

Netherlands Health Care Study Group Application Q&A

A program for U.S. health care reporters to travel to the Netherlands, meet with health care leaders and visit experts to inform reporting projects for U.S.-based outlets.



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Welcome & Introductions

Who We Are

Association of Health Care Journalists



International Health Care Study Group

- The International Health Care Study Group allows a group of U.S. journalists to **see firsthand how the Dutch health care system works** by **spending a week in the Netherlands** and **gathering information for news reports back in the U.S.**
- You will:
 - Meet with **local experts, health care leaders and business, government and labor officials.**
 - Participate in a series of **site visits** to hospitals and physicians' offices to see the Dutch system in action.
 - Spend some time learning about **Dutch history and culture.**
- Help **developing a project** to write for a U.S.- based audience on some aspect of the Netherlands' health care system that focuses on one of the following broad categories: **Equity, Cost, Coverage or Care.**





**2025
GERMAN
HEALTH CARE
STUDY GROUP**

What's covered

- **One week training in the Netherlands** (Week of Nov. 15, 2026)
 - Travel
 - Lodging
 - Meals
 - Travel insurance
- A year's **membership** in AHCJ, new or renewed.
- In addition to pre-determined programming, there will be **tailored sessions and independent reporting time** for participants to schedule interviews with sources specific to their projects during the week.

Timeline



Work Study Program Week Plan

We build this program around sourcing to help your projects:

- **Meetings with sources**
 - For example: Ministry of Health officials, experts in public policy, insurers, tech companies, academics
- **Site visits to get color for stories**
 - For example: Dementia Village, primary care, hospitals
- **Reception and group dinners**
 - Informal discussions and debrief on learnings
- **Time for pre-scheduled interviews with your own sources**

Post-Travel Expectations

- **Follow up group webinar(s) on project progress**
- **Regular check-ins with your Mentor / AHCJ**
 - Help with story framing
 - Help with sourcing
 - Other areas you need help
- **Getting a good story past the finish line: *Publishing!***
 - Not behind a paywall
 - Credit line/link to the fellowship (we'll provide language)
 - By the deadline

Eligibility

- U.S.-based, working journalists who qualify for AHCJ professional membership.
- Have equivalent **10 years + experience**, preferably with strong experience covering health care policy and delivery at the national or regional level.
- **Current passport** that will be valid for up to six months after the reporting trip departure date.

Selection Process

- Each application will be reviewed as it's submitted (**rolling basis**) so apply early!
- Applications will be scored with a matrix of criteria including:
 - Project proposal
 - Experience and qualifications
 - Work sample

Selection Criteria

Application checklist (REQUIRED)

- ❑ **Up to 500-word project proposal** focused on an aspect of the Netherlands' health care system (*equity, cost, coverage or care*). **Competitive proposals will be well developed and demonstrate a clear reporting plan.** Applicants are encouraged to identify specific reporting questions, potential sources, organizations or locations to visit, relevant data to examine, and how they plan to use the week in the Netherlands to advance the project.
- ❑ Complete the **application form**, which will include:
 - ❑ One-sentence overview of your proposal (an “**elevator pitch**”).
 - ❑ A paragraph on **why you are applying** for the fellowship and **how it will help your professional development.**
 - ❑ A paragraph on the **impact** reporting on this project will have (quantitative and qualitative).
 - ❑ A paragraph on the **primary audience/demographic** for the project (whom you’re serving).
- ❑ A current **resume** or CV.
- ❑ A letter of **recommendation (and pledge to publish before March 2027)** from your employer.
 - ❑ Freelance applicants must submit a letter from an assigning editor at an outlet that pledges to publish/broadcast your final project by March 2027.
- ❑ Your **best work sample published or aired during the past 12 months.**

Tips for a strong proposal

- Show how your project addresses themes of **cost, coverage, care delivery or equity**.
- Demonstrate your understanding of the topic you hope to report on. In other words, **be sure your project pitch reflects the research you've already done and your background in reporting on it.**
- Make your project pitch **as specific as possible**, especially if you plan to report on a subject that has been covered deeply. Application reviewers want to know what will make your approach a fresh one.
- **Who will you interview? What data will you analyze? Where will you go? What will you get from on the ground reporting that you can't get remotely?**
- Make a case for why this project in particular is **important to your audience** and how people will benefit from it.
 - ***Why you? Why now? Why this project?***

Project Proposal			Project Impact		Experience & Qualifications		Work Sample
Relevance & Significance	Originality & Approach	Feasibility	Potential Impact	Audience Alignment	Experience	Inclusion	Quality of Work
Up to 20 Points	Up to 20 Points	Up to 10 Points	Up to 15 Points	Up to 10 points	Up to 10 points	Up to 10 points	Up to 5 points
Does the proposed project address themes of <u>cost, coverage, care delivery or equity?</u> Does it demonstrate potential <u>significance</u> for informing U.S. audiences or policymakers?	Is the applicant's project concept creative or uniquely positioned? Does the reporter show <u>evidence of pre-reporting</u> and explain their <u>reporting process</u> and why it would be effective?	Is the project scope achievable within the timeframe of the study group and follow-up reporting? Has the applicant <u>clearly outlined sources, locations, and a plan for reporting in the Netherlands?</u>	Does the applicant describe the potential for the work to inform U.S. readers and contribute meaningfully to the discourse on health reform? Are qualitative and/or quantitative impacts discussed?	Does the applicant demonstrate understanding of the intended audience (U.S. general public, policymakers)? Is there clear benefit or relevance to this audience?	Does the applicant have a solid track record in health journalism? Are they equipped to independently research and analyze a foreign health system? Do they have (equivalent) 10+ years of relevant experience?	Does the applicant bring a perspective or background that enhances the inclusivity of the cohort?	Is the submitted work sample high-caliber, showing depth and clarity in reporting complex health topics? Does the work sample reflect strong journalistic ethics, narrative skill, and analytical ability?

Apply Early!

**Applications reviewed on a
rolling basis with finalists interviewed
and selected by the end of August.**

Dutch Health Care System Primer



Some Basics

	<u>Netherlands</u>	<u>U.S.</u>
Population	18 million	342 million
GDP	\$1.3 trillion	\$32 trillion
Per Capita Income	\$79,900	\$94,500
Health Care Spending (per capita)	\$8,436	\$14,775
Life Expectancy	82 years	77.5 years
Serious Problems Paying Medical Bills	6%	22%

Key Characteristics of the Dutch Health Care System

- Complete coverage for all residents
- Health insurance is mandatory (< 1% uninsured)
- Strong focus on primary care - patients are registered to a general practice, which serves as gatekeeper
- Well-developed long-term care system & publicly funded long-term care insurance
- Still a new healthcare system (post-reforms)

Sound Familiar?

- *Private health insurance**
- *Private hospitals*
- *Private physicians*
- *Employer & employee contributions*
- *Health insurance deductibles*

Netherlands Coverage Examples for U.S. Audience



Questions?