

# East Africa Fellows Program

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What is the purpose of the Acumen Fund East Africa Fellows Program?**

The purpose of the Acumen Fund East Africa Fellows Program is to build a community of future leaders who will develop innovative social change projects to address the needs of their own communities, and who will work across sectors to ultimately bring about lasting social change on a regional and global level. There is a great need for local leadership from business, non-profit, and government backgrounds with the ability to collaborate with others despite differences, the courage to defy the status quo, the drive to execute, and the moral imagination to build a more inclusive economy and social system.

### **How is the Acumen Fund East Africa Fellows Program structured?**

The East Africa Fellows Program will launch in Kenya in July 2011 and is structured like an executive MBA. Acumen Fund will select a group of up to 20 leaders from the East African region drawn from different nationalities, sectors, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Each selected Fellow will be driving a unique project with large social impact inside their organization or as an entrepreneurial venture. The East Africa Fellows Program is designed to develop the Fellows' leadership skills and strengthen the project that they are driving.

The year long program is comprised of five multiday seminars - including one regional trip - and culminates in an innovation conference. The seminars will give Fellows access to world-class speakers, trainers, and mentors who will allow Fellows to deepen their skills in leadership, social change, and innovation. The regional trip will give Fellows the opportunity to learn about social change models in other countries. The innovation conference is meant to be a chance for Fellows to put into practice the skills they've learned over the course of the year, as well as provide a platform to showcase their projects to a larger community of leaders.

During the program, Fellows will remain in their jobs, and will only meet for the seminars, the regional trip, and the innovation conference. Fellows will continue to drive their own social change projects, and will receive coaching and mentorships throughout the year that will accelerate the progress of their projects.

After they complete the Program, Fellows will remain connected as part of the Alumni network, leveraging each other's connections and experiences for continual collaboration. Fellows will also be plugged into the Acumen Fund network, as well as the Global Fellows Program network.

### **I am not a citizen from Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania, or Uganda... Can I still apply?**

One does not need to be a citizen of any of these countries to apply. The Acumen Fund East Africa Fellows Program is seeking out applicants who are passionate and committed to Kenya, Rwanda, Southern Sudan, Tanzania, or Uganda. To determine your connection and commitment to the region, we look at a number of factors, including (but not limited to) your period of residency, your period of employment, and the focus of your social change initiative. We do however plan to expand the Regional Fellows Program in the coming years, launching programs across the globe, in the different regions where we operate.

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### Who becomes a Fellow?

Fellows come from all walks of life, from different socioeconomic, cultural, political, and religious backgrounds. Most importantly, each class of Fellows will be comprised of individuals with experience across many different sectors - from business, to non-profit, to government. We seek to create the most diverse class possible, rich in experience and potential. Specifically, we are looking for individuals with:

- + A compelling project with significant social impact that you have been driving for at least 2-3 years
- + A deep passion and commitment to the East African region
- + A proven track record of leadership and management responsibilities
- + Unrelenting perseverance, personal integrity and critical thinking skills

The East Africa Fellows Program is developed to serve the people who are committed to improving the East African region, specifically the countries of Kenya, Rwanda, Southern Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda. Additional programs may be launched around the globe, within the next few years, training leaders from various regions and sectors.

### Is there an age or education requirement for the program?

You must be 18 years of age or older to apply. There is no education requirement for the program. The most important requirement is that you have been driving a social change project for at least 2-3 years.

### What exactly is a 'project with significant social impact' and why are Fellows required to have one?

A project with significant social impact is any project, initiative, or program that addresses a pressing social issue with an innovative solution that has a positive impact in the lives of the community. It can take the shape of a social enterprise, a grant-funded program, or a socially-focused project within a for-profit corporation. Social change projects can address a need for sanitation services, or a lack of affordable housing, or a violation of human rights. It can leverage advances in agricultural techniques, an innovative business model, or the latest mobile technology. And it is by no means limited to these examples.

We seek out individuals who have experience driving such projects because we believe that by developing and connecting these innovative leaders, we will create a powerful network of change makers who not only impact countless lives in East Africa but also influence international development on a global level.

### Is English proficiency a requirement?

Because all seminars and trainings are conducted in English, proficiency is a necessary requirement. We would like to ensure that Fellows get the most out of their experience; however we do not expect applicants to be native English speakers. Many will, in fact, speak other native languages that reflect the diversity of East Africa.

### What does the online application for the Acumen Fund East Africa Fellows Program entail?

The Acumen Fund East Africa Fellows Program is creating the unique opportunity for East Africans to receive the following:

- + Background information
- + Two references
- + Your resume/CV
- + Short & long answer questions

*Please consult the [Application Guide](#) for a step-by-step guide of how to submit a complete application.*

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To access the application, go to [www.acumen.com/fellows/east-africa-fellows-program/apply-now!](http://www.acumen.com/fellows/east-africa-fellows-program/apply-now!) You will need to create an account by entering an e-mail address (this will act as your username) and password.

The application process for the East Africa Fellows Program opens on 16 March 2011 and will close on **15 April 2011 at 11:59PM EAT (East Africa Time)**. All applications must be completed and submitted online by this deadline. It is recommended that you submit your application well in advance of the deadline to avoid any last-minute technical difficulties or connectivity problems.

#### **I am having trouble uploading my resume/CV... What should I do?**

The problem that you are having usually occurs if you don't have Javascript or Flash enabled. If you can enable them, or download the necessary application, then you should be able to upload your resume without any snags. Please let me know if you continue to experience issues, and I can try to help you to sort it out.

#### **I never received a confirmation email... is there a problem?**

After submitting your application, you should have received a confirmation email automatically. Since you didn't receive one, you may want to check your email settings to make sure that our emails are not getting caught in your spam filter. We will send you emails through either: [mailer@wizehive.com](mailto:mailer@wizehive.com); [wizehive.com@sendgrid.me](mailto:wizehive.com@sendgrid.me); and [eastafricafellows@acumenfund.org](mailto:eastafricafellows@acumenfund.org).

#### **What does the selection process for the Acumen Fund East Africa Fellows Program entail?**

After reviewing all applications, we will select a subset of candidates for 30-minute phone interviews, to be conducted during late April/early May 2011. Following these phone interviews, the team will further select a group of finalist candidates who will be invited to attend a selection conference, which will be held on 21 May 2011 in Nairobi.

All finalists are expected to come to Nairobi for the selection conference. Out of station candidates will be provided accommodation in Nairobi and financial assistance will be provided on a case by case basis.

Once all candidates have been interviewed, the selection team will make a final decision. We expect to extend offers by 31 May 2011. The first seminar of the program will take place in early July 2011.

*(Please note that this timetable is subject to change, due to travel schedules and unforeseen circumstances.)*

#### **What are the benefits of joining the Acumen Fund East Africa Fellows Program?**

The Acumen Fund East Africa Fellows Program is creating the unique opportunity for East Africans to receive:

- + High-quality training in leadership and social development from influential leaders across sectors
- + The tools necessary to accelerate social change initiatives
- + Access to a network of African and global leaders who are developing innovative solutions to poverty
- + The opportunity to build the leadership, communication and execution skills necessary to create lasting change
- + The chance to design and participate in a regional trip

#### **What does each seminar look like? What kinds of activities do Fellows participate in?**

The seminars will focus on developing the skills necessary for social change, and on understanding each Fellow's role in the development of East Africa. Over the course of the year, Fellows will explore their own leadership abilities through interactive modules. Fellows will work one-on-one with prominent leaders and trainers from

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across sectors on creative problem solving and on how to scale their social initiatives. They will also study readings and have discussions about social justice, the role of government, equality, and human rights.

**Which costs does the program cover?**

Fellows will have all program-related costs covered during the year-long program. This includes all costs associated with the seminars and regional trip (including lodging, food, and transportation), as well as visa processing costs.

**Does the program offer a stipend or health insurance?**

As Fellows will still be engaged in their current jobs, no stipends or health insurance are provided for by the Program.

**What if I am unable to attend one of the seminars - will I still be able take part in the program?**

Upon admission to the program, all Fellows are asked to commit to attend ALL meetings for the East Africa Fellows Program - including all five seminars, the regional trip, and the innovation conference. If candidates are unable to commit to full attendance, then they become ineligible to participate in the program. As there are a very limited number of meetings in the curriculum and because Acumen Fund is investing a significant amount of time, effort and resources into this program, it is extremely important that each Fellow attend every session.

**What do Fellows do after completing the program? What type of professional and personal development support does the Acumen Fund East Africa Fellows Program offer?**

Acumen Fund is invested not only in the Fellow's 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. We also have a very active alumni network, where we engage alumni from both the Global Fellows Program and the East Africa Fellows Program through events, a newsletter, and the recruitment process. In addition, graduates of either program have access to Acumen Fund's network and connections with other leading social sector organizations.

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