



**A** ACUMEN  
CHANGING  
THE WAY  
THE WORLD  
TACKLES  
POVERTY

APPLICANT PACKET  
**ACUMEN FELLOWS  
PROGRAM 2020**



# WELCOME

We're excited that you'll be applying to the Acumen Fellows Program!

We want to help you learn more about the program, what to expect from the application process, and how you can be a successful applicant.





## **THE FELLOWSHIP...**

**...is the start of a journey towards mastering the skills, attributes, and values of moral leadership: empathy, immersion, understanding, and action.**

**...unites our Fellows through shared values, a common commitment to a world beyond poverty and injustice, and a pledge to accompany, celebrate, and hold each other accountable.**

# THE FELLOWSHIP YEAR 1

20 individuals driving initiatives focused on fighting poverty and injustice are selected.

These Fellows stay in their jobs.

They attend 5 Seminars — lasting up to six days each — across the region and year. (COSTS COVERED)

Between seminars, they complete weekly assignments — 3-4 hours per assignment.

At the end of Year 1, they become part of a lifelong global community.



# THEY ARE TRAINED IN

## **ADAPTIVE LEADERSHIP**

Catalyzing and embracing  
the process of creating  
change.

## **GOOD SOCIETY READINGS**

Learning the foundations of  
social change while exploring the  
meaning of a just society.

## **POLARITIES MANAGEMENT**

Leading when opposing but  
interdependent values  
are in tension.

## **AUTHENTIC VOICE**

Honing the capacity to articulate  
vision, speak across differences,  
and move others to act.

## **SYSTEMS THINKING**

Designing solutions for all  
stakeholders by examining problems  
through a systems lens.

**WHO BECOMES A FELLOW AND WHAT  
QUALIFIES THEM?**





QUALIFIED APPLICANTS

Demonstrate a long-term commitment to the country or region of the program they are applying to...



**...AND ARE COMMITTED TO CREATING POSITIVE CHANGE—AND RESIDE—IN ONE OF THE FOLLOWING COUNTRIES**



**EAST AFRICA**



**WEST AFRICA**





A man with dark curly hair and a goatee, wearing a white button-down shirt, is smiling warmly at the camera. He is holding a blue pen in his right hand. The background shows a modern office or meeting room with wood-paneled walls, a brass light fixture, and a white lampshade.

QUALIFIED APPLICANTS

**Are leading, or are an integral part of building,  
an initiative that exists to eradicate poverty or injustice.**



A man with a beard and glasses, wearing a light blue button-down shirt and dark jeans, is standing on a wooden deck and talking to a woman. The woman is wearing a dark blue or black long-sleeved top and a dark skirt. They are both looking at each other and gesturing with their hands. The background shows lush greenery, including trees and bushes. In the foreground, there is a white metal railing, a green wicker chair, and some papers and a red folder on a concrete ledge. A black outdoor heater is also visible.

Qualified applicants:

Are ready and willing to undergo an intensive, year-long personal and professional leadership journey.





QUALIFIED APPLICANTS

Are typically on one of the following trajectories: entrepreneur, intrapreneur, or an organizational builder whether for-profit, nonprofit, or in government. We define that as...



## **ENTREPRENEUR**

Founding or leading a for-profit or nonprofit organization that provides critical goods or services to the underserved.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL BUILDER**

Supporting the growth of an organization, institution, or company focused on alleviating poverty or injustice but not as the founder or CEO.

## **INTRAPRENEUR**

Creating innovative solutions to tackle poverty or injustice from within an existing institution by shifting its culture and building new collaborations.



## **IN SHORT**

**WE ARE LOOKING FOR DEDICATED IN-COUNTRY LEADERS WITH  
AN ENTREPRENEURIAL ATTITUDE, MINDSET, AND  
APPROACH TOWARDS TACKLING POVERTY OR INJUSTICE**



# THE SELECTION PROCESS





**STAGE 1**

**8 JUL - 11 AUG**

An application form designed to understand why this is the right time for you to become an Acumen Fellow.



**STAGE 2**

**4 SEPT - 22 SEPT**

An opportunity to dig deeper into the work you do. This is a 3-step application which requires 2 video submissions and answers to short essay questions.



**STAGE 3**

**BY EARLY DEC**

An all-day in-person event for the finalists. The day includes elevator pitches, group activities, and a panel interview.



**STAGE 4**

**BY END DEC**

Offer letters signed, and 2020 Cohorts finalized in each region.



# **APPLICATION ADVICE**





TIP ONE

## MAKE IT PERSONAL

The application is our first glimpse into who you are: the values, attitudes, and experiences that have made you the person you are today. Be authentic and bring your whole self to the application.



A young woman with a white headscarf is speaking into a microphone. She is looking slightly to the right of the camera with a focused expression. In the background, two other people are visible but out of focus. The scene is set in what appears to be a conference or event space with a white wall and a blue banner in the background.

TIP TWO

## DO YOUR HOMEWORK

Learn as much as you can about the program before applying. Review our website, reach out to Fellows, attend an information session, or take a +Acumen course.





TIP THREE

## SAVE AN OFFLINE COPY

Read through the entire application form first. Enter and save your background information, then spend time offline composing your responses to the essay questions. When you are ready to submit, copy and paste your responses into the online form.





TIP FOUR

## **APPLY EARLY**

Start well in advance to avoid any last-minute technical difficulties or connectivity problems. We do not accept applications after the deadline.



BREAKOUT SESSIONS



TIP FIVE

## READ THE FAQ

Take time to carefully read through the frequently asked questions on our website. <https://acumen.org/fellowships/faq/>

**WHAT DO THE FELLOWS SAY?**





**GET READY FOR A  
TRANSFORMATION, IT'S AN  
EXPERIENCE THAT WILL  
CHANGE YOU IN WAYS YOU  
HAVE NOT THOUGHT  
ABOUT...**



**SARAH FAROOQ, PAKISTAN FELLOW**





**I HAVE NEVER IN MY LIFE HAD SO MUCH TIME TO BE STILL, REFLECT, AND LEARN ABOUT MYSELF BUT ALSO ABOUT OTHERS. THE FELLOWSHIP GAVE ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO LET MYSELF BE SEEN, AND SEE OTHERS IN MYSELF, IN WAYS I HAD NEVER EXPERIENCED BEFORE.**



DOREEN KESSY, EAST AFRICA FELLOW





**FOUR YEARS LATER, I STILL FEEL WHAT I WENT THROUGH IN 2013, I'M STILL CONNECTING THE DOTS. IT WAS SUCH A POWERFUL EXPERIENCE AND OVER THE YEARS IT HAS GIVEN ME A FREE MARK OR GUIDED ME.**



MARION MOON, EAST AFRICA FELLOW





**THERE ARE ALSO SOME ESSENTIAL TOOLS THAT CAME WITH THE FELLOWSHIP. I READ THROUGH AND THOUGHT, 'YEAH THAT WOULD BE GOOD TO HAVE.' WHEN I ACTUALLY WENT THROUGH THEM I WAS LIKE, 'THIS IS REAL GOLD.'**



ABU MUSUUZA, EAST AFRICA FELLOW

**FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT**

[ACUMEN.ORG/FELLOWSHIPS/FAQ/](https://acumen.org/fellowships/faq/)

**READ WHAT WE'VE LEARNED ABOUT TACKLING  
POVERTY AND INJUSTICE**

10 LESSONS LEARNED - 15 YEARS OF TACKLING POVERTY

THE OPPOSITE OF POVERTY