



Global Health Advocacy, Access & Equity

Frequently Asked Questions for Host Organizations

Deadline to apply is 2 October 2023

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AVAC and the Fellows Program

1. What is AVAC?

AVAC is an international non-profit organization that leverages its independent voice and global partnerships to accelerate ethical development and equitable delivery of effective HIV prevention options, as part of a comprehensive and integrated pathway to global health equity.

Through education, policy analysis, advocacy and a network of global collaborations, AVAC mobilizes and supports efforts to DELIVER proven HIV prevention tools for immediate impact; DEMONSTRATE and roll out new HIV prevention options; and DEVELOP long-term solutions needed to end the epidemic(s).

- We promote **equity, solidarity, and inclusion** by working directly with affected communities and breaking down complex concepts and barriers to information and services.
- We **put people and communities at the center** of the work we do, integrating sexual health, harm reduction, and HIV prevention.
- We ensure that products and programs are ethically designed and delivered to advance **rights-based** and **equitable** access to comprehensive, user-centered quality care.
- We cultivate balanced partnerships grounded in **respect** and **transparency** through bi-directional learning, capacity building, and priority setting.
- We are **accountable** to the individuals and organizations influencing the conduct of research and roll-out, and to the communities that most need access to products, services, and programs.

While most of AVAC's staff is based in New York City, we have team members in Kenya, Malawi and South Africa as well as other parts of the US and Europe. AVAC's programs, projects and partnerships operate globally with a focus both on high-burden countries and communities where the bulk of HIV prevention research is carried out and where scale-up of proven prevention methods is ongoing or would be most beneficial. More information is at avac.org.

2. What is the Advocacy Fellows Program?

Almost 15 years ago, AVAC launched the Advocacy Fellows program to identify emerging HIV prevention champions, support their efforts, help hone their skills, strengthen the capacity of civil society to shape the agenda for HIV prevention research and influence how fast new interventions move into policy and programs. Today, the Advocacy Fellows program continues, offering 18 months of intensive support to emerging and mid-career advocates to complete an advocacy project focused on HIV prevention and global health equity- from research to programs to structural interventions that address human rights.

AVAC provides technical and financial support to Fellows—both salary and project budget—for the duration of the Fellow's year. The Fellows program is implemented through a close collaboration among the Advocacy Fellow, the Host Organization and AVAC. Advocacy Fellows are housed by "Host Organizations" who are the fiscal and administrative grant partners. Hosts provide daily supervision to Fellows, ensure their projects are aligned with the organization's goals and ensure that their activities and strategies are contextualized in the country/community.

The program is guided by the belief that effective, accessible and sustainable prevention of HIV and other pandemics depends on programs and research that are fundamentally grounded in the needs and priorities of people who need prevention most. Passionate, skilled community advocates are the lynchpin to this process. They explain the science, define priorities, hold stakeholders accountable and influence the field.

A recent independent [evaluation](#) found that *"The AVAC Advocacy Fellows Program is beneficial to participants, and has durable impacts on the Fellow, both personally and professionally. By influencing the Fellow on a personal level, the Fellowship contributes to changes in the HIV landscape at organizational, community and national levels."*

Advocacy Fellows carry out their projects while based at Host Organizations in their home country. Close collaboration among the Fellow, Host Organization, and AVAC is central to the program goals. Host Organizations are critical partners in the Fellowship, and hosting Fellows is an opportunity for the organizations to further develop its own work in this

field. AVAC provides mentorship, training, technical, and financial support to Fellows and their Host Organizations for the duration of the 18-month Fellowship.

This round of applications will recruit the thirteenth cadre of Advocacy Fellows. Eighty-five (85) Fellowships have been awarded from 2010 to 2022. To learn more about alumni and current Fellows and their projects, visit avac.org/project/fellows.

For more general information about the Advocacy Fellows Program, its goals and scope, see the [Advocacy Fellows Program Information Packet](#).

The 2024 Advocacy Fellows Program

3. How long is the 2024 HIV Prevention Advocacy Fellowship?

The Advocacy Fellows Program runs for 18 months, from April 2024 through September 2025. During the initial months, selected Advocacy Fellows and their Hosts will work closely with AVAC to develop their work plans and project budgets.

4. What types of projects do AVAC Fellows pursue?

AVAC supports projects that align with its vision. Achieving a world without HIV, delivering a successful and effective HIV response, and creating a supportive environment for global health depends on advocacy to address biomedical, structural, social and behavioral drivers of HIV and other epidemics.

While biomedical HIV interventions are a critical entry point towards reducing HIV incidence, they are insufficient alone. Effective interventions must be paired with a recognition and commitment to building an integrated, and sustained response. This entails designing programs that meet people where they are, considers who they are, and what they need.

To read more the scope of projects AVAC is interested in supporting, visit <http://avac.org/fellows-alumni/> or reference Section 15 of the [Advocacy Fellows Program Information Packet](#).

Role of the Host Organization and Supervisor

5. What types of organizations serve as Hosts?

Fellows can be hosted by the organization they currently work or volunteer with or an organization with aligned goals. Applicants and prospective Host Organizations are strongly encouraged to hold in-depth conversations when developing their application to establish whether the proposed project goals fit within the Host Organization's mission.

Typically, Host Organizations are:

- Established non-governmental, civil society, faith-based or community-based organizations or research/academic institutions with documented experience in HIV, sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and/or pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response (PPPR) advocacy. Exceptions can be made for others.
- Open to working in HIV prevention, SRH and/or PPPR advocacy and to considering ways to integrate this into their current work portfolio, if not already doing so.
- Open to working with key populations such as people living with HIV, sex workers, LGBTQIA+ and people who use drugs.
- Meet financial eligibility criteria. Host Organizations are required to submit relevant documentation including proof of the organization's legal designation, a copy of the most recent audited financial statements, annual budget, an organizational chart, a copy of the organization's human resources' policies and procedures, and any other relevant information on finance and accounting systems.
- Committed to working with Advocacy Fellows to develop and share joint goals, roles, and responsibilities.

- Assign a Host Supervisor (see below) to the Advocacy Fellow and clearly define expectations of the Fellow in the work plan.

Please note: Only under specific circumstances will current AVAC grantees be considered to host a 2024 Advocacy Fellow. Please contact AVAC (fellows@avac.org) before proposing a Host Organization that is currently an AVAC grantee. See this [list](#) for current and previous Host Organizations.

If you are interested in hosting a Fellow but do not have an interested applicant, please contact us at fellows@avac.org so we can possibly link you to a potential applicant.

6. What is the role of the Host Organization?

The Host Organization provides the organizational home and physical space for the Advocacy Fellow and their project. This includes supervision and support for Fellows' program activities, and the financial infrastructure for administering the Advocacy Fellow's grant. The Host Organization is an integral partner in the Advocacy Fellow's Program.

A proposed Host Organization may be the current organization where the applicant already works or volunteers, or a new organization well-suited to the proposed project. It is critical that the Host Organization and Fellow are well-matched and aligned in their goals. It is expected that applicants and potential Host Organizations have detailed discussions prior to the application process.

Physical and programmatic "home" and supervision for the Advocacy Fellow

Each Advocacy Fellow is housed at an organization in their country. The Fellowship is implemented through a close collaboration that links the Advocacy Fellow, the Host Organization, and AVAC. The Host Organization provides a supervisor who monitors and supports the Fellow's activities and ensures they are integrated into the broader goals and projects of the organization. AVAC provides technical support to the Advocacy Fellows and has regular contact with each Host Supervisor throughout the project. Alumni Fellows also help support Fellows during their Fellowship.

Fiscal and administrative grant partner

The Host Organization is the administrator of and the signatory to the Advocacy Fellow grant. The Fellow will be an employee of the Host Organization and subject to all policies and processes. However, the Fellow is expected to manage their project and their budget, with support from the Host Organization. The Host Organization, with assistance from the Advocacy Fellow, is expected to submit mid-Fellowship and final programmatic and financial reports.

The Host Organization's finance and administration team plays an important role in preparing the Fellow's grant and throughout the execution of the project and should be involved as early in the process as possible. The grant includes financial support from AVAC for: (1) the Advocacy Fellow to receive an equivalent of an 18-month salary and benefits; (2) an activity budget for the Fellow's project; and (3) overhead costs for the Host Organization to cover both indirect costs as well as to support mentorship.

Overhead allocations include 10 percent of the total grant to cover the Host Organization's indirect costs and another 10 percent to support supervision efforts. The 10 percent indirect support is for costs incurred by the organization to support all activities that are not directly spent on the Fellows Program activity — for example, portions of rent, phone, accounting, and administrative staff time. The 10 percent support for supervision is to support personnel costs of program staff who provide mentorship and support to the Fellow.

**Please note that a special webinar will be organized for prospective Hosts of the shortlisted applicants before final selection to clarify program and organizational roles.*

7. How do organizations benefit from hosting an AVAC Fellow?

"Hosts reported increased organizational capacity, advocacy profile and network."

— Fellows Program Evaluation Report, 2020

Hosting an AVAC Fellow provides an opportunity for the organization to strengthen its capacities in HIV prevention advocacy and links the organization to a global network at the intersection of HIV prevention, global health, and social justice. Hosts build their profile in the larger field of HIV; directly link to AVAC and its programs; get involved in new initiatives; and receive the latest information, technical support and training on HIV prevention, other epidemics and

SRH. Please see the list of Host Organizations to learn more about them.

Technical support and capacity building can include: skills training; content-rich webinars on advocacy and scientific advances and other virtual convenings; site visits by AVAC staff and partners; and access to other AVAC programs and staff including the finance and administrative team, both during the Fellowship and as future partners. In addition, AVAC offers specific organizational development training to Host Organizations.

8. Who supervises the Advocacy Fellow?

The Advocacy Fellow has multiple sources of support, consultation, and supervision.

The Fellow will have a Host Supervisor in the Host Organization. The Host Supervisor monitors and supports the Advocacy Fellow's activities. They ensure the Fellowship project and Fellow are integrated into the broader goals and projects of the organization, are appropriate to the context, and are linked to other local or national initiatives and priorities.

The Advocacy Fellow will also work closely with the AVAC Fellows team who, in turn, work closely with both the Fellow and the Fellow's Host Supervisor(s) to provide technical assistance and guidance. The AVAC team is in regular contact with the Advocacy Fellow to support progress in their work plan and its implementation. The team offers technical guidance and links the Fellow to other projects, activities, and contacts that will help advance their advocacy.

In addition, the Fellow will be linked with alumni Fellows in their country and to the greater network which includes all previous Fellows and their Host organizations.

9. Who is best suited to be the Advocacy Fellow's Supervisor in the Host Organization?

Ideally, a Fellow's Host Supervisor should be someone in a leadership role at the Host Organization who has adequate time (minimum of 1 hour/week), interest, and commitment to supervise an Advocacy Fellow throughout the eighteen months of their Fellowship. In addition, the proposed Supervisor's portfolio should be pertinent to the Advocacy Fellow's activities (see Section 16, *Role of the Host Supervisor* in the [Advocacy Fellows Program Information Packet](#)).

- The Host Supervisor is expected to give 10 percent of their time to the oversight of the Advocacy Fellow. This guidance should cover program activities and management. The Supervisor should ensure that the project is integrated into current organizational activities, that the Fellow is on track both programmatically and financially, and, where applicable, working with the Fellow to identify ways to sustain and build on activities after the Fellowship is completed.
- The Host Supervisor is the primary supervisor for the Fellow. They review reports, advise on strategy, and oversee implementation; they are also expected to link the Fellow and their project to other relevant organizational partners and ensure that proposed plans are appropriate to the local or national context. The Supervisor will structure ways to keep the Host Organization at large updated on the project and its progress.
- The Host Supervisor will be requested to join the Orientation Workshop and quarterly teleconferences with the AVAC team. They may also be invited to meetings and trainings organized by AVAC.

10. What are responsibilities of hosting and supervising an Advocacy Fellow? And what type of support do Supervisors receive?

The relationship with the Host Organization is a pillar of the program. While the hope is that the leadership of the organization and the whole staff will be engaged through the duration of the Fellowship, the assigned supervisor and the finance team play a more prominent role.

Workload varies. Some Advocacy Fellows work alongside their Supervisors at Host Organizations with daily exchanges, management, and interaction. Others work more independently, checking in with the Supervisor on weekly or other scheduled intervals. Hosting an Advocacy Fellow involves providing the financial and administrative support for their grant, including payroll and benefits, cash advances, and reimbursement of vendors for Fellowship-related activities, and biweekly or more frequent management on the part of the Supervisor.

When the Fellowship has been offered, but before the Fellowship officially launches in April 2024, the Host Supervisor will be the Fellow's and AVAC's main contact to the Host Organization. They will lead the compensation negotiations with the Fellow and ensure the Host Organization has all the information it needs for the grant to be signed. The Host Supervisor plays an active role in the early months of the Fellowship to support the Fellow in developing their project work plan and budget. The Host Organization is also responsible for preparing the financial and program reports (at the midpoint and conclusion of the Fellowship) that account for activities implemented and funds disbursed as outlined in the grant agreement.

The Supervisor is expected to:

- Participate in periodic calls with AVAC mentors and quarterly teleconferences with other Host Supervisors
- Participate in the Fellows' Orientation Workshop scheduled at the start of the Fellowship (April 2024), which introduces new Advocacy Fellows and Host Supervisors to the program and provides an opportunity for networking and building peer and mentor relationships among new Advocacy Fellows, alumni, and other Host Organizations

The Fellowship allocates 10 percent of the total grant to the Host Organization and another 10 percent for supervision efforts. It is expected that these activities will be incorporated into the Supervisor's current job responsibilities.

The AVAC team will provide direct support to the Supervisor and they will be linked to former Supervisors from their country and beyond. Specific support includes dedicated sessions at the Orientation Workshop regarding the role of Supervisors, Hosts-only group calls, and one-on-one calls as needed. First-time Hosts will be paired with previous Hosts to offer support and mentorship and, early on, an AVAC-Host meeting will be organized to introduce AVAC, the Fellows Program, and Fellow's project.

11. What is the Host Organization's role in the application process?

As part of the application process, the primary Host Organization will be expected to submit information and background documents as listed below. (See [Timeline](#) in Section 22 below.)

- **Phase 1:** *With initial application:* Host Organization information form; Letter of Support from Host Organization
- **Phase 2:** *If the applicant is shortlisted, then they will have to provide the Host Organization's:* Proof of organizational registration; Mission statement or charter
- **Phase 3:** *If the applicant is accepted into the Fellows Program, the Host Organization **MUST** submit the following information:* completed [Host Commitment Form](#); most recent audited financial statement; annual budget; organizational or staffing chart; organizational human resources manual/policies; organizational finance policies; list of organizational benefits package; two external Host Organization references

If the applicant is shortlisted, the proposed Host Supervisor will also be contacted for an interview with the AVAC team.

Please note that current AVAC grantees (hosting a 2022 Fellow or receiving another project grant) should contact AVAC first before agreeing to host an applicant. Existing grantees will only be considered as prospective 2024 Host Organizations in specific circumstances.

Host Organizations can get in touch with the AVAC Fellows team at fellows@avac.org at any time during the application process to ask specific questions and get feedback on the Fellowship, the application process, and required forms.

12. Can organizations apply to host an Advocacy Fellow?

Typically, we accept applications from individuals who propose Host Organizations. However, if your organization is interested in hosting an Advocacy Fellow, please contact the AVAC Fellows team at fellows@avac.org to explore this possibility, as we may be looking to pair applicants with Host Organizations.

If you are a current AVAC grantee (hosting a 2022/23 Fellow or receiving another project grant), please contact AVAC first before agreeing to Host an applicant. Existing grantees will only be considered in specific circumstances.

For more information, please visit [2024 Application Materials](#) or contact fellows@avac.org.

The Fellow-Host Relationship

13. A current employee is interested in applying for the Fellows Program. Will he/she become an employee of AVAC?

No. Advocacy Fellows are employees of the Host Organization and not employees of AVAC. The Host Organization signs and administers a Fellowship grant agreement, which includes the Advocacy Fellow's compensation and applicable benefits (vacation days, medical coverage, etc.), administered through the Host Organization's payroll or other suitable mechanisms. Financially and administratively, the Fellow is housed at the Host Organization, with funding for their time and activities coming from the AVAC Fellowship grant. Description of the Fellow's role and title at the Host Organization is decided between Host and Fellow in each case.

14. If offered a Fellowship, can an employee continue with their current job as well?

No. The Advocacy Fellow cannot have two jobs. The Fellowship is the primary focus of the 18-month program. Most Fellows devote 100 percent of their time to the Fellowship. Of course, it is expected that they will participate in organizational meetings and support larger work, where applicable.

However, if the Fellow is a current employee of the organization and there is mutual agreement between the Host Organization and Fellow that they should retain some specific and limited responsibilities towards ongoing work, AVAC will consider a work plan to accommodate this. In such a scenario, no more than 25 percent of a Fellow's time is devoted to other organizational responsibilities. The Host Organization is responsible for the proportion of the salary and benefits for any non-Fellowship work responsibilities. These arrangements must be discussed with the AVAC Fellows team prior to signing of the grant agreement, and are considered on a case-by-case basis.

15. The prospective Advocacy Fellow isn't employed by the Host organization at present. Do we have to hire him/her for the Fellowship or retain them after?

The Fellow is considered to be an employee of the Host Organization during the entirety of the 18-month Fellowship. They are expected to fit within the organization's structure, bound by the same policies, and receive the same benefits and support that other employees do.

The Fellow does not have to be retained after the Fellowship period.

The Fellows program is designed to build the capacity of the Advocacy Fellows, but also strengthen the Host Organization's institutional capacity for HIV, other pandemics and SRH research and implementation advocacy. We anticipate that Advocacy Fellows will develop and execute projects that are of ongoing relevance to their communities and Host Organizations and, where possible, these projects and the Fellows will be integrated by the Host after the 18-months has concluded. However, the Host Organization is under no obligation to hire the Advocacy Fellow at the end of the project. While some Fellows have been retained at their respective Host Organizations, others have moved on.

16. How do I determine Advocacy Fellow's financial compensation?

Financial compensation is determined on a case-by-case basis in a transparent process consisting of an open consultation with the Fellow, input from the Host Organization, the Fellow's most recent salary, and considerations for equity across the Fellow's cadre.

AVAC is committed to providing compensation that is adequate, fair, and sufficient for the Fellow to work on their project on a full-time basis. Compensation can also include benefits such as medical insurance and retirement, as mandated by local labor laws and the Host Organization's human resources policies. The Host Organization is responsible for paying the Fellow's compensation (provided through the grant) and administering their benefits. This is commonly done through the Host Organization's payroll and benefits program; other financial arrangements such as a consultancy agreement could be considered.

As part of the process for determining the Fellow's financial compensation, Host Organizations and Fellows will be asked to provide information such as pay slips, organizational salary structure, human resource policies, and other information that confirms the candidate's salary history or that of individuals within the Host Organization at

comparable positions and experience levels. This includes the employment code act for the country or any government document that contains mandatory provisions for benefits.

AVAC strongly encourages Host Organizations and prospective Advocacy Fellows to have detailed conversations about salary and benefits expectations as early as possible in the Fellowship application process. In an ideal scenario, the Host Organization and the Fellow will provide feedback from discussions and expectations as soon as, or shortly after, a Fellowship award offer has been made. This information will be used as the basis for setting final salary and benefits. Failure to discuss salary and benefits expectations early in the process can slow the grant-making process and launch of the Fellowship activities.

Every effort will be made to ensure that Fellows receive adequate and fair remuneration at equitable levels across the cadre of Fellows. However, from past experience, compensation may be greater or lesser than Fellows' previous salaries.

17. How will the Host Organization be kept informed about the Fellow's activities?

Each Advocacy Fellow and Supervisor pair is expected to set up mechanisms for feedback and progress updates to the relevant staff at the Host Organization. Each Fellow prepares monthly for both AVAC mentors and the Supervisor. Host Supervisors may also have periodic calls with AVAC staff. Generally, the Host Organization is encouraged to develop a reporting system that meets its needs.

18. What happens when the Fellowship is over—how is the project sustained?

AVAC is committed to helping Advocacy Fellows and Host Organizations build on the experiences of the Fellowship. Midway through the Fellowship, AVAC encourages Fellows, Supervisors, and other Host Organization staff and alumni Fellows to review progress and consider sustainability plans. This can include possible follow-up projects or next steps, and strategies for securing additional sources of funding. In some instances, additional funding may be available for follow-up work through AVAC. In other instances, AVAC may work with the Host Organization and Advocacy Fellow to identify other potential partners and sources of support. In every case, the Host Organization and Advocacy Fellow remain part of the broader advocates' network fostered by AVAC, and will be included in relevant national, regional, and global activities going forward.

19. Where can I get more information on the Fellows Program?

For more information about the Fellows Program, please visit the [AVAC website](#).

For questions about the application process, contact us at fellows@avac.org.

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To stay updated on the state of the HIV prevention field and on AVAC programs, [sign up for our e-mail newsletters](#).

About AVAC

AVAC is an international non-profit organization that leverages its independent voice and global partnerships to accelerate ethical development and equitable delivery of effective HIV prevention options, as part of a comprehensive and integrated pathway to global health equity.

Follow AVAC on Twitter @HIVpxresearch; find more at www.avac.org and www.prepwatch.org.