



# ACLS Leading Edge Fellowship

<b>Project:</b>	Innovations in Child Care Access and Affordability in the United States: A Reporting, Convening, and Mapping Project
<b>Organization:</b>	Better Life Lab, New America (Washington, DC)
<b>Location:</b>	Remote
<b>Stipend:</b>	\$60,000 per year, plus health insurance and professional development funding
<b>Start Date:</b>	September 2021

## ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION

New America is a non-partisan think tank focused on renewing the promise of America. The Better Life Lab at New America works in solidarity with the movement for work-family justice by producing data and storytelling that can advance the public conversations on gender equality, the value of care, and the quality of work, and lead to policy and cultural changes that allow individuals and families to pursue good health and wellbeing. Learn more at <https://www.newamerica.org/better-life-lab/>

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, child care in the U.S. was underfunded, inaccessible, and subsidized by the work of low wage, precariously employed child care workers and early educators. An estimated 51% of Americans live in child care deserts--census tracts without any licensed child care available (Center for American Progress). As overhead costs of operating child care centers have skyrocketed over the last year, advocates say an estimated 40% of existing centers are at risk of permanent closure. Child care scarcity has devastating consequences for children's development, for families' economic security, and for women's labor force participation. In 2021, the Better Life Lab will begin a multi-year project aimed at remaking the U.S.'s patchwork child care and early education systems into federally supported, resourced, and widely accessible care options that allow families across income and race to work and thrive.

A Leading Edge Fellow would play a critical role in this project's success by helping to identify the most promising innovations in childcare, then managing relationships with these multiple, diverse community stakeholders in a future child care system, researching potential child care solutions, and writing up findings about those potential solutions for a lay audience on the New America website and beyond.

The ideal applicant will have experience writing about complex policy and political questions for the public and would be a collegial and outgoing representative of New America while building relationships with and gathering knowledge from a variety of diverse groups and individuals. Additionally, the fellow should have an interest in social transformation around the issue of care and equity.

The project and fellow will be supervised by the program's deputy director Haley Swenson. Additionally, the fellow would attend monthly New America all-staff meetings and weekly Better Life Lab team meetings to coordinate their work. This is a full-time commitment for the fellowship year, including dedicated time for professional development activities.

### Responsibilities and tasks:

- With Better Life Lab colleagues, identify the most promising childcare innovations in the country today, and track expected outcomes, prospects of scalability and transferability
- Manage the BLL's relationship with on-site contacts, to continue to capture details about cost, quality, availability, and equity consequences for providers and families alike

This position is *only* available through the Leading Edge Fellowship program.  
You may *not* contact the host institution to inquire about this position.

- Track, assess, and report on childcare innovations and potential policy implications
- Final report to BLL on the childcare innovations research project, as well as journalistic and editorial pieces on the care crisis
- Convening or workshop bringing together childcare innovators with advocates, end users, and policymakers

**Qualifications:**

- PhD in any field of the humanities or humanistic social sciences. Read more about eligible fields [here](#);
- Excellent written and oral communications skills;
- Collegial and outgoing attitude, interest in collaborating with diverse project partners;
- Interest in public policy, public-facing research, and/or solutions-oriented journalism.

*Preferred:*

- Experience writing about complex policy issues in an accessible manner

**APPLICATIONS**

- Information on the Leading Edge Fellowship Program: <https://www.acls.org/Competitions-and-Deadlines/Leading-Edge-Fellowships>
- All applications must be submitted through the ACLS Online Fellowship Application System (ofa.acls.org)
- Application deadline: 9pm EDT, May 6, 2021

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