

# 2023 HONORS FELLOWSHIP

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PACKET



### **Overview**

Congratulations on your acceptance into the TTN Honors Fellowship in the Community Development concentration!

This Fellowship is about strengthening your insights into the countless obstacles that face communities around the world, and opening your mind to new perspectives on the social, environmental and economic impacts of a globalized 21st century.

While you're on your program as an Honor Fellow, speak to program staff and people you encounter to learn about their perspectives on community development, as well as the personal challenges and struggles that make what they do count.

Your final project will be an essay that will challenge you to tackle new concepts in a meaningful and insightful way.

### **Pre-Program**

While preparing for your upcoming program, you'll want to do some research into community development challenges encountered by communities large and small. This could take the form of crumbling or nonexistent infrastructure in rural communities, the spike in housing costs due to urban growth or lack of access to the most basic human necessities in parts of the world without any economic cushion for those in poverty.

While the pre-program reading and viewing is 100% optional - your pre-program assignment won't be graded or any work turned in - the best final essays frequently draw from the material you learned prior to travel, in combination with reflections on programmatic content. You won't be tested on this material, but it will have an impact on the quality of your final project.

#### CONTENT TO READ/VIEW BEFORE YOUR PROGRAM:

- *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind* (Netflix) - A searing portrait of life in rural, impoverished Malawi, this film documents the story of a 13-year old with only a science book and the most basic scraps who builds a wind turbine to face off against famine in his community. This film is based on a real life story and William, the protagonist, went on to attend the African Leadership Academy, Teen Travel Network's sister organization.
  - Watch this film with a Netflix account
- *A Canadian Study Gave \$7,500 to Homeless People. Here's How They Spent It.* (Vox) - This feature explores the aftereffects of an initiative designed to give cash directly to homeless people in their local Vancouver communities. This article dives into a complex subject - income inequality and its relationship to direct community aid - and should generate a lot of critical thought on your end.
  - Read this article on Vox: [LINK TO ARTICLE](#)
- *Museums Make Bids for Their Communities.* (NYT) - This article outlines one way in which the arts can be a powerful tool for unification and the strengthening of community, especially in areas with diverse populations.
  - Read this article at New York Times [here](#)

### **On-Program**

Once you're participating in your program, think about what type of final project you would like to do when you finish your program. For Honors Fellows, this takes the form of a reflective essay.

What are you learning about the communities that you spend time in? What are the most immediate issues you see? How about longer term trends and challenges? Try to

ask questions that allow you to create a final project that is unique to your experience after you finish your program.

The creativity of your project is completely up to you, and while you should spend most of your time on-program focused on the experience, keep tabs about what you're learning. This will help you later to make your final essay your own and try to develop your personal style that conveys exactly what you want to say about your experience.

Take the opportunity to speak with staff and community members—there is so much to be learned through conversation. The perspectives you encounter may surprise you, or even inspire you to change the focus of your final project.

We recommend that you keep a daily journal while on your program. Not only will it be a useful reference for your project when you get back from your program, but a daily journal entry will uncover useful questions and ideas to ask the next day.

## **Post-Program Final Project**

Now that you've completed your Teen Travel Network program, it's time to pull insights and learnings from your experience and craft your essay.

Writing a well-formed essay is more than just going off of a format and writing what people expect. Be sure to stake out a position and defend it using evidence. You can use what you experienced on-program, add context from your pre-program reading and viewing, and build on that with new critical thinking or additional material you've consumed after your program. And don't be afraid to take some chances!

The most important aspect of your essay is your thesis. What are you trying to convey? Your essay can take any form you think is most appropriate. You will find our assessment rubric at the end of this packet to see what components we're looking for in an essay.

Regardless of the topic, the highest-rated essays have a clear thesis. Most importantly, they draw heavily from students' time with TTN, including their first-hand experiences

and the experiences of those in the community. They are also free of errors, include a "Works Cited" page, and have a title.

### **Your final essay should be 3-7 pages in length.**

#### CHOOSE ONE OF THESE PROMPTS TO WRITE YOUR FINAL ESSAY:

- Thinking of your host community, identify one challenge you would be passionate about helping to resolve. Write a proposal for your idea to implement an initiative to fix the problem, and within your essay, weigh out both the pros and cons of your approach.
- Consider the film *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind*. Thinking about your experience, what parallels can you draw between William's innovation and projects or initiatives in your host communities?
- Identify a problem in your hometown that you think a meaningful community development initiative could tackle. What is it? Why do you feel it's worth tackling? And how would you go about seeing a project through to address the problem you've cited, if you were the project leader?
- What are some examples of art (in any of its forms!) fostering community on your program? What role do the arts play in this culture? What principles can you bring back to your own community?
- Choose your own prompt. Feel free to be creative! If you do, please include your custom prompt at the top of your essay submission so the Fellowship Committee reviewing your final project knows what topic you're tackling.

You must **submit your final project by no later than SEPTEMBER 15** to [fellowships@teentravelnetwork.com](mailto:fellowships@teentravelnetwork.com). Use the subject line FINAL PROJECT FOR HONORS FELLOWSHIP to make sure it isn't missed.

To submit an essay, please send a PDF or Word document to the email address listed above. Include your full name with your submission.

### **Completing Your Fellowship**

The only deciding factors as to whether you've completed your Fellowship are:

1. You participated in a full Teen Travel Network program

2. You submitted your final project to the Fellowship Committee by the deadline
3. You showed critical thinking and displayed a mastery of your subject matter

Otherwise, the amount of time you put into the Fellowship, and any reading or viewing of learning materials, are completely up to you.

Regardless of the topic, the highest-rated essays have a clear thesis. Most importantly, they draw heavily from students' time on their program, including their first-hand experiences and the experiences of those in the community. They are also free of errors, include a "Works Cited" page, and have a title.

Should the Fellowship Committee determine you met all the requirements satisfactorily, you'll be awarded:

- A Certificate of Achievement
- A Custom Metal Fellowship Pin
- A Recommendation Letter from our Executive Director (upon request)
- The title of *Honors Fellow* for your College Applications and Future Resume/CV

At this time, you will be considered an Alumni Fellow in good standing with Teen Travel Network.

The Fellowship Committee will review final essays on a rolling basis. We expect to have all Fellowship final project submissions reviewed by December 15.

Please note that there is no direct staff support for your Fellowship. *This packet has everything you need to complete your requirements as a Fellow.* If you do have any pressing questions that absolutely cannot be answered in this document, you may email [fellowships@teentravelnetwork.com](mailto:fellowships@teentravelnetwork.com), but please note that replies may not be immediate.

Congratulations again on your outstanding efforts, and we look forward to reading your final essay after you complete your TTN program!

## 2023 Honors Fellowship Rubric

Did the final project meet the length requirements of 3-7 pages?  YES  NO (1 Point)

### Score A

CRITERIA	<u>Excellent</u> 3 Points	<u>Great</u> 2 Points	<u>Good</u> 1 Point	<u>Needs Revision</u> 0 Points
Introduction and Setup <b>Score B</b>	<i>Student concisely introduces key questions and/or problems around topic.</i>	<i>Student introduces all relevant questions and/or problems for each paragraph.</i>	<i>Student introduces some questions and/or problems, but not all outlined in essay.</i>	<i>Student does not introduce relevant questions and/or problems in introduction.</i>
Information Gathered <b>Score C</b>	<i>Information is gathered from multiple sources and clearly supports the thesis. Cited at the end of essay.</i>	<i>Information is gathered from two or three sources and most support the thesis or are relevant</i>	<i>Information is gathered from only student as source, but supports the thesis.</i>	<i>Very little relevant information is gathered to support thesis.</i>
Connection to TTN Experience <b>Score D</b>	<i>Information is backed up by personal connection to the program, augmenting the impact of the data</i>	<i>Essay contains personal experiences that give context to the facts in the essay.</i>	<i>Essay contains personal experiences or information from experience</i>	<i>Essay contains no personal experiences or information from program</i>
Conclusions Reached <b>Score E</b>	<i>Detailed conclusion reached with a clear connection to the introduction and thesis.</i>	<i>Conclusion reached and sums up the essay clearly.</i>	<i>Conclusion reached with connection to thesis, but extraneous sections left unexplained.</i>	<i>Conclusion has little connection to the thesis and much is left unexplained.</i>
Grammar & Structure <b>Score F</b>	<i>Punctuation, spelling, and grammar are flawless.</i>	<i>Punctuation, spelling, and grammar are almost all correct, with a few errors.</i>	<i>Punctuation, spelling, and grammar are mostly correct.</i>	<i>Punctuation, spelling, and grammar are flawed with many errors.</i>

A score **above a 6** is considered a passing grade for your final project.  
A score of **6 or below** will require the student to revise their submission.

### EVALUATION SCORE: