benchmarking policies in the U.S. Work will build skills in policy research, technical communications, government relations, and advocacy strategy. The Schneider Fellow will be expected to contribute to the GBIG Insight platform ([http://insight.gbig.org/](http://insight.gbig.org/)).

**Applicable Backgrounds:** energy engineering, public policy, real estate, building science, math and applied statistics, technical communications, green building, government.

**Location:** This fellowship Focus Area will require time in USGBC's Washington, DC headquarters and may include travel to complement research activities.
(iii) Interdisciplinary research on energy and climate benefits of green infrastructure features of buildings.

Summary: The selected Schneider Fellow will work with the public policy and research teams on in-depth analysis of green infrastructure, including benefits and policy approaches. Green infrastructure can encompass a variety of strategies, from green roofs and walls to xeriscaping approaches and use of cisterns, among others. Typically, government incentive programs for green infrastructure features derive from stormwater concerns; however, these features can have climate and resilience benefits as well. With more cities making commitments for climate action, green infrastructure could play a more important role. This project will evaluate potential energy and climate benefits from several green infrastructure features, and identify what is known about the effectiveness of local policies to increase the use of these features.

Concept: The Fellow will compile data from the literature on the climate benefits of several green infrastructure features, including green roofs. In particular, quantitative benefits will be summarized in a meta-analysis. The Fellow will discern key factors determining magnitude of climate benefits as well as any significant gaps in available research studies. With this context, the Fellow will review guidelines and samples of city climate action plans, to determine potential linkages between climate action expressed using carbon emission reduction metrics and quantifiable green infrastructure outcomes. As time allows, the Fellow will research several models of green infrastructure policy, focusing on review of any effectiveness data. The Fellow will make recommendations for next steps to improve methods for accounting and incorporating green infrastructure policy and achievement into city climate action plans. In the course of this work, the Fellow will interview USGBC staff, city and state officials, and partner organizations. The Fellow will develop a draft paper presenting this work. Work will build skills in technical and policy research, technical communications, and sustainability planning. The Schneider Fellow will be expected to contribute to the GBIG Insight platform (http://insight.gbig.org/).

Applicable Backgrounds: energy engineering, public policy, real estate, building science, math and applied statistics, technical communications, green building, government.

Location: This Fellowship Focus Area will require time in USGBC’s Washington, DC headquarters and may include travel to complement research activities.