

# GSBF 2015 DETAILED APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

## **This document explains**

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## **1. What is an action research fellowship in social entrepreneurship?**

Action research supports innovation and entrepreneurship to provide practical solutions for global poverty and environmental degradation. This fellowship collaborates with the signature program of the Center, the [Global Social Benefit Institute](#) (GSBI®). Since 2003, GSBI has supported hundreds of social entrepreneurs around the world. GSBI offers integrated capacity development designed for entrepreneurs dedicated to solving the world's most pressing problems. GSBI provides specific programs and full lifecycle support that blends Silicon Valley executive mentorship, targeted, practical curriculum, and a Jesuit ethical vision.

Global Social Benefit Fellows conduct action research in service on interdisciplinary teams of two or three with the social enterprises that have completed our program. The fellowship provides a comprehensive program of mentored, field-based study and action research for undergraduate juniors within the [GSBI® worldwide network of social entrepreneurs](#). The fellowship combines a fully funded 6-8 week international summer field experience in the developing world with two quarters of academically rigorous research. It is a program of practical social justice, in the Jesuit educational tradition. This is a richly rewarding yet demanding experience, one that requires a time-intensive, nine-month commitment. Each fellow will receive a support package to cover all international travel, in-country expenses, and research costs, plus a summer stipend.

Each fall the Center consults with its [GSBI® social entrepreneurs](#) to create action research proposals. Students interested in applying for the fellowship should read these proposals carefully, since they will be asked to rank them according to their interest in their application. Applicants will be interviewed for specific action research proposals, but not all of these proposals will necessarily run. We offer our social enterprise partners research projects providing:

- Social impact assessment, and the development of monitoring tools
- Customer satisfaction surveys, including social science surveys
- Knowledge formalization, such as sales training manuals or operation manuals
- Social documentation, beneficiary profiles, promotional materials, photography, and videography
- Market assessment, marketing campaign planning, and business plan development

- Mobile app and IT systems development
- Technology evaluation

Research projects will be presented during fellow's senior year. Ideally, research projects will enhance senior theses, design projects, and capstone projects. Applicants should be prepared for a sustained effort in research and personal reflection across all nine months of the fellowship. All fellows are required to take two courses: in Spring Quarter, ELSJ 134 "[Social Entrepreneurship Seminar](#)" and in Fall Quarter, ELSJ 135 "[Research in Social Entrepreneurship](#)." Completion of these two courses fulfills the STS and ELSJ core curriculum requirements.

## **2. Who is eligible to apply for the fellowship?**

Students from all disciplines are eligible to apply during January of their junior year. Successful applicants bring a blend of academic excellence, a commitment to community service, cross-cultural competencies, practical research skills, and the personal responsibility necessary to live and work in a developing world. Applicants are evaluated individually and as members of a team to tackle a specific action research proposal. Language skills -- especially Spanish! -- are a definite plus. The aggregate GPA of fellows is generally greater than 3.5, however, students with passion, interest, and skills appropriate to the fellowship are encouraged to apply. Some applicants with high GPAs do not receive fellowships, and some students with lower GPAs are awarded fellowships due to their skills and other strengths.

## **3. The three stages of the application process**

Read very carefully the prior action research portfolios, and check out the 1 page proposals for 2015. Then attend an information session, where you will learn more about the program and be able to ask prior fellows questions about their experience.

Second, register your basic information through our Qualtrix webpage. This will go live December 1 and remain accessible through January 22. You should be prepared to provide the following information: your name, majors, email addresses, phone number, GPA, top three preferred placements with a short statement about what skills you would bring to that placement, and foreign language proficiencies (if any) using the [ILR scale](#). Within 48 hours of registration, we will send you an customized email with a unique box.com email submission address for submitting your other documents.

Third, use this unique box.com email submission address to directly submit your documents as email attachments to a unique application folder in the cloud. Each document must be titled with your surname (examples: Warner\_essay.doc; Warner\_transcript.pdf; Warner\_Smithletterofrecommendation.doc) so as to facilitate the organization of the ~200 documents that we receive each year. You will submit as email attachments your transcript (obtained through ecampus) and your personal application essay. You will request three letters of recommendation (see below). Note that neither you nor your recommenders can submit emails messages to the unique box.com email submission address; you can only submit attachments this way.

#### 4. The personal application essay

This is the heart of your application. Download the template and spend a good bit of time thinking about how you can present yourself, your passions and skills, in a personal way. Write it carefully and ask friends to read it and give you feedback. What you enter on this is likely the most important determinant of whether we invite you to interview. Be sure you rename this file!

#### 5. Three letters of recommendation

Solicit three letters of recommendation: one from a SCU instructor, one from someone who provided adult supervision in an immersion or community service context, and one from a peer or teammate. Once they have agreed to write a letter on your behalf, send your recommenders the following text (as appropriate), your unique box.com email submission address, and the requirement that they submit their letter as an email attachment (not an email message), and the deadline for submission. You should copy and paste appropriate text from below to insert in an email to those you invite to write letters on your behalf.

**You have been asked** by a Santa Clara University student to write one of three required letters of recommendation for the Global Social Benefit Fellowship. This is a very competitive fellowship, and your letters are essential for us to be able to evaluate this student as a candidate. Please begin by reviewing [information about the fellowship](#). Your honest answers will be greatly appreciated. Your letter of recommendation will help the review committee evaluate the candidate's academic strength, community service experience, and suitability to live and work in an underserved community in a different culture. We will evaluate each applicant individually, but will also consider the overall composition of teams. Letters should be emailed to a unique box.com email submission address the student applicant will provide you. Please name your letter: ApplicantSurname\_YourSurname. A letter on electronic letterhead is preferred, but a simple document attached to an email will also suffice. Note that cannot submit email messages to the unique box.com email submission address; you can only submit attachments this way. Your frank assessment of this student's suitability for this fellowship is most appreciated. If you have questions, please contact the director of the fellowship, Keith Warner OFM at [kwarnerscu.edu](mailto:kwarnerscu.edu).

**Instructor at SCU:** Please begin the letter by telling us how long, and in what capacity, have you known the applicant. Please assess the candidate's suitability for living and working in the developing world for a summer placement. Please assess the candidate's academic skills, organization, and perseverance suitable for a 9 month action research fellowship.

**Immersion or Service Supervisor:** Please begin the letter by telling us how long, and in what capacity, have you known the applicant. Please assess the candidate's suitability for living and working in the developing world for a summer placement. Please describe the candidate's level of maturity, assess how he or she has exercised responsibility, and your experience of working with him or her. How did this person play a constructive role in your program? Please relate a specific

experience that you think best illustrates this. Would you want to spend a summer in a developing world country with him or her? Why or why not?

**Peer or Teammate:** Please describe your relationship with the applicant, and how you observed this student to interact with his or her peers. Please describe a couple of specific experiences that you believe best illustrate this person's character, both strengths and weaknesses. Would you want to spend a summer in a developing world country with him or her as the only other person from SCU on your team? Why or why not?

## **6. Health and safety considerations**

Santa Clara University holds paramount the health and safety of our students. This fellowship program follows all university international safety policies, which is closely tied to the [US Department of State](#) travel information. Each placement is thoroughly evaluated for safety from known environmental, disease, or political concerns. While fellows are abroad we require weekly communication via text or email. We also track regional news online so we are equipped with the latest developments in the placement region and can act quickly in case of an emergency. No international travel is without risk. Every applicant should have a conversation about international field work with their family and loved ones prior to submitting an application.

## **7. The interview process**

Our application process allows the Center to make quick decisions about who to invite for interview and to extend those letters. We invite many, but not all, candidates to interviews shortly after their application is complete, prior to the submission deadline. You do not improve your chances for a fellowship by completing your application early, but you might secure an early interview.

Interviews are conducted at CSTS during the period of 26 January to February 14, approximately. We ask you to describe your motivations and skills, and assess your suitability for the fellowship and specific action research projects. We assess candidates using the dual criteria of your suitability for the fellowship generally, and your ability to contribute to a specific action research project. We send out award letters during the second half of February, and host a welcome event in early March.

## **8. The Center's expectations of students who commit to the fellowship**

The award letter indicates a specific action placement, and a summer stipend of \$2000. In order to accept the fellowship, you must agree to be available for fellowship activities from June 13-August 24. The overall value of a fellowship is many thousands of dollars. Our expectations are very, very high for fellows to be dedicated learning with the Center and providing research in service to our social enterprise partners. Those who accept the fellowship award sign a learning agreement that would commit you to:

- Participate fully throughout the full 9-month academic program, as described on The Center's webpage. You must be available for fellowship activities from June 13-August 24.

- Participate in academic research activities, based on preparation and field work, to support the social entrepreneurship movement. Field work in the developing world entails some risk, and the Fellow's signature below indicates your willingness to sign the "SCU Participant Agreement Form" acknowledging his or her informed consent to participate, and to work with the Center to abide by SCU travel policies.
- This research will be conducted with the social entrepreneur over the summer. It will be reported at a seminar in the fall quarter, and posted on The Center's webpage. These research products, your personal reflection essays, and the photos and videos of you and others in the field will be shared with The Center to use in fulfillment of its mission, including on our webpage and promotional materials.
- Engage in personal vocational reflection activities and thus fulfill the ELSJ learning objectives.
- Share fellowship experiences with the broader university community, including The Center, and perhaps university faculty, and donors. This will include all forms of digital media, including writings, photos and videos.
- Assist in the recruitment, selection and interview process for next year's GSB Fellows.

#### **9. The timeline for 2015**

- January 22, 2015, 5pm: application deadline
- January 26-February 14: interviews
- Late February: fellowships awarded, on a rolling basis.
- Spring quarter: required course Introduction to Social Entrepreneurship, ELSJ 134. This meets MW 3.30-5.15pm.
- Mid-June to early August: field placement with a social enterprise. In order to accept the fellowship, you must agree to be available for fellowship activities from June 13-August 24.
- August 12-22 (approximate dates): participation in GSBI accelerator in residence component
- Fall quarter: required course Research in Social Entrepreneurship ELSJ 135. This meets MW 3.30-5.15pm.
- November. Social Enterprise Action Research Roundtables. Assist in recruiting applicants for subsequent cohort.