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Who Applied?: Class of 2024 National Fellows Program Applicants

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Fellows

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About the Author(s)

Awista Ayub is the director of New America's Fellows Program. She is the author of *Kabul Girls Soccer Club*.

About New America

We are dedicated to renewing the promise of America by continuing the quest to realize our nation's highest ideals, honestly confronting the challenges caused by rapid technological and social change, and seizing the opportunities those changes create.

About Fellows

New America's Fellows Program invests in thinkers—journalists, scholars, filmmakers, and public policy analysts—who generate big, bold ideas that have an impact and spark new conversations about the most pressing issues of our day.

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## Who Applied?: Class of 2024 National Fellows Program Applicants

Every year, New America's Fellows Program invests in bold thinkers—journalists, scholars, filmmakers, and public policy analysts—who generate big ideas to make an impact and spark new conversations about today's most pressing challenges.

We carefully select our National Fellows through a rigorous, competitive selection process. We seek to support individuals who put forward far-reaching ideas through projects that draw on in-depth research, keen reporting, nuanced analysis, and a thoughtful storytelling approach.

For nearly 25 years, the Fellows Program has contributed to a deeper understanding of trends around timely topics, from climate change to criminal justice reform. Our fellows have gone on to write bestsellers, produce feature-length films, and win Pulitzer Prizes, MacArthur Foundation Fellowships, Emmys, Carnegie Fellowships, and National Magazine Awards. Visit our **impact page** to learn more.
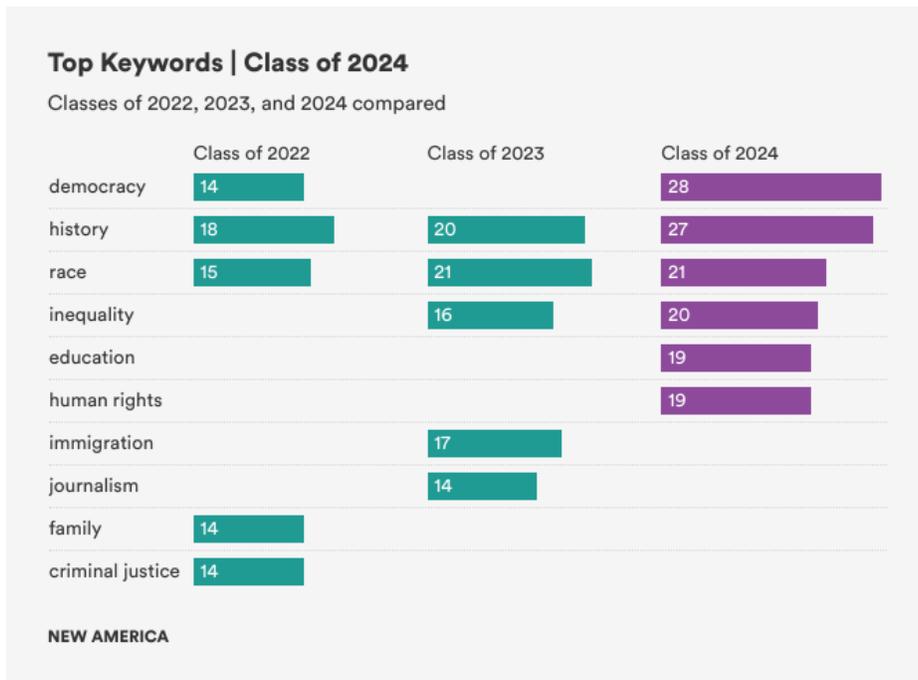
Keyword Mapping

An analysis of the keywords submitted with each application yielded the following cloud of the top 28 words used this year. The size of the word represents the frequency of use, and the color-coding of the word aligns broadly with the issue areas they represent.
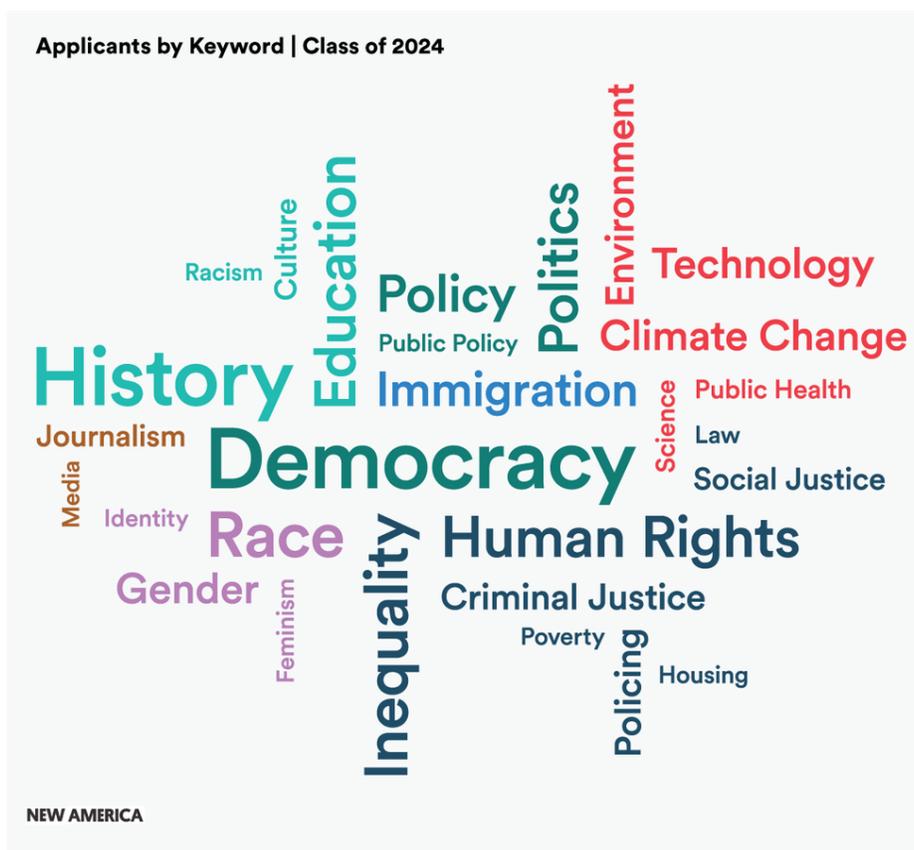
Note: Words are not to scale.

This year, the top six keywords based on the frequency of use for the Class of 2024 applications are democracy (28), history (27), race (12), inequality (20), education (19), and human rights (19). This year we've seen the use of democracy jump dramatically, as race and history remain top keywords used over the years. The applicants' keywords used over the years are as follows.

Top Keywords | Class of 2024

Classes of 2022, 2023, and 2024 compared

	Class of 2022	Class of 2023	Class of 2024
democracy	14		28
history	18	20	27
race	15	21	21
inequality		16	20
education			19
human rights			19
immigration		17	
journalism		14	
family	14		
criminal justice	14		

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Class of 2024 by Issue Area

Candidates submit applications that speak to various pressing global and domestic issues every year. Given the annual application cycle, the program provides a unique insight into the types of issues journalists, academics, and other thought leaders are attuned to in that given year.
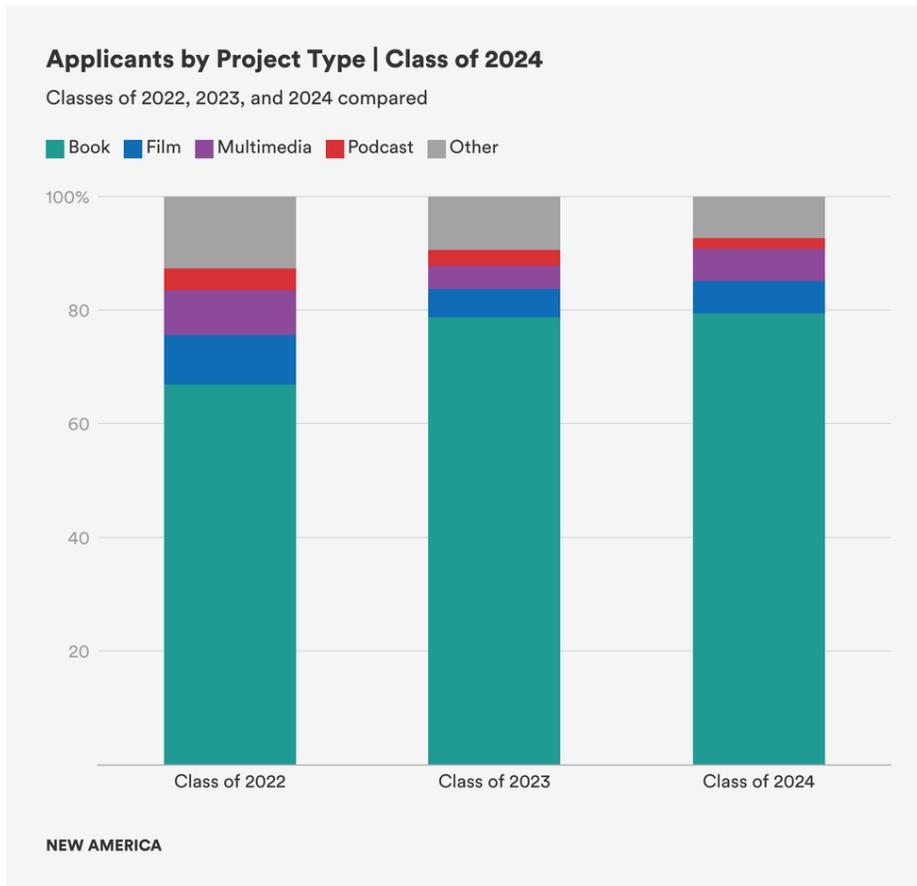
Over the past several years, the percentage of applications has been similarly spread across the six broad issue areas—society, justice, & human rights; science, technology, & innovation; foreign policy; domestic policy; identity; and journalism. However, between the Class of 2022 and the Class of 2024, the breakdown of the applications by issue area remained relatively the same. This year, there is a percentage decrease in projects focused on society, justice, & human rights as well as foreign policy, and, instead, an increase in projects focused on domestic policy. The chart below demonstrates that shift from the Classes of 2022 to 2024.

Applicants by Issue Area | Class of 2024

Classes of 2022, 2023, and 2024 compared

	Class of 2022 (339)	Class of 2023 (221)	Class of 2024 (283)
Society, Justice & Human Rights	29%	34%	29%
Science, Technology & Innovation	23%	22%	23%
Domestic Policy	15%	10%	18%
Foreign Policy	17%	22%	14%
Identity	14%	10%	11%
Journalism (study of)	3%	2%	5%

Society, Justice & Human Rights: Criminal Justice, Policing & Guns; Education; Poverty, Inequality & Social Mobility; Society & Culture; Work & Care

Science, Technology & Innovation: Cities; Environment, Climate Change & Energy; Health & Medicine; Privacy, Data, Algorithms & Cybersecurity; Science & Technology; Thinking, Innovation & Entrepreneurship

Foreign Policy: Foreign Affairs; Immigration & Migration; U.S. Military & Intelligence; War, Security & Terrorism

Domestic Policy: Business, Labor & Trade; Economy & Finance; Populism & Democracy; U.S. Politics & Public Policy/Trump

Identity: Gender & Identity; Race, Ethnicity & Identity; Religion

Journalism (study of)

Note: For any given class year, candidates submit their application in early February of the previous year, i.e. the Class of 2024 National Fellows submitted their application on February 1, 2023. Number of applicants in parenthesis.

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Class of 2024 by Project Type

To date, the Fellows Program has supported the publication of nearly **150 books**, **13 films**, and several **award-winning long-form reporting projects**. While New America's Fellows Program has an established reputation as a premier fellowship for nonfiction writers, every year, we continue to receive a range of new projects that vary in form and approach. With the acceptance of the Class of 2024, in addition to 12 books, we are supporting two film projects and one podcast project.

While approximately 80 percent of the Class of 2024 applicants submitted book projects, there continues to be a steady representation of non-book projects submitted. Approximately 6 percent of the applicants submitted a film project. Additionally, approximately 2 percent proposed a podcast project, and approximately 6 percent presented a multimedia approach to their proposed project.

Applicants by Project Type | Class of 2024

Classes of 2022, 2023, and 2024 compared

■ Book ■ Film ■ Multimedia ■ Podcast ■ Other


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Class of 2024 by Location

Of the broader candidate pool, 228 applicants are based in the United States across 34 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, and 55 are based abroad across 33 countries.
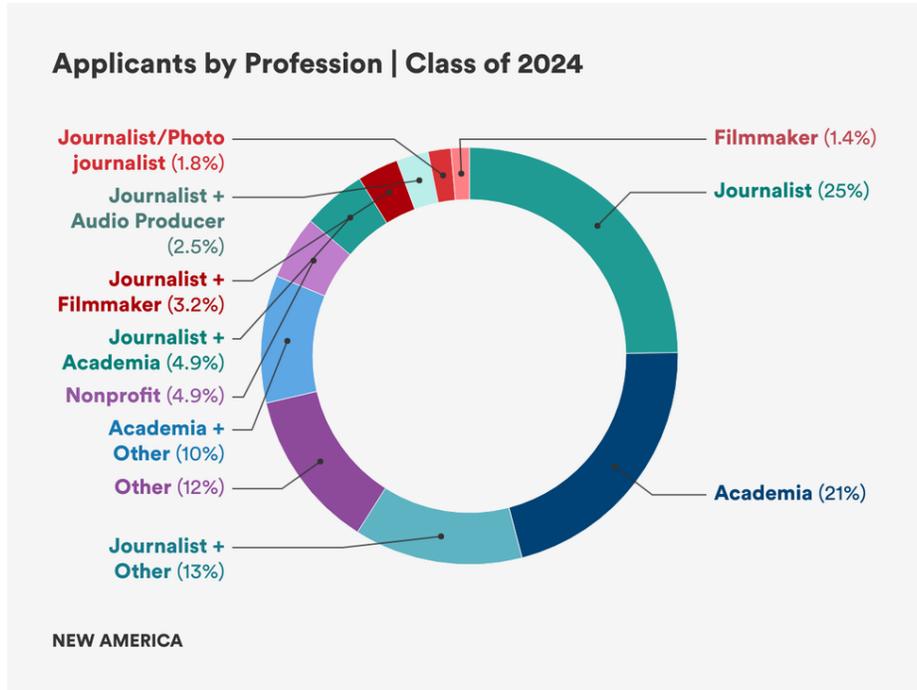
The U.S.-based applicants concentrated in New York (64), California (27), the District of Columbia (23), Massachusetts (14), and Texas (10). This is the same top-five list from last year. Internationally, applicants based in Canada (7), Brazil (4), and India (4) made up nearly 28 percent of the international candidate pool.

Applications distributed across state and country as follows:

Applicants by Location | Class of 2024

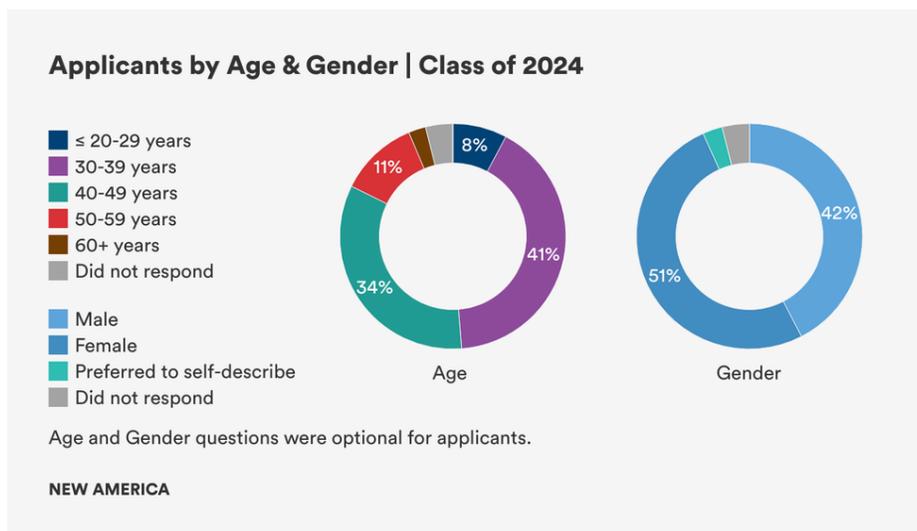228 U.S.-based applicants   55 International applicants   NEW AMERICA
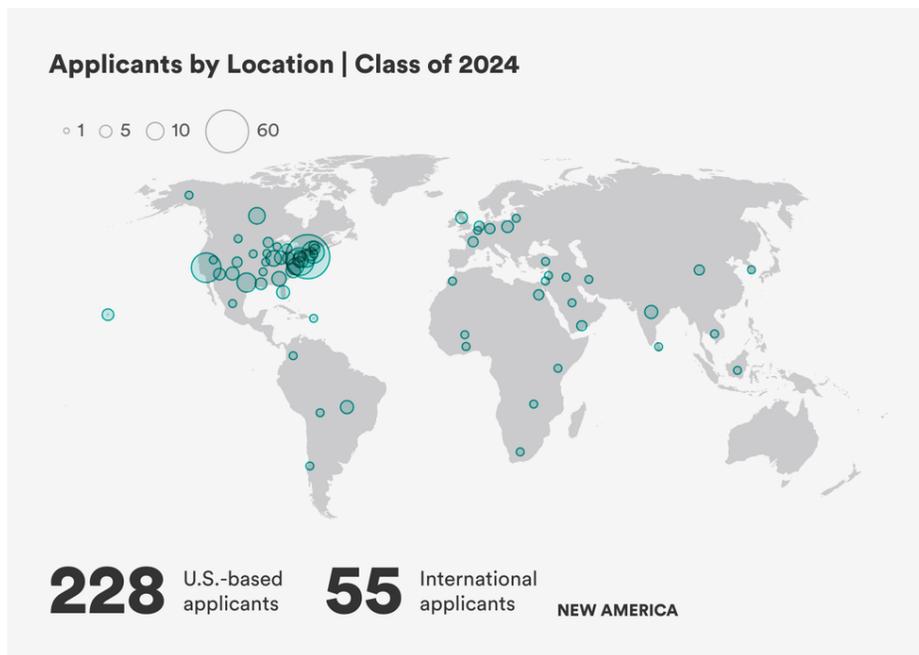
Class of 2024 by Profession

While the Fellows Program attracts applicants from across professions and industries, most of our applicants are journalists (25 percent), followed by those working in academia (21 percent). The applicants by profession are as follows.

Applicants by Profession | Class of 2024

- Filmmaker (1.4%)
- Journalist (25%)
- Journalist/Photojournalist (1.8%)
- Journalist + Audio Producer (2.5%)
- Journalist + Filmmaker (3.2%)
- Journalist + Academia (4.9%)
- Nonprofit (4.9%)
- Academia + Other (10%)
- Other (12%)
- Journalist + Other (13%)
- Academia (21%)

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Class of 2024 by Gender and Age

The age and gender breakdown for the applicant pool are as follows.

Applicants by Age & Gender | Class of 2024

- ≤ 20-29 years
- 30-39 years
- 40-49 years
- 50-59 years
- 60+ years
- Did not respond

- Male
- Female
- Preferred to self-describe
- Did not respond

Age: 8%, 41%, 34%, 11%

Gender: 42%, 51%

Age and Gender questions were optional for applicants.

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