

Fellows Program



Ayaleen Ajanee supported the work of Kashf Foundation, a Pakistani microfinance institution.



The 2007 Fellows brainstorm during a training session.

Building transformative businesses that serve the poor requires a unique pool of talent with the skills, experience and moral imagination necessary to create long-lasting change. Acumen Fund has built its Fellows Program to identify, train and cultivate the next generation of leaders in this mold.

What is the Fellows Program?

Established in 2006, the Acumen Fund Fellows Program is a 12-month fellowship for individuals dedicated to serving the poor in the developing world and with the business, operational and professional skills needed to effect change. Though primarily based in South Asia and East Africa, the fellowship begins with a six-week orientation program in the Acumen Fund New York office, during which the Fellows explore business models for the poor, build their personal networks, hone critical leadership skills and get to know the culture and people of Acumen Fund.

After orientation, each Fellow works for an Acumen Fund investee on a critical business issue facing the organization. Fellows have worked on projects ranging from marketing drip irrigation systems to expanding the clinic network of a pharmacy company to developing branding strategies for a microfinance institution in Pakistan.

At the same time, the Fellows help meet Acumen Fund's goal of developing knowledge about market-based approaches to poverty alleviation. The Fellows are trained to spend a portion of their time in the field documenting their experiences and creating business case studies, academic papers and documentary videos, which are then shared widely.

ABOUT ACUMEN FUND

Using the flexible capital of philanthropy and the rigor of the marketplace, Acumen Fund invests in select enterprises with the potential to reach the poor on a large scale. We leverage our extensive networks, structure financial support, and provide intensive managerial and technical assistance. We adhere to a disciplined process in selecting and managing our philanthropic investments as well as in measuring and reporting the end results.

Acumen Fund works with its investees to provide management expertise on the basic building blocks of business development. We currently apply our model of identifying and supporting social innovators in countries such as India, Pakistan, Tanzania, Uganda, and Kenya.

ACUMEN FUND FELLOWS



Fellow Tricia Morente is supporting LifeSpring Hospitals through outreach and related customer retention.



The 2008 Fellows class bonds during training.



Catherine Casey helps the nurse-franchisees of SHF deliver healthcare to low-income customers in Kenya.

FELLOW CASE STUDY

Jocelyn Wyatt **Nairobi, Kenya**

Jocelyn came from a career in international development and worked at Advanced Bio-Extracts, cultivators of artemisinin plants used in malaria treatment.

Impact: Jocelyn helped define the company's HR practices and built the company's financial model.

Now: Jocelyn is part of a team leading IDEO's 'base of the pyramid' design efforts.

FELLOW CASE STUDY

Tricia Morente **Hyderabad, India**

Tricia came from a background in private sector consulting and worked for LifeSpring, a chain of low cost maternity hospitals.

Impact: Tricia supported LifeSpring with outreach and customer retention; LifeSpring opened 2 new hospitals during Tricia's fellowship.

Now: Tricia has taken a full-time position at LifeSpring to support the opening of the next 27 hospitals by 2011.

Who becomes a Fellow?

Acumen Fund Fellows are talented individuals of diverse geographies, backgrounds, religions and ages. Past Fellows include those who have already decided on a career in venture philanthropy, those who are seeking a job at the highest levels in the corporate world and those budding social entrepreneurs who want to learn about managing organizations in demanding settings.

What does it mean to support the Fellows Program?

The Fellows Program has been built with the generous support of a number of partners interested in tackling the challenging issue of building leadership for the social sector. We work with Fellows Program funders on the Fellows' selection, mentoring and training.

How to apply

If you are interested in the Acumen Fund Fellows Program, please see our application instructions on the "opportunities" page of the Acumen Fund website: www.acumenfund.org/get-involved/fellows-program.html

Timeline



Acumen Fund Supporters: Anonymous · The Brinson Foundation · The Globalislocal Fund · Google.org · IDEO · The Partridge Foundation · The Edmond & Benjamin de Rothschild Foundations · Skoll Foundation · The Woodcock Foundation

Talent Advisors: Christine Brown, (retired) Pricewaterhouse Coopers · Niko Canner, Katzenbach Partners LLC · John Foster, IDEO · Jan Piercy, ShoreBank · Peter Reiling, Aspen Institute

Learn more about our work and about how you can get involved at www.acumenfund.org