

Presidential Management Fellows at the BLM: Most Frequently Asked Questions

How are PMFs selected?

PMFs are recruited in their final year of graduate study from a wide variety of professional fields, including: Public Administration & Policy, Law, Natural Resource Management, Economics, Business, Science, etc. PMFs must be nominated by their University in order to apply for the program. Competitive selection is based on background qualifications and education, experience, and commitment to and potential for leadership and management in the Federal Government. Writing ability, teamwork, and analytical skills are assessed by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) in a structured assessment; finalists are selected based on their performance. PMF finalists are then eligible to apply for PMF positions with federal agencies.

Are there costs associated with hiring through the PMF program?

Yes. Costs associated with the PMF program include the following:

- A one-time fee of \$6,000 to OPM for recruitment, screening, placement and orientation costs.
- Salary and benefits (GS-9 the first year and GS-11 the second year)
- Training costs (PMFs are required to complete at least 80 hours of formal training each year)
- Travel and per diem for two rotations over the course of 2 years (one 4-6 month developmental rotation and one 30-60 day rotation outside the agency)

What are the benefits of hiring through the PMF program?

Some benefits include:

- Highly qualified job candidates: PMFs are thoroughly assessed by OPM for their writing ability, management skills, teamwork and analytical skills in order to compete for a Finalist position.
- Strategic workforce planning: PMFs can help alleviate the pressures of upcoming retirements and capture institutional knowledge.
- No need for competitive listing: PMFs are excepted service positions.

When can PMFs be hired?

PMF's can be hired anytime from when they are selected as finalists (usually in mid March) through December 31 of the year they are selected, but most hiring occurs in the weeks following the annual PMF Job Fair, where agencies conduct interviews with PMF Finalists from around the country. The 2008 Job Fair will be held April 22-24th, 2008 in Washington, DC.

Do we have to be at the Job Fair in order to hire a PMF?

No, there is no requirement for an agency or a PMF Finalist to be present at the Job Fair. It is simply a forum that facilitates the interview and hiring processes. However, experience has shown that the Job Fair greatly improves position visibility among PMF Finalists. Representatives from the BLM Washington Office have volunteered to do initial “screening” interviews for positions offered by the BLM offices in the field that are unable to send a representative to the Job Fair. Hiring is also accomplished by recruiting through the PMF resume bank on the OPM’s website and posting available positions on the Projected Positions System (PPS).

Are PMFs hired at a specific grade-level?

An agency must appoint a Fellow at the GS-9 grade level, or its equivalent, at a minimum. However, if the agency determines that a Fellow meets the requisite qualification requirements for their posted position at a higher grade level, the agency may appoint the Fellow at the GS-11 or GS-12 level, or their equivalents. After successful completion of the first year, PMFs are eligible for promotion to GS-11, Step 1 as desired by the hiring agency. Upon completion of the PMF program, PMFs may convert noncompetitively to a GS-12 for career or career-conditional status. More information on these regulations can be found on the PMF website at: <http://www.pmf.opm.gov>.

What types of positions do PMFs typically fill?

Some positions PMFs have filled in the past include:

- Planning and Environmental Analyst, Planning and Decision Support Division, Washington Office
- Natural Resource Specialist, National Landscape Conservation System, Washington Office
- Dispute Resolution Specialist, ADR and Collaborative Action Program, Washington Office
- Planning and Environmental Analyst, National Operations Center, Denver, CO
- Planning and Environmental Coordinator, Little Snake Field Office, CO
- Program Manager for the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act (SNPLMA), Las Vegas Field Office, NV
- Geospatial Specialist, Planning and Decision Support Division, Washington Office

There is no specification on what kind of position a PMF can fill, as long as it aligns with the grade requirements and the purpose of the PMF program. PMFs within the Department of the Interior and other Bureaus have been offered positions such as Budget Analyst and Environmental Specialist, among others.