

MIT Department of Urban Studies and Planning
Excellence in Public Service Awards

Purpose. In 1999, DUSP established the Fund for Excellence in Public Service to raise funds to assist and encourage graduates from the Master in City Planning (MCP) program who choose to pursue public service careers. The Excellence in Public Service Awards, as the Fund's first initiative, is designed to advance three purposes:

- Recognize outstanding public service achievements by recent MCP graduates
- Provide inspiration and encouragement to other DUSP students, DUSP alumni/ae, and others to pursue public service careers
- Provide a financial award to help offset debt incurred to obtain an MCP degree

Type of Assistance. Two annual awards of up to \$10,000 will be made. Awards must be used either to reduce outstanding debt incurred to obtain a MCP degree or to reimburse the applicant for recent or current payments made on such debt. Please note that these awards may be subject to taxes and applicants should consult their tax advisors.

Eligibility. Eligibility is based on the graduation year, public service employment and financial need. Graduates who received an MCP degree from DUSP between 2004 and 2008 and are employed full-time in planning-related public service work are eligible. Public service work includes employment in government, the private non-profit sector, an equivalent organization, or self-employment with a public service mission. Graduates in an academic position at a college or university are not eligible. For financial eligibility, a graduate must have incurred at least \$30,000 in debt to secure an MCP degree, have at least \$15,000 of that debt still unpaid, and have annual income of \$65,000 or less. For applicants who are married, 50% of the total household income will be used to determine eligibility with an allowance for children based on the IRS dependent exemption amount. Please add \$3,500 per dependent to the \$65,000 income cap. Both U.S. and international alumni/ae are eligible and are encouraged to apply. For international applicants, foreign currency denominated debt and income will be converted into dollars, based on the currency exchange rate in effect on the application deadline date.

Criteria for Awards. Awards will be made based on the graduate's achievements in public service work and its contribution to improving the well-being of a specific place or community-of-interest (a non-place-based group with common characteristics or interests, e.g., micro-enterprises, community land trusts, etc.). Four criteria will be used to evaluate alumni/ae achievements:

Role in the Achievement. The applicant alumnus/a must have had a prominent role in the design, formulation and implementation of the specific achievements cited. An alumnus/a who either provided exemplary leadership in advancing the initiative and made an innovative intellectual contribution to design and implementation will receive priority consideration for an award.

Extent of Implementation. The applicant's achievement must involve a plan, project, program or policy that has been implemented or that shows substantial progress toward implementation, consistent with its complexity and scope, to be considered for an award.

Level of Difficulty. Achievements that involve overcoming substantial challenges and obstacles will be given priority for an award. Achievements in low-income areas, places with limited infrastructure, resources or organizational capacity, and communities with prior histories of planning failure will be given greater consideration than achievements in resource-rich environments.

Impact. The applicant's work must demonstrate a tangible and important contribution to improving the well-being of a place or community-of-interest. Impacts can include physical improvement, improvement in social conditions, economic advancement, capacity building and empowerment, or other outcomes. Evidence of impact beyond the applicant's representation needs to be provided, in the form of letters of support, press clippings, etc.

Application and Selection Progress. To be considered for a Public Service Excellence Award, an eligible alumnus/a must submit a completed application form and supporting documentation by July 15, 2009. Applications will be reviewed for eligibility and only eligible applicants will be considered for an award. All eligible applications will be reviewed by the Awards Committee appointed by the DUSP Department Head. The Awards Committee will discuss and rank the applications and make final awards recommendations to the DUSP Department Head.

Announcements of past winners may be viewed at: <http://dusp.mit.edu/p.lasso?t=5:5:0>

For more information, contact Ezra Glenn at 617-253-2024, eglenn@mit.edu.

Excellence in Public Service Award Application Form
Due July 15, 2009

Name _____
Home Address _____
City, State, Zip Code, Country _____
Home phone _____

Job Title _____
Employer _____
Business Address _____
City, State, Zip code, Country _____
Business phone _____
Fax _____
Description of Employer _____
Number of Years with Current Employer _____
E-mail address _____

Previous employment (if any since MCP graduation)
Job Title _____
Employer _____
Business Address _____
City, State, Zip code, Country _____
Description of Employer _____
Number of Years with Previous Employer _____

Social Security number _____
Year of MCP graduation _____

Spouse's Name _____
Employer _____
Business Address _____
City, State, Zip code, Country _____
Spouse's Social Security number _____

Dependents _____
Name(s) and Age(s) _____

Applicant's 2007 Gross Income (from federal tax return) _____
Spouse's 2007 Gross Income (from federal tax return) _____

Total loans borrowed to finance MCP degree _____

Outstanding MCP loans:

Lender 1 name _____

Address _____

Account # _____

Original loan amount _____

Monthly payment _____

Outstanding balance _____

Lender 2 name _____

Address _____

Account # _____

Original loan amount _____

Monthly payment _____

Outstanding balance _____

I certify that the information presented above is correct. I further certify that I am not in default on any student loans.

Signature

Date

Please attach the following to this application:

- 2008 Federal tax return
- Spouse's 2008 Federal tax return (if applicable)
- Copy of most recent statement(s) for MCP loan(s)
- Personal statement of public service work and accomplishments (1000 word maximum).
Please include details re: your specific role in accomplishments, the impact of your personal efforts and the degree of difficulty you faced.
- Documentation of impact of public service work (letters of recommendation*, media coverage, evaluation reports, etc.)

* Please ask your recommenders to address award criteria.

Completed applications should be submitted by July 15, 2009 to Excellence in Public Service Awards, c/o Ezra Glenn, Department of Urban Studies and Planning, MIT, Room 7-337, 77 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, MA 02139. For more information, contact Ezra Glenn at 617-253-2024, eglenn@mit.edu.