

## **Researcher-in-Residence**

SELCO Foundation invites applications from scholars in the sciences, social sciences, and humanities to participate in its Researcher-in-Residence program (Fellowship program). The program has been designed to facilitate research that focusses on issues within academia while having direct relevance to on-the-ground implementation of policies, or interventions more broadly conceived in the field of sustainable services for underserved communities.

### **What SELCO Foundation offers**

SELCO Foundation is a non-profit that is committed to pioneering the utilization of decentralized sustainable energy as a catalyst for environmental, social and financial sustainability. These include ecosystem development in the areas of basic access to energy, health, education, livelihoods and healthy and safe living environments.

### **What kinds of projects is SELCO looking for?**

The research must aim to produce knowledge about complex social problems: offer new perspectives, or organized ways of thinking about and addressing them. Projects must address existing concerns while being pragmatic to on-the-ground implementation of policies, or interventions more broadly conceived in the field of sustainable services for underserved communities.

Researchers-in-Residence are welcome to propose their own projects, but may also choose also to conduct research within the Foundation's existing initiatives. The following research buckets broadly indicate the Foundation's current areas of interest. Researchers can design their research to fall within one or more of these at any point of time:

#### **1. Modes of processes of Replication**

Identifying existing initiatives that have had certain level of successful impacts, and applying them to other situations, this research bucket is about thinking in analogies. How can processes, ownership models, and strategies for scaling up services in particular sectors or countries be deconstructed, documented, shared and internalized to be applied in different contexts?

#### **2. Energy Efficiency**

This bucket addresses questions of energy standards – both in terms of technology, as well as possible incentives and policy frameworks that can encourage the production and adoption of products, services, practices or systems with greater energy efficiency. It also expands the concept of efficiency beyond the purely technical to address how, for instance, livelihoods might be impacted by access to increased efficiency, and the costs associated with such access. Energy Efficiency topics and questions range from market analysis, benchmarking, evaluations, design etc in design, engineering and built environment contexts.

### **3. Models of Renewable Energy Access**

While SELCO India is known for its work providing access to solar electricity via local financial institutes and with reliable maintenance guarantees, their most successful product is the solar home system. There are, however, other models of renewable energy available in the country today, including central charged stations solar microgrids, solar and wind/husk hybrids, utility scale solar as well as bio-mass projects at the extremely decentralized level. This bucket addresses research that considers the technical, financial and social analysis as well as feasibility and viability of these models of access to renewable energy.

### **4. Socio-cultural and Economic Research**

This bucket can address a wide range of social and humanistic perspectives connected to interventions relating to services for the underserved. These could include developing educational content, market linkages for arts and crafts, how conditional kerosine subsidies affect the adoption of solar energy in rural areas, to the long term effects of demonetization on digital literacy, or the social history of solar energy in the country.

### **5. Enterprise and Investment**

What is the relationship between the type of investments and the growth trajectory of a company or enterprise? Are there any correlations to be made between types of investments and the subsequent activities that an enterprise engages in? How can we analyze the links between types of investments and the nature of enterprises to argue for a better fit between certain kinds of funding and social enterprises? SELCO Invites researchers to understand and analyze modes and types of impact investment or social enterprise contexts and issues along with the dependance and relation between them.

### **6. Impact Evaluation and Impact Metrics**

This bucket has been defined in order to encourage research on links between policies or activities and material quality of life, as well as metrics on how to possibly measure or quantify the links. For instance, researchers could address the impact of stone quarrying on human, plant and animal well being in a defined area, or how access to energy in the form of a home lighting system can enhance possibilities of financial inclusion. The bucket can even expand to developing frameworks and metrics to measure the social inclusiveness of an solution and/or policy.

### **7. Policies and Legalities**

Linking technology, finance and social outcomes to policy making by elaborating, analyzing and design disruptive policies for development under relevant topics like schemes, taxations, incentives etc. The need assessment based on which pro-poor policies are designed, the design, the implementation and the review (feedback loop) of the policy can determine the cause and effect to a significant extent. Research topics like other buckets can extend to household wellbeing, education, health and livelihoods.

## **8. Design and Innovation Research**

Applying design research and innovation imperatives within and beyond education specifically for sustainability and developmental issues lacks consensus. Like other buckets it is important for the practitioners and end users perspective to drive these sectors towards higher levels of qualitative dialogue. Studies can be documentation, evaluation or solution driven.

### **At what stage should you get in touch?**

Scholars can get in touch during any stage of their research. Feel free to contact us if you have a defined project idea that you feel would be of interest to us, and that you would like to use SELCO networks to further explore. If you are at the initial stages of research design, we would be happy to meet and discuss how your interests could fit into potential projects and develop them together.

### **How will my research be used?**

While SELCO Foundation is primarily an implementation agency, it is interested in encouraging implementation-facing applied research that can inform our work, and help us think about and tackle the complex social problems that we deal with. SELCO Foundation will make this research available, open source, to organizations that might benefit from it, or individuals interested in carrying the work forward, both practically and theoretically.

### **Application Details:**

Eligibility: Open to students or recent graduates of all nationalities. Timeline: 3 to 9 months (or more, depending on nature of project)

Funding: Living wage (for residence in Bangalore and in other parts of SELCO's work) for 3-9 months.

Application: Rolling applications. In order to apply please send your CV, and a small write up of proposed project or areas of interest, along with a short biography to [info@selcofoundation.org](mailto:info@selcofoundation.org)