



AMERICAN GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The American Geographical Society Awards 2026 AGS Council Fellowship to Ms. Mahboobe Safaei Mehr

Description: The American Geographical Society (AGS) awards Ms. Mahboobe Safaei Mehr, a Ph.D. student at University of Texas at Austin, a 2026 AGS Council Fellowship.

[New York City, NY] – [April 16, 2026] — The American Geographical Society (AGS) announced the recipients of the 2026 AGS Council Fellowships to support master’s and doctoral research. The recipients are Ms. Khojasteh Hashemi, a Ph.D. candidate at Kent State University, Mr. Matthew Hielt, a Ph.D. candidate at University of Illinois-Urbana Champaign, Ms. Mahboobe Safaei Mehr, a Ph.D candidate at University of Texas, Austin, and Mr. Monojit Saha, a Ph.D candidate at University of Maryland, College Park. Masters and doctoral students from American universities are eligible to apply for the Fellowships. Established in 2013, each recipient receives a \$2,000 award for their graduate research project. AGS will recognize the four Fellows during its annual Fall Symposium, Geography 2050, to be held November 19-20, 2026 in New York City.

Ms. Safaei Mehr will use the fellowship to fund her mixed-methods research project, *Contraceptive Deserts and Maternal Mortality in Texas: A Feminist Approach to Investigating Reproductive Healthcare*. She remarked, “Overall, this research offers an interdisciplinary and justice-oriented contribution to geographic scholarship by demonstrating how reproductive healthcare inequalities are spatially produced, maintained, and contested. By linking contraceptive deserts to maternal mortality and situating these patterns within feminist, demographic, and geospatial frameworks, the project advances geographic understandings of health inequality and supports evidence-based strategies aimed at improving maternal health outcomes in historically underserved communities across Texas.” She wrote, “It is a great honor to be awarded the AGS Fellowship. This opportunity allows me to further my research on maternal mortality and inequalities in reproductive justice in Texas, and to highlight the spatial dimensions of reproductive healthcare access. I hope my work contributes to a deeper understanding of health disparities and promotes more equitable outcomes in healthcare.”

Dr. Marie Price, President of AGS and Chair of the Selection Committee, remarked, “The Council of the American Geographical Society is pleased to award four research grants to student members of the society. In our effort to support the next generation of scholars and practitioners we began the Council Fellowships ten years ago. We have awarded 49 Council Fellowships since 2014. Our intent is to expand the program in coming years to fund more awards through partnering with the AGS Champions program. Congratulations to this year’s winners.”

The AGS is a 21st-century learning society dedicated to the advancement of geographic thinking, knowledge, and understanding across business, government, academe, social sectors, and most importantly with teachers and students. The vision of AGS is to be the foremost champion of geography for the benefit of society. The mission of AGS is to convene a diverse global community of innovators, thinkers, and practitioners; create and curate geographical knowledge, learning, and exploration; and advance geographic knowledge and technologies to address society’s challenges and opportunities. Established in 1851, AGS is the oldest professional geographical organization in the United States and is recognized worldwide as a pioneer in geographical research and education. AGS seeks to engage the American public, from its youngest to its oldest citizens, with new and amazing ways to understand and characterize our changing world. The Society maintains its headquarters in New York City.



AMERICAN GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY



Ms. Mahboobe Safaei Mehr University of Texas at Austin

Contact Information:

American Geographical Society
121 Avenue of the Americas, #6
New York, NY 10013
Telephone: 917-745-8354

Email: ags@americangeo.org
www.americangeo.org



###