



• SPRING /SUMMER 2020 ROUND •

APPLICATION OPENS MARCH 9, CLOSES MAY 11, 2020



Fellowships for Academic Researchers Interested in Helping to Address Problems Generated by Industrial Animal Agriculture [a.k.a. Factory Farming], Especially Those Related to Low- and Middle-Income Countries

- These fellowships focus on a set of "burning questions" from individuals who are tackling and trying to find solutions to industrial food animal production's negative impacts (from poor animal welfare, environmental pollution, to other serious problems), particularly in developing countries.
- Fellowships are offered to individuals. They are meant for *academic researchers* (including independent scholars). Applicants must hold PhD/doctoral degree or be PhD/doctoral students working on their dissertations or theses. There are no restrictions as to applicants' residence, citizenship, or location.
- 3 categories of fellowship awards: US\$25,000 (for a team of 2-4 researchers); \$20,000 (for an individual with PhD); \$15,000 (for an individual enrolled in a PhD program and writing a dissertation).
- Award period is four months. Winners can choose their own start date (preferably no later than August 15, 2020).
- The main task of a fellowship recipient during the award period is to prepare one 5,000 – 7,000 words report which we call *Guidance Memo*. (Guidance Memos are written in plain language to assist those tackling problems. They should provide sound information and clear explanations that deepen readers' understanding of the issues addressed, highlight key considerations that they may not be aware of, and offer practical advice that aids their work and decision-making.) Guidance Memos must be directly relevant to the "burning questions".

Click [HERE](#) to read about past fellowship winners.

Website: tinybeamfund.org

Contact: min@tinybeamfund.org

I. Fellowship Program Overview

The Burning Questions Initiative (BQI) that houses the Fellowship Program

- These fellowships sit within Tiny Beam Fund's *Burning Questions Initiative (BQI): Coming to grips with pressing practical questions on tackling negative impacts of global industrial food animal production.*
- BQI was launched to address a specific need – the need for a much deeper understanding of the complex problems that industrial animal agriculture has generated globally (especially in low- and middle-income countries), and the need to translate the understanding into practical steps to address these problems.
- This need is felt urgently by particular groups of persons who are dealing with these problems. BQI uses the term "*front-line persons*" as a shorthand to refer to all of them. They include:
 - Persons in non-profit organizations working with multiple stakeholders to improve poor conditions and advocate for change (e.g. work collaboratively to raise animal welfare standards)
 - Activists mounting campaigns to oppose certain practice or principle in this system of production
 - Small local farmers experiencing first-hand unfavorable impacts from industrial producers
 - Communities contending with predicaments such as environmental pollution
 - Philanthropic funders that support the above groups

- To help these front-line persons acquire the understanding they need, BQI takes three approaches:
 1. Find out more concretely the kinds of things these front-line persons would like to understand better by asking some of them to share their “burning questions”.
 2. Encourage academic researchers to shed light on these “burning questions”.
 - Why academic researchers? With their unique mix of skills, perspectives, and resources, academics are well-positioned to investigate front-line persons’ thorny questions, and to provide them with sound information and evidence. Academics are also showing increasing interest in studying industrial animal agriculture’s impacts in emerging economies and developing countries for their own scholarly purposes.
 3. Serve as a bridge to connect front-line persons with academic research findings and experts.
 - It is not enough to motivate academic researchers to look into the “burning questions”. The insights and information they come up with must be communicated to front-line persons in a digestible form. But the reality is that academics have their own orbits, jargons, and special way of reporting their work to their peers that is often unintelligible to non-academics. And it is not commonplace for front-line persons to engage with academic experts or make use of their research findings. Therefore it is vital to bridge this gulf so that the fruits from the academics’ labor not only are delivered into the hands of front-line persons, they are presented in a way that is ready to be put into practical use.

The current list of “burning questions”

- [Here’s the current list of “burning questions”](#). There are 50 questions, with eight ranked as top priorities.
- The questions came from an invited group of 24 individuals. They have been tackling and trying to find solutions to a range of negative impacts generated by industrial animal agriculture in various countries.
- They were requested to contribute one to three pressing questions they considered to be of most significance and salience to their work, questions that perplexed them and that they did not think have been answered satisfactorily.
- Roles of question-contributors: 10 front-line persons; 3 researchers /practitioners; 5 academic researchers; 2 non-academic researchers; 4 funders.
- Areas of expertise /interest (one person can have multiple areas): 13 environment /food and agriculture; 15 animal welfare; 1 public health; 3 farm workers, owners; 2 agribusiness; 4 local communities.
- After the questions have been collected, question-contributors were invited to prioritize them using an exercise modified from a well-established process for prioritizing healthcare treatment uncertainties.
- BQI then shortened the questions for clarity and grouped them into broad categories.
- The current list of questions is an inaugural list. New lists will be made available every two years when a new cycle of questions collection and prioritization takes place.
- Note: The “burning questions” are not (and are not meant to be) academic research questions.

II. Fellowship Awards Key Information

- Fellowship awards are intended primarily for researchers affiliated with academic institutions (early career as well as senior academics). Independent scholars and researchers can also apply.
- There are no restrictions as to applicants’ residence or citizenship or location.
- Award period is four months. Winners can choose their start dates, preferably before August 15, 2020.
- There are three award categories. The number of fellowships offered in each category is not fixed. The plan is to provide no more than a total of six fellowships in each round. The decisive factor is the quality of the applications. Tiny Beam Fund may not provide any fellowship in a particular round if none of the applications from that round meets its standard:
 - Category 1: US\$15,000 award for a single individual enrolled in a PhD/doctoral degree program and who is writing a dissertation or thesis. (PhD students who have not started on their dissertations are not eligible to apply.)
 - Category 2: US\$20,000 award for a single individual with a PhD/doctoral degree.
 - Category 3: US\$25,000 award for a team of two to four researchers that has at least one person with a PhD/doctoral degree.

- Payment schedule: Half at the start, and half at the end of the award period when Tiny Beam Fund is satisfied that all the requirements mentioned in the Letter Of Agreement have been fulfilled.
- Award funds are sent to individuals' personal bank accounts.
- A Fellowship recipient's tasks and obligations:
 - 1) Main deliverable at the end of the award period is one 5,000 – 7,000 word Guidance Memo.
 - Guidance Memos are written in plain language and prepared specifically to assist front-line persons (see above for an explanation of these persons) who are the target audience and end users.
 - Topics addressed in Guidance Memos must be relevant to "burning questions".
 - Guidance Memos' primary objective: To provide sound information and clear explanations that deepen front-line persons' understanding of the issues addressed; to highlight key considerations that they may not be aware of; to offer practical advice that helps their decision-making and work.
(For a detailed description of what is a Guidance Memo, see Section VI.)
 - 2) An annotated bibliography of 7 – 15 items relevant to the content in the Guidance Memo.
 - 3) A short personal narrative (1,000 – 2,000 words) on the experience with the fellowship.
- All applicants must provide concrete evidence to show the main thrust and substance of their Guidance Memo has been considered by their academic peers.
- Tiny Beam Fund retains copyright of Guidance Memos. But fellowship winners are strongly encouraged to use materials in their Guidance Memos in academic and non-academic publications and settings.
- Fellowship recipients must be available for a mid-point check-in via phone or Skype. They must also submit writing samples from their draft Guidance Memos 4 – 6 weeks before sending the final version.
- Award funds may be used for research work that goes beyond the fellowships' required deliverables. But such work should still be related to the fellowship recipients' chosen topics.
- Part of the award funds can be used for subsistence-level living expenses. An accounting of how the funds have been used is required by the U.S Internal Revenue Service (IRS).
- Individuals who have won fellowships must leave a gap of two rounds before applying again.

III. Application Process

An application consists of three parts

Part 1. Applicant's general information

- 1.1 Name and contact information of applicant.
- 1.2 Name and full address of applicant's institution.
- 1.3 Short CV of applicant.

Part 2. Topics to be addressed in Guidance Memo

- 2.1 What are the topics to be addressed in your Guidance Memo?
- 2.2 Which "burning question(s)" is/are relevant to your chosen topics?
- 2.3 Why do you think the explanations and advice in your Guidance Memo will deepen front-line persons' understanding of the topics addressed and help them with their endeavors?
- 2.4 How will you go about your work on the Guidance Memo?
- 2.5 What concrete evidence can you provide to show that the main thrust and substance of your Guidance Memo has been considered by your academic peers?

Part 3. Personal statement

- 3.1 Why do you choose a fellowship that is about tackling industrial animal agriculture (especially in developing countries)? Why do you want to help front-line persons who are dealing with this issue?
- 3.2 How will the work done during this fellowship fit into your academic research interests and professional goals in the coming 1 – 3 years? How do you plan to keep developing this work for your own research purposes?
- 3.3 Is there anything else that is very important to your application that you want us to know?
- 3.4 Complete this sentence in 50 words or less: "In a nutshell, I am/we are applying for this fellowship mainly because . . ."

Part 1: Applicant's general information

1.1 Name and contact information of applicant

- Include at least one e-mail address.
- For a team, provide name and contact information for every person on the team.

1.2 Name and full address of the academic institution the applicant is affiliated with

- Write "independent scholar" if not currently affiliated with an academic institution.
- For a team, provide name and full address of each person's institution.

1.3 Short CV of applicant

- Indicate clearly in the CV whether you currently hold a PhD/doctoral degree, or you are a student enrolled in a PhD/doctoral program. If the latter, state how far along you are with your dissertation or thesis.
- For a team, provide a short CV for every person on the team.

Part 2: Topic(s) to be addressed in Guidance Memo

Note: Please read VI. Explanation of "Guidance Memo" before preparing this part of your application.

2.1 What are the topics to be addressed in your Guidance Memo?

To answer this question:

- Describe each topic (and sub-topic).
- Be as clear, succinct, and specific as possible.
- Use no more than 250 words.

Tips:

- Example of a topic that is well defined and described:
"The restructuring of the Chinese dairy industry in the past decade that has forced out small dairy farmers in favor of large vertically coordinated producers."
- The topics can be very broad or very narrow. Many or few topics can be addressed in a Guidance Memo. The number and range of topics do not affect the success of an application. But topics that are relevant to high-priority "burning questions" score higher in the review process.

2.2 Which "burning question(s)" is/are relevant to your chosen topics?

To answer this question:

- Refer to [the current list of burning questions](#).
- Indicate clearly the unique ID number of each "burning question" to which the topics are relevant. ID numbers always begin with a # mark (e.g. #PT)
- Even if a topic is relevant to a small part of a "burning question", state the ID number of that question.
- If your topics are relevant to one part of a "burning question" and one part of another "burning question", state the ID numbers of all questions concerned.

2.3 How do you think the explanations and advice you provide in your Guidance Memo will deepen front-line persons' understanding of the topics addressed and help them with their endeavors?

To answer this question:

- Organize your reasons and answer in bullets or short paragraphs.
- Use no more than 500 words.

Tips:

- Example of a well-written reason:
"One of the three topics my Guidance Memo will address is the characteristics of large-scale aquaculture in Asia-Pacific countries."

I will focus on explaining those features that make tackling the rapid development of this sector particularly challenging for front-line persons (e.g. the Asia-Pacific aquaculture production sector's incredibly and uniquely wide stakeholder network).

I will also point to areas where front-line persons can provide their practical support that may not be obvious to them. For example: Front-line persons can initiate projects in partnerships with governments to train personnel needed for proper implementation of policies and regulations aimed at mitigating negative impacts of large-scale aquaculture. This is of practical significance because the main reason for delays in these policies and regulations taking effect is the governments' lack of financial resources and skilled personnel to implement them."

- Your answer to this question is critically important to reviewers.

2.4 How will you go about the work on the Guidance Memo?

To answer this question:

- Explain the steps, process, methods, etc. that will be involved in planning and writing the Guidance Memo.
- Use no more than 500 words.

Tips:

- Give a clear and specific description. For example, if one of the things you plan to do is an in-depth literature review to augment a preliminary one already in hand, provide some detail about this work. Do not just say "I will do a thorough literature review".
- We want to see that you have put some serious thought into planning your work and we want to understand your direction of travel.

2.5 What concrete evidence can you provide to show that the main thrust and substance of your Guidance Memo has been considered by your academic peers or advisors?

To answer this question:

- Present the evidence in a list, briefly explaining each item.
- Use no more than 250 words.

Tips:

- This evidence is requested for the sake of "quality control", to make sure that even though Guidance Memos are written for non-academics, their gists have been seen or heard by the authors' academic peers or advisors.
- An example of an item on this list of evidence:
"All the topics addressed in my Guidance Memo are discussed in a manuscript I submitted recently to peer-reviewed journals. The working title of this manuscript is"
- Other kinds of evidence and explanations that are satisfactory:
 - The Guidance Memo will be based on the applicant's peer-reviewed papers.
 - Important data in the Guidance Memo will be taken from the dissertation the applicant is writing.
 - Key points in the Guidance Memo have been mentioned in a conference presentation by the applicant.

Part 3: Personal statement

3.1 Why do you choose a fellowship that is about tackling industrial animal agriculture? Why do you want to help front-line persons who are dealing with this issue? [Use 250 words or less]

3.2 How will the work done during the fellowship period fit into your academic research interests and professional goals in the coming 1 – 3 years? How do you plan to keep developing this work for your own research purposes? [Use 250 words or less]

3.3 Is there anything else that is very important to your application that you want us to know? [Use 250 words or less]

3.4 Complete this sentence in 50 words or less: "In a nutshell, I am/we are applying for this fellowship mainly because"

These fellowships are best for academic researchers who:

- Want to address real-world problems and be of help to front-line persons.
- Already have a solid understanding of the topics they plan to focus on during the award period. Applications from researchers who plan to use the fellowship to explore topics they are not familiar with (e.g. use the award period to do little else other than conduct preliminary literature reviews) are unlikely to be shortlisted.
- Are good at explaining complex topics concisely and decisively to non-academics.
- Are interested in work that is somewhat unconventional for academics and off their beaten tracks.
- Are committed to build on the work they do during the award period for years to come because that work will be a good fit for their own long-term research plans and/or professional goals.

Above all, applicants should be comfortable with writing Guidance Memos. We are happy to answer questions about Guidance Memos. Please feel free to ask!

IV. Review and Selection Process. Payment Schedule.

- Applications are reviewed according to four criteria:
 1. How useful will the Guidance Memo be to front-line persons? [This is the key consideration.]
 2. How relevant are the applicant's chosen topics to the "burning questions"?
 3. How well does this fellowship fit into the applicant's own research interests?
 4. What is the overall quality of the application (e.g. is it thoughtfully prepared; does it indicate the applicant's commitment and ability to write an excellent Guidance Memo)?
- An applicant's field, discipline, career stage, and location is not important to reviewers.
- Directors of Tiny Beam Fund will make the final selection of winners.
- Payment schedule: Half of the fellowship award will be paid at the start, and half at the end of the award period when Tiny Beam Fund is satisfied that all the requirements mentioned in the Letter Of Agreement have been fulfilled.
- Award funds are sent to fellowship recipients' personal bank accounts. They are normally issued in USD, but may be given in other currencies at the recipients' request, to be determined on a case by case basis.

V. Obligations and Deliverables Expected from Fellowship Recipients

- Each recipient of a fellowship award must sign a Letter Of Agreement with Tiny Beam Fund.
- Fellowship recipients must be available for a mid-point check-in in the form of a conversation over the phone or Skype that lasts no more than an hour.
- 4 – 6 weeks before submitting the final version of their Guidance Memos, fellowship recipients should send writing samples taken from their drafts.
- Each fellowship recipient should deliver the following **three documents** at the end of the award period:
 1. **A Guidance Memo** which meets the scope and requirements described in Section VI.
 - The Guidance Memo should satisfy the seven criteria described in Section VI, part B.
 - It should be a stand-alone document in PDF format. Its layout need not reach professional design standard, but should not be too informal. It must be easy to read and navigate, and free of fancy, distracting designs.
 - Tiny Beam Fund holds copyright to Guidance Memos. But their authors are strongly encouraged to use material in the Guidance Memos in academic and non-academic publications and settings.
 2. **An annotated bibliography** of publications relevant to the content in the Guidance Memo.
 - Different kinds of publications can be included (e.g. peer-reviewed academic papers, books, government reports, feature articles by investigative journalists).
 - Information and commentaries in the publications listed must be sound and reliable.

- A publication listed in the bibliography need not focus in its entirety on the topics addressed in the Guidance Memo. (For example, if one chapter of a book with five chapters contains relevant, valuable data and perspectives, then the book can be included.)
 - In addition to standard bibliographic information, each item should contain an annotation (no more than 250 words) which highlights key parts of the publication that are of most relevance, their strengths and limitations, unique features, etc.
 - The bibliography should contain a minimum of seven and a maximum of fifteen items.
 - Any citation style commonly seen in academic writing can be used.
 - The bibliography should be a stand-alone document in PDF format.
 - Tiny Beam Fund will hold copyright to the bibliography.
3. **A short personal narrative** on the experience with the fellowship.
- The narrative should have a minimum of 1,000 and a maximum of 2,000 words.
 - It should cover the following topics:
 - Lessons learned (e.g. What insights have you gained and takeaways you want to share?)
 - Challenges (e.g. Did you face challenges? Why or why not?)
 - Surprises (e.g. Did anything surprise you, big or small, pleasant or otherwise?)
 - Expectations (e.g. Does the work overall and/or are there particular things that far exceed or fall short of your own expectations?)
 - Any other reflections are welcome.
 - The personal narrative should be a stand-alone document in PDF format. It can be presented as an essay or in any other non-academic writing style.
 - The narrative is for Tiny Beam Fund’s internal use only.
- Also required is an accounting of how the award funds have been used, based on broad categories (e.g. travel expenses for fieldwork) for the U.S. Internal Revenue Service.

VI. Explanation of “Guidance Memo”

A. Characteristics of documents commonly referred to as guidance memos, staff guides, practice briefs

1. The main purpose of these documents is to provide explanations and clarifications. They are not laundry lists of facts and figures. They are not key points for debate teams.

- The function of these documents is to explain rules or scenarios that may appear complicated, confusing, or ambiguous to persons who need to base their decisions on them.
- Authors of these documents also spell out practical implications and offer guidance on interpretations and applications.
- Government departments and agencies often issue decision-makers guides, staff guides, practice briefs. For example: The education department of a U.S. state issues a guidance memo on the state’s financial aid for adult learners to assist university administrators in that state.

2. Each document focuses on very specific topics and addresses a particular audience. These documents are not directed at the public at large.

- For example: (i) A guidance memo from the American Bar Association to law schools on using admission tests. (ii) A new head of the housing department requests a veteran staff member to prepare an “action memo” on reorganizing the department’s internal structure in the coming months.

3. Concise and succinct presentation. These documents are not essays.

- Bullets and short paragraphs are invariably used. Lengthy, discursive narratives are eschewed.

4. The following are good examples of the kind of “Guidance Memos” we have in mind. These examples are chosen for their tone and approach to explaining the topics concerned (not for their lengths or design styles):

- [“Promoting Bilingual Children’s Communication Development”](#)
- [“Ensuring Climate-Smart Agriculture ‘Leaves No One Behind’”](#)
- [“Preparing for Literacy”](#)

B. The fellowship program's Guidance Memos

Fellows have flexibility in determining how they want to structure and present their Guidance Memos. All Guidance Memos must meet the following requirements and criteria:

1. Relevant to front-line persons' "burning questions"

- *A Guidance Memo must be directly relevant to at least part of a "burning question".*
- For example, the Guidance Memo of a fellowship winner named Pat B. focuses on the topic of supply chains of pork and poultry products from medium- and large-scale facilities in China. This topic is relevant to the following "burning question":
What percentages are animals raised for food in China and in India "factory farmed"? Which are the companies involved with "factory farming" in the two countries? What do the supply chains for "factory farmed" products look like?

2. 5,000 – 7,000 words in plain language/English

- *A Guidance Memo should have a minimum of 5,000 words and a maximum of 7,000 words (not including charts, graphs, endnotes, etc.) In addition, there should be an abstract of no more than 350 words.*
- For more information on what is "plain language", consult websites from reputable organizations and governments that support and promote its use.
- The Guidance Memo can be written in a language other than English. This is subject to approval on a case by case basis. Applicants must raise this issue early in the application process. And if awarded the fellowship, they must be involved in steps to arrange for translation of the original into English.

3. Clarity

- *Clarity and succinctness in every aspect is essential, from how the content of a Guidance Memo is organized to the content itself.*
- Clarity can come from teasing out strands as well as pulling scattered strands together. Synthesis of disorderly information and "joining up dots" to form a clear coherent picture is especially welcome in Guidance Memos.
- Another highly desirable feature in Guidance Memos is explaining precisely the points of disagreement when something is controversial or confusing. Such clarification is much better than merely stating "not enough research is done" or "more research is needed" which is not helpful to front-line persons.

4. Solid information and sound judgment

- *Authors of Guidance Memos should try their best to use the most reliable sources and research findings.*
- Information, data, evidence, ideas, and viewpoints presented or used in a Guidance Memo need not be definitive, undisputed, or comprehensive. The determining factor for their acceptability is whether it is fair, reasonable, and defensible to use them. An author's own sound judgment is therefore very important.

5. Explanations that deepen understanding, but are easy for non-academics to grasp

- *The goal of Guidance Memos is to help front-line persons gain a deeper, more sophisticated and nuanced understanding of the topics being addressed. Therefore unpacking complex, obscure, opaque issues should play an important role in a Guidance Memo. But it should be done in a way that is easy for non-academics to comprehend.*
- In the course of providing a thorough explanation it may be unavoidable to make reference to concepts, methodologies, contexts, or research works that may not be familiar to non-academics. But that should be kept to a minimum.
- Citations to scholarly and other kinds of publications are very important and should be given, but they should not clutter up and interfere with the flow of explanations.

6. Practical advice that is useful to front-line persons

- *Guidance Memos should include practical advice that helps front-line persons with their endeavors (especially with planning, strategizing, decision-making), with how to come to grips with complex issues.*
- Front-line persons have their own experience, opinions, and approaches. Guidance Memos are intended to complement and supplement these with practical advice based on the perspectives of academics.
- Advice can be concerned with how to view, approach, analyze, interpret, contextualize something and/or what concrete actions to take.

- All advice should pertain to practical (not theoretical or philosophical) matters.
- Some categories of advice that can be included in Guidance Memos:
 - Advice which reminds front-line persons that certain seemingly good solutions are probably “not that simple” when they are implemented in real life and there may well be risks, trade-offs, and unintended consequences.
 - Suggestions to frame or communicate an issue in a new light (e.g. suggest how front-line persons can emphasize the history of certain practices which resonate with local communities, or how to take into account the level of training /education of farmers).
 - Advice on how front-line persons can employ some particularly strong evidence to persuade and influence stakeholders such as corporations or legislators.

7. Do not dwell on “the usual suspects”

- *Guidance Memos should pay special attention to information, views, and research findings that front-line persons may **not** be aware of.*
- Front-line persons are not clueless about the topics addressed in Guidance Memos. They are not the general public who may need to have the most basic things explained to them. (For example, front-line persons are very familiar with the FAO’s 2006 report “Livestock’s Long Shadow”.)
- But front-line persons often cannot access peer-reviewed literature behind paywalls.
- One of the most valuable features in a Guidance Memo is its ability to highlight things that are not “the usual suspects”, things that are not obvious even to those with some understanding of a topic, things that may be ignored, misconstrued, or counter-intuitive.
 - For example, Pat B’s Guidance Memo on supply chains of pork and poultry products in China can highlight the following points which are not commonly known or discussed, but which provide new perspectives for front-line persons:
 - the pig production sector’s activities relating to contracting with small-scale farmers
 - the continuing popularity of “wet markets” in rural areas
 - a number of farm-gate transactions still happening between small traders and small pork producers which do not involve the modern supply chain

Send All Inquiries and Applications to: min@tinybeamfund.org

- Application opens: March 9, 2020 [0800 U.S. Eastern Daylight Time]
- Application closes: May 11, 2020 [1800 U.S. Eastern Daylight Time]
- All applications will be acknowledged within 72 hours of their receipt.
- All applicants will know no later than June 1, 2020 whether they are offered the fellowship.

Persons interested in these fellowships are urged to contact us as early as possible to express their interest, ask questions, send drafts, etc. so we can help them prepare strong applications.

