



## **Southern Education Leadership Initiative (SELI) Fellow**

The Southern Education Foundation, Inc. (SEF), located in Atlanta, Georgia, is seeking highly motivated and diverse undergraduate and graduate students to join its **Southern Education Leadership Initiative (SELI)**.

Since 1867, the mission of the Southern Education Foundation has been to advance equitable education practices and policies in the South through research, advocacy, leadership development, and technical assistance to help every student attain a high-quality education that propels them toward the opportunity-rich life they deserve.

Candidates will be committed to the belief that education is the vehicle by which all students have access and opportunities for fair chances to develop their talents and attain school success. SELI Fellowship candidates should demonstrate a strong commitment to educational equity and embody SEF's mission and vision.

To learn more, please visit <https://southerneducation.org/what-we-do/leadership-development/seli/>.

### **The Opportunity:**

Launched in 2004 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of *Brown v. Board of Education*, the **Southern Education Leadership Initiative (SELI)** is a unique fellowship program designed to cultivate the next generation of leaders in education and social justice. SELI fellows gain hands-on experience in educational equity through an eight-week summer fellowship where they are placed with organizations across the South, working on projects that promote equity and excellence in education.

As a SELI fellow, you will:

- **Develop** as leaders in education and civil rights
- **Engage** with important community stakeholders
- **Acquire** practical job skills
- **Learn** about contemporary education issues in the South

Fellows are placed in school districts, education agencies, higher education institutions, and nonprofit organizations that focus on advocacy, policy analysis, grant-making,



community organizing, and direct service. Each placement is tailored to match the fellow's skills, interests, and developmental needs.

### **Program Highlights:**

- **Stipend:** Fellows receive a \$5,000 stipend for living expenses, with additional financial assistance available for relocation if needed.
- **Travel Support:** SEF covers travel expenses for orientation and closing meetings in Atlanta, as well as for relocation to placement sites.
- **Comprehensive Training:** A three-day orientation from May 14 to May 16, 2026, in Atlanta, GA provides fellows with tools and strategies for leadership and equity work.
- **Fellowship Placement:** Full-time, in-person placement in an organization across the southern region from May 19 to July 11, 2026, under the supervision of seasoned leaders.
- **Reflection and Networking:** Fellows participate in a closing meeting from July 16 to July 18, 2026, in Atlanta, GA to reflect on their experiences and join a robust alumni network of over 300 SELI leaders.

### **Eligibility and Other Requirements:**

- Must be between 20 and 35 years old.
- Must be currently enrolled in a four-year college or graduate program.
- Must have completed 60 credit hours (the equivalent of junior status or above in an undergraduate program) or be currently enrolled in a master's, doctoral, or professional program at a college or university. No minimum GPA is required.
- All majors are accepted, but you must have a demonstrated interest in education equity and/or social justice.
- Must have excellent interpersonal, writing, and critical thinking skills, with flexibility to respond well to diverse people, settings, and tasks.
- Deadline for the submission of a complete application is **February 3, 2026, at 5 PM ET**. Deadline extensions may be granted on a case-by-case basis. Please contact Amber C. Davis with SEF at [adavis@southerneducation.org](mailto:adavis@southerneducation.org) to request an extension.
- Must only work on assigned projects from the placement site and SEF during the fellowship. Students do not design their projects for this experiential learning opportunity but are assigned projects by their placement site supervisor.



- **Must be willing to relocate to another city or town for the summer**, and refrain from any coursework, test preparation, or other jobs or internships during the summer program. Fellows **must attend in full the Orientation and Closing Meeting** and be physically present at their placement site for office hours and for the duration of the program.

### **Application Process:**

To apply, submit the following by **February 3, 2026, at 5 PM ET**:

1. **Online application:** [Apply Here](#)
2. **Resume including education, work experience, and achievements**
3. **College transcripts (unofficial copies are acceptable)**
4. **A response to Short Answer Questions included in the application**
5. **Recommendation forms from one or two professional references:** Share the link to the recommendation form with recommenders directly ([bit.ly/RecommendSELI](http://bit.ly/RecommendSELI)). All recommendations must be submitted before the application deadline to complete your submission

For questions, contact **Amber C. Davis** at [adavis@southerneducation.org](mailto:adavis@southerneducation.org).

### **Key Dates:**

- Application Deadline: February 3, 2026
- Orientation: May 14-16, 2026 (Atlanta, GA)
- Fellowship Placement: May 19-July 11, 2026
- Closing Meeting: July 16-18, 2026 (Atlanta, GA)

### **Join a Legacy of Change:**

The SELI Fellowship is an unparalleled opportunity to advance educational equity while gaining invaluable professional experience. Upon completion, fellows join SEF's prestigious alumni network, continuing their journey to create a more just and excellent education system for all.