



NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION APPLICANTS

THE COLUMBUS FOUNDATION SUMMER FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What are the basic qualifications to host a Fellow?

To qualify for the Fellowship program, organizations must have a current Directory Listing in The Giving Store; be located in and serve Franklin County; present a specific project with clear scope and description; and have a specific supervisor, desk/office space, and supplies (e.g., computer) for the Fellow.

What type of project would be a good fit for a Fellow?

Any project that is meaningful and would engage a Fellow with the mission of your organization would be a good fit. The strongest applications will outline a specific idea with clear direction and outcomes. Additionally, a strong application will describe a project that most likely can be completed by the Fellow within the 10-week program. Projects may be in person or virtual.

Can I apply for a Fellowship to support someone who already works at my organization?

No. This program is for organizations to add a temporary staff person who builds the capacity of the organization and serves its mission. If a student already works at your organization, they would be eligible to apply and, if selected, would need to work for another organization.

My organization hosted a Fellow last summer. When are we eligible to apply again?

Organizations that have hosted a Fellow must wait one year before they are eligible to apply again.

How does the nonprofit organization application process work?

Applicant organizations go through a review process that is similar to other grant opportunities. Once the group of finalists is approved by The Columbus Foundation's Governing Committee, they will be notified accordingly. Applicant organizations will hear from The Columbus Foundation in November. At that time, more specific details pertaining to the logistics of the program will be communicated with the selected organizations.

How long is the Fellowship?

The Fellowship is 10 weeks long. This would include the full-time work of the Fellow, required learning sessions at The Columbus Foundation, and any opening and closing orientation sessions for both the Fellow and selected organization.

My project starts earlier or runs longer than the designated 10 weeks. Will this application be considered?

Organizations with slightly varying schedules are welcome to apply, although preference may be given to projects following the 10-week schedule.

How many hours per week must a project be to qualify for the Fellowship?

The Fellow must have a project that requires them to work full-time (approximately 40 hours each week) for 10 weeks. Non-traditional working hours are acceptable.

How does the Fellow selection process work?

- Students meeting the minimum qualifications will send in complete applications by the deadline.
- Each application will be reviewed by members of the selection committee. The selection committee will give each applicant a numerical score based on a set of criteria.
- Based on those scores, Columbus Foundation staff and the selection committee will move the top applicants into an interview phase. Each selected host organization will be sent information about two applicants.
- Selected organizations will interview both applicants and choose the applicant they have determined as the best fit. Please note that if neither applicant is acceptable, organizations must contact The Columbus Foundation immediately to receive information for an additional applicant.
- Once the organization has chosen the most eligible applicant, they will notify The Columbus Foundation.
- Columbus Foundation staff will contact each potential Fellow to complete a background check.
- Once the applicant's background check is completed, The Columbus Foundation will notify the Fellow that they have been selected—and which organization they will be serving.

What is the timeline for this year's application and program process?

- **August 28, 2026:** Nonprofit Application available
- **September 25, 2026:** Nonprofit Applications due
- **June 7, 2027:** Fellowship begins
- **August 12, 2027:** Fellowship ends

What if neither applicant is acceptable?

Contact The Columbus Foundation immediately to be given the information for an additional candidate.

Who notifies the candidates that they did or did not receive the Fellowship?

The Columbus Foundation staff will notify the candidates regarding whether or not they are selected once the background check is complete.

How much does the Fellowship pay?

The Fellow will receive a stipend of \$6,350.

How does the Fellow receive their stipend?

The Fellow is considered an employee of their host organization. Each host organization will receive a grant of \$7,350 from The Columbus Foundation. Of that, the Fellowship stipend is \$6,350. Host organizations are responsible for paying the Fellows through their payroll system. The host organization is to use the remaining \$1,000 to help cover administrative costs associated with the Fellowship.

What do I do if I have more questions about how the stipend works?

Each selected host organization will be given more information during the host organization orientation.

Does the Fellow have any obligations to The Columbus Foundation during the Fellowship?

Fellows must attend an orientation, all learning sessions, and the final luncheon. Organization representatives will be notified of additional required events. Required events taking place during working hours will be included in the Fellow's required 40 hours of work. Fellows will be required to write weekly blog posts sharing Fellowship experiences and lessons learned. At the conclusion of the program, Fellows are required to give The Columbus Foundation a final report and may be invited to make a final presentation of their Fellowship experience. Other events, such as excursions, are highly encouraged for the Fellow, but not required.

What are the expectations of the host nonprofit organization during the fellowship?

Host organizations are expected to attend orientation in May. Host organizations are expected to include the Fellow in meetings, offer a dedicated work space, and offer all necessary tools to complete the project, including a computer if necessary. Host organizations are expected to offer full-time employment (approximately 40 hours per week) to the Fellow, and to offer the same Fourth of July holiday time off as it offers to other employees.

Need more information?

Please contact Dr. Mark Lomax at mlomax@columbusfoundation.org or visit columbusfoundation.org.