

AEA Graduate Diversity Internship Program Request for Proposals for 2009-2012 Internship Director

Deadline for Letter of Interest: May 15, 2008

AEA seeks proposals from individuals to serve as the *internship director for the AEA Graduate Diversity Internship Program* for the three-year period of academic years 2009-10 through 2011-12. The internship program is intended to:

- 1) recruit masters and doctoral students from underrepresented groups who already have a strong research background and substantive knowledge about their area of concentration to extend their capacities to evaluation;
- 2) stimulate evaluation thinking concerning communities and persons of color by providing professional development training opportunities for social science, public health, and other research graduate students; and
- 3) deepen the evaluation profession's capacity to work in racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse settings.

The Program builds on existing and natural interest among private foundations and non-profit agencies to improve the quality and effectiveness of evaluation by increasing the racial and ethnic diversity within the evaluation profession. Each year a cohort of students from across the country, with strong research backgrounds and representing under-represented groups within the profession, are selected for the program. Each cohort remains with the program throughout a single academic year. During that time, the students meet to take part in four training programs; participate in an extended internship at a site in their home region; undertake an evaluation project in coordination with their internship site; and receive ongoing mentoring and support from mentors including the Internship Director, Field Placement Supervisor, and an advisor from their home institution. ***Students receive a stipend to support their participation and all travel expenses are paid in relation to the training events.*** This program has operated since the 2004-05 academic year as a partnership between AEA and Duquesne University under the directorship of Dr. Rodney Hopson. Dr. Hopson currently serves on the sustainability task force for the internship program and will assist with transition and planning during the 2008-09 academic year.

Funding: The program has been supported financially by a mixture of funds from grants, internship sites, and AEA. The Internship Director should have experience in seeking funds in support of programmatic activities. We are striving to secure a pool of committed internship site hosts/funders, each of which agrees to support one or more interns each year. This effort began in earnest in 2007 and we believe that we will have in place a set of committed funds to support at least half of the students upon transition to the new Director.

Administration and AEA's role: For this AEA program, the association provides ongoing support. AEA administers all internship site funds and coordinates student payments. AEA provides logistical support for planning and travel related to the four training opportunities, assistance with recruitment and advertising for students, sites,

and mentors, and ongoing capacity building support from the Executive Director. Grant funds may be administered through AEA or through the Internship Director's home institution as appropriate. More generally, AEA provides leadership support through its many volunteers who serve in advisory capacities and intern mentors.

Internship Director's Role: This is a unique opportunity to lead a hallmark program within AEA and the field. The Internship program has a successful track record of securing funds from both federal and private donors. Moreover, the program fosters the development of the next generation of leaders, and positions the Director at the heart of the evaluation community. The service commitment of the Director is consonant with that of a journal editor or the AEA President and the support provided is similar as well. AEA provides for, or directly provides, logistical assistance and administrative support. In the Director's first year, academic year 2009-2010, \$13,000 will be paid directly to the Director's University to support the planning and administrative work of the program. No more than \$2,000 of this allocation may be used to cover overhead costs. The allocation may be used to offset course release costs, to pay for administrative support, or to cover travel costs of the Director related to the program. As with other volunteer leadership positions within the association, AEA will not provide a stipend after the first year; however, funds may be secured for release time through any grants and contracts that are related to the internship program. The Internship Director guides all aspects of the program, from providing strategic leadership and vision, to recruitment and selection of students, to identifying and pairing with internship sites, to development and delivery of training content, to ongoing mentorship and support for student interns, to securing programmatic funding.

Planning for the Future: In addition to selecting a new Director, during this period AEA will undertake a review of the program, the literature, and parallel programs offered via other associations, to identify the best model for meeting the program's goals. Thus, while it is assumed that the internship program will operate using the same basic programmatic framework as has been used to date, the Internship Director for 2009-2012 will also have the opportunity to serve on a task force to develop the long-term program model.

The ideal candidate for Director would:

- Serve on the faculty of a college or university in the United States,
- Have experience working with students from diverse backgrounds,
- Possess both practical and teaching or training experience in the field of evaluation,
- Have a background in programmatic fundraising and/or grant writing, and
- Be able to secure a commitment from his or her home institution as a program host.

Application Process: If you are interested in being considered to serve as the Internship Director, please send a one-page letter of interest to AEA Executive Director Susan Kistler at susan@eval.org by May 15, 2008, briefly stating your reason for applying and your experience related to the bulleted items above. Those who are interested will hear back from the selection team by June 1, 2008 and finalists will engage in a discussion with the selection task force and be asked to develop a more extensive application packet by August 1, 2008. Final selection will be made by September 15, 2008. Questions may be directed to Ms. Susan Kistler at

susan@eval.org or to Dr. Rodney Hopson at hopson@duq.edu.

AEA/DU Current Internship Program Elements – Currently, students in the AEA internship program:

Take part in four extended training opportunities: The students gather in September for three days to receive an orientation to the program, to evaluation, and to culturally responsive evaluation practice. The students attend the AEA Annual Conference for a full week in November where they participate in an evaluation focused service learning project, attend pre-conference workshops and multiple sessions throughout the conference, and re-connect with the director in person to provide updates on internship progress. The students gather again in January for three days to receive further training as well as coaching and feedback on their progress related to their internship projects. They gather for a final time for four days in June at the AEA/CDC Summer Institute to present and receive feedback on their final projects, attend the Institute, and take part in a graduation ceremony.

Receive mentorship and academic advisement. A critical part of the internship program includes the mentorship and advisement support mechanisms provided by an academic advisor at the intern's home institution. Each intern is requested to identify an (evaluation-related) advisor who would be the program staffs key contact about academic matters related to the internship program. They facilitate sponsoring agency placement of intern and aligned the internship program activities within the academic requirements at their home institution. Internship advisors are identified by selected students from their home institutions early in the program year. Facilitating mentors are matched with active senior AEA members with similar research and/or career interests as the internship students.

Participate in an extended internship: As part of their internship program activity, participants are placed with sponsoring agencies in their local vicinity. Applying knowledge and skills received through professional development and at the AEA annual conferences, interns are involved in evaluating programs that serve culturally diverse populations and incorporate the theoretical framework in their evaluation project work. All interns participate in an internship from October through June for approximately 15 hours each week.