

Mumbai Address:

Basement Gala No. B,
Chanchal Smruti Co-op Hsg Soc Ltd., G.D.
Ambekar Marg, Kohinoor Mill, Wadala
Mumbai – 400031



Concept Note: Maharashtra Governance Fellowship, Cohort –1 (2026)

About Praja

Over the last 26 years, Praja Foundation has been dedicated to fostering accountable governance through extensive data-driven research on civic issues. The Governance Fellowship Programme is a unique and exciting opportunity for young citizens to learn how the city government functions and be part of running their cities.

Objectives:

The programme aims to cultivate awareness and a ground-level understanding of urban governance in the city and the various powers and functions of the elected representatives and administration through comprehensive fieldwork. During the fellowship, fellows closely work with Maharashtra's different Municipal Corporations, Elected Representatives (councillors & MLAs) and Administration from their cities and state and assist them in raising matters of public concern and raising questions on issues on the floor of the legislative forums. In this process, fellows undertake extensive research and data-collection work on civic, public health, Solid waste and other urban governance issues which broadens their horizons towards understanding their cities better and continue to take actions towards improving the city.

Fellowship Format:

Praja's Maharashtra Governance Fellowship Programme will begin in March 2026. Following a rigorous selection process, 2 fellows for Mumbai Metropolitan Region, 2 fellows for Pune and Pimpri-Chinchwad and 2 fellows for Nashik will be selected. The fellows will go through a comprehensive orientation programme to build a foundational understanding of urban governance and the structure of local city governance.

The fellows will be involved in research on urban governance reforms, municipal finance, service delivery, citizen participation etc. Besides, they will provide support in organising capacity-building workshops for elected representative and administration, Prajatantra-National Youth Festival, amongst other events. They will closely work with city administration and elected representatives.

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Praja will organize capacity building sessions facilitated by experts, weekly and monthly review meetings with the fellows to ensure active peer learning within the cohort. Praja coordinators will also share their feedback as well as guide them in their upcoming tasks

Fellowship Impact:

The research conducted by Praja Fellows and their assistance in raising matters of public concern on the legislative forums has resulted in action from local governments to improve public services for the city. Last year, Mumbai fellows were part of the Urban Governance Index and Fiscal empowerment report. Delhi fellows have formulated 116 questions for the General body meeting and ward committee meeting focusing on issues like centralised complaint management and ward committee formations. Lucknow fellows have worked closely with Director of Urban local bodies on Municipal finance and capacity building modules for elected representatives. Collectively, these efforts have translated into tangible improvements in service delivery, increased governmental transparency and accountability, and a more engaged and empowered citizenry across these major Indian cities.

In this cohort of the Praja's Maharashtra Governance Fellowship Programme, Cohort-1 youth will be carefully chosen through a structured selection process. Through the period of the fellowship, the fellows will engage with various stakeholders to strengthen urban governance, including but not limited to elected representatives, administration, and other field experts.

Learning Outcomes:

- Understanding of the process of data collection and research in different government departments
- Build knowledge of the Right to Information Act and its functions,
- Experience and comfortability in interacting with government officials
- Understanding of data entry, data analysis and the process of creating white papers/reports
- Knowledge of the process of outreach with elected representatives and other stakeholders
- Understanding of Urban Governance, Municipal Finance and Climate Action in other cities in India
- Understanding the importance of media and communications in outreach and advocacy.
- Hands-on experience of participating in the governance process with mentorship from experts and changemakers.

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- Networking with professionals and experts in their field, expanding the professional network, and developing prospective career opportunities.
- Develop hard and soft skills, i.e. interpersonal communications, time management, research, and others.

Note: Praja's ER Governance Fellowship Programme Cohort 1, will be Mumbai Metropolitan Region (Thane, Kalyan – Dombivali, Navi Mumbai, Bhiwandi, Vasai – Virar, Mira – Bhayandar, Panvel) Pune and Nashik based onsite fellowship for the period of 10 months. Fellowship will start from March 2026.

Important Dates for the Fellowship: -

Application Form Date: 16th February 2026 – 28th February 2026

Link for application form: <https://forms.gle/j8WS5XTW5fUx1DUF8>

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