



ACLS Leading Edge Fellowship

Project:	Bridging the Digital Divide in Native Nations
Organization:	Institute for Local Self-Reliance (Minneapolis, MN)
Location:	Remote
Stipend:	\$60,000 per year, plus health insurance and professional development funding
Start Date:	September 2021

ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION

Founded in 1974, the Institute for Local Self-Reliance (ILSR) is a national research and technical assistance organization that constructs the foundation and frame upon which communities can take charge of their local resources, their economies, and their environmental future. ILSR challenges concentrated economic and political power, and instead champions an approach in which ownership is broadly distributed, institutions are humanly scaled, and decision-making is accountable to communities. Learn more at <https://ilsr.org/>.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Internet infrastructure in Native Nations has been underfunded and overlooked compared to elsewhere in the country, and the consequences have been significantly exacerbated by the current pandemic. Many of these communities have built their own broadband networks to provide essential service to their residents and assist in meeting the challenges in running small businesses, accessing telehealth, and working and learning remotely. ILSR has compiled the only known database of existing tribal broadband networks in the United States as a step toward understanding the unique challenges those communities face. With the support of ILSR's broadband team, the Leading Edge Fellow will conduct original research and writing in service of developing policy narratives that can be used to support new and existing tribal broadband efforts. This is a full-time commitment for the fellowship year, including dedicated time for professional development activities.

Responsibilities and tasks:

- Research the political, economic, cultural, legislative, and other barriers standing in the way of tribally owned broadband networks
- Document the cost of deployment for tribal broadband networks for an array of technologies
- Research the impacts of and produce material to advocate for tribal control of wireless spectrum, and update existing databases
- Interview tribal leaders on existing efforts
- Participate in storytelling (through case studies and longer reports) which details the economic, cultural preservation, and health benefits of locally owned, affordable broadband access

Qualifications:

- PhD in any field of the humanities or humanistic social sciences. Read more about eligible fields [here](#);
- Familiarity with both qualitative and quantitative analysis; position will not require sophisticated statistical methods, but will require the ability to collate basic demographic data;
- Ability to work independently within the parameters of a project;
- Interest in thinking and writing about solutions to bridge the digital divide;

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

- Commitment to elevating local voices;
- Excellent writing skills;
- An understanding of the history of attempts by the federal government to extract wealth from and assimilate tribes into Western culture.

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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