COURSE CATALOG
2018/2019

Notice to Prospective Fellows
The Blossom Academy course catalog is designed for fellows online aimed to assist and be a roadmap for our fellows. Blossom Academy expects all fellows to be familiar with our requirements outlined for this career intensive program set forth in this catalog. However, this course catalog is not a contract between Blossom Academy and our fellows. Blossom Academy has the power to change our policies, criteria, and format whenever our team expects see fit.

Our recent course catalog is available on our website and may be updated bi-annually. Please check this online course catalog version as the privacy, policy and program description may change during the fellowship year. This handbook is valid for the 2018-2019 training/fellowship year which began last year. As a prospective fellow you are advised to evaluate this catalog before applying. Interested person should also access their interests and strengths in related areas of study of data analytics before applying. Blossom Academy's Country Director, Larbi Adjei-Lawrence, can also be reached at larbiadjlaw@gmail.com or through our website: www.blossomacademy.co

Mission and Values
We're about more than developing great talent and bridging the data science skills gap. The propelling force behind our work is to empower the next generation of African data scientists who will catapult business growth globally. Our mission is to connect African talent to the global economy by providing the necessary next-gen and leadership skills. Our vision is to create Africa's most diverse and dynamic community of highly skilled and creative data enthusiasts who are able to affect change and promote progress.

The Blossom Academy training program trains fellows to be efficient in modern day jobs, to facilitate a strong pathway. By the end of the year-long program, fellows will possess the hard skills and soft skills required to succeed in business-focused careers, as well as a greater sense of personal direction for the types of jobs and companies they will thrive in most. Fellows will be imbued with a confidence to succeed in business and a mentality of being a fellow always. At Blossom Academy, it's more than a job-we give fellows the technical and soft skills needed to launch meaningful careers in Data Science. We also connect fellows to work at top companies, on projects that make a difference. Gaining the training fellows need to be successful starts here.

Objectives
The Blossom Academy Program accomplishes transformational outcomes through a live, cohort-based learning experience. The skills-based curriculum is designed in collaboration with industry employers, and pedagogically is reflective of an actual working experience. Fellows will be able to apply business and statistics knowledge in Excel, SQL, PowerPoint, R, and Python, and will also receive coaching and assessment in critical soft skills (communication, collaboration, critical thinking, positive attitude, and project management). The majority of this

experience is delivered virtually, which enables Blossom Academy to leverage technology for quick, accurate fellow assessment, and personalized fellow experiences. The Program is intended for individuals who want to get into a high-growth career. Our business model ensures we remain invested in our fellows' job placement and continued success, which will be supported with alumni services and continuing education.

Program Description

Blossom Academy's program is designed by data science experts with industry and academic excellence. Our training consists of a rigorous workforce readiness, academic material that is instructed in person and online. Our hybrid model allows fellows to keep up with coursework anywhere around the world. While our in-person instructions helps fellows connect with leading data scientists and data science scholars who answer any questions they have. Since Blossom Academy believes in creating self-sufficient data analysts, stewards, scientists and architects, we take our professional readiness workshops very serious. While fellows work on data sets and other technical skill development exercises, we also expect fellows to research and access industry trends in articles.

The projects fellows work on are industry leading projects that have application in real-world business and technology. As fellows learn and build their skills, they're gaining actual industry experience. Some of the hard skills include business writing, excel modeling, regression analysis, and SQL. Soft skills include persuasive communication, time management, critical problem solving, and team dynamics. 1:1 Ratio Mentorship with Industry Professionals. Fellows will have a mentor to help and advise them throughout our program, as well as their first two years of employment. We truly invest in the success of our fellows, providing in-depth, comprehensive instruction and personal attention, helping to ensure they will excel in their data science careers.

Data Analytics + Business Intelligence

Blossom Academy curriculum is crafted with experts from both industry and academia. Everything fellows learn is hands-on and real-world so that when they graduate they'll be equipped with the technical and professional experience to be a top data analyst at any company as distributed team members. Fellows will graduate with a portfolio and resume of real-world experience in the field.

Blossom Academy is composed of three main experiences, which map to each 14-week trimester of the program. A total of about 1,200 clock hours are required for the program.

Trimester 1: Foundations

Foundation is "essential education" for the purpose-oriented knowledge worker of the 21st century. At the end of this trimester, fellows will have built 7 meaningful projects based on real-world problems at top companies.

Fellows will develop deep technical foundations in Excel, SQL, R, and Python as they perform analysis for top companies on how they can better serve their customers. They will learn the essence of business by working in project teams that leverage the same best practices from teams at top companies. Fellows will develop their whole personal and professional purpose as well as their ability to effectively communicate and collaborate with others in the world around them.

Topics & Skills

Accounting
Deck Based Storytelling

Economics
Intermediate SQL
Relationship Building
Beginning Python
Beginning R
Descriptive and Inferential Statistics
Finance
Organization Structure
Values Identification
Business Strategy
Excel
Influence
Project Management

Trimester 2: Specialization

Specialization is an intensive deep dive in fellows' Blossom Academy "Major", which will be Data Analytics and Business Intelligence for 2019 cohort. At the end of the trimester, fellows will have the knowledge, skills, and experience to establish their personal identity as a professional Data Analyst in their industry of interest.

During the first half of the trimester, fellows work through pre-defined and structured projects on real-world datasets in order to master the concepts and tools of the eld and during the second half of the trimester, fellows will work in teams to define and deliver their own capstone portfolio project based on their chosen industry.

Topics & Skills
- Advanced SQL
- Data Wrangling & Mungling
- Relational Databases/Data Management Systems
- Influential Communication
- Tableau
- Github
- Data Visualization Design
- Intermediate Python Programmer
- Intermediate R Programmer

Electives/Capstone Project
- Industry Proposal

Trimester 3: Work Experience & Career Launch

Here, fellows will work on different projects provided by our startup partners. This helps refine their data analytics skill set in a team environment. Not only do we guarantee a certification in the career path they want, we ensure that fellows have a smooth transition into the workforce by holding an intensive career training. Fellows will also be assisted with client relations skills and equipped with financial literacy and business etiquette skills. After successful completion of training, fellows work as data analysts at Blossom Academy. During this phase, they learn about multiple industries, sharpen their skill sets, and assigned to exciting client projects across the world.

Topics & Skills
- Business Etiquette

- Financial Literacy
- Building Mentorship
- Building Online Presence
- Portfolio Design
- Thought-Leadership
- PowerPoint

Blossom Academy fellows are assessed across three dimensions throughout the training program. Performance will impact learning resources fellows receive or are required to complete, as well as work experience opportunities for them. Fellows may receive remedial coursework outside of the core content if necessary to ensure they are staying on track with learning objectives.

Successful completion of the program requires a minimum completion score of 80% on assignments, 100% completion of projects and 90% participation in instructional activities and overall program attendance. Fellows are allowed two excused absences per trimester (6 total for the program).

Six final projects will be assigned during the first trimester, and six in the second trimester. These projects will occur at the end of each module, about one every two weeks. These projects will count for 50% of the core grade.

During the third trimester fellows must complete a minimum of 400 hours of work experience (14 weeks for 30 hours a week).

Facilities
Blossom Academy class sessions will take place online via Zoom and at the Blossom Academy Headquarters. The fellow suite contains a large area for lectures and large group projects, whiteboards and a projector for use during instruction.

Equipment
Fellows' are responsible for providing their own desktop computer or laptop (PC or Mac) that is less than 4 years old and is not a Chromebook. An internal or external microphone and webcam are also required. No equipment is purchased through Blossom Academy.

Bandwidth Requirements
Blossom Academy class sessions and group sessions take place online via video chat. Fellows are required to have access to high-speed internet that allows for video chat communication.

Learning Resources
Blossom Academy provides all necessary learning materials through the fellow learning management system, Piazza. Fellows can access assessments, readings, recordings of previous lectures, and group forums. Fellows are given Slack accounts to communicate directly with their instructors and cohort-mates.

With the exception of the resources listed below, all texts and sources necessary for class reading or reference for the Blossom Academy Program are available on the Internet free of charge. Either hyperlinks to these texts and sources or information sufficient to find the texts and sources with the use of a search engine will be provided over the course of the program via logging into Piazza.

Standards for Fellow Achievement
Pedagogically, we want our assessment to resemble the working world as much as possible. We assess the skills and tools that are relevant to job success, and deliver the feedback in a manner similar to real-world employment (performance reviews, check-ins, email feedback).

The three areas we assess fellows in are:
- Content & Tools: This includes domain knowledge in business and technical areas (Accounting, Finance, Marketing, Stats), as well as the ability to apply these concepts in tools (Excel, PowerPoint, Email, SQL, Python). We assess these through quizzes, exercises, and capstone projects at the end of each module.
- Soft skills: Through all aspects of the program, we are assessing fellows on 5 soft skills: communication, collaboration, critical thinking, positive attitude, and project management. Instructors, peers, and fellow experience advisors will all provide input into these ratings, and they will be collated and distributed twice a Trimester.
- Engagement: This will be assessed through the entire Trimester as well and is a function of how active fellows are in the Program. This includes whether they are showing up to all activities, whether they are showing up on time, and whether they are (constructively) participating while there.

Fellows are required to meet a minimum proficiency in Content & Tools before moving on to the next module (there are 6 modules in each Trimester). Fellows will see their current status which is updated after each quiz and project, so they will know where they stand. We support them to reach this proficiency with office hours and 1:1 check-ins (which become required if fellows are below the basic threshold).

For soft skills, fellows will receive a performance review twice throughout the Trimester, and any red flags will be identified sooner. For engagement, fellows are expected to meet the attendance policy and be productive fellows. If there are any weeks where they begin to show risk of meeting this, there will be immediate check-ins.

In the final semester of the program fellows are required to work on partner company projects to gain real-world experience.

For fellows that do not meet the above assessment, they will be asked to leave the program, or join the subsequent cohort so they can use the additional time to build their skills.

Admissions Policy
To be considered for admissions, fellows must be 18 years old, be a university graduate, and have authorization to work in West Africa. We also give preference to final year students (with proof of being on track to graduate), master's students, or post national-service candidates from statistics, software engineering, and actuary science disciplines.

The Blossom Academy admissions process includes an application, the Admissions Challenge, Aptitude Tests, Programming Evaluations, and an Individual Interview. Interviews are conducted over a video-conference using Zoom. Each stage is evaluated on core competencies and the applicant must receive a minimum passing score to move onto the next stage. The main competencies assessed in applicants during the admissions process are leadership potential, critical thinking and communication.

Credit for Prior Learning

Although we encourage everyone to come in with knowledge of Excel, R, Python, and statistics, we do not require or accept credits earned at other institutions or through challenge examinations and achievement tests. Blossom Academy does not have any transfer agreements with other colleges or universities, and does not award credit for prior experiential learning.

All instruction and coursework will be in English. Blossom Academy will require documentation as proof of English language proficiency, as English language services will not be provided. We require English fluency as established by our Admissions staff and technical assessment. Please note that no external qualification (e.g. TOEFL, IELTS) will be considered in lieu of our individual assessment.

Attendance
Classes will take place Monday through Saturday between 4:00pm - 9:00pm, with the exception of national and state recognized holidays. In addition to online class meeting times, it is mandated that fellows attend all bi-monthly meetings, as well as any in-person or datathons hosted by Blossom Academy or affiliate companies. All sessions are conducted live either over the internet via Zoom or in person at our facility in Accra, Ghana.

Attendance in an online school is as important as attendance in a traditional classroom. It takes a lot of self-motivation for fellows to direct their own learning, and active participation allows them to not only learn from their instructors, but also from their classmates - ultimately broadening perspectives.

Fellows are allowed up to two (2) excused absences per trimester. If a fellow knows they will be absent for any reason, it is their responsibility to email the course instructor and copy the company email (info@blossomacademy.co). This email should be sent at the start of any week (Monday) when a fellow expects to be absent. For example, if fellows plan to be absent on a Thursday, they should email the appropriate Blossom Academy staff members on the previous Monday.

For absences that are planned well in advance, it is the fellow's responsibility to indicate those dates in the New Fellow Survey assigned during pre-course. Fellows that miss more than two days of instruction per trimester without notifying Blossom Academy staff will be subject to dismissal from the program. Fellows are responsible for attending office hours and learning any material they may have missed during their absence.

We understand that emergencies come up and can result in unexpected absences. Please notify Blossom Academy of these situations as soon as possible.

Leave of Absence Policy
A leave of absence is generally not permitted unless under extenuating circumstances. Any prior engagements that would require an extended absence from the program need to be submitted and approved by the administration prior to the start of the program. It is the responsibility of the fellow to complete all coursework that was assigned during their leave.

Fellow Rights
Fellows have the following rights:
- Fellows have the right to equal opportunity education and non-discrimination based on sex, race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, disability, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, sexual orientation or other categories protected by law of the states in which we operate.

- Fellows have the right to cancel or withdraw from their course, per Blossom Academy's Cancellation, Withdrawal and Refund Policy.
- Fellows have the right to file a grievance, per Blossom Academy's Grievance Procedure.

Grievance Procedure

Blossom Academy aims to provide a high quality and safe learning environment for all fellows and staff. Any fellow that feels their rights have been violated are strongly encouraged to bring the issue to Blossom Academy leadership by emailing info@blossomacademy.co. The leadership team will review the grievance and take necessary steps with the fellow to find a solution to the problem.

Probation and Dismissal Policy

- Fellows must maintain good academic standing throughout their time at Blossom Academy. Good Standing includes completing required assessments as well as maintaining a responsible attendance record.
- Fellows are held accountable to the academic expectations of the program. If a fellow fails to complete the academic work required of the program, they will be dismissed from the cohort. Specific details of this policy are outlined below.
- Late or incomplete work: fellows that hand in more than 2 assignments late or incomplete in a given trimester will be called in for an in-person 1:1 meeting with a Blossom Academy staff.

Failure to complete work: fellows that fail to complete a graded assignment, or fail to complete more than one ungraded assignment will be called in for an in-person 1:1 meeting with Blossom Academy staff.

If after a 1:1 meeting, fellow behavior does not improve, he/she will be subject to dismissal from the program.

Academic Dismissal

While we will do our best to provide guidance and assistance to a struggling fellow, if the fellow cannot keep up with the coursework, they will be subject to academic dismissal.

Fellows who have been academically dismissed and would like to return to Blossom Academy will be required to reapply for admissions. A re-enrollment application will only be considered if the fellow is able to provide evidence of an improvement on their readiness and motivation for the program. Any re-enrollments after a dismissal must be approved by the administration.

Violations Dismissal

If a fellow violates the rights of another fellow or staff member, they will be subject to removal from the program immediately.

Retention of Fellow Records

Blossom Academy stores all fellow records electronically in Salesforce indefinitely, our main database of information. This includes the fellow's contact information, admissions application, challenge results, group and individual interview evaluations, enrollments, and completion of modules throughout the program.

Career Services and Job Placement
During the third trimester of the Blossom Academy program, fellows will receive tools, strategies and support to seek and obtain post-program employment in the data analytics and business intelligence field.

Housing
Blossom Academy is a non-residential program, however we do require our fellows to live within 50 miles of the cohort location since there are bi-monthly workshops - in addition to group projects - throughout the program.