PBF Blog Writing Guide for Fellows

1. **Overview**
   Blogs written by Fellows share the stories behind policy change that highlight your site team's work, the value of partnerships, and the community impact that make it possible. Blogs can take two forms:
   a. Storytelling: a personal, first-person reflection from the Fellow's perspective.
   b. Policy-focused: an analytical piece that explains a policy, process or outcome clearly for external audiences.
2. **Structure, 500-1000 words total**
   a. **Headline, under 10 words –** capture attention with a short, descriptive title
      i. San Jose's Tenant Preference Paves the Way for Inclusive Communities
      ii. North Richmond's Redevelopment Puts Community First
      iii. Lived Experience Leads Housing in Antioch
   b. Opening paragraph, choose one of two styles
      i. **Story-led:** start with a moment or scene that captures your work's purpose. Example:
      It was a brisk October morning in downtown Richmond, when community members gathered at a vacant lot on MacDonald Ave, Richmond's historic main street, and 16th St, across from the Richmond BART station. Some of the group who live nearby mentioned that the lot had been vacant for as long as they could remember. Mostly everyone agreed that these types of vacant lots around town were so common, they barely noticed them anymore.
      ii. **Policy-led:** start with a key milestone or issue. Example:
      In Silicon Valley's landscape of stark economic disparities, San José's new Tenant Preferences Program to Fight Displacement marks a crucial advance in combating housing instability. By prioritizing displaced residents for affordable housing, the policy exemplifies the powerful outcomes possible when local government and communities collaborate toward shared goals of equity and inclusivity.
   c. **Middle sections** – use 2-3 short sections to explain the journey and impact. Include data and quotes when possible.
      i. **Background/Context** – explain the issue you're addressing, and the local challenge and opportunity

ii. **Partnerships/Process** – Who made this happen? Name key partners (CBOs, city depts, community leaders, etc.) and describe how you worked together.
iii. **Results/Impact** – what changed as a result of this work – a new policy, pilot or process?
iv. **Lessons/Reflections** – What did you learn about collaboration, equity or the policy process?

d. **Conclusion** – end with what's next: upcoming steps, ongoing efforts, or a reflection that ties back to the opening.

3. **Coaching Prompts – consider the following questions before writing:**
   a. What's the main achievement or milestone I want readers to know about?
   b. Why does this matter for housing equity or community power?
   c. Who made this possible, and what did collaboration look like?
   d. What challenge or barrier did we overcome?
   e. Who benefits most from this work?
   f. What's next for this effort or policy?
   g. What did I personally learn from this experience?
   h. How might this inspire or guide others doing similar work?

4. **Photos**
   Include 1-3 images (high-res if possible), ideally of people, events or places related to the story. Include captions, including names and brief context.