

The International Fellows Programs at the Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society

The Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society, based at The Graduate Center of The City University of New York ran its first International Fellows Program (IFP) in 1989. Since that time it has trained 185 Fellows in 61 countries and territories around the globe.

The current focus of the IFP is on community foundations and strengthening cultures of giving. The program also explores (to greater or lesser extent, depending on funding and research interests) diaspora philanthropy and corporate social responsibility.

We run two programs each year, both of which emphasize learning about the NGO/NPO sectors in comparative perspective. The programs engage the Fellows through readings, weekly seminars, networking opportunities and site visits. Fellows are introduced to the international literature on philanthropy and nonprofits, and prepare a research or position paper with recommendations for their institutions, countries and/or regions. The Center currently has two International Fellows Programs:

- A three-month ***Emerging Leaders International Fellows Program*** that provides leadership training through applied research and professional mentorships to young scholar-practitioners (generally under the age of 36) from overseas, as well as from communities of color under-represented in the U.S. grantmaking sector.
- A four-week ***Senior International Fellows Program*** that provides opportunities for the professional development of Third-Sector practitioners (usually 36 years and above) from outside the United States who are decision-makers in their professions.

The Program: Professor Kathleen D. McCarthy and her staff are joined by foundation leaders, researchers, and other experts in the nonprofit field who serve as mentors and guest lecturers. Seminars arranged for the Fellows in recent years have been led by distinguished speakers from: The Atlantic Philanthropies; Brazil Foundation; Carnegie Corporation of New York; Charles Stewart Mott Foundation; Ford Foundation; Long Island Community Foundation; New York Community Trust; The Wallace Foundation; Community Foundations of Canada; Council on Foundations; Interfaith Center on Corporate Philanthropy; Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors; Synergos Institute; Institute for the Development of Social Investment (Brazil); as well as the Baruch College's School of Public Affairs, CUNY, among others.

Site visits to local foundations and attendance at local meetings and/or relevant national or international conferences are also integral components of the International Fellows Program.

As a result of the learning and contacts that result from the program's guest speakers, research papers, attendance at conferences and other meetings, many doors have opened for our program alumni. Some have gone on to create new foundations and to lead national, regional, and international support organizations around the globe; others work across the sectors, in corporate philanthropy, government, NGOs and universities. Together they have helped to shape and strengthen Third Sector in innumerable ways.

Institutions brought to life through the work of program alumni include:

- A Center for the Study of Philanthropy in *Ukraine* that conducts fundraising workshops led by international experts.
- *Turkey's* first community foundation and a US-based Turkish America diaspora fund.
- A community foundation in *Egypt* which builds on traditional Islamic giving practices.
- New community foundations in St. Petersburg, *Russia* and Hamilton, *Bermuda*.
- The first community foundations in Ahmedabad and Mumbai, *India*.
- A strategic philanthropy fund in *Mexico* committed to raising public awareness and promoting a more robust philanthropic culture.
- Membership associations for community foundations in *Poland* and in *New Zealand*.
- A local social grantmaking fund in *Uruguay*.
- A non-profit foundation in Kathmandu, *Nepal* that funds policy research and supports policy engagement initiatives.
- A Leaders in Philanthropy Program in *Latin America*.

Initiatives underway also include:

- Applying in-country diaspora models to start rural community funds in *South Africa*.
- Strengthening youth philanthropy initiatives in *Canada* and *Russia*.
- Facilitating corporate-community engagement in *Russia* and *Cyprus*.

Alumni also worked on a number of publications linked to their research as Fellows, including the recent 300-page discourse in German on community foundations, published in January 2013 to mark the occasion of 15 years of community foundations in that country.

These and similar undertakings build on seminar discussions and readings in a range of areas, from developing a culture of philanthropy to identifying and adapting best practices; from resource identification and endowment building to establishing transparency, visibility and trust among civil society organizations. These and other learnings are helping the Center's alumni to build civil society capacity in emerging democracies around the globe, from Asia, Europe and the NIS (former Soviet republics) to Africa and Latin America.

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