

## Apply to WPI-State, Class of 2017



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**WPI-STATE** is a policy advocacy and leadership training program for women and trans\* folks who want to build their skills to influence public policymaking at the state level.

Carefully [read the application instructions \(PDF\)](#) and then [start your online application!](#)

### Who We Are

The Women's Foundation of California's Women's Policy Institute (WPI) is a renowned year-long program designed to train community-based leaders in California in public policy advocacy. The goal of WPI is to increase the number and capacity of visionary leaders, their organizations and their communities so that they can become actively involved in shaping and implementing policies that affect the lives of women, trans\* folks and their families and communities.

Widely recognized as one of the most successful policy advocacy training programs on the West Coast, the WPI-State fellowship was launched by the Women's Foundation of California in 2003. In the last thirteen years, the courageous efforts of our fellows have contributed to the passage of 25 new state laws. These laws have drastically improved the health, safety and economic well-being of Californians, and even more state and local policy has been created or impacted by our alumni.

Since 2003, we've trained close to 400 grassroots leaders throughout California in public policy advocacy at the state level. The vast majority of these leaders continue working in policy long after their fellowship

ends: Our alumni are advocates, lawyers, direct service providers, executive directors, public officials, educators and organizers, and collectively they constitute one of the most powerful voices fighting for the health and well-being of disadvantaged communities in California.

Each year the Women's Foundation of California chooses specific focus areas that will improve the health, safety and economic security of California's women, trans\* folks and their families and communities. This year WPI plans to receive applications in the following four issue areas: criminal justice, health, interpersonal violence and reproductive justice. Prior to the application process, we will also be selecting a pre-formed childcare team to work on this year's economic justice project.

Because WPI-State is an experiential training fellowship, our teams will learn about the policy process and research and develop a policy advocacy project (usually a state bill) of their choosing, all the while supported by a mentor who is an expert in public policy work. The fellows will develop relationships with key state policymakers, government employees and allied advocates; select a bill to support or develop; and implement an advocacy plan to move the bill through the legislature.

This year we are accepting applications from individuals as well as from pre-formed teams. If selected, individual applicants will be placed in teams based on overlapping areas of interest. Pre-formed teams, meanwhile, are groups of five people who wish to apply to the fellowship together and who represent different organizations that are already working or want to start working together.

### What You Will Learn and Do

By participating in the WPI-State program, our fellows will:

- Develop legislative and administrative policy advocacy skills;
- Gain knowledge and information about California's policy landscape, including legislative and administrative policy processes;
- Overcome perceived barriers and increase their confidence in participating in the policy process;
- Develop the relationships necessary to do coalition work that advances public policy;
- Produce state policy that reflects the needs of California's women, trans\* folks and their families and communities;
- Increase their participation in state policy formation and implementation;
- Build their communities' capacity to use the policy process to address problems;
- Strengthen their relationships to and collaboration with other social justice organizations and movements in California;
- Create a peer learning environment among state-level advocates;
- Join a network of close to 400 community and nonprofit leaders who have already graduated from WPI-State and WPI-County and are currently working in public policy at the local and state levels.

### Important Dates

**Application Release:** Friday, June 3, 2016, Noon PST

**Online Application Due:** Tuesday, July 26, 2016, Noon PST

**Application Status Notification:** First week of September 2016

**Informational Webinars:** If you plan to participate in one of our webinars below, please RSVP [here](#).

- Wednesday, June 15, 2016: 10:00 AM PST
- Thursday, June 23, 2016: 1:00 PM PST
- Friday, June 24, 2016: 10:00 AM PST
- Friday, July 1, 2016: 1:00 PM PST

For more information or technical assistance, email [WPI@womensfoundca.org](mailto:WPI@womensfoundca.org). No phone calls, please.