



# Gyo Obata Fellowship

## Guidelines for Prospective Fellows & Host Arts Organizations

**2023**

### **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 enables 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 who have been traditionally underrepresented in the arts.

The ten-week paid summer fellowship program provides a minimum of ten college students with a hands-on introduction to arts nonprofits in St. Louis City and County. The program matches undergraduate students from underrepresented backgrounds in arts administration 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**

As the leading public catalyst for arts and culture in St. Louis, the Regional Arts Commission (RAC) leverages the power of creativity to strengthen and enrich our community. Established in 1985, RAC has awarded more than 7,000 grants totaling more than \$100 million to support nonprofit arts, individual artists, cultural organizations, and programs that bring vibrancy to the St. Louis community.

#### **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. Because they were Japanese Americans, Gyo Obata's 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, Gyo Obata 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 in 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 equitable field of arts administration. Learning from similar programs in New York and Los Angeles, the program provides students working towards careers in the arts with a hands-on introduction to the arts nonprofit sector in St. Louis. The Gyo Obata Fellowship matches undergraduate students from backgrounds that are underrepresented in arts administration with host arts organizations to guide students' professional growth throughout the summer.

The Gyo Obata fellows are selected from a competitive pool of students and granted paid, full-time, ten-week fellowships at arts organizations 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 for the fellow
- Transportation stipend for the fellow
- Weekly group site visits to all fellow host
- Regular professional development workshops and cultural outings
- Mentorship: each fellow will be paired with a mentor who is also part of the Gyo Obata Fellowship Advisory Committee

## FELLOWSHIP PROJECTS

The ideal fellowships are those that have a mutually beneficial impact for the host 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 constitutes a meaningful fellow project, host organizations will take into account projects, duties, or other activities 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.

## HOST REQUIREMENTS AND ELIGIBILITY

To host a fellow, host applicants must fulfill the following criteria:

- Be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit arts organization located in St. Louis City or County
  - Organizations may include museums, visual arts organizations, performing, presenting (including film and media organizations with a presenting program), arts service, and literary arts organizations that are not part of a college or university.
- Have a budget with an annual operating income of \$200,000 or more
- Have a minimum of one full-time staff member
- Have dedicated and accessible office space with furniture and adequate business machines, such as computers, copy machines, etc. and/or be able to provide them with the office equipment needed for the fellow to work remotely
- Does not receive funding from the Zoo Museum District (ZMD)

Successful host candidates will demonstrate:

- A commitment to equity in the arts
- A proposed arts management project that is challenging, substantive, and not only clerical in nature
- A positive and supportive working and learning environment

## 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, have at least 60 credit hours from an accredited college or university, or have graduated within a year of the program start date. 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 seeks candidates from backgrounds traditionally underrepresented in arts

administration. 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 host organization participants through a competitive application, interview, and selection process. RAC matches students with host organizations based on students' interests and experience/skills as they relate to the host organizations' proposed projects. The selected host organizations and the students will have an opportunity to rank their project/student preference, which will influence the fellow's placement.

## **SCHEDULE**

The 2023 program dates are Thursday, June 1 to Friday, August 11, 2023. All fellows work full-time, for ten weeks at their respective arts organizations. Specific daily work schedules will be set by individual host organizations and communicated to the fellows during the matching process. This schedule must be re-communicated to the fellow and RAC on or before their first day of work and remain constant and consistent throughout the ten-week fellowship.

There is an expectation that fellows will miss no more than three days (approximately 24 hours) of work during the ten-week fellowship for vacation, sickness or bereavement. If more than three days of work are missed, hours will be made up at a time that works for both the host organization and the fellow. The fellow may be paid for up to three days of missed work for vacation, sickness or bereavement. Any days above and beyond three are to be made up on a future date(s). If a fellow misses more than three days and does not make them up, the host organization is not required to pay them for that time. This must be clearly communicated to RAC and the fellow. If the fellow plans to miss work for a vacation during the fellowship, these dates should be communicated with RAC and the fellow's supervisor before the start of the program.

Gyo Obata Fellows may work a part-time job during the ten-week fellowship but this commitment needs to be communicated to RAC and the fellow's supervisor. The Gyo Obata Fellowship should be the fellow's first priority and fellows must schedule their part-time job around their Gyo Obata Fellowship schedule.

Fellows must be free to attend scheduled program events (see Additional Activities below), which occur approximately once per week. These activities are to be included in the fellow's work schedule, and they will be paid for this time.

## **SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES**

The host organization must assign one primary supervisor to the fellow. The Gyo Obata Fellowship requires each supervisor to:

- Attend a program orientation before the program kicks off
- Attend kickoff and closing ceremonies
- Serve as a mentor to the organization's fellow
- Assist and support the fellow in planning the site visit for the cohort of fellows (either in-person or virtual, TBD)
- Participate in an evaluation of the fellow and the fellowship program at the end of the summer
- Connect with fellow's assigned mentor to share updates (either in-person or virtual) twice per month

## **ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES**

### **Opening and Closing Ceremonies**

All fellows and host organization supervisors are required to participate in an opening session at the start of the program on Thursday, June 1, 2023 and a closing session at the end on Friday, August 11, 2023.

### **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 to 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 determine 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 to attend seven professional development sessions and three cultural events that increases learning and provides 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 experiences.

## **PAYMENT**

RAC will be responsible for paying the fellow a stipend that totals \$8,000 for the ten-week program in three payments. The first payment (\$1,000) will be issued after week two of the program. The second

payment (\$3,500) will be issued after week five of the program, and the third payment (\$3,500) will be issued after week 10 of the program.

If a fellow is not performing duties as outlined by the fellowship guidelines and as outlined by the host organization, the fellow's stipend may be altered.

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 organization staff, the same accommodations must be made for the fellow. If the office is closed for a holiday and staff are not required to work and are being paid for this closure, the fellow will also receive this benefit. RAC will provide a \$200 transportation stipend directly to each fellow to help cover the costs associated with attending site visits, professional development, and cultural events.

## **EVALUATIONS**

RAC has developed a logic model that will enable it to project achievable and aspirational outcomes for the program. The evaluation process includes tracking the advancement of the fellows who complete the fellowship as they continue their college education, graduate, and hopefully seek and find employment in the field of arts administration.

Host organization supervisors are expected to meet regularly with fellows during the ten-week fellowship to define, review, and evaluate project and personal goals. Supervisors are highly encouraged to provide substantive and constructive feedback throughout the fellowship period. Additionally, host organizations and fellows will each be required to complete a midpoint check-in with the Gyo Obata program lead and final evaluation surveys distributed by RAC to assess the program.

At the conclusion of the program, efforts will be made to contact fellowship graduates, to schedule an interview to determine if and how the Gyo Obata Fellowship experience is making a positive impact on their professional trajectories.

## **TIMELINE**

**February 27, 2023 – March 31, 2023 – Fellowship Application Open**

**February 27, 2023 – April 3, 2023 – Host Organization Application Open**

**March 31, 2023 – Fellowship Application Deadline**

**April 3, 2023 – Host Organization Application Deadline**

**April 17 – April 24, 2023 – Review Fellowship Applications and Host Organization Applications, Interview Fellow Finalists**

**April 28 – May 1, 2023 – Notification to Selected Fellows and to Selected Host Organizations**

**May 1 – 5, 2023 – Placement of Fellows with Host Organizations**

**Late-May 2023 – Supervisor Orientation & Training (projected date is May 24, 2023)**

**Late-May 2023 – Fellow Orientation & Training (projected date is May 24, 2023)**

**June 1, 2023 – Fellowship Begins**

**August 11, 2023 – Fellowship Concludes**