ACLS Leading Edge Fellowship 2025

Position Title	Research & Policy Associate
Organization	Coalition for the Homeless
Location	New York, NY
Stipend	$72,000 in the first year, $74,000 in the second year
Benefits	Access to employer health insurance. Professional development funds provided by ACLS.
Start Date	September 2025

ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION

The Coalition for the Homeless (Coalition) is the nation's oldest advocacy and direct service organization helping homeless individuals and families. We believe that affordable housing, sufficient food, and the chance to work for a living wage are fundamental human rights. Since our inception in 1981, the Coalition has worked through litigation, organizing, shelter monitoring, policy work, public education, and direct services to ensure that these goals are realized, and in that time, we have given more than one million homeless New Yorkers a way off the streets.

POSITION DESCRIPTION

The Coalition seeks a Research & Policy Associate to lead data-driven research and assist the Advocacy Department in developing policy solutions to address homelessness and housing insecurity. More specifically, the Research & Policy Associate will leverage qualitative insights gained from the Coalition's access to direct service providers and thousands of homeless clients, and then synthesize them with quantitative analyses of critical datasets on homelessness, poverty, and housing. Working under the direction of the Director of Research and Policy Development, the Research & Policy Associate will use their advanced interpretive skills to translate the results of this mixed-methods research into actionable, evidence-based policy recommendations that address systemic challenges for homeless and precariously housed New Yorkers. Work products will include legislative testimony and policy reports, such as our annual State of the Homeless report, which will be pivotal for supporting our advocacy efforts.

If desired, the Research & Policy Associate will also have the opportunity to become a registered lobbyist, so as to directly engage with the policymaking process. This will allow the fellow to learn the mechanics of lobbying while building relationships with policy stakeholders that can be leveraged beyond the course of their fellowship. Training for any necessary job functions will be provided by the supervisor and other Advocacy Department team members.

By the conclusion of the fellowship, the Research & Policy Associate will have gained valuable skills and knowledge, experience in government relations, and developed a strong portfolio of research-driven policy work. Most importantly, a placement with the Coalition will allow the Research & Policy Associate to help make a tangible, lasting change in the lives of individuals and families in New York City experiencing homelessness—those most in need of support and advocacy. The fellowship tenure is 24 consecutive months, with an expected time commitment of approximately 37.5 hours per week.

Responsibilities and tasks:
- Draft policy proposals and contribute to at least 2 high-impact advocacy reports, including the Coalition's annual State of the Homeless report.
- Co-author at least 3-4 additional short-form pieces, such as policy one-pagers.
- Collect and analyze large datasets on housing and homelessness from public sources, Coalition programs, and Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) requests.

- Engage with clients, social workers, and other practitioners to incorporate first-hand insights into data analysis, enriching findings with humanistic perspectives and real-life experiences.
- Develop data visualization tools, such as dashboards, to communicate findings effectively to stakeholders, including policymakers and partner organizations.
- Support the Coalition's advocacy efforts by preparing evidence-based policy recommendations and participating in issue-based campaigns.
- Attend various meetings, hearings, and conferences both to engage with partners and decision-makers and to enhance knowledge of housing and homeless issues.

Qualifications:
- PhD in any field of the humanities or interpretive social sciences. Read more about eligible fields here.
- Strong qualitative and interpretive research, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills, with an emphasis on social justice issues.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to translate complex findings into accessible, persuasive written narratives.
- Project management skills and the ability to work collaboratively in a team-based environment.
- Strong commitment to social justice and an understanding of structural inequalities, especially in issues relating to poverty and homelessness.
- Exceptional ability to prioritize numerous tasks and complete them within stated timeframes.
- Willingness to develop quantitative skills as needed, such as analyzing large datasets.
- This position is designed to be accessible to PhDs across disciplines, with training available for quantitative methods or other skills, if necessary. The Research & Policy Associate will work within a supportive environment that values humanistic insights, making this an excellent opportunity for fellows interested in applying their expertise to urgent social issues and public policy.

Preferred:
- Familiarity with data visualization tools and dashboards.
- Background in qualitative research methods, such as interviewing and surveying.
- Experience with or interest in community organizing or grassroots advocacy.
- People from communities that are disproportionately impacted by homelessness (e.g., people of color, LGBTQ+, immigrants, and people with disabilities) or with prior personal or familial lived experience with homelessness are strongly encouraged to apply.

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: 9 PM EDT, March 12, 2025.