

Bridge Fellows

About Common Future

Common Future is a network of leaders (re)building an economy that includes everyone. Our initiatives shift capital, uplift local leaders, and advise the development of equitable economies. Why? Because capitalism is broken and too many people have been left out. We're working towards a vision of economies that work for all people. We've already shifted \$250M+ of philanthropic and investment capital into community investment, and we seek to connect even more wealth-holders and wealth-builders to create lasting wealth in marginalized communities.



About the Common Future Bridge Fellows

In 2020, Common Future will launch a one-time initiative to select 6-8 local economy leaders in the southern region of the United States and provide grants in service of their work to build equitable, inclusive local economies. The Common Future Bridge Fellows will come from organizations that are breaking systemic barriers in their communities and building bridges that increase access, opportunity, and success for marginalized people.

The Common Future Bridge Fellows initiative will support Fellows through a combination of in-person immersions and virtual experiences to deepen relationships with the cohort. Specifically, the fellowship will include:

- Two 2-3 day experiential learning convenings held in different regions of the United States where fellows will learn from site visits and experiences unique to each place
- Virtual engagement to reinforce the work, deepen relationships from the convenings, and dive into learnings from the curriculum.
- Resources to advance each fellow's leadership development through an Individual Learning Plan.
- Each Fellow will be awarded between \$40,000 to \$60,000 to be used towards advancing their organizational impact, programs, services, etc.

How to apply

- **Mar 1 - April 5 2020:** We will accept applications **submitted here** until April 5, 2020 at 11:59pm
- **Apr 13 - May 8 2020:** We will review applications and contact qualified applicants to participate in a virtual interview
- **May 15 2020:** We will select and notify the final Fellows by May 15, 2020

Program FAQs

What do we look for in an applicant?

Common Future Bridge Fellows are leaders (CEOs, directors, presidents, co-founders, etc.) of community-based nonprofits, social enterprises, entrepreneurial-support organizations, and other entities that are focused on closing the racial wealth gap by supporting entrepreneurs and improving the physical and economic health of their communities. We look for leaders of organizations that are small-medium size (less than 50 employees), established, and beyond the startup phase.

Location Eligibility

We will accept applications for Fellows from the Southeastern U.S., prioritizing select cities and their surrounding regions, including: Jackson, MS, Baton Rouge, LA, Atlanta, GA, Memphis, TN, Little Rock, AR, and Louisville, KY.

Applicants from across the Southeastern U.S. are encouraged to apply if they meet requirements for the work (See “What do we look for in an applicant?”).

We expect all Fellows to:

- Lead work that is intentionally focused on addressing the root causes of inequality through a systems-approach
- Be intersectional and interdisciplinary in their approach, holding a global interest, openness, curiosity, and commitment to reach beyond their boundaries
- Have strong leadership skills and a strategic mindset
- Have a proven track record and the backing of your community who see you as a bridge builder and fierce collaborator
- Have examples of successful collaborations at the local, regional, or national level

- Have a clear vision and ability to articulate what is possible in the short and long-term
- Demonstrate financial viability with a proven track record of fundraising, financial acumen, and ability to convene and maintain key partnerships;
- Have a demonstrated track record, yet still be in a position to grow and build upon their impact.

Minimum qualifications for applicants:

- You are over 18
- You are mid-career
- You have at least three years experience leading local projects that yield results
- You are committed to the time and requirements of the fellowship (see “Fellowship Expectations”)
- You are proficient in English or can demonstrate a path to proficiency
- You are not a political candidate or official
- You are based in one of the locations listed above

Who is not a good fit?

Candidates who have been the beneficiaries of other prestigious fellowships and awards (although we will not disqualify these applicants). We are not seeking fellows who have yet to establish an organization, or who aren’t affiliated with an institution.

Is this a continuation of the BALLE Local Economy Fellowship?

The Common Future Bridge Fellows experience will source leaders working at the same intersections of local economy work, but with a different program experience. They will be considered Common Future Fellows and join our growing network alongside alumni of the Local Economy Fellowship.

Program FAQs

Do I need to move if I am selected?

No, Fellows are expected to continue living and working in their community. During the course of the Fellowship, Fellows will travel to two convenings in different locations. Travel costs will be covered by Common Future.

Can previous BALLE Local Economy Fellows apply?

As this is a new pilot, previous fellows are not eligible to apply. However, as natural connectors who advocate for others in their communities, previous fellows are encouraged to **recommend** other leaders. We expect that Fellows will not be affiliated with current or former Common Future initiatives.

Does the Fellowship accommodate people with disabilities?

It is important to us that people with disabilities can fully participate in this program. We will provide reasonable accommodations deemed necessary for qualified candidates and Fellows to participate in the selection process and in the Fellowship.

Fellowship Expectations

What is the time commitment?

The 2020 Common Future Bridge Fellows initiative will run from June 2020 through December 2021. Specific commitments include:

- Full participation in two 2-3 day convenings in the U.S. (one held in late summer/early fall, 2020 in the southern U.S. and another held in 2021 in the northeast)

- Engaged participation in the majority of monthly learning calls with the cohort throughout the Fellowship
- Approximately 1-6 hours each month for additional activities, including sharing insights

What are the expectations?

We see Fellows as co-creators of the experience, therefore the program is designed to meet the specific needs and interests of the 2020 Fellows. Although the curriculum is designed in advance, Fellows will be expected to co-create and facilitate content to best fit their needs. We expect Fellows to participate wholly and fully, and to remain engaged as an alum.

Are fellows expected to cover the cost of travel?

No, Common Future will cover travel and accommodation to in-person convenings.

What can we expect from gatherings?

We recognize that community leaders are often in the spotlight while needing to meet high expectations and demands, often at the detriment of their mental and physical health. With this program, we seek to create a space that prioritizes the presence, health, and wellness of fellows including: content that encourages Fellows to create time for themselves, space centered around joy and truth, even in the presence of tough conversations, and a village mentality that brings people together in a mutually supportive community.

Questions about this program? Please email bridgefellows@commonfuture.co.