



+POLICY NETWORK  
Call for 2023-2024 **POLICY SCHOLAR** Research Applications  
Applications Due: **NOVEMBER 1, 2023**

The +Policy Network (+PN; formerly, Policy Destination Area), solicits applications from continuous-appointment Virginia Tech faculty who wish to pursue research projects with policy relevance. The overarching goal of the +PN is to integrate, connect, and expand policy knowledge—broadly defined—across disciplines. This call supports the **Policy Scholar** program, designed to enable researchers without policy expertise to obtain tailored guidance by collaborating with a faculty expert.

**Policy Scholar Professional Development Program.** This initiative is designed to assist researchers who lack policy expertise, but who wish to address policy questions in future work. The Scholar will collaborate with a Virginia Tech faculty member who will serve as policy coach or mentor. Examples of possible activities and deliverables include:

- Collaborating on a joint article or grant proposal that has policy relevance;
- Collaborating on developing and disseminating a policy brief or research tool;
- Engaging in regular coaching/mentoring sessions that lead to a Scholar-authored article or grant proposal.

The Virginia Tech faculty member serving as policy collaborator or mentor can be someone the Scholar has worked with before or may represent a new relationship. The +PN has a list of diverse disciplinary faculty who have agreed to mentor that applicants may review.

The policy expert will provide guidance and otherwise assist the Scholar in developing his or her policy-related knowledge. For example, Scholars and mentors might fully collaborate on a policy study; Scholars might consult with their mentors as they develop their project research designs; mentors might help Scholars understand possible theoretical explanations or expectations in the policy context in which they will be working or consider different audiences and applications for their findings. Mentors may also serve as co-authors. As such, applications must include a brief expected collaboration/mentorship plan in their applications. The budget request should reflect an allocation of resources to both Scholar and mentor, with a larger sum assigned to the Scholar (see Application Guidelines, Budget, for details).

Deliverables may include one or more of the following, within 3 years of award: (1) external funding proposal that incorporates a significant policy dimension; (2) academic publication or (3) policy brief. We also ask that Scholars provide the +PN with a brief written progress report at the end of the first year suitable for website posting and by 2026 or research completion, whichever occurs earlier, a policy brief OR summary of the project with a policy implications section.

**By October 18, 2023:** To ensure that potential applicants understand the call, and to offer assistance - including with mentor suggestions, as needed - we strongly suggest that potential applicants **contact Isabel Bradburn ([isbrad@vt.edu](mailto:isbrad@vt.edu)), +PN Director, or Max Stephenson ([mstephen@vt.edu](mailto:mstephen@vt.edu)), Chair, Research Committee.** This date allows sufficient time to develop a reasonable proposal with a mentor by the November 1 due date.

**Summary of general guidance and expectations of award use.** Participants selected for the Policy Scholars program are expected:

- To devote time during AY 2023-24 and early summer 2024 to proposed activities;
- To submit a progress and budget report by July 2024 to the +Policy Network, with follow-up progress reporting annually for the following two years so that the group can track its investments (3 progress reports total);
- To submit a 2–5-page policy brief describing project outcomes upon project completion or by the end of 2026, whichever occurs earliest, for posting on the +Policy Network website (<https://policy.isce.vt.edu>);
- To present a seminar concerning the funded work to the Science, Technology and Engineering in Policy (STEP) seminar series or another +PN forum, as appropriate.

The program is open to all faculty members at Virginia Tech with continuous or multi-year appointments that include research (tenure-track/tenured, collegiate, research). Maximum awards are **\$10,000**.

### **Application Guidelines**

Applications must include: (a) signed cover sheet, including approval of Scholar's department head/chair regarding summer stipend or an internal buy-out for Spring semester 2024 if requested (attached); (b) title of project; (c) Scholar biosketch, CV or description of research training and interests, together with that of the mentor if not from +PN list; (d) A research narrative of up to 2 pages; and (e) budget and budget narrative. Policy Scholar proposals must also include a paragraph describing their expected mentoring or learning plan.

Applications will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- Clearly described, reasonable and attainable (aims) and approach
- Policy content, relevance, or link to Scholar's research program
- Mentoring plan
- The +PN reserves the right not to consider proposals that are unresponsive to the particulars of this call.

**Budget Guidelines:** Maximum grant award is \$10,000.

Funds can be used for

- Summer stipend or stipends not to exceed \$8,000 inclusive of fringe benefits; <https://policies.vt.edu/4296.pdf>. Any summer stipend for mentors cannot exceed that provided the Scholar.
- Spring 2024 course release up to \$8,000 for Scholars, with amount determined by home department buy-out rates and up to \$2,000 for collaborating mentor(s);
- Research assistant support;
- Select materials needed to conduct study (please specify)

### **Submission Requirements and Deadline**

Applications should be prepared using 1-inch margins and Arial 11 font or larger. Submit an e-copy of the complete application and signed cover sheet to Isabel Bradburn ([isbrad@vt.edu](mailto:isbrad@vt.edu)) by November 1, 2023 at 5:00 p.m. Acknowledgement of receipt of applications will be acknowledged within 48 hours and funding decisions will be made soon thereafter.

Visit the +Policy Network webpage ([www.policy.isce.vt.edu](http://www.policy.isce.vt.edu)) to download an electronic copy of the application form.

### **Notification of Award/Availability of Funds**

Funds will be dispersed upon approval of a Policy Scholar project. Any unencumbered funds as of June 1, 2024 must be returned to the +PN.

**Questions?** We encourage questions or discussion about ideas, tracks and any aspect of this call. Please contact the +PN Director Isabel Bradburn (isbrad@vt.edu) or +PN Research Committee Chairperson Max Stephenson (mstephen@vt.edu).

*(Cover page next page)*

**+POLICY NETWORK**  
**Policy Scholar Research Application**  
 Application Cover Sheet  
 (please print or type)

Name of applicant:	Name of mentor:
Rank/Title:	Email Address:
College:	Telephone Number:
Department:	Campus Address:

Description of the project and goal of the scholar program (one sentence each at most):

Support requested for: <input type="checkbox"/> Summer stipend 2024 <input type="checkbox"/> Course buyout spring 2024 <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate Student <input type="checkbox"/> Other (list)	Total Amount Requested:
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Signature of proposed Scholar	Date
Signature of mentor	

When relying on internal funds, the cost of release time to allow faculty members in my department to pursue research/scholarly activities ranges from: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per course. The department is willing to accept funds within this range should the applicant receive the research award. The department understands that the +Policy Network cannot carryover unspent funds from this award. If allowable within their college, the Department may carry over any remaining funds for the faculty's use in the next fiscal year in order to complete their +PN research.

Name of Department Head/Chair (print)

Signature

Date