



IPA Talent Exchange Program

OVERVIEW

The federal government has reached a critical juncture in its efforts to strengthen its talent base. With a growing need to tackle many daunting challenges—from the COVID-19 pandemic and economic turmoil to systemic racial injustice and the devastating effects of climate change—agencies will need to draw on talent with critical expertise from other parts of society that will contribute to better decisions, better systems and better program delivery. Our talented, dedicated civil servants need to partner with external experts to make the most impact during this critical time.

Intergovernmental Personnel Act, or IPA, placements help agencies fill talent gaps. Using a “tour of duty” approach to public service, the IPA allows individuals from academia, nonprofit organizations, and state and local government to work in a federal agency for up to two years, focusing in particular on priority programs and projects that require additional staff.

With almost 20 years of experience working on federal human capital issues, the Partnership for Public Service understands the unique opportunities and challenges facing HR professionals, job recruiters and public sector leaders. As such, the Partnership is well-positioned to work with government and talent sources to scale and operationalize the management of IPA placements.

THE PROGRAM

The Talent Exchange program aims to do just that. Under the program, participating agencies submit position descriptions for IPA assignments while the Partnership identifies potential candidates and matches them to agency needs. After the agency confirms the candidate match, the Partnership will work directly with IPA assignees to prepare them for the federal workforce.

This program prepares IPA placements to navigate the federal arena and maximize their impact in the public sector, and enables agencies to more quickly deploy external talent to meet urgent needs. By standardizing the process by which agencies recruit, onboard and manage IPA placements, this program also helps human resources professionals and general counsels improve their knowledge of regulatory concerns and best practices.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR QUESTIONS

CONTACT: IPAPROGRAM@OURPUBLICSERVICE.ORG

VISIT: OURPUBLICSERVICE.ORG/IPA-TALENT-EXCHANGE

FOR AGENCIES

The Intergovernmental Personnel Act of 1970 created a talent exchange designed to increase partnerships between federal, and state or local governments.¹ The act allows federal agencies to temporarily employ individuals from academia, nonprofit organizations, and state and local government for up to two years without going through the arduous traditional federal hiring process.

Each agency is responsible for managing its own IPA program with limited oversight from the Office of Personnel Management. As a result, agencies have maximum flexibility to design the job assignments and work schedules for incoming IPA candidates. However, this flexibility can often lead agencies to misunderstand candidate eligibility requirements, overlook recruitment opportunities and underuse the program in general. Through its Talent Exchange program, the Partnership will help agencies better understand—and take full advantage of—the benefits of the IPA program.

TYPES OF IPA ASSIGNMENTS

Agencies will be required to describe a prospective IPA candidate's job assignment. Examples of assignment duties may include:

- Advise senior leaders on implementation of strategic plans related to racial equity.
- Enhancing the transparency and integrity of a team's research design and data analysis process.
- Designing, implementing and analyzing the impact of a large-scale field experiment.
- Managing the solicitation and evaluation of research proposals.

To reaffirm President Biden's recent [executive order](#) on advancing federal support for racial equity and underserved communities, a substantial portion of the candidates will be chosen for positions with duties dedicated to advancing diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility at an agency.

¹ The exchange is authorized under 5 USC Sections 3371-3375, and is described in detail in the Code of Federal Regulations, part 5, Chapter 334.

FOR CANDIDATES

IPA placements spend up to two years as temporary employees of a federal agency and work on issues ranging from information gathering and program management to strategic planning. The Partnership will review your application and then match you with a federal agency based on your experience and expressed preferences.

WHY APPLY?

- To gain experience in public service without leaving your current field or maneuvering a long-term career change.
- To make a long-standing impact on the nation in your field of work.
- To expand your professional network and develop career skills in a new context.

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- Designing, implementing and analyzing the impact of a large-scale field experiment.
- Managing the solicitation and evaluation of research proposals.
- Facilitating the development of team-wide plans to improve diversity, equity and inclusion within an office.

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APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

- Clearly defined talent needs for a GS-12 (or equivalent) and above.
- Roles and responsibilities dedicated to advancing racial equity as outlined in Executive Order 13985.
- Approval for the temporary placement of an IPA participant for 12-24 months.
- Funding (salary and benefits) for the length of the assignment based on the pay range anticipated for the role.

APPLICATION TIMELINE

Sept. 24, 2021:

Application opens.

September 2021-May 2022:

Applications reviewed on a rolling basis.

Fifth Standard Agency Deadline:

April 30, 2022.

Applying by the deadline ensures that an agency's position description will be considered by the Partnership as a placement choice for the fifth round of IPA candidates. Please note that applying by this deadline does not guarantee agencies will receive IPA placements. Please note: this program is currently only accepting applications for roles that advance racial equity as outlined in Executive Order 13985 and which can be fully funded by an agency.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

- Ability to work full- or part-time at a federal agency for a span of 12-24 months.
- Full-time employee of a:
 - State or local government.
 - Native American tribal government.
 - Institution of higher education.
 - Nonprofit organization.
 - Federally funded research & development institution.
 - Research institute.
 - Scientific society.
 - Hospital.
- U.S. citizen or a U.S. national.
- Experience equivalent to a [GS-14](#) or above.

APPLICATION TIMELINE

October 1, 2021:

Application opens.

October 2021-April 2022:

Applications reviewed on a rolling basis.

Third Standard Application Deadline:

April 30, 2022.

Applying by the application deadline ensures you will be considered for agency placement by late summer 2022.