



MANDELA WASHINGTON
FELLOWSHIP
FOR YOUNG AFRICAN LEADERS

2027 Fellowship Recruitment Toolkit

Application Period: September 22 – October 13, 2026



OVERVIEW

The 2027 Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders will bring up to 550 Fellows to the United States in June 2027. With your help, we hope to ensure that our 2027 Fellows represent the impressive breadth and expertise of young leaders in Sub-Saharan Africa.

This resource packet features **application information, email templates, and social media sample posts** for you to use throughout the application period. Additionally, advice for applicants is available at mwfellows.info/apply.

Supplemental recruitment resources are available at mwfellows.info/RecruitmentResources, including:

- Fellowship application promotional one-pager
- A short recruitment slide deck for general talking points and visual aids
- Recruitment graphics to share on social media and by email
- Instructions for the 2027 Fellowship application
- Answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs)

ELIGIBILITY

The Mandela Washington Fellowship is open to young African leaders who are:

- Between the ages of 25 and 35 on or before the application deadline (October 13, 2026), although **exceptional** applicants ages 21-24 may be considered
- Not U.S. citizens or permanent residents of the United States
- Eligible to receive a United States J-1 visa*
- Not employees or immediate family members of employees of the U.S. Government
- Proficient in reading, writing, and speaking English
- Citizens and residents of an eligible country
- Not alumni or prior participants of the Mandela Washington Fellowship

* Nationals of countries subject to a full or partial suspension of entry to or visa issuance from the United States are eligible to apply, but selection of finalists from these countries will be considered on a case-by-case basis. See travel.state.gov for more information.

A strong applicant for the Fellowship should have a proven record of accomplishment in business, trade, emerging technologies, governance, and/or security; a demonstrated and clear interest in building and maintaining partnerships with American organizations and businesses that advance shared goals; a commitment to return to Sub-Saharan Africa and contribute skills and talents to build and serve their communities; the ability to work cooperatively in groups and respect others; strong social and communication skills; and demonstrated adaptability and the ability to lead effectively in varying and changing environments.

The Fellowship is committed to a fair and merit-based selection process. Applicants should refer to the application instructions for additional information on eligibility and application requirements.

FELLOWSHIP ACCOMMODATIONS

Disability Support

Individuals with disabilities are leaders across the globe. The Mandela Washington Fellowship is committed to ensuring that Africa's young leaders with disabilities are able to fully participate in the Fellowship through reasonable accommodation and support. The Fellowship's disability support complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which guarantees that people with disabilities can fully participate in American life. Please review the [information for Fellows with disabilities](#) resource for more information.

EMAIL TEMPLATE

On September 22 – Application Now Open Template

Subject: Now Open: 2027 Mandela Washington Fellowship Application

Dear [INSERT NAME],

The application for the 2027 Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders opened today. This is an opportunity for outstanding young professionals from Sub-Saharan Africa to hone their skills through coursework, field experiences, and networking with American experts.

Fellows have the opportunity to:

- Participate in a six-week executive-style institute on a U.S. college or university campus;
- Meet with U.S. Government representatives and public and private sector leaders; and
- Be part of a dynamic network with opportunities for continued career enhancement.

[Start your application here](#)

I encourage you to apply for the 2027 Fellowship and want to make sure you have access to any resources you may need to complete the application. Please visit mwfellows.info/apply to view eligibility requirements, frequently asked questions, application instructions, and more.

Applications are due Tuesday, October 13, 2026.

Sincerely,
[INSERT NAME]

SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

Use this timeline to guide your social media posts. Supplemental graphics can be downloaded from mwfellows.info/RecruitmentResources.

1. Before the application launches (through September 21) – Build Interest in the Fellowship

Sample Text: The application for the 2027 Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders will open September 22, 2026. Eligible applicants may apply to one of three tracks: Business and Trade, Emerging Technologies, or Governance and Security. Learn more: mwfellows.info/apply

2. On September 22 – Announce the Application Launch

Sample Text: The application for the 2027 Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders is now open. Fellows participate in a six-week institute at a U.S. college or university. Apply now: mwfellows.info/apply

3. From September 22 to October 13 – Weekly Reminders

Sample Text 1: Apply now: the 2027 Mandela Washington Fellowship application is open. The Fellowship connects young African leaders with peers, professional networks, and American experts. Submit your application today: mwfellows.info/apply.

Sample Text 2: Have a question about your 2027 Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders application? Review the Frequently Asked Questions here: mwfellows.info/apply. Applications are due October 13.

Sample Text 3: Are you ready to apply for the 2027 Mandela Washington Fellowship? The Fellowship is an opportunity for you to participate in executive-style training at a U.S. college or university, meet with American experts, and join a dynamic network for continued career enhancement. Applications due Oct. 13. mwfellows.info/apply

4. October 12: 2-Day Reminder

Sample text: If you haven't already, be sure to complete your application for the 2027 Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders. Submit your application before tomorrow's deadline: mwfellows.info/apply

5. October 13: Application Closing Reminder (post first thing)

Sample text: TODAY is the last day to apply for the 2027 Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders. Submit your application as soon as possible here: mwfellows.info/apply

RESOURCES

Fellowship Application and Eligibility Information	mwfellows.info/apply
Application Resources	mwfellows.info/RecruitmentResources