

## Systems Change Fellowship

### Overview

[Systems change](#) is an intentional process designed to fundamentally alter (or create) the components and structures that cause a system to behave in a certain way. The Systems Change Fellowship is a 15-month systems transformation process designed to fundamentally develop the components and structures of key systems that drive outcomes in higher education institutions (HEI).

It combines a fellowship, systems approach, and implementation grant to drive the targeted institutional transformation. The program identifies fellows from HEIs as champions for change and takes them through expert training and mentoring and provides them with funding to improve on and develop new systems within their department or institution.

### Why This Fellowship?

Through this fellowship, HEIs receive the needed resources to review, build and remodel critical systems and structures to help improve their impact. The program allows for both individual and institutional ownership of leading and sustaining change. The fellow builds their capacity to lead the transformation process and encourages institutional participation to ensure growth and sustainability of resulted projects and outcomes. In addition to project funding, fellows are awarded a monthly stipend. The Systems Change Fellowship also encourages peer engagements through collaborative learning, networking opportunities, and participation in a community of practice following the completion of the program.

### Key Collaborators for Change

**Fellows:** They champion a system change initiative in their HEIs. Fellows are provided with training, mentorship, funding, and other necessary resources, to work with their institutions in building the structures and policies that lead to a system change. To be selected for this program, the fellow ought to be nominated by one's institution or may choose to nominate oneself with approval from their institution. With help from The Education Collaborative, these individuals become responsible for running the systems change project(s) from start to finish.

**Higher Education Institutions:** These are the beneficiary institutions of the fellowship program. Before fellows submit applications, there is the need for evidence that the recommended project not only solves a need within the HEIs but aligns with the institution's long-term growth strategy. HEIs hold the responsibility to ensure the implementation and sustainability of these transformation processes in the organization. By participating in this program, HEIs receive the needed resources to pilot and scale designed initiatives to improve their outcomes.

### Program Structure

The program has 3 phases with pre-determined outcomes and milestones. Here is a summary of the Phases.

### PHASE 1

- Engagement of fellows
- Training and mentorship towards project design and structure
- Proposal Submission for the System Design Pilot Grant

### PHASE 2

- Project Rollout and Testing
- Project Progress Reporting and Blogging
- Project Impact Review Conference
- Post-Fellowship Engagement\*

### PHASE 3

- Project Scaling Proposal (Systems Change Grant)
- Post-Fellowship Engagement

*\*Following the Impact Review Conference, based on performance toward outcomes, some fellows may not qualify for Phase 3 where the project receives further grant to scale. Fellows on such projects, begin post-fellowship engagements after the Impact Review Conference.*

Details of the Fellowship Program Structure below:

Stage	Process	Output
<b>PHASE 1: Selection, Training and Proposal Preparation</b>		
<b>DURATION: 3 months</b>		
Stage 1: Identify Fellow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applications are submitted and reviewed</li> <li>• HEIs fellows enroll in the first cohort</li> </ul>	List of selected fellows Contractual agreement
Stage 2: Mentorship, training, workshops, proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fellows go through job shadowing, campus visits, workshops, and mentorship towards developing the design and structure of a specified project. This would include travel to peer institutions twice over the 15-month period</li> <li>• Networking opportunities for fellows among co-fellows and resource persons from mentee institutions</li> <li>• Fellow works with assigned mentor to develop a proposal for a specific system's structures development for pilot; with targets for impact and outcomes</li> </ul>	Mentorship and training reports Proposal for pilot of system's change initiative
Stage 3: System Design Pilot Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposal submission for review and agreement by the fellow, their institution, and the Education Collaborative</li> <li>• Grant funding received for pilot</li> </ul>	System Design Pilot Grant award Contractual agreement
<b>PHASE 2: Project Rollout, Mentorship and Reporting</b>		
<b>DURATION: 12 months (1 academic year + summer)</b>		
Stage 4: Pilot Implementation and Continued Mentorship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grant for pilot is disbursed</li> <li>• Fellows receive mentorship and consulting to assist the rollout and testing according to project pilot proposal.</li> <li>• Networking opportunities for fellows among co-fellows and resource persons</li> <li>• Periodic articles and reflections on project progress and success or learnings in achieving targets.</li> </ul>	Project launch report Project progress reports per milestone target outcomes
Stage 5: Reporting and Impact Review Conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institutions provide acknowledgement of project progress</li> <li>• At the end of the phase, fellows present on the overall success of the project in an Impact Review Conference</li> <li>• Pilot project is reviewed to determine qualification for the next phase</li> </ul>	Project outcomes portfolio (Compilation of project reports)
Stage 6: *Post-fellowship engagements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fellow joins a community of practitioners</li> <li>• Continued sharing of learnings from the new system formed</li> </ul>	N/A
<b>PHASE 3: Project Scaling and Post-Fellowship Engagement</b>		

Stage 7: Systems Change Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Based on measured outcomes and impact from pilot targets, the institution may receive a larger grant to scale the system</li> </ul>	Second proposal for funding for scale (Systems Change Grant)
Stage 8: Post-fellowship engagements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fellow joins a community of practice in the project area</li> <li>Continued sharing of learnings from the new system set up</li> </ul>	N/A

**Structural Pillars of the Fellowship**

***Funding***

Upon submitting the first proposal for funding and the estimated project budget, each project may receive up to USD 16,000 as a part of the system design pilot Grant awarded by the fellowship. Fellows receive a stipend of USD 1200 every month, throughout the engagement period of 15 months. Based on the level of success achieving target outcomes and impact, following the initial Pilot Grant, the fellow’s institution is awarded the systems change grant of up to USD 30,000 to scale and grow the system.

The pilot grant process is designed to be helpful to the participating institution to provide the foundations needed for continued growth with or without the larger scale grant. At the end of the pilot grant period, with mentorship and training, the institution would have defined clear outcomes and pathways to positively change a system. They would have identified and strengthen key partnerships needed and addressed critical challenges that rise through the implementation process. They would hence have strengthened their ability to be sustainable and raise further resources.

***Training and Mentorship***

Fellows and institutions enrolled within the Education Collaborative Systems Change Fellowship benefit from:

- One-on-one consultations, training, coaching and support.
- Tools to develop accountability and create long-term sustainability.
- The tools and resources to mentor other institutions in the network.

Fellows within the program receive training and coaching towards developing the design and implementation of the structure of an identified system in the institution; particularly in phases 1 and 2. This training and coaching assignment and tracking is managed by an Education Collaborative partner institution. The mentorship provided during the fellowship program is tailored and institution specific, and based on expertise and need alignment, location, and institution’s context and profile.

***Institutional Commitment***

Institutional commitment to the fellowship is key and begins from the nomination process and continues throughout the fellowship. A nomination letter and a nomination form are required as a part of the application process to provide evidence of an institution’s commitment to the project. The institution commitments to consistent communication and update meetings from the fellow throughout the program. The institutional leadership provides acknowledgement and review of interim and outcome and impact reports at all scheduled milestones throughout the process.

## ***Monitoring, Evaluation, and Impact Measurement***

The impact tracking and measurement for the fellowship begins with the establishment of a baseline and ends at the end of phase 2 with a final measurement. There is also a mid-point measurement of progress and outcomes. Measurements are conducted by the Education Collaborative. Targets and timelines for interim reviews and measurements apply to both goals for the fellow's development in phase 1, and goals related to the project's progress and success in phase 2.

The steps to setting goal targets, and impact measurement timelines are:

1. At the beginning of the program, in phase 1, fellows set their Theory of Change, which is the change or improvement the project is expected to bring after a set period. This is set in relation to the target program's Theory of Change defined by the Education Collaborative. Program areas in the Education Collaborative are developed along our five transformational goal areas.
  - a. Ethics and leadership development
  - b. Employability and relevant career readiness
  - c. Active entrepreneurship ecosystems
  - d. Systems for accountability and sustainability in HEIs
  - e. Inclusion, equity and diversity in HEIs

The 2021 and 2022 fellowship program will focus on Systems for Employability and relevant career readiness

2. In consultation with a mentor, the fellow and institution will set strategic goals to be achieved over the period of the 12 months of implementation. They will be determined by the systems design goal expected at the end of the program. These goals are expected to be objectively certifiable and may consist of both quantitative and qualitative measures as well as other relevant ways by which systemic change can be measured.
3. The fellow will document their progress and outcomes per milestone in mini reports reviewed and signed by their institutional leadership per period. These reports will be published as learnings and outcomes from the program on the fellowship blog on the Education Collaborative website.

Interim progress and outcome reports will be reviewed by the Education Collaborative partner institution per milestone. The fellow and institution will either receive excellence reviews or be required to submit a performance improvement plan if not achieving the set targets for each period. Criteria for reviews will be based on target milestones, goals, and outcomes set, as well as the fellows participation in the relevant communities of practice.

### **What we look for in a fellow**

- The candidate has a strong profile showing a steady record of engagements in the higher education field (academic, professional and/or personal).
- The candidate can show evidence of experience managing program or project planning, timelines, communication, and deliverables, and engaging top leadership.
- Candidates must demonstrate a commitment to their institution's growth and strategy.
- Candidates must have demonstrated commitment to the program's philosophy by driving change through collaboration and innovation, and creatively solving problems in their professional lives.
- Candidates should be willing to share their insights and participate actively in a knowledge sharing community during and after the fellowship.
- Candidate must have the time to commit to the full fellowship for at least 15 months.

### **What we look for in a fellow's institution**

- Institution must be an accredited African higher education institution.
- There's evidence of fit of the systems change project with the institution's strategic focus for the target period
- Must be ready to assign a fellow to champion the implementation of the transformation processes.
- Institution should be thoroughly ready to provide support and the environment for successful implementation of the transformation process.
- Must be ready and committed to share and mentor other institutions to develop in similar areas of change.

### **Application Process**

To enroll in this fellowship, institutions would have to nominate a fellow candidate to apply. Or a fellow candidate may self-nominate. The nominee will then need to complete the application form and upload the required documents.

*Access application form:* [Fellowship Application](#)

### ***Required documents for upload:***

1. [Nomination form](#)
2. One page letter of approval from institution
3. Current CV

### ***Instructions for Applicant***

1. Download the [nomination form](#) and send to an individual at your institution who is nominating you (executive, program director, dean, or other administrator).
2. Request a one-page letter of approval from your institution towards your project. This must provide evidence that the proposed project contributes to the institutional strategy.
3. Submit the nomination form, the Project Approval Letter, and a current CV via the [application form](#).
4. Answer the following questions:
  - a. Briefly share examples of experience managing program or project planning, timelines, communication, and deliverables and engaging top leadership.
  - b. What are your leadership career goals and how are your career aspirations in line with the mission of the fellowship?
  - c. In what areas do you hope to grow or learn by participating in the fellowship?
  - d. Describe a need your institution is facing in this area of change that can be addressed through a Systems Change fellowship program. \*

\* For 2021 to 2022, the fellowship program will focus on Systems for Employability and Career Development