



Acumen Regional Fellows Programs

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

ABOUT THE APPLICATION CRITERIA & SELECTION PROCESS:

Q. What is the purpose of the Acumen Fellows Programs?

A. The purpose of the Acumen Fellows Programs is to develop a community of leaders who challenge the status quo, work across lines of difference, and inspire their communities to believe in a brighter future.

Q. Does the Fellows Program provide scholarships or funding?

A. No. While all costs associated with participating in the program are covered (such as travel and accommodations), we do not provide scholarships, stipends or funding. If you are interested in learning more about Acumen's investment criteria and how to apply for investment, [click here](#).

Q. Does participation in the Fellows Program qualify me to receive investment or grant funding from Acumen?

A. No. Acumen's leadership development programs are run separately from our investment activities.

Q. Do I have to be working in a social enterprise to be considered for the Fellowship?

A. No. Though the many of our Fellows work in social enterprise, Fellows can be working in any sector (for-profit, non-profit, social enterprise, government).

Q. Is the program only open to entrepreneurs?

A. No. Fellows can be entrepreneurs who started their own organizations or leaders influencing change within an existing organization. We are looking for an entrepreneurial attitude, mind-set and approach – people who don't accept the status quo.

Q. What are the academic qualifications for the program?

A. There are no specific academic prerequisites. However, Fellows must be able to fully participate in a program that is conducted in English.

Q. Do I have to be from the region to which I'm applying (e.g. India to apply to the India Fellows Program)?

A. Yes. We consider applications from citizens of the country/region. We will also, on an exceptional basis, consider applicants who demonstrate a concrete connection (i.e. long-term employment, residency, focus of social change project).

Q. Are there minimum or maximum age requirements for Fellows?

A. No. There is neither a minimum age requirement, nor a maximum age cut off.

Q. How do you define ‘social change work’?

A. Social change work refers to any project, initiative, program, or organization that furthers Acumen’s mission of changing the way the world tackles poverty. It can take the shape of a social enterprise, grant-funded program, government initiative or a socially-focused project within a for-profit corporation.

Q. Does the applicant need to be currently involved in a social change project?

A. Yes, we are looking for individuals who are currently driving a social change project on a full-time basis. On an exceptional basis we will consider individuals whose social change work is done part-time.

Q. Is English proficiency a requirement?

A. Yes. All seminars and trainings are conducted in English so proficiency is a requirement to ensure Fellows get the most out of the experience.

Q. What are the application deadlines?

A. The application process opens on **Monday June 13th 2016** and closes **12:00 AM IST/PKT/EAT on Monday 1 August 2016**. All applications must be completed and submitted online by these deadlines. It is recommended that you submit your application well in advance of the deadline to avoid any last-minute technical difficulties or connectivity problems.

Q. What makes a good application?

A. A good application is clear and concise. All responses should answer the question as directly and succinctly as possible.

Keep in mind the fellowship is first and foremost an individual leadership development program. In addition to learning about your professional achievements, we want to know about you as a person. Please be authentic. We are seeking Fellows who possess the humility and self-awareness to recognize their weaknesses and learn from their failures.

For a step-by-step guide on how to submit a good application, including tips and guidance on what the selection committee is looking for, please read through our [Application Instructions](#).

Q. What does the selection process entail?

A. After reviewing all of the applications, we will select a subset of candidates for a 45-minute phone interview to be conducted between August and September 2016. Following these phone interviews, our team will select a group of finalists who will be invited to attend a mandatory day-long in-person interview day (called a “Selection Conference”) will be held on:

- 1 October 2016 in Mumbai (for the India Fellows Program)
- 1 October 2016 in Nairobi (for the East Africa Fellows Program)
- 24 September 2016 in Karachi (for the Pakistan Fellows Program)

Once all candidates have been interviewed, the selection team will make a final decision. We expect to extend offers by December 2016. The first seminar of the program will take place in the first quarter of 2017. (Please note that this timetable is subject to change, due to travel schedules or unforeseen circumstances)

- Q. Can I apply for both Acumen's Regional Fellows Program and Global Fellows Program?**
- A. No. Candidates may only apply to one program per year and should choose the program that makes the most sense for them.
- Q. Can someone who has participated in of one Fellows program apply and participate in another? (i.e. Can a Global Fellow join the India/Pakistan/East Africa Fellows Program?)**
- A. No. Each cohort of Acumen Fellows must be comprised of individuals who have not previously taken part in an Acumen Fellows Program.
- Q. If I have taken +Acumen courses, can I apply to the program?**
- A. Absolutely! Taking +Acumen courses prior to the Fellowship is strongly encouraged.
- Q. How many Fellows do you select each year in each of your 3 regions India, Pakistan, and East Africa?**
- A. On average, we select 20 Fellows per year in India, Pakistan and East Africa.
- Q. What is the structure of the Fellows Program?**
- A. Fellows remain in their jobs and come together for five seminars, each lasting 5-8 days, throughout the year. The program has a 100% attendance requirement, and those who cannot commit to this should not apply to the program.
- Q. What will happen during the five seminars?**
- A. The seminars give Fellows access to speakers, trainers, and mentors who allow them to deepen their skills in leadership, social change, and innovation. Modules to date have included: Good Society (social justice readings), Adaptive Leadership, Storytelling for Change, Human-Centered Design, Lean Startup, and Systems Thinking.
- Q. What is the total time commitment required for the program?**
- A. The total in-person time commitment is about 30 days over the course of the year, plus travel time to the seminar locations. Whenever possible we have scheduled seminars to run Wednesday to Sunday to preserve a portion of the traditional work week.
- In addition, between seminars you will be expected to spend additional time on program-related assignments, email correspondence, and collaborative projects.
- This program requires significant time commitment. Before applying, we recommend discussions with your employers, colleagues, and/or family to set expectations accordingly.
- Q. What is the attendance policy? What if I have to miss a seminar?**
- A. To participate in the program, Fellows are required to commit to 100% attendance at the seminars. Missing even one day from one seminar is grounds for expulsion.

Q. Is internet connectivity a requirement?

A. Yes. The primary method of communication will be email. Therefore, all Fellows must have regular and reliable internet access.

Q. I am having trouble accessing the application form and/or uploading my resume. What should I do?

A. The problem usually occurs when JavaScript or Flash is not enabled. If you enable these programs, or download the necessary application, you should be able to upload your resume without any snags.

Q. What browser is best for accessing the application?

A. We recommend using Google Chrome as your browser if possible. If your problems persist, please try submitting your application from a different computer or a location with stronger internet connectivity.

Q. I didn't get a confirmation email after I submitted my application. Is there a problem?

A. Yes. Our system automatically sends a confirmation email. If you do not receive one immediately after submitting your application, please check your email settings to make sure that our emails are not caught in your spam filter. We will send you emails through either: mailer@wizehive.com; wizehive.com@sendgrid.me; estafricafellows@acumen.org; pakistanfellows@acumen.org; or indiafellows@acumen.org.

Q. Do I need to provide a recommendation letter?

A. No. However, if you make it to the final Selection process, you will need to provide the contact information of two professional references. Your references should be people with whom you've worked closely. They should not be family, friends, or spouses.

Q. I've already submitted my application, but I'd like to make some changes. Is this possible?

A. No.

Q. Which costs does the program cover?

A. Acumen covers all program-related expenses during the year-long fellowship. This includes all costs associated with the seminars including lodging, food, transportation, and visas.

Q. In which locations will the different seminars and meetings for the Fellows Programs be held?

A. The trainings are typically held in or around major cities. In the past, we have held seminars for the East Africa Fellows Program in Nairobi, Kampala, Kigali and Dar es Salaam. The Pakistan Fellows Program has hosted seminars in Karachi, Lahore, Murree, and Bahawalpur. The India Fellows Program has held seminars in Mumbai, Delhi, Bangalore, Hyderabad and Mysore.

Q. How are Acumen's Regional Fellows Programs different from the Acumen Global Fellows Program?

A. East Africa, Pakistan, and India Fellows remain in their current jobs and come together for week-long seminars and meetings at five points throughout the year. Global Fellows leave their current jobs and participate in the fellowship full-time including 3 months of intensive training and a 9-month field placement.

Q. What additional benefits (e.g. stipends, insurance) do Regional Fellows receive?

A. As this is a part-time program, East Africa, Pakistan, and India Fellows do not receive any stipend or insurance.

Q. Is any post-Fellowship job placement provided?

A. No.

Q. What do Fellows do after completing the program? What type of professional and personal development support do the Acumen Fellows Programs offer?

A. Acumen is invested not only in the Fellows' growth over the course of the year-long program, but also in their development as a lifelong agent of social change. After graduating from the program, Fellows may receive continued mentorship toward the scaling of their social change initiative. Acumen also has a very active and growing network of social sector organizations, thought leaders, and Fellows across the globe. We engage both the Global and Regional Fellows through events, newsletters, and subsequent recruitment processes.

Q. Do Fellows receive any type of certificate or acknowledgement for completing the fellowship year?

A. Yes, upon completion of any of the programs Fellows receive a certificate of completion.

If you still have questions, please send a brief email to the program to which you are considering applying: eastafricafellows@acumen.org; pakistanfellows@acumen.org; or indiafellows@acumen.org.