



Gyo Obata Fellowship

Guidelines for Prospective Fellows

Updated 12/20/18

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Gyo Obata Fellowship is modeled after three long-running and highly successful programs of the Arts and Business Council of New York; the Los Angeles County Arts Fellowship Program and the Getty Foundation Multicultural Fellowship Program. The program will enable the Regional Arts Commission (RAC), with major support from the St. Louis-based Gateway Foundation, to invest in building a more equitable field of arts administration in the St. Louis region by supporting substantive, full-time, summer work opportunities for college undergraduates from backgrounds that have been traditionally underrepresented in the arts.

The ten-week paid summer fellowship program will provide a minimum of ten college students with a hands-on introduction to arts nonprofits in St. Louis City and County. The program will match undergraduate students from underrepresented backgrounds with host nonprofit arts organizations, who will guide their professional development through the summer. The program is intended to be mutually beneficial, providing arts organizations with financially subsidized staff to support ongoing operations or address the needs of special projects during the summer months.

PARTNERS

The Regional Arts Commission

The Regional Arts Commission of St. Louis (RAC) is at the forefront of efforts to transform St. Louis into a more vibrant, creative, and economically thriving community by elevating the vitality, value, and visibility of the arts. The largest public funder of the arts in the region, RAC has awarded more than 7,000 grants totaling more than \$100 million to support nonprofit arts, individual artists, cultural organizations, and programs since its founding in 1985.

The Gateway Foundation

Founded in 1986, the Gateway Foundation seeks to enrich life and culture in the St. Louis area by supporting efforts to acquire, create, or improve tangible and durable art and urban design. In 2009, the Foundation's largest project, a two-block sculpture park called Citygarden, opened in downtown St. Louis in the Gateway Mall. From prominent public sites downtown to community college campuses in

St. Louis County, the Foundation has played a prominent role in promoting a wide range of public art projects that enhance the quality of life for St Louis residents.

PROGRAM NAMESAKE

Gyo Obata is an American architect, born in 1923 and raised in San Francisco. His parents were renowned painter, Chiura Obata, and Haruko Obata, an ikebana artist. As Japanese Americans, his parents and siblings were interned during WWII, a fate he avoided by transferring from University of California at Berkeley to Washington University in St. Louis, where he earned his bachelor's degree in architecture in 1945. He later studied under master Finnish architect Eero Saarinen at the Cranbrook Academy of Art in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, receiving his master's degree in architecture and urban design in 1946.

In 1955, he co-founded the global architectural firm, HOK (formerly Hellmuth, Obata + Kassabaum) in St. Louis. Notable projects include the McDonnell Planetarium at the Saint Louis Science Center, The Abbey of Saint Mary and Saint Louis, the National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C., and the Japanese-American National Museum in Los Angeles.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Gyo Obata Fellowship was developed to invest in building a more diverse, inclusive, and racially equitable field of arts administration. Learning from similar programs in New York and Los Angeles, the program will provide students working towards careers in the arts with a hands-on introduction to the arts nonprofit sector in St. Louis. The Gyo Obata Fellowship will match undergraduate students from underrepresented backgrounds with energetic and motivated host arts organizations who will help guide students' personal professional growth throughout the summer.

The Gyo Obata fellows will be carefully chosen from a competitive pool of students and granted paid, full-time, ten-week-long fellowships at arts organizations based in St. Louis. Students will gain meaningful on-the-job training and experience working in local nonprofit arts organizations, while assisting arts organizations in fulfilling their missions.

To ensure an immersive and well-rounded experience, the summer fellowship will include:

- Full-time work placement at a St. Louis arts nonprofit
- Summer stipend
- Transit passes (as needed)
- Weekly group site visits to all fellow host sites
- Monthly professional development workshops and cultural outings

RAC will establish a committee of community volunteers, led by at least one RAC Commissioner, to advise in the development of the program and selection of the host nonprofit arts organizations and the fellows.

FELLOWSHIP PROJECTS

The ideal fellowships are those that have a mutually beneficial impact for hosting organization and a positive learning experience for the student. The Gyo Obata Fellowship will offer selected students experience in key areas of arts management, such as fundraising, financial management, marketing, or programming. In considering what makes meaningful fellow project, host organizations will consider projects, duties, or other activities that are important to their organization while assisting the fellow in developing practical, work-related skills. Matches between fellows and host organizations are based on merits of the proposed project, and the talents and interests of fellow applicants.

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

Fellowships are open to students currently enrolled in any bachelor's degree-seeking program of an accredited college or university in the greater St. Louis area or St. Louis City or County residents who are enrolled in an accredited college or university outside of the St. Louis area. Students must be entering their third or fourth year of undergraduate studies or have at least 60 credit hours from an accredited college or university. Students must also be able to legally work within the United States.

The Gyo Obata Fellowship is designed to promote and advance diversity in the field of arts management and thus seeks candidates from backgrounds traditionally underrepresented in arts leadership. In its review of candidates, the Regional Arts Commission will give preference to these applicants.

The Regional Arts Commission considers historically underrepresented groups in the arts based on race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, citizenship status, or religion.

SELECTION PROCESS

The Regional Arts Commission selects both student and arts organization participants through a competitive application, screening, and selection process. RAC matches students with host organizations based on students' interests and related experience/skills as they relate to the host organizations' proposed projects. The selected host organizations will have an opportunity to rank the students, which will influence their placement.

Host organizations, representing a diverse cross-section of the St. Louis nonprofit arts community, are selected based upon the scope of their projects and the existence of a supportive environment in which the fellow can gain experience in arts management.

APPLICATION TIMELINE

January 9 – February 26 – Fellowship Application Open

February 26 – Fellowship Application Due

April 5 – Notification to Selected Fellows and Hosts (Placement of Fellows at Hosts)

June 3 – Fellowship Begins

August 8 – Fellowship Ends

FELLOWSHIP SCHEDULE

The 2019 program dates are Monday, June 3 to Thursday, August 8, 2019. All fellows work Monday-Friday, full time, for ten weeks at their respective arts organizations. Specific daily work schedules will be set by individual host organizations. Fellows must be free to attend scheduled program events (see Additional Activities below), which occur approximately once per week, usually in the late afternoon/early evening.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

Opening and Closing Ceremonies

All fellows and their host organization supervisors are required to participate in an opening ceremony at the start of the program on Monday, June 3, 2019 and a closing ceremony at the end on Thursday, August 8, 2019.

Site Visits

During the fellowship program, fellows attend site visits to all participating host organizations to learn more about the work of their peers and experience the mission, programming, and infrastructure of a broader cross-section of St. Louis arts organizations. Site visits may take the form of tours, performances, workshops, panel discussions with staff, or whatever the fellow and host organization feel best conveys the mission and work of that organization. Each fellow will work in collaboration with their supervisor to plan and host the site visit at their host nonprofit arts organization. The site visits usually take place on weekday afternoons, but some may take place during evening hours.

Professional Development and Cultural Experiences

An important part of the fellowship experience will be attending one professional development and one cultural event that increase their learning and give them a greater sense of the diversity of arts activities offered in the region. Fellows are required to participate in these activities and are also encouraged to independently arrange their own outings outside of work to enhance their learning experiences.

PAYMENT

It is the responsibility of the host organization to hire and pay the fellow a stipend of \$4,000 for the ten-week program. Each host organization can choose to pay out the \$4,000 stipend through company payroll, or as a separate stipend payment. Individual work and payment schedules will be determined by the host and communicated to the fellow prior to the start of the program.

The fellow will be held to the same personnel policies as the organization's staff. If free parking, parking stipend or transit stipend is provided to the host nonprofit arts organization staff, the same accommodations must be made for the fellow. RAC can provide some support for transportation costs on an as needed basis.