

Kavli Center for Ethics, Science, and the Public

Graduate Fellowships

Application Deadline ****now extended****: **Monday, July 15, 2024 by 11:59pm PT.**

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2024 Call for Applications

The [Kavli Center for Ethics, Science, and the Public](#) invites applications for its graduate fellowship program.

Discoveries in science and technology are moving quickly from basic research to real-world applications, sometimes with societal-scale impact, and scientists are increasingly encountering challenges that fall outside their expertise. We need a new kind of training that prepares scientists to confront the current and future ethical challenges of their fields, and that creates social scientists, philosophers, journalists, and policymakers who are able to work with scientists and diverse communities to ensure that the applications of scientific discoveries protect and advance fundamental human interests. The Kavli Center for Ethics, Science, and the Public aims to build a transdisciplinary community of research and learning that breaks down barriers between disciplines and across academia and society, to work together to envision the futures we want our scientific advances to create.

The center is launching applications for its next cohort of fellows. We're looking for graduate students in the sciences, humanities, social sciences, and professional schools who are **interested in exploring ethical challenges, advancing solutions, and identifying ways of involving impacted communities and the public in science and technology.** Successful applicants will be offered a **fellowship of 16 months (3 semesters) with modest funding** available to work and study in the center and be a part of a new kind of community.

About the Center

The UC Berkeley Kavli Center for Ethics, Science, and the Public comprises three elements: a “hub,” representing the core activities of the center, where all affiliates come together to address fundamental ethical questions across disciplinary boundaries; “spokes” linking these activities to specific scientific disciplines; and an “axle” connecting the center with the larger society it sits within. Current spoke sciences focus on genome editing, artificial intelligence, and neuroscience. These areas have enormous potential to benefit humanity but also raise questions of practical and existential ethical significance and may affect distinct communities differently. Bringing these three scientific fields together under one center enables the identification of shared challenges and the translation of solutions and lessons learned from one to another. Read more about the Kavli Center [here](#).

The Kavli Center collaborates with many departments and institutes on campus to provide fellows with access to leading researchers and scholars in their fields. Read more about our [structure and core faculty here](#).

Eligibility

Applicants are eligible for the fellowship if they are **graduate students (master’s or PhD) who meet the following conditions:**

1. Enrollment in a UC Berkeley graduate degree program in either
 - a. a science or technical degree program¹ relevant to one of the three scientific spokes²: Artificial Intelligence, Genome Editing, or Neuroscience.

Or

 - b. a humanities or social science discipline, or a professional school, in fields including (but not limited to) Philosophy, Social Science, Economics, Sociology, Ethics, Public Health, Public Policy, Journalism, Business, or Law.
2. Completion of the following degree requirements:
 - a. Completion of the first-year course requirements in the candidate’s home department (for those in the sciences and professional schools) and selection of a primary adviser/PI (for those in the sciences).

¹ Examples of qualifying programs include (but are not limited to) Molecular and Cell Biology Graduate Program, Bioengineering Graduate Program, Neuroscience Graduate Program, or Data Sciences Graduate Program.

² Candidates need not be conducting dissertation research directly in AI, Genome Editing, or Neuroscience, though applicants who are doing so may be preferred.

Or

- b. Advancement to candidacy (for those in the humanities and social sciences).

Overarching Goals of the Program

With the Fellowship Program, the Kavli Center aims to:

- Remove disciplinary silos.
- Advance our understanding of ethical challenges in innovative science, and advance how they can be addressed across different disciplines and diverse publics.
- Strengthen the ability of scientists to recognize and respond to ethical challenges.
- Strengthen the ability of scholars to communicate and collaborate with scientists and other experts.
- Strengthen the ability of scholars and scientists to recognize the value of engaging publics, stakeholders, and communities in the questions our scientific advances raise.
- Support reflection on the role and responsibilities of scientists and experts.

Program Structure

The program is designed to supplement student's graduate programs and existing training in their primary field. We hope to see fellows cross the boundaries of typically siloed disciplines and explore public, stakeholder, or community perspectives in defining ethical applications of science and technology. To this end, the program is structured in three-parts.

Learning & Exploration: Fellows will expand their training outside their primary discipline through weekly colloquia, workshops, and special access to courses and other learning opportunities. The emphasis during this initial stage is to explore new concepts and skills, and gain a common foundational understanding of different dimensions of ethical challenges and opportunities presented by advancements in science, with an emphasis on our three spoke sciences. Fellows will bring their distinct areas of expertise to teach each other and foster collective growth.

Ideation: During this second phase, fellows will continue their exploration of different fields and discussion of ethical dilemmas born from scientific advancements, but will begin to define a small project that will be executed during the third phase. This project will build on what they've explored in the first semester. We ask that fellows stretch their boundaries during this project beyond their primary thesis work. Fellows will pitch

their project ideas to their colleagues and to some of our core faculty and researchers for feedback. The center aims to support fellows in a variety of different project paths. Such a project may look like a small community or public engagement that engages around hopes, fears, or ethical questions about a scientific advancement. It may look like a chapter in a thesis, a public-facing piece about the ethical, legal, or social implications of science, or organizing a convening around a particular issue. Where center-wide projects align with the fellow's interests, a fellowship project may look like participation in a larger research or engagement effort. Lastly, projects could be individual or collaborative with other fellows.

Execution: Following project approval from the Executive Director, fellows will shift to working on their projects. Weekly meetings will still provide ongoing training, but will also include space for sharing works in progress and getting feedback. The center will help connect fellows with experts or resources that can provide additional insights.

We aspire to create a strong cohort of scientists and scholars who will continue to interact during their professional careers. This cohort model has been successful in building other novel fields, through forming strong support and collaboration among current students, postdocs, and program alumni who have moved on to other positions in academia, industry, NGOs, foundations and government. By regularly convening program alumni and fostering connections, we will create a community that goes beyond UC Berkeley to effect positive change in the real world.

Program Elements

- A weekly Colloquium (Mondays 2pm–4pm) represents the core programming for the Kavli Center Fellows. Weeks alternate between formats to bring training, discussion, and work-in-progress support to the fellows.
- Working groups or journal clubs formed around the interests of the fellows.
- Independent time within the center. The center acts as a hub to connect fellows to other experts and to provide support in project development.
- Community building and support for each person's individual development.
- Availability of special opportunities (see below).

Examples of Special Opportunities

The Kavli Center develops pilot projects, new courses, workshops, events, or research and engagement opportunities that are open to the fellows. Below are upcoming opportunities and previous examples.

- Special access to a new spring 2025 course taught by the Kavli Center's Co-Director, Jodi Halpern: "Skillful Ethical Reasoning for Innovation and Health Leadership." This course is case-based yet takes an unusually systematic approach. Each week introduces one of four major ethical theories, showing how the theories relate to each other using real cases in public health, germline gene editing, experimental invasive neuro-technologies, and a range of uses of AI in health.
- An op-ed workshop led by historian and journalist, Elena Conis, and collaboration with a journalism graduate class to write about ethical issues in science for a public audience. Past fellows have had their work submitted to outlets such as Undark, Wired, and Scientific American.
- Participation in projects from the [Berkeley Ethics and Regulation Group for Innovative Technologies](#). One or two fellows may be selected to join the planning group and work regularly with ethics and regulation experts.
- Participation in a collaborative project with the Berkeley Public Library to bring discussions about ethical questions in our three spoke areas to the Berkeley public ([past example](#)).
- Participation in new courses organized by the Kavli Center or its affiliates: for example, the center created two new courses that were offered in [2023](#) and [2024](#).
- The center often hosts diplomats or policy experts or has access to invitation-only events with high-level experts and officials. When fellows' expertise aligns, we regularly nominate or include them in such events.

Expectations

- Regularly attend and contribute to program activities which include presenting journal articles for discussion, contributing to or leading group discussions, helping to organize seminars, and exchanging feedback on work in progress.
- Attend project or skill development workshops and other center events.
- Contribute to growing the Kavli Center community.
- Produce a fellowship project output. As described above, this may be through any number of activities and can include working independently or collaboratively on a toolkit, a white paper, a public/stakeholder/community engagement on a specific topic, a policy or regulatory proposal, a thesis chapter on an ethical dilemma in a science spoke, an op-ed, or any number of meaningful efforts that align with the goals of the center.
- Present your work to the broader Kavli Center community.

- Participate in alumni activities, returning periodically for cohort retreats and networking.

Logistics

Space

Fellows will have access to rotating desk space and meeting rooms in 621 Sutardja Dai Hall.

Start Date and Fellowship Duration

Graduate Fellowships begin at the start of the fall 2024 semester. The first meeting and orientation will be scheduled for the second week of September. Participation is year-round, and will run until the end of Fall 2025 semester (16 months).

Award

The Kavli Center provides an award of **up to \$10,000** to support fellows' participation in the program. This award may be put toward stipend (including summer stipend), tuition, or fees. The mechanisms for administering the award may vary depending on the student's department (past disbursements have been to PIs or via departmentally distributed awards).

How to Apply

Complete the online application: <https://form.jotform.com/241337710113141>

As part of the application, you will be asked to include:

1. An **Interest Statement**: Up to 750 words submitted as a form attachment (see the instructions below).
2. A **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Statement**: up to 250 words via a form field describing your personal background and contributions to diversity, equity, and valuing inclusion of a variety of perspectives and lived experiences. Applicants who address these as part of their interest statement may simply state so in the form field.
3. A copy of your **curriculum vitae or resume** submitted as a form attachment.
4. A **statement of support** from your thesis supervisor or mentor submitted via a separate form (see the instructions below).

Instructions for the Interest Statement

Interest Statements should include the following:

- **Describe the relevance of the Kavli Center for Ethics, Science, and the Public Fellowship to your academic or professional development.** Why are you interested in this program? How will the program help you achieve your career goals or fill a gap missing in your current training and why?
- **Describe your interest areas.** What is the topic of your current thesis work and what interest areas and key learning questions do you envision pursuing in the Kavli Center if awarded the fellowship? While ideas for fellowship projects and outputs will be developed *during* the fellowship program, what projects or work products might you imagine emerging from your time in the center? Is there a question you wish to pursue or a particular area of interest that stretches beyond your immediate disciplinary training? Not all successful applicants will have a pre-defined project and may instead hope to use the fellowship to explore how they might integrate some of the concepts and values of the center into their own research or practice. In either case, interest statements should indicate how you hope to use your time in the fellowship program, if selected.

Statements should be no more than 750 words, single-spaced, in Times New Roman 12 point font and include your full name at the top.

Instructions for the Statement of Support

If you have a PI or academic advisor who supervises your thesis work, we ask that they fill out a form to indicate their approval of your participation in the fellowship program and to provide a 1-paragraph statement of support. This paragraph should help support why you would make a good Ethics, Science, and the Public Graduate Fellow. For those without a thesis supervisor, please have a mentor or faculty member who can speak to your qualifications fill out the statement of support.

Tip: It may help to provide your recommender with some bullet points highlighting why you want to be involved in this program and what makes you an excellent candidate.

Statements of support should be submitted through the following form and are also due **Monday, July 15, 2024 by 11:59pm PT** (**newly extended**):

<https://airtable.com/app98b01wuELiQ4yr/pagO4AyZBYEcfyRNU/form>

Timeline

Application Deadline

UPDATED DEADLINE: The Graduate Fellowship application is **due Monday, July 15, 2024 by 11:59pm PT**. This includes the statement of support submitted by your supervisor or mentor.

Anticipated Timeline

We anticipate notifying applicants of our decision by mid August, 2024.

Start of the fellowship: Second week of September, 2024. Exact date and time of the first meeting will be scheduled around the incoming cohort's schedule.

Questions

Please direct any questions to KCESP-Fellowships@berkeley.edu