

Concept Note: Srinagar Municipal Fellowship Programme Cohort –1

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, the Elected Representatives (ER) Fellowship Programme in the cities of Mumbai and Delhi has always been one of the highlights. The programme was designed to increase awareness, among 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.

Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) and Praja Foundation signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 8th February 2022 through which **Praja is excited to extend the Municipal Fellowship Programme in Srinagar to assist Srinagar's Municipal Corporators and Administration.** The fellows will get an opportunity to help the corporators of Srinagar to discharge their constitutionally mandated function i.e., raising questions on the floor of the house/committees and provide support in official tasks to the administration. This is done through data and research support provided by the fellows. The fellows also get a platform to work on citizens' needs at ward and zonal level, projects and proposals on developmental works by SMC, as well as on other prevalent issues and help in communication between elected representatives and the administration.

During the fellowship, Praja coordinators will organise weekly and monthly review meetings with their fellows wherein the latter can share their experiences from the previous month in extensive detail. Various workshops will also be 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. Corporators will benefit from this activity as well. Testimony to that from the fellowships in Mumbai and Delhi 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 the fourth cohort started in March 2022; 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 both Mumbai and Delhi had put hours of work ranging from 5,000 hours to over 13,000 hours in each cohort. During cohort 3 of the fellowship, they conducted 1,146 meetings in Mumbai with councillors to provide data and research support.

In this cohort of the Srinagar Municipal Fellowship Programme, 16 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 and Municipal administration of Srinagar for a period of 10 months working full day. This will be done after rigorous trainings are conducted by Praja and SMC, to prepare them for the upcoming field work. Through the period of the fellowship, the fellows will engage not only with elected representatives, administration and other field experts in Srinagar but also with various stakeholders in the process of governance.

Last date to apply: 19th June 2022

To apply: Login to <http://www.praja.org>

Note: Srinagar Municipal Fellowship Programme Cohort – 1 will be held in Srinagar as it will be a physical fellowship for a period of 10 months.