

## **Call for Applications 2012-2013**

### **Ambassadors for Access to Medicines: Fellowship in Eastern Europe & Central Asia**

The Open Society Foundations' Access to Essential Medicines Initiative seeks motivated candidates for its new Access to Medicines 2012/2013 fellowship program. The deadline for applications for this 18 month part-time fellowship is Monday, June 4th, 2012.

#### **The Fellowship Program 2012-2013**

This newly created and competitive Fellowship Program aims to build a cadre of motivated leaders, activists, lawyers and healthcare professionals in Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECA) who have the knowledge and leadership abilities to help build a vocal access to medicines movement and propel and mobilize others for increased access to medicines advocacy.

Up to 5 fellows will be selected in the summer of 2012 for a fellowship period of 18 months. During the fellowship, fellows will remain in their home organizations and be expected to devote at a minimum of 5 hours per week to the fellowship, including work on an individual project. The fellowship will include extensive virtual learning opportunities and 3 face to face meetings – all focused on developing expertise on technical and political access to medicines issues, as well as advocacy and leadership skills. A small honorarium will be offered to the fellows.

#### **Access to Medicines needs and challenges in the EECA region**

In EECA, less than 50% of people in need of medical treatment receive it. When it comes to more expensive treatments for infectious and chronic diseases, including HIV and AIDS, hepatitis C, cancer and diabetes, the situation is even worse. One of the main challenges in accessing life-saving treatments is the high price of medicines. Newer medicines are very expensive since their price is dictated by pharmaceutical companies – companies who hold patent monopolies on these medicines. There are examples of civil society and governments in other parts of the world such as Brazil, Thailand and South Africa, working to successfully reduce expensive medicine price, particularly in the HIV field. Unfortunately, examples don't exist of such efforts in the EECA region. In this region, there is limited knowledge within both government and civil society sectors about access to medicines issues, with few civil society leaders and groups equipped to conceptualize and drive needed advocacy.

It is imperative to build awareness and knowledge of how civil society and government can help ensure access to medicines for those who need it. Civil society groups have identified a number of issues which they feel are priorities for action in EECA – priorities include but are not limited to ensuring a correct implementation of patentability criteria to avoid frivolous patents, utilizing existing legal flexibilities to overcome patent barriers to address health problems, promoting increased transparency of procurement systems particularly government tendering, and promoting drug regulatory systems that effectively oversee the quality of medicines, at a time when EECA countries are actively seeking to build national pharmaceutical industries. While there are many known challenges in the area of access to medicines in EECA, the knowledge and leadership around possible solutions to these problems remains very limited. Growing an Access to Medicines movement requires leaders who can educate and mobilize their communities, creating a critical mass of activists pushing for more transparency and better access to medicines to all.

#### **Why apply?**

Fellows will have the opportunity to deepen their knowledge of access to medicine issues and strengthen their leadership skills. They will interact with regional and international experts via monthly webinars, share and learn at 3 face-to-face meetings and online facilitated discussions, as well as read selected literature and receive one on one mentorship. The development and

implementation of individual projects is an important component of the fellowship and will allow the fellows to use what they learn in practical ways. As part of the project, it is expected that fellows will actively share their knowledge and experiences within their own organizations and countries. Additionally, in the last 6 months of the fellowship, fellows will help to coach a new generation of program participants.

### ***What are fellow responsibilities?***

- Devote at a minimum 5 hours per week to the fellowship
- Develop and implement of individual project and workplan
- Willingness to engage long term in access to medicine advocacy and leadership which includes seeking to inject access to medicines issues into regional/national debates and policy discussions and building capacity of own organizations and partners to take on access to medicine advocacy,
- mandatory attendance at 3 meetings over 18 month period (two of them will take place at the OSF regional EECA workshop on access to medicines<sup>1</sup>) including playing supporting role in development of the annual workshops,
- participation in monthly webinars, virtual discussions and regular communication with Fellowship coordinator,
- bimonthly reports outlining progress on project and other access to medicines developments,
- highlighting access to medicines issues and work on project and learning in regional listservs and meetings,
- publish outcomes of project in a virtual or print national/regional/global publication
- serve as mentor to next generation of fellows
- participate in evaluation of fellowship program.

### ***Who is a fellow?***

We invite applications from interested persons who meet the following qualifications.

- University diploma with at least 2-3 years work experience - or if no university diploma, 7 years work experience in a related field.
- Experience working in the NGO sector is valued.
- Advocacy experience is a must.
- Background in health, access to medicines, law, economics, accountability and/or social justice issues, including appreciation of access to medicines issues with an understanding of current access challenges at a national/regional/global level.
- Work in disease fields, which have acute access issues such as HIV, hepatitis C, cancer and diabetes is highly encouraged.
- Written support from organization, including letter from Executive Director stating support with acknowledgment of expected time commitment of the candidate in the Fellowship.
- Ability to speak, write and read in English and working knowledge of Russian
- Willingness to travel
- Based or working in East European and Central Asian region.

### ***Application process***

Interested candidates should submit their applications by June 4th, 2012 to Anna Segelman at [asegelman@sorosny.org](mailto:asegelman@sorosny.org).

The application should include:

- completed application form (see attached)
- 2 page CV

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<sup>1</sup> The 2012 EECA regional A2M workshop will take place on August 27-29, 2012 in Georgia.

- short essay of not more than 500 words describing 1) what you hope to benefit from and contribute to the access to medicines fellowship (why are you applying?), and 2) what A2M issue areas are you most interested in learning about through a fellowship and why
- 2 reference letters
- 1 letter of support from your organization (if currently employed in an organization)
- Conflict of interest disclosure form (see attached)

All documents should be submitted in English or Russian. The application form should be completed in English.

The shortlisted candidates will be interviewed in the second half of June 2012. Successful fellows will be notified in July 2012 and are expected to attend the OSF EECA regional A2M workshop on August 27-29 in Georgia.