

Voqal Fellowship FAQs Continued

Questions gathered on the application training webinar

- Are you open to plans for follow up once the fellowship is ended?
 - Voqal considers all fellows as part of the alumni network and provides ongoing support through networks, resources, and, in limited cases, funding
- What if your business is already incorporated for 3 years? Can technology used provide sales of products? Can you be a for-profit business?
 - A project/idea is eligible even if it has been incorporated, so long as the work being to keep the operations moving isn't extensive (for example, if you incorporated but only in name and still have work to bring the organization to life); technology *may* be used to provide sales, but only in service to community organizing; yes, an idea can be centered on a for-profit model, so long as there is a social enterprise aspect
- Are there grant opportunities available from Voqal other than the fellowship?
 - Voqal has a grant program but it is invite-only.
- What % of fellows come from geographic areas outside the primary Voqal funding areas in Chicago/Denver etc? Do you prioritize applicants from those areas?
 - The makeup of each fellow cohort varies year-to-year. In 2019, 25% of the Fellows were based in a primary geographic area for Voqal (Chicago, Denver, Portland, Oregon, and the Twin Cities. Voqal does not prioritize these cities unless it comes down to two finalists.
- How many people typically apply per cycle?
 - Voqal receives 100-150 application each cycle.
- What is the expectation from Voqal on what the fellowship funds will be spent on?
 - Voqal has no expectations on how funds are spent. They can be used to cover living expenses, buy equipment, or contact outside services, to name a few. As long as the expenses is in service to supporting the fellow and the idea, then it is okay with us.
- Would Voqal have claims to any potential Intellectual Property (IP) that is created through the successful applicant's fellowship?
 - No, and the agreement states that any IP is strictly owned by the fellow.
- If your idea was created in response to the unrest in Ferguson, but it wasn't until late 2017 that we figured out our program model (and that is continually shifting as a startup). Would my "idea" be eligible?
 - Per the second bullet above, this would be eligible since it is not based on how long someone has had an idea, but how much work has gone into bringing the idea to life.
- Do you currently have to reside in the city you are servicing?
 - No, but Voqal prioritizes funding ideas developed by people from a geographic location and/or a marginalized population. In this case, the applicant would need to demonstrate why a city is being chosen.
- How do you define a start-up?
 - Voqal views an early-stage idea as one that hasn't been fully fleshed out to see where the idea can go. Since start-up conjugates the tech field, we use early stage to also encompass grassroots organizing ideas.
- How are is the \$30k distributed? Is it broken up over the term of the fellowship or is it one lump sum?
 - Each fellow receives the \$30,000 as a lump sum at the start of the fellowship.

- How is the 1:1 coaching opportunity matched? Would the Fellow have a choice, make requests for the kind of coach and coaching?
 - Coaches are chosen after the fellows, so there is opportunity to make suggestions for a specific person or type of person you would want to have as a coach.
- If you're running a startup, would you have to stop your work as the founding ED focus in this fellowship?
 - It depends. If your funded idea is part of the startup, then the work would be one in the same. However, if your idea is for a personal passion or other side project, then Voqal would expect you to step back for these six months.
- To clarify re: funding- the \$30k is to fund our project only? If we are on sabbatical from full-time work, can we work part-time to pay the bills?
 - The fellowship stipend can be used to cover living expenses and Voqal allows for up to 10 hours per week for work on other projects outside of the fellowship. However, this can be negotiable on a case-by-case basis as we wouldn't want to hinder someone supporting themselves and their family to be a fellow.
- Does it matter if your project is local based or national?
 - No, a project can be hyperlocal or have a national lens.
- Is health insurance/fringe benefits something you should outline in your budget?
 - In addition to the stipend, Voqal provides \$1,000 to be used to purchase healthcare for the six-month period.
- Do you also pay for childcare or would this need to be included in our budget proposal?
 - If childcare is needed at in-person convenings, Voqal can cover this cost, buy day-to-day childcare would need to come from the budget.
- Will there be a follow up webinar before applications are due?
 - No, but this one is recorded, and the slides are available to reference until the due date.
- What is the outcome you're looking to see by the end of the fellowship? Deployed software? Data analysis?
 - We expect fellows to demonstrate growth, whatever that looks like. There is no expectation for a final product other than presenting about what you learned and how you may have pivoted to move forward.
- Can you implement project?
 - Yes, the fellowship stipend and time can be used to implement an idea, not just think it through.