

The Mexico Center Visiting Scholars Program

Program Overview and Call for Proposals

The Baker Institute Mexico Center provides policymakers, the public and industry leaders with quality, data-driven analysis of the policy issues that affect both Mexico and the United States. The center's nonpartisan research assists public policy coordination by framing problems, providing policy alternatives and contributing to informed decisions that consider both U.S. and Mexican interests. In conjunction with actors in both countries, the Mexico Center envisions a future in which coordinated policy decisions maximize benefits for all who live in the region.

In order to facilitate public policy coordination between Mexico and the United States, the center reaches out to scholars and other experts to produce original, empirical research on relevant issues, including trade, security, economics and infrastructure; fosters the exchange of ideas through public events that bring together decision-makers from both sides of the border; and gathers input from government officials, the private sector and the general public to develop effective and pragmatic policy recommendations.

The Mexico Center Visiting Scholars Program

The Mexico Center welcomes outstanding scholars to take part in its nonpartisan research and public dialogue. The objective of the Visiting Scholars Program (VS) is to offer opportunities for scholars to conduct independent research on key Mexican and/or U.S.-Mexico policy issues at Rice University's Baker Institute during the summer.

Through the VS program, the Mexico Center seeks to enrich crucial policy debates and provide a platform for scholars to engage with the Baker Institute, Rice University and Houston, Texas—the fourth-largest city in the United States and one of Mexico's major trade and cultural partners.

This program provides funding for individuals from universities in Mexico and the U.S. to conduct research on Mexico or the U.S.-Mexico binational relationship; consideration also will be given to scholars from other universities. Interested scholars from universities that are members of the Puentes Consortium are also invited to apply to the Puentes Consortium Fund for Visiting Scholars and Graduate Students: <https://www.bakerinstitute.org/research/call-proposals-puentes-scholars/>.

The research stay must be for a minimum of eight and a maximum of 12 weeks at the Baker Institute Mexico Center between May 15 and August 15. The beginning and end dates are negotiable between the visiting scholar and the Mexico Center director.

After reviewing all applications, the scholar whose research project has been accepted will receive an invitation letter from the Mexico Center as well as documents necessary to process a J-1 visa at the nearest U.S. consulate. The Baker Institute will send original documents, as well as any other required paperwork, via express courier service, to the scholar's university or research center.

The Mexico Center will offer awards of up to \$7,500 to cover airfare, lodging, expenses associated with the J-1 visa application, food and transportation.

The Mexico Center does not commit to covering expenses that were not properly disclosed during this process.

The Mexico Center will provide a workspace equipped with a Mexico Center laptop as well as library access at Rice University.

A. Project Topics:

Projects must be aligned with the Mexico Center's objective to address U.S.-Mexico issues with an inclination toward public policy. For information on topics that the Mexico Center has addressed, please visit <http://bakerinstitute.org/mexico-center/>.

B. Participation requirements for **Ph.D. students**, in addition to those detailed in Paragraph A:

- Applicants must have completed their second year of doctoral study.
- Applicants must be developing research for which they should be able to present evidence of substantial progress and/or have an advanced doctoral dissertation proposal endorsed in a letter by their supervisor.
- Applicants must present a work plan to be followed during their research stay that details how the stay would benefit for the ongoing research.
- Applicants must provide a presentation letter that clearly details the benefits the research conducted during their visit will have on their dissertation (for example, what chapter of your dissertation might be influenced by this stay, and in what way?). This must also be endorsed in a letter by their supervisor.
- The application also must include a budget of up to \$7,500 detailing expenses according to the following rubrics: (a) airfare, (b) lodging, (c) transportation, (d) food and (e) immigration fees (if applicable).

C. Requirements for **research professors**, in addition to those detailed in Paragraph A:

- Applicants must present a research project they are currently working on and on which they should be able to present evidence of substantial progress at the time of application.
- Applicants must submit a letter detailing the benefits the research stay will have on the project, their program and the university where they are currently employed, as well as a work plan to be followed during the research visit.
- Applicants must submit a letter of support from their department head or appropriate university leadership.
- The application also must include a budget of up to \$7,500 detailing expenses according to the following rubrics: (a) airfare, (b) lodging, (c) transportation, (d) food, and (e) immigration fees (if applicable).

D. Deliverables

The academic stay must result in a tangible research publication in the form of a policy or research paper or a book chapter, in accordance with the Baker Institute's publication guidelines. The product is expected within a reasonable period after the completion of the academic stay. To that end, the Mexico Center respectfully requests the following items:

- Within three months of the completion of the academic stay, the scholar should provide a **first draft of the publication** to the Mexico Center director.
- Within six months of the academic stay, the scholar should provide the **final paper** for publication by the Mexico Center.

E. Important Deadlines:

1. Opening of call for applications: Oct. 16
2. Deadline for completed applications: Dec. 31
3. Announcement of a finalist: Jan. 15

F. Application Guidelines

- Proposals must be submitted in English to mexicocenter@rice.edu in one document (Microsoft Word or PDF), including the information described in Paragraph B for doctoral students or Paragraph C for scholars, by 11:59 p.m. (Houston, Texas, CST) Dec. 31.
- Once received, proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:
 - The goals of the research project and its general importance to understanding (a) Mexican and/or U.S.-Mexico policy issue(s).
 - The feasibility of the project to be completed in one summer with the allotted funds.
 - The proven capabilities of the researcher to successfully execute the project.
 - The relevance of the project to the Mexico Center's research initiatives, mutual collaboration goals and efforts to cultivate binational public policy networks.
- The call for proposals can be declared void if applications do not meet requirements of form or substance, as well as for extraordinary circumstances/events beyond the control of the parties, as detailed by the Mexico Center.