

# Alaina J. Harkness

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## Profile

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- Expert in urban and community development, with special interests in urban governance, civic technology and data, intermediaries, networks, philanthropy, and social sector capacity building
- 10+ years of experience in domestic and international urban and community development planning, investment, policy, and practice
- Successful track record as a fundraiser, program designer, and institution builder
- International expertise in Latin America; field research experience in Mexico
- Strategic communicator with publications including blogs, papers, and a book chapter

## Professional Activities

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Fellow, Office of the Centennial Scholar, Project on 21<sup>st</sup> Century City Governance      2016 – present  
The Brookings Institution

- Conduct research on innovations in urban governance and development
- Build networks of urban development practitioners, scholars and investors
- Design and implement panels, workshops, and meetings that advance the goals of the Centennial Scholar Initiative and build the urban development field
- Publish blogs, briefs, and papers, and engage with other thought leaders via social media

Senior Program Officer, Cities      2009 – present  
The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation      *(on leave 2016 – 2018)*

- Designed urban development program strategies and built networks of policymakers, practitioners, and researchers to support them
- Developed, managed, and evaluated an international portfolio of urban development investments, including: a comprehensive community development initiative, civic technology programs, gun violence prevention and police reform, and a multi-year [exploration](#) of new ways to use information technology to improve governance and quality of life in cities
- Provided leadership to collaborative urban development efforts: in Chicago, including the public housing transformation and Connect Chicago, a major effort to increase digital access and skills in low-income neighborhoods; nationally, including support for the launch of the MetroLab Network, serving as a member of Living Cities and on the board of the Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities; internationally, including serving on the U.S. Habitat III National Delegation
- Active communicator (panels, social media, occasional lectures and publications) on a range of topics: Chicago civic issues, data-driven community development, urban planning, policy, and development, civic technology
- Served on Foundation working groups and committees to develop and implement program strategies and improve operations

- Program Manager, 2016 Fund for Chicago Neighborhoods 2008 – 2009  
Chicago Community Trust
- Designed and implemented program strategies (neighborhood, workforce, business, and youth development) for a funder collaborative that aimed to provide neighborhood benefits from Chicago's bid for the 2016 Summer Olympic and Paralympic Games
  - Reviewed and recommended grants and managed the board and relationships with Chicago 2016 and other partners.
- Program Officer, The Partnership for New Communities 2006 – 2009  
Chicago Community Trust
- Designed and implemented program strategies for housing, workforce and neighborhood development to support the Chicago Housing Authority's Plan for Transformation
  - Recommended grants and monitored a portfolio of projects totaling over \$6 million
  - Cultivated and managed funder and board relationships to secure new sources of funding and set strategic direction
  - Oversaw design, implementation and evaluation of Opportunity Chicago, a \$23 million collaborative workforce development initiative
  - Managed external communications and coordinated workshops, conferences, and events
- Intern, Assistant to the Trust Director 2006  
Chicago Community Trust
- Researched and recommended organizations for African American Legacy Initiative grants and restricted funds
  - Developed a strategic plan to facilitate internet-driven philanthropy
- Research Assistant, Cultural Policy Center 2005 – 2006  
University of Chicago
- Managed transcription, coding, and data analysis for a six-person qualitative research team.
  - Transcribed, coded, and analyzed interviews for a Wallace Foundation project on leadership and audience development in the arts
  - Contributed research, editing, and writing to *Entering Cultural Communities: Diversity and Change in the Nonprofit Arts* (2008, Rutgers University Press)
- Assistant Grants Administrator 2001 – 2003  
Arts & Cultural Council for Greater Rochester
- Led grant-writing clinics and information sessions, maintained database of applicants and panelists, and coordinated the grant selection process for an arts organization capacity building program
  - Wrote press releases and corresponded with state and national arts organizations and grant applicants
- Teaching Assistant, Department of Political Science 2000 – 2003  
University of Rochester
- Research Assistant, Department of Political Science 1999 – 2001  
University of Rochester

## Education

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| High School, Rich East Township, Park Forest, Illinois  | 1998 |
| B.A. in Political Science and Art History, University of Rochester<br><i>International Relations Certificate; Phi Beta Kappa; Rush Rhees Scholarship; Golden Key Honor Society; Helen S. Jones Prize for Excellence in Political Science; Highest Honors in Art History with High Distinction in Research; Barth-Crapsey Undergraduate Research Award</i> | 2002 |
| A.M. in Public Policy, University of Chicago Harris School of Public Policy<br><i>Dean's Scholarship</i>  | 2006 |
| A.M. in Latin American Studies, the University of Chicago<br><i>Thesis: "Institutionalizing Community: The Unión de Museos Comunitarios de Oaxaca."</i>   | 2006 |

## Selected Presentations and Publications

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"Mayoral Power in the Age of New Localism." (*forthcoming 2017*). With Bruce Katz, Caroline Conroy, and Ross Tilchin. Brookings Institution research paper.

Discussant, Fordham Urban Law Journal *City Power* conference, January 23, 2017 New York, NY

["On November 8, don't forget the deep down ballot."](#) Brookings blog, November 1, 2016

["Financing the New Urban Agenda: multi-level metropolitan finance for 21<sup>st</sup> century cities."](#) Brookings blog, October 7, 2016

["Hardwiring urban innovation: RD&D partnerships for 21<sup>st</sup> century cities."](#) Brookings blog, July 11, 2016

["A new federalist arrangement for disconnected youth."](#) With Bruce Katz and Ross Tilchin. Brookings blog, May 25, 2016

["The market makers: local innovation and federal evolution for impact investing."](#) With Emily Gustafsson-Wright. Brookings blog, April 28, 2016

["Why urban governance matters – now more than ever."](#) With Bruce Katz. Brookings blog, April 12, 2016

Panel organizer / moderator, United Nations Habitat III side session "Financing the New Urban Agenda," with OECD; moderator for networking session "Localizing the SDGs" with Urban Institute and OECD. Quito, Ecuador October 2016

Workshop participant, Aspen Institute Roundtable on Institutional Innovation. Aspen, CO July 2016

Guest lecturer, University of Illinois at Chicago. Introduction to Urban Policy Process – “The Role of Foundations in the Urban Development and Policy Process.” Chicago, IL November 19, 2015.

Panel moderator, White House Smart Cities Week Forum. Washington, D.C. September 14, 2015

“A Call for Investment: Building Information Infrastructure to Support Community Development.” Chapter in [What Counts: Harnessing Data for America's Communities](#), a San Francisco Federal Reserve Bank/Urban Institute edited volume on using data for community development. November 2014

Panelist, [“What Counts” Book Launch](#), the Urban Institute. Washington, D.C. December 2014

“Measuring Child Well Being at the Neighborhood Level.” Panelist, Chapin Hall Child and Family Policy Forum. Chicago, IL October 2012

“Collective Impact and Performance Management: What Should NNIP’s Role Be? Panelist, National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership Member Meeting. Portland, OR October 2012

[“Bridging the Gap: Technology and Civic Change.”](#) Guest post for Living Cities Catalyst Blog. April 2012

Panelist, *Voices from the Field III* book launch, Aspen Roundtable on Community Change. Washington, D.C. November 2011

“Funding Community Food Systems,” in Building Chicago’s Community Food Systems: A Report from the Chicago Food Policy Advisory Council. 2008

A.M. thesis, “Institutionalizing Community: The Unión de Museos Comunitarios de Oaxaca,” presented at the National Endowment for the Arts Leadership Conference at American University, Washington, D.C. (2006), Field Museum of Natural History Center for Cultural Understanding and Change (2005), and University of Chicago Latin American Studies Workshop (2005)

## **Expert Groups**

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| Member of U.S. Habitat III National Delegation   | 2014 – 2016 |
| City of Chicago Community Development Advisory Committee<br><i>Mayoral appointee; chair, Housing &amp; Community Improvements subcommittee</i> | 2015 – 2016 |
| Board of Directors, Funders’ Network for Smart Growth & Livable Communities  | 2013 – 2016 |
| Operations Committee, Smart Chicago Collaborative  | 2010 – 2016 |
| Member, Living Cities (various work groups)  | 2010 – 2015 |

Member, ARRA Recovery Partnership 2008 – 2010  
*Workforce Development, Housing, and Evaluation Committees*

Member, Steering Committee, Chicago Food Policy Advisory Council 2008 – 2010

### **Civic Leadership and Volunteering**

Fellow, Leadership Greater Chicago, Class of 2014

Board of Directors, Urban Initiatives 2016 – present

Board of Directors, Chicago Women in Philanthropy 2012 – 2016  
*Co-Chair August 2012 – 2014; director through 2016*

Harris School of Public Policy Alumni Advisory Council 2012 – 2016  
*Member, 2012 – 2016; President, 2014-15*

Volunteer, University of Rochester Admissions 2007 – present

Member, Program Committee, National Museum of Public Housing 2007 – 2009

Member, Chicago Grantmakers for Effective Organizations, Donors Forum 2007 – 2009

Volunteer cook and server, Living Room Café Woodlawn 2006 – 2010

### **International Experience**

Member of U.S. Habitat III National Delegation 2014 – 2016

Researcher, Oaxaca, Mexico 2004 – 2005  
*Conducted ethnographic research examining the rise of a network of civil associations and community museums and their role in local economic development and environmental conservation in Latin America.*

Volunteer conference coordinator, Unión de Museos Comunitarios, Oaxaca, Mexico 2003

“Culture, Religion and Society in Peru,” University of Rochester Summer Study Program 2002

Parliamentary Intern, House of Commons, London, England 2001

### **Technical Skills**

Spanish: fluent reader, proficient writer and speaker

Proficient in Windows and Mac OS, all Microsoft Office utilities, AtlasTi, STATA, SPSS. Familiar with ArcGIS, Google Fusion Tables, and Tableau mapping and analytics software

Proficient user of social media for professional purposes