Fellowship Application Preparation Guide

How to Prepare an Effective Application for the Gratitude Network
Introduction:

The Gratitude Network is creating an incredible network of empowered leaders of scaling social impact organizations that impact the lives of under-served children and youth globally. Through our Fellowship we provide leadership development that leads to organizational transformation. We engage Coaches and Expert Advisors to enable Social Entrepreneurs to scale their organizations to impact more children. We also bring together these social impact change-makers in person and virtually to learn and grow from one another. Our network effect accelerates change - leaders learn from and thrive on each other within our network.

This guide is designed to:

- Outline the Gratitude Network Fellowship Program
- Help you prepare the necessary information for the online application
- Provide you helpful tips for crafting an effective application

Before you begin your application, we strongly encourage you to read the following guide to help you fully understand the Fellowship program and prepare your application.

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Gratitude Fellowship Program Description and Overview:

The Gratitude Network supports its social entrepreneur Fellows to enable them to help more children and youth. Once selected, Gratitude Fellows become a part of their yearly cohort as well as the greater Gratitude Network comprised of Alumni Fellows, Coaches, Supporters, and Expert Advisors. Through this network and the coaching relationship, Fellows maximize the program to be able to tackle the challenges facing their organizations.

The Gratitude Network Fellowship Program includes:

- 12 Months of tailored guidance from a knowledgeable and dedicated Coach
- Access to a network of experienced Expert Advisors with knowledge in a wide variety of operational areas
- Membership into a structured peer leadership cohort
- Regularly scheduled webinars on a variety of topic relevant to scaling social impact organizations
- Access to the Network website with tailored content, resources, presentations, etc.
- Invites to learning and networking events specifically for scale stage social enterprises

The Gratitude Network Fellowship Program Structure:

The average time commitment for a Gratitude Fellow is **3.5 hours per month** and additional time commitment for the optional in-person Gratitude Leadership Summit in June 2020.

- Monthly Coaching Calls
  - Gratitude Fellow meets with their Gratitude Coach
  - Phone/video call or in person if it works for both parties
o 1.5-2 hours length
o Exact dates/times determined by Fellow and Coach

• Every Other Month Cohort Calls
  o Every other month all cohort members meet for a Fellows Leadership Roundtable
  o Phone/video calls
  o 1.5-2 hours

• As Needed Expert Advisor Calls
  o As needed, calls will be set with specialized Expert Advisors
  o Phone/video call or in person if it works for both parties
  o 1-2 hour length
  o Exact dates/times determined by Fellow and Expert Advisor

• Leadership Summit
  o In person all Network gathering in the San Francisco Bay Area, California, USA
  o Workshops, networking time, and social events allow Fellows to bond and collaborate with their peers, Coaches, advisors, and the Gratitude Network Team
  o Dates: June 17-19, 2020
  o Attendance at the Leadership Summit is highly encouraged, but optional. Travel stipend provided as needed and available.
Fellowship Eligibility

Gratitude Network Fellowship applicants must meet the following requirements:

- Social enterprise is at least one-year old.
- Social enterprise must have at least two full-time employees (including the Applicant).
- Social enterprise’s beneficiaries must primarily be children/youth.
- Social enterprise must be serving children/youth in one of the following categories:
  - **Education** such as school systems, training of teachers, education technology, and early childhood programs as well as how/what children learn at school or outside of the classroom (e.g. after-school or summer programs).
  - **Health and Wellbeing** such as addressing children’s basic needs, including poverty alleviation, nutrition, water, safe shelter, disease prevention, mental health, and social-emotional health.
  - **Children’s Rights** such as protecting children and families from abuse, exploitation, trafficking, incarceration, and other harm, as well as other advocacy.
- Applicant is committed full-time to the social enterprise organization.
- Applicant has strategic decision making power for the social enterprise as the organization’s Founder/Co-Founder, Executive Director, CEO, or similar level role.
- Applicant will not be receiving formal coaching/mentoring support during the Gratitude Fellowship year (2020).
- Applicant and social enterprise organization are interested and ready to scale the organization.
- Applicant is able to commit to the time commitments of the Fellowship.
Application – Part 1 and 2:

Work with your applicant and their organization to prepare the information outlined below. The application consists of two parts with separate deadlines.

Part 1 – Preliminary Questions

- Submission Deadline: August 30, 2019

- Part 1 of the application is a preliminary questionnaire designed to confirm alignment with the Fellowship criteria. Applicants who meet the requirements will be invited to complete Part 2 of the application.

- Invitations to complete Part 2 of the application will be sent throughout the application period. All Part 2 invited applicants will be notified by September 6, 2019.

Part 2 – Additional Questions

- Submission Deadline: September 13, 2019

- Part 2 of the application includes additional questions and requests designed to share more information about the applicant and organization.

- All Part 2 applications will be screened and reviewed by the Gratitude Network Judging Panel.

- All applicants will be notified of their selection status by December 2019.

- Part 2 of the Gratitude Network Fellowship application includes the following requests:
Section 1 - Basic Information:

- Organization Name
- Organization Website
- Applicant Name (This is the individual who is applying to participate in the Gratitude Network Fellowship.)
- Applicant’s Title with Organization
- Applicant’s LinkedIn Profile (if available)
- Preferred Fellowship start date (January or March 2020)
- Year Organization was founded
- Business License or Tax ID #
- Service Category
- Country/Region/City for Program/Services
- Headquarter Country/City
- Revenue - last fiscal year
- Estimated Revenue - current fiscal year
- How many full-time, paid staff does the organization have?
- How many part-time, paid staff does the organization have?
- How many active volunteers support the organization on average per week?

Section 2 - Long-Form Response Prompts:

In 2,500 characters or less (including spaces), please be prepared to respond to the following prompts:

Problem and Solution/Innovation

- List the 3 biggest problems the organization is solving and describe why each is important. (A successful response provides evidence that the problems exist and a compelling explanation of why these issues are important to resolve. If possible, provide information substantiating that the problems exist through the use of statistics from experts or other examples that support your claims.)
• Describe the organization's solution (product or service) to each problem listed above. Include whether it is in use or not. *(A successful response provides the specific details of the products or services for each of the 3 problems described above and offers evidence to support that the solution is effective.)*

• Describe all of the ways the organization is innovative. *(A successful response will detail how the organization is novel and unique. This may include the organization’s product or service, business model, use of technology, the applicant’s leadership style, or any other aspect of the organization that demonstrates innovation. Be sure to include how the organization is innovative compared to other organizations working in the same field if applicable.)*

**Beneficiaries and Impact**

• Describe the organization’s beneficiaries – the individuals who benefit from your product/services. Detail why they need your product/service. *(A successful response will fully describe both the direct and indirect beneficiaries of the organization and may include information on gender, socioeconomic status, etc. Describe why your target beneficiaries need the organization.)*

• Detail how many children/youth beneficiaries the organization directly serves annually. List by product/service if appropriate. *(A successful response will include a breakdown of the number of children/youth the organization serves every year by product/service. Indirect children/youth beneficiaries can be included but should be noted separately.)*

• Describe the impact the organization is having and how the organization measures impact. *(A successful response describes the positive effect the organization has on the lives of the beneficiaries. Please use evidence, data, and/or examples to demonstrate how their lives are improved. Be sure to also detail the method for collecting and tracking the organization’s impact. Your response will help us understand what factors you use to define success for the organization.)*
Growth and Scale

- Describe the scale and impact planned for the organization to reach within the next 3 years. (A successful response will describe the anticipated growth, provide a realistic plan for how the organization will achieve this growth, and detail the anticipated impact on the children/youth you plan to serve. Organizations can grow in a variety of different ways. For example, an organization may venture into new locations, expand current location offerings to more children/youth, hire more staff, hold more events, or franchise its model.)

- Describe the organization's current and future business model. (A successful response describes the organization's economic drivers and details the organization's strategy for financial sustainability. Your response should detail all the types of funding and provide the organization’s strategy for securing said funding currently and for future growth.)

Applicant and Team

- Describe the organization’s team/staff structure and the Applicant’s role within the structure. (A successful response describes both the leadership team structure/roles and the Applicant’s role within it as well as the broader team structure including details on full-time, part-time, and volunteer roles. Your response will help us understand how the work of the organization is planned and executed.)

- Describe why the Applicant is interested in becoming a Gratitude Fellow and joining the Gratitude Network. (Once selected Gratitude Fellows become a part of their Cohort as well as the larger Gratitude Network – which includes all past Fellows, Coaches, Expert Advisors, Team members, and Supporters.)

- Describe what topics, issues, and challenges the Applicant and organization would like to address during their Gratitude Network Fellowship, if selected. (Gratitude Fellows enter a year-long program with a dedicated coach focusing on leadership development, team development and operational issues designed to help the Fellow scale and grow their organization. A successful response will detail both the organizational
challenges and the leadership development opportunities the Applicant would specifically like to address for themselves. Please note: the Gratitude Network Fellowship is not designed to assist Fellows with securing specific funding for growth.)

Section 3 - Additional Documents and Information:
Upload the following documents as part of your application. File types accepted: PDF, PNG, JPEG. File size maximum: 10 MB

- Organization overview or Annual Report
- Organization’s most recent financial statements - including a Profit and Loss Statement and Balance Sheet (audited financials preferred)
- Optional: A link to a video of the applicant explaining what the organization does and why you want to join the Gratitude Network
- Any Additional Comments or Information you would like to share
- Have you applied with The Gratitude Network before? If so, when?
- How did you hear about The Gratitude Network?
Tips for Creating an Effective Application:

The Gratitude Network receives numerous applications each cycle for its Fellowship program. Review the tips below to better help you craft your application.

1. Review the Fellowship Eligibility Requirements.
   Review the Fellowship Eligibility Requirements to ensure that your applicant meets the basic eligibility requirements for the Fellowship. In general, you should not submit an application if your applicant is not eligible. If you are unsure about any requirements, be sure to ask (Annie@gratitude-network.org).

2. Provide Details and Context.
   Assume that the reader of your application knows nothing about your applicant, the organization, and why the work is important. Be sure to include relevant background details and historical information if appropriate. Consider providing some cultural background to frame your applicant’s work. Avoid the use of jargon – when you write your responses, assume they will be read by someone with limited knowledge of your field or industry.

3. Provide Examples and Real Data.
   Give compelling evidence to support your claims about your applicant and the organization. Using quotes of support, summarized case studies, real data, and specific outcomes will show that your applicant’s organization is dedicated to transparency and accountability. Highlight specific examples of the real impact the organization has had – this is more compelling than speaking in generic terms.

4. Be Honest.

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When talking about your applicant and the organization, never exaggerate. Applications are extensively reviewed and finalists for the Fellowship are rigorously researched, so overstated accomplishments will be unveiled.

5. Be **Descriptive**.
   Be sure to paint a colorful picture in your application to help it stand out as memorable, bold, and special. Use language that is reflective of the values and culture of your applicant and the organization. The application should be enjoyable and inspiring to read.

6. Be **Inspiring** and **Unique**.
   Before you begin your application, write down the **one thing** you must communicate about your applicant and the organization - something that makes your applicant or the organization stand out. Be sure to include this information somewhere in your application. If needed the last page of the application provides a space for any additional comments you would like to communicate.

7. **Give Yourself Time**.
   Although the application window is open for several weeks, we recommend that you do not wait until the last minute to submit your application. Give yourself plenty of time to gather important material and craft your responses.

8. **Collaborate**.
   If you are submitting an application for someone else, talk to your applicant - it is virtually impossible to submit an effective application without talking to the applicant first. Ask them specific questions and gather lots of details. If you are submitting an application for yourself, we still encourage you to work with your colleagues for suggestions and proofreading.

9. **Prepare, Edit, and Proofread**.
Make sure you prepare your responses ahead of time. We suggest typing your responses outside of the online system, so that you can copy and paste them in – just in case there is a technical error and you have to restart. Make sure to re-read your entire application before submitting it – you will NOT be able to edit it afterwards.

The Long-Form Response Prompts section of the application has a strict character limit of 2,500 for your responses; these limits include spaces. Any answer over the character limit will be truncated. Check all character limits in a word processor prior to submission so your answers do not get cut off.

The Gratitude Network team is available to assist you with any questions or concerns you have about the application process. Email Annie Marggraff, Director – Gratitude Network Fellowship at Annie@gratitude-network.org.

To get started on your application, click here.