

Concept Note: Praja Elected Representatives Fellowship Programme Cohort – 4 (Mumbai)

Over the last two decades, [Praja Foundation](#) has been working towards enabling accountable governance. We conduct data driven research on civic issues and inform citizens, media, and government administration and work with elected representatives to equip them to address inefficiencies in their work processes, bridging the information gaps, and mobilising them in taking corrective measures advocating for change.

Among Praja Foundation's several capacity building efforts to improve governance in the city of Mumbai, the Elected Representatives (ER) Fellowship Programme has always been one of the highlights. The programme was designed to increase awareness, in the participating fellows, on the ground realities of urban governance and the powers and functions of elected representatives while working alongside them. It focuses on building the capacities of fellows to turn them into educated and skilled future political and social leaders.

The fellows get an opportunity to help the municipal councillors/ MLAs of Mumbai to discharge their constitutionally mandated function i.e., raising questions on the floor of the house/ committees. This is done through data and research support provided by the fellows. The fellows also get a platform to work on civic, health, education verticals as well as on other prevalent issues alongside the elected representatives.

During the course of the fellowship, Praja coordinators organise weekly and monthly review meetings with their fellows wherein the latter share their experiences from the previous month in extensive detail. Various workshops are also conducted for the fellows so that they are not just practically involved in the process of good governance but also theoretically benefit from the programme.

Councillors have benefitted from this activity as well. Testimony to that has been the fact that they have been constantly reaching out to the fellows, either to procure data from Praja pertaining to their ward or to take help in framing questions, which they may want to ask on the floor of the house or at ward level meetings.

Praja Foundation has run three cohorts of the Fellowship Programme in Mumbai (2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20) and 1 cohort in Delhi (2019-20). For Mumbai, in the year 2017- 18 and 2018-19 (first and second cohort respectively), Praja's Fellowship was conducted with 19 fellows each whereas the cohort 1 ER Fellowship in Delhi had 12 fellows. The fellows of Mumbai cohort 1 put in 9,120 man-hours of work whereas the fellows of Mumbai cohort 2 put in 13,789 man-hours and the fellows of the first Delhi cohort put in 5,790 man-hours of research support for the councillors. The Mumbai ER Fellowship cohort 3 in 2019-20, with 17 fellows, spent 13,543 man-hours to assist the councillors. During the cohort 3 of the fellowship, they conducted 1,146 meetings in Mumbai with councillors to provide data and research support.

Fellows have historically assisted the councillors on research work and in providing questions on Health, Education, Civic and Crime white papers of Mumbai that Praja painstakingly compiles each year. In 2017-18, 47 questions were raised by Councillors in Mumbai, due to the research assistance

provided by fellows of cohort 1. In 2018-19, 126 questions were raised by the Councillors whereas in 2019-20, 355 questions were raised by Councillors in various committees & General Body Meetings (GBMs) in Mumbai.

Praja Foundation is preparing to undertake the Fellowship Programme for the fourth year, starting from March 2022. The promotion of the fellowship programme in colleges in Mumbai will start from January 2022 onwards.

In this cohort of the ER Fellowship Programme, 20 students will be carefully chosen, through a structured selection process. These fellows will then be divided into pairs of two and each pair will be allotted specific wards to work on, with local elected representatives of Mumbai for a period of 10 to 12 months. This will be done after rigorous trainings are conducted by Praja, to prepare them for the upcoming field work.

Through the period of the fellowship, the fellows will engage with various stakeholders in the process of governance including but not limited to elected representatives, administration and other field experts in Mumbai.

Note: Praja's Elected Representatives Fellowship Programme Cohort – 4 (Mumbai) will be Mumbai based physical fellowship for the period of 10-12 months starting from March 2022.

Important Dates for the Fellowship:

Application Form Date: 17th January 2022 – 20th February 2022

Link for application form: <https://bit.ly/3A5hYYA>