



FELLOWS SELECTION **TOOLBOX**

Power of Training at **OFA**

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THE OFA GRASSROOTS ORGANIZING FELLOWSHIP

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YOUR ROLE AS A FELLOWS MANAGER

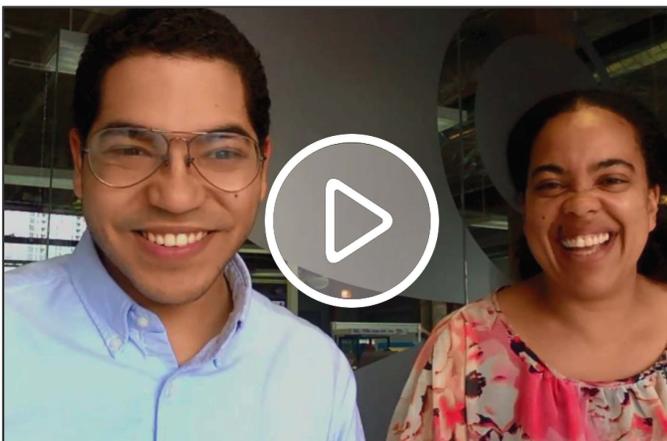
As a Fellows Manager, you are part of one of the most talented community of volunteer leaders and trainers in the progressive movement. Thank you for your commitment to train the next generation of community organizers.

Use this Toolbox to recruit, interview, and select your class of Organizing Fellows.

This Toolbox has helpful information about the Grassroots Organizing Fellowship Program, and your role as a Fellows Manager. Additionally, you will find information about the process you will use to process applications, interview promising candidates, and onboard your Fellows. Throughout the toolbox, you will find helpful frameworks, templates, best practices and guidelines. If used correctly, this Toolbox will accompany you to all of your interviews.

This is an interactive document. Use the arrows, icon buttons, or hyperlinks to skip to a section within the document or to explore a web page.

Following the recruitment, interview, and selection process, you will coordinate a local Fellows onboarding and plan the rest of the program. On May 25th you will receive a Curriculum Toolkit with the information and guidelines you will need to feel comfortable planning an onboarding for the program. Meanwhile, use this toolbox to start recruiting, interviewing, and selecting your next Fellowship class.



Watch the “Let’s Get Started” video from OFA’s National Organizing Director, Jennifer Warner and Training Programs Manager, Aquiles Damiron-Alcantara.

[Watch the video](#)



FELLOWS PROGRAM OVERVIEW

OFA Organizing Fellows - Who are they?

The OFA Organizing Fellowship is designed around a culture of learning and experimenting. For 12 weeks, Fellows embark on a learning journey where they learn new organizing concepts, practice new organizing skills, and assess their accomplishments and opportunities for improvement with their Fellows Managers.

What do they do?

Organizing Fellows participate in weekly skill-building webinars and help the chapter or team organize an event by the end of the program. Each webinar is designed to give Fellows the skills they will need to organize their end-of-program event. For instance, one week, Fellows learn to host an Action Planning Event. The following week, they learn to recruit for the Action Planning Event.

The OFA Culture

Organizing Fellows work with Fellows Managers across the country – they are truly part of something bigger. Quality Fellows are passionate about progressive issues and fighting for change, they are metrics driven, work well in teams, are honest and reliable, and have fun doing important work!

Professional Development and Mentorship

Organizing Fellows graduate with an understanding of basic organizing skills, and ready to use grassroots and digital organizing tools to build relationships with people who care about progressive issue, recruit volunteers, and organize events. In addition to weekly skill-building webinars, Fellows receive one-on-one mentorship from Fellows Managers who are experts in community organizing.

Why the program?

The OFA Fellowship exists to train a new generation of progressive organizers. The program helps develop local talent who can become volunteer leaders upon completing the program, or work as organizers in the progressive movement. Fellows work closely with local chapters and teams to help implement OFA's issue campaigns.



FELLOWS RECRUITMENT, INTERVIEW, AND SELECTION PROCESS

This Toolbox provides all the tools and resources you will need to complete the Fellows recruitment, interview, and selection process. Use the following step-by-step checklist to guide your process. **Click on the boxes to read more about each step!**

Timeline:

April 18 th	Application Opens Online
May 8 th	Offline Recruitment Begins
May 23 rd	Application Deadline
May 25 th	Curriculum Toolbox Released
June 6 th	Summer Fellowship Onboarding



RECRUITMENT, INTERVIEW, AND SELECTION CHECKLIST

- Step 1: Create a Plan of Action
- Step 2: Recruit Fellows
- Step 3: Review Applications
- Step 4: Conduct Interview
- Step 5: Select Applicants
- Step 6: Get Aligned W/ Fellows



STEP 1: CREATE A PLAN OF ACTION

Your role in recruiting quality fellow applicants starts with your message. Complete this Plan of Action to develop a great description of the Fellowship, and consider key questions that will help you talk about the program during your recruitment and interviews. Consider the following questions:

- 1 As a Fellows Manager, why do you want to run this program in your community?
- 2 What would you like your Fellows to contribute to the program? Be as specific as possible. For instance, would you like them to help build the chapter? Reconnect with members? Plan a Day of Action?
- 3 How will you and your team members help the Fellows grow as organizers and professionally?
- 4 Now, in your own words, describe the Organizing Fellowship - why should someone apply to the program?
- 5 Describe your team's culture - share benefits of volunteering with OFA. Why do you volunteer with OFA? What will Fellows gain from working with your team?
- 6 While OFA will help you recruit online, you are responsible for using the resources and tools available in this toolbox to recruit offline. Offline tactics include flyering on a local campus and involving current Fellows in recruitment. What is your offline recruitment plan? What are some places in your local community where you could recruit quality Fellow applicants?



STEP 2: RECRUIT FELLOWS

To build your program, you should plan on using a combination of online and offline recruitment tactics. See the following resources to help you begin your recruitment!

RESOURCES

Fellowship Online Application

Use the online application link to forward the application to prospective candidates

[See Application](#)

Text

Fellowship Offline Application

When recruiting offline use this application to give candidates more information about the program. The application includes a link to the online application, which candidates can use to submit their applications.

[See Application](#)

Fellowship Recruitment Flyer

Use this small flyer to advertise the program on local bulletin boards. Applicants can follow the application link to submit an application.

[See Flyer](#)

Recruiting on Campus Guidelines

Use this manual to follow instructions and guidelines for recruiting Fellows on campuses.

[See Manual](#)

Fellowship Internship Board Post

Use this program description to distribute to career centers that connect students with internship opportunities.

[See Post](#)



STEP 3: REVIEW APPLICATIONS

Once applicants submit their applications online, you will access each one on the Summer Fellows Applications Tracker.

[Access tracker](#)

The tracker is divided into different tabs, each representing a different region of the country (Northeast, Southeast, Central, Northwest, Southwest). Find the applications for your state under the tab that corresponds to your region.

If there is more than one Fellows Manager in your state, make sure to have a regional plan so that each manager only reviews the applications that correspond to their turf.

As a Fellow Manager you are ultimately responsible for reading the applications in your region. However, feel free to form a reading committee! The committee can be composed of volunteers available to read applications and/or conduct interviews.

Screening the applications - what are you looking for?

As you or your team of readers screen the applications, remember to consider the criteria you listed on your Plan of Action.

[See plan of action](#)

Use the Program Description to screen for whether the candidate understands the expectations and the mission and goals of the program.

[See program goals](#)



STEP 4: CONDUCT INTERVIEWS

As you prepare to review applications and interview candidates who have applied to the Fellowship, use this section to review a few tips to conduct an interview that helps you assess if a candidate is a good fit for the program.

INTERVIEW STRUCTURE

A solid interview for the Organizing Fellowship should not last more than 30 minutes and should follow this structure:



This structure will help you keep the conversation on track and under 30 minutes, while also providing the candidate the information he/she needs to interview well, and remain excited about the program following the interview.

As an interviewer, share this structure with the candidate before you start your interview. Let he/she know that you will first provide an overview of the position, you will then proceed to ask questions, he/she will then have time to ask questions, and you will close by offering clear next steps.



STEP 4: CONDUCT INTERVIEWS

MUST-HAVES VS. NICE-TO-HAVES

Every position has must-haves and nice-to-haves. Must-haves are skills or experiences that are absolutely needed for the position. Nice-to-haves are skills or experiences that can add value to the position, but are not absolutely necessary to perform the job.

One of your main responsibilities as an interviewer is asking questions that align with the position's must-haves and nice-to-haves. Many times interviewers get distracted because a candidate has an impressive skill that is a nice-to-have, but is short on the must-haves skills.

As you prepare for an interview, think about the Must-Haves and Nice-to-Haves for a successful Fellowship experience and ask questions that help you assess whether the candidate has the Must-Haves. Remember, while the Nice-to-Haves do add value, they are simply “nice” and not a “must.”

BEFORE YOUR INTERVIEW

MUST-HAVES	NICE-TO-HAVES



STEP 4: CONDUCT INTERVIEWS

Once you understand the position's Must-Haves and Nice-to-Haves, proceed to ask questions that help you assess if the candidate is a good fit. There are four types of questions you can ask: Background Verification, Behavioral, Situational, and Challenge Seeking. Use this table to become familiar with each type of question.

Type of Question	Definition	Example
Background Verification	Simple questions to verify/clarify the candidate's work experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What was it like to work in X role at Y company? ▪ What were the most important things you learned while working in x role at y company?
Behavioral	Ask about how they behaved in certain experiences in the past, and use their answer as a way to assess whether they have the must-haves you are looking for.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tell me about a time when you led a team of your peers to accomplish a goal ▪ Give me an example of a situation where you had to deal with a peer who was very upset with you
Situational	These questions put your candidate into a hypothetical situation they are likely to face in the job you are hiring them for.	Imagine this: you are in week two of the Fellowship, and there is one acronym you have heard trainers say a lot, and you can't figure out what it means. What do you do?
Challenge Seeking	These questions help you address things you are concerned about head on.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What concerns you about the candidate? ▪ If the candidate seems too good, what holes can you find?



STEP 4: CONDUCT INTERVIEWS

Before your interview, draft your questions! Use this worksheet to help you think through the Must-Haves and Nice-to-Haves, as well as the types of questions you should ask.

Background Verification Question

Question:

Which must-haves does this question assess?

Behavioral Question

Question:

Which must-haves does this question assess?

Situational Question

Question:

Which must-haves does this question assess?

Challenge Seeking Question

Question:

Which must-haves does this question assess?



STEP 4: CONDUCT INTERVIEWS

ADDITIONAL INTERVIEW RESOURCES

Sample Interview Request Email

Use this sample language to schedule an interview with a promising applicant.

[See sample](#)

Conducting Effective Interviews Training

Use these training module to learn best practices for conducting a great interview!

[See module](#)



STEP 5: SELECT APPLICANTS

Following your interviews, decide whether you would like to accept or reject an applicant. You are responsible for making this decision. However, if working with a selection committee, involve other volunteer leaders in your decision making.

Summer Fellows Applications Tracker

Regardless of your decision, make sure to track it on the Summer Fellows Applications Tracker. You can mark an applicant as “accepted” or “rejected.”

[See tracker](#)

Sample Acceptance Email

Use this sample language to officially accept an applicant. Notice that the email should be customized to fit your local needs and next steps. Note that the sample acceptance email should be customized to fit your local needs, next steps, and information about your Fellows onboarding training.

[See sample](#)

Sample Rejection Email

Use this sample language to reject an applicant, whether you interviewed them and decided to not accept them, or reviewed their application and decided to not accept them.

[See sample](#)

Non Disclosure Agreement

All accepted members of the Organizing Fellowship must complete a Non Disclosure Agreement (NDA). This is part of your acceptance email. Please make sure that all accepted applicants submit an NDA form using the link below.

[See NDA](#)

[NDA Submission Form](#)



STEP 6: GET ALIGNED W/ FELLOWS

If a Fellow applicant accepts the position as an Organizing Fellow, the Fellow Manager should schedule a Fellow-Manager alignment meeting or call. This meeting will help both the Fellow and the Fellow Manager get to know each other, and understand each other's goals and management styles.

Use the Planning Your Journey worksheet to complete the alignment

[See worksheet](#)

FELLOWS-MANAGERS ALIGNMENT MEETING AGENDA

- 1. Share your personal stories:** Use this as an opportunity to talk about why you organize. Ask the Fellow why they are interested in organizing.
- 2. Review Goals:** Share your goals with the Fellow. Ask the Fellow to share what they hope to gain from this experience, and what they hope to contribute to OFA.
- 3. Management structure:** Share with one another things you appreciate in a manager-Fellow relationship, including methods of communication.
- 4. Next Steps:** Establish clear next steps, such as onboarding date.





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