



State of Wisconsin
2023 - 2024 LEGISLATURE

LRB-4901/1

ARG:cjs

2023 ASSEMBLY BILL 1141

March 6, 2024 - Introduced by Representatives J. ANDERSON, EMERSON, ANDRACA, BARE, CLANCY, CONLEY, JACOBSON, JOERS, MOORE OMOKUNDE, MURPHY, OHNSTAD, RATCLIFF, SHANKLAND, SHELTON, SINICKI, SNODGRASS and STUBBS, cosponsored by Senators SPREITZER, AGARD, CARPENTER, LARSON, PFAFF and ROYS. Referred to Committee on Colleges and Universities.

AN ACT *to create* 20.285 (1) (cm) and 36.25 (56) of the statutes; **relating to:**

creating a journalism fellowship program in the University of Wisconsin System and making an appropriation.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

This bill creates a journalism fellowship program in the University of Wisconsin System under which 25 fellows are matched with participating newsrooms for a one-year fellowship. Each fellow, who must hold a two-year or four-year degree in journalism, media, communications, or a similar program at an institution of higher education, receives a salary of \$40,000. In an application to be a fellow or a participating newsroom, the applicant must demonstrate how the applicant's participation in the program will help increase access to high quality local journalism, bolster media literacy, meet state residents' civic information needs, or a combination of these.

For further information see the **state** fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. 20.005 (3) (schedule) of the statutes: at the appropriate place, insert the following amounts for the purposes indicated:

2023-24 2024-25

20.285 University of Wisconsin System

(1) UNIVERSITY EDUCATION, RESEARCH AND PUBLIC

SERVICE

(cm) Journalism fellowship program GPR A -0- 1,000,000

SECTION 2. 20.285 (1) (cm) of the statutes is created to read:

20.285 (1) (cm) *Journalism fellowship program.* The amounts in the schedule for the journalism fellowship program under s. 36.25 (56).

SECTION 3. 36.25 (56) of the statutes is created to read:

36.25 (56) JOURNALISM FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM. (a) The board shall establish a journalism fellowship program that matches individuals with journalism degrees to local newsrooms.

(b) The board shall establish a committee to select participating fellows and newsrooms for the program and to match these fellows and newsrooms. This selection committee shall consist of the following:

1. Three members who hold a faculty position in the system in the field of journalism or communications, appointed by the system president.

2. One member employed in the journalism industry, appointed by a majority of the members specified in subd. 1.

3. One member employed in the technology industry, appointed by a majority of the members specified in subd. 1.

(c) The selection committee shall evaluate applications to be a fellow and to be a participating newsroom under the program. The application shall require each applicant to demonstrate how the applicant's participation in the program will help increase access to high quality local journalism, bolster media literacy, meet state residents' civic information needs, or a combination of these. To be eligible for a fellowship, an applicant must have completed a 2-year or 4-year degree in journalism, media, communications, or a similar program at an institution of higher education.

(d) Based on the recommendations of the selection committee, the board shall annually award 25 one-year fellowships providing each fellow with a salary of \$40,000.

(e) The program under this subsection shall be funded from the appropriation account under s. 20.285 (1) (cm).

SECTION 4. Nonstatutory provisions.

(1) The authorized FTE positions for the University of Wisconsin System are increased by 25.0 GPR positions on July 1, 2024, to be funded from the appropriation under s. 20.285 (1) (cm), for the journalism fellows under s. 36.25 (56).

(END)