



2027

CHICAGO UNITED FOR EQUITY

FELLOWSHIP

APPLICATIONS DUE JANUARY 19, 2027

ABOUT US

CUE's mission is to transform Chicagoans' relationship to power by activating and connecting our network of racial equity practitioners and racial justice advocates inside and outside of civic institutions and systems.

We envision a Chicago where every community thrives in a city responsive and accountable to their needs, particularly communities of color.

We value: Civic Accountability, Collective Action, Community Voice, Chicago (Civic) Love, Creative Experimentation, Courage & Audacity

FELLOWSHIP EXPERIENCE

The Chicago United for Equity (CUE) Fellowship is a yearlong experience for practitioners committed to catalyzing systems change in Chicago. Each cohort of 15-20 Fellows serves as collective strategists for one another, sharing their diverse perspectives from working in government, media, research, advocacy, organizing, philanthropy, and more. Together, they build a shared analysis of the city we love, through learning about Co-design, Racial Equity Impact Assessments (REIA), Co-governance, power mapping, and more, while developing racial equity projects for their own organizations.

"The CUE Fellowship created space to remain human while advancing equity during unprecedented times in our country. It renewed my belief in collective impact across Chicago and affirmed that advancing racial equity requires community, accountability, and courage"

- Chris Cole, 2025 CUE Fellow

APPLY NOW



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WHY NOW?

In the past two years, progress toward equity has eroded, and the very fabric of our democracy is under threat. At CUE, we believe in honoring our vision of racial equity and racial justice in the City we all love. We believe that the CUE Fellows are essential in pursuing that vision. As a CUE Fellow, you will join a community committed to the collaboration and accountability that will make Chicago "the City that works" for all of us.

SELECTION CRITERIA

CUE Fellows are innovators, disruptors, and healers of all different kinds. Candidates are evaluated on their individual leadership, project concept, and organizational partner. Evaluation is conducted by CUE staff and Fellowship alumni, through a written application and Selection Day, a collaborative scenario-based interview process with other candidates.

We are looking for Fellows who are...

- ★ Clear in their analysis of equitable systems change
- ★ Courageous catalysts and drivers of positive outcomes
- ★ Collaborative, generative thought partners
- ★ Committed to racial equity and willing to have difficult conversations about racism
- ★ A driven leader with a deep love for Chicago

FELLOWSHIP PROJECT

Fellows are expected to define a **Racial Equity Project** to reimagine a policy, program or practice through a racial equity lens. Promising projects develop an approach that has the potential to serve as a new model for the field or sector and addresses a racial equity challenge that shifts power to those most impacted.

To explore Equity Projects from previous cohorts, and browse the CUE Equity Playbook, visit chicagounitedforequity.org/collaborations, or scan the QR code below.



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EXAMPLES OF PAST CUE FELLOW PROJECTS

Deepening Political Analysis in Philanthropy

This pilot program fosters a deeper understanding of power and its role in systemic change. The program equips leaders to challenge harmful norms and advance a more just philanthropic sector that supports BIPOC communities' self-determination and addresses the sector's role in maintaining racial and economic inequities.

Chicago Public School's Non-Citizen Advisory Council

This project aims to establish the Non-Citizen Advisory School Board for the CPS Elected School Board, so that non-citizen families and community members can have their voices heard and advocate for non-citizen students.

Building a Survivor-Centered Chicago

This project aims to increase civic engagement between Chicago City Council Members and survivors most impacted by gender-based violence in order to develop policies and solutions rooted in survivors' lived experiences.



PARTNER ORGANIZATION & FEE

For the CUE Fellowship, our learning community extends beyond the Fellow to the partnering organization. The approach is for the Fellow's racial equity project to be embedded in the organization's ongoing work as part of the institution's priorities.

Each applicant must have a pre-existing relationship with the partnering organization (as a board member, staff member, or longstanding collaborator). This shared commitment between the Fellow and the organization is essential to ensure the project's lasting impact.

The partner fee for the Racial Equity Fellowship helps CUE provide each Fellow with professional instructors and facilitators, a coach, staff support, and technical assistance. Partner organizations that have a candidate selected for the CUE Fellowship contribute to the cost of the program on a sliding scale based on the organization's annual operating budget.

PARTNER ORGANIZATION ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET	PARTNER FEE
Up to \$499,999	\$750
\$500,000 - \$999,000	\$2,000
\$1M - \$1,999,999	\$4,000
\$2M - \$2,999,999	\$5,500
\$3M - \$4,999,999	\$7,000
\$5M +	\$9,000

IMPORTANT DATES

OCTOBER 13 Application Opens	NOVEMBER 10 Info Session (In-Person) 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM	December 9 Info Session (Virtual) 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM
JANUARY 6 Info Session (Virtual) 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM	JANUARY 19 Application Closes at 11:59 PM	FEBRUARY 26 Selection Day (In-person) 10:00 am - 1:00 pm
MARCH 6 Selection Day (In-person) 10:00 am - 1:00 pm	MARCH 2027 Finalist Notification	APRIL 2027 Fellows Onboarding
JUNE 2027 Announcement and Welcome Dinner	JULY 2027 Fellowship Program Begins	

To register for virtual and in-person info sessions, visit chicagounitedforequity.org/2027-fellowship, or scan the QR code below.



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If you are selected as a 2027 CUE Fellow, you will embark on a collective learning journey. You must be able to commit to attending monthly full-day workshops. Please review the important 2027 CUE Fellowship dates listed below for your awareness. **Fellows can only miss one session due to personal or work-related reasons.**

2027 CUE Fellowship Dates
2027 Fellowship Welcome Dinner - Thursday, June 24 th
Workshop #1 - Friday, July 16 th 9:00 am - 4:00 pm
Workshop #2 - Friday, August 13 th 9:00 am - 4:00 pm
Workshop #3 - Friday, September 17 th 9:00 am - 4:00 pm
Co-Learning & Connection Overnight Workshop Friday, October 15 th - Saturday, October 16 th
Workshop #5 - Friday, November 12 th 9:00 am - 4:00 pm
Workshop #6 - Friday, December 10 th 9:00 am - 4:00 pm
Workshop #7 - Friday, January 21 st 9:00 am - 4:00 pm
Workshop #8 - Friday, February 18 th 9:00 am - 4:00 pm
Workshop #9 - Friday, March 10 th 9:00 am - 4:00 pm
Workshop #10 - Friday April 14 th 9:00 am - 4:00 pm
2027 CUE Annual Showcase*, Thursday, May (TBD)

*Date Subject to Change**