

Echoing Green Fellowship

Question by Question Guidance



This document is a list of the short answer questions from the Echoing Green Fellowship application. The information under each question is included to help you focus your answer. Consult this guidance before completing the application. We encourage you to use this document to draft and refine your answers before pasting them into the appropriate fields in the application website.

Take careful note of the character limits for each essay question and be sure you don't exceed this number in your response. Keep your responses concise and focused – each word should be important! (Character limits *include spaces*—you may wish to use www.wordcounter.net to help count characters.)

If you have general questions about the application process, please consult our website for more information. Any specific questions can be directed to fellowship@echoinggreen.org.

Problem and Solution

This section of the application will focus on the finer details about you and your organization. If applying as a partnership, all short answers should reflect both applicants.

Describe the problem your organization will address. Please include detailed information explaining the causes of this problem and why it still exists. (1,000 characters)

- A successful answer will provide evidence that the problem exists and a compelling explanation of why this issue is important to resolve. Provide as much numeric / statistical evidence as possible, evidence of the factors that create this problem, and why no one else has tried to solve or has succeeded in solving the problem.
- Identify the problem that you intend to address and explain why it's significant. If possible, provide information substantiating that the need exists through the use of statistics from experts or constituents. Tell us about the lives of the population your organization will serve.
- One common mistake made by applicants is stating the need without sufficient statistics, sources, or examples to support the claim. Another common mistake is presenting a need that is a market opportunity but not a true social challenge. Show us that you have done your research and understand those you intend to help. Because your response is limited in length, it is acceptable to identify your references without providing the full level of detail that you would provide in a footnote (for example, you do not need to include publisher, volume number, page number, etc.).

Describe the specific product(s) or program(s) your organization will implement to solve the problem. (1,000 characters)

- A successful answer will provide the details of the solution your organization will implement and evidence to support that the solution will be effective. Please provide the specific activities of your solution and be sure you answer how exactly your organization will go about the work.
- What will your work look like? What will you or your staff do on a daily/weekly/monthly basis? Think about a member of the population served by your organization and tell us how they will experience your products or programs. Be specific enough that you are not just repeating the idea behind your organization over again, but actually explaining how your organization will carry

out that idea in reality. After reading this answer our reviewers should understand exactly what your organization does and how it will solve the social problem you're trying to address.

How is your idea innovative compared to other individuals or organizations addressing the problem? (1,000 characters)

- A successful answer will explain the current methods used to address this problem and why they have been ineffective. It will also explain why your organization will succeed where other organizations have not. Please discuss other competitor organizations in your space and describe how your approach is different.
- It is very likely that there are a wide variety of organizations and entities, from local community organizations to governmental agencies, which deliver services to the constituency/community that you have identified. It is also possible that one or more organizations are focused on the same area of need, either in your community or outside of your community.
- How is your idea for social change different from the ideas already at work? Name specific organizations working in your field. How is your organization a significant improvement on existing models? Why do you think your organization will be more successful than the others? Feel free to quote experts or publications that validate your assertion. This question offers you the opportunity to give us a small peek into the research you have done on your competitors and peers.

How will the lives of the target population be better because of your organization's work? (1,000 characters)

- In this answer we're looking to learn about your impact. A successful answer will describe your impact and show how your organization or idea will positively affect the lives of your constituency. Please use evidence, data, or examples and hypotheses to demonstrate how their lives will improve.
- If you're able to give us specifics, please include those here. For example, if the work of your organization is to tutor low-income high school students to improve their college attendance rates, one output might be 500 hours of tutoring sessions over a year, while one outcome might be a twenty percent increase in college attendance among the targeted students. A measurement system for this project might include weekly reports from tutors on the number of tutoring hours logged and quarterly surveys of past participants in the program to determine their current education status.
- However, if you are still figuring out what your desired outcomes might be, that's okay as well. Walk us through what you think you might measure five or ten years from now to know whether you've done a good job. For example, if you were earlier along in the development of the example above, you might know that you want to increase college attendance but might not yet know what target number you're aiming for. Similarly, you might know you want to follow up with students after they leave the program but might not yet know what that follow-up system will look like. It's okay if you don't have all the details figured out—just explain what you're currently thinking in terms of measuring your impact.

How will you track and assess the status and success of your organization? (500 characters)

- We're looking for your impact metrics in your response. How you plan to track the status and progress of your organization. Your response will help us understand what factors you believe will define the success of your organization. For example, an organization focused on distributing a product may measure success by the number of products distributed and how those products will benefit their recipients.

- Now that you told us about the impact you hope to achieve, tell us how you might measure this impact. In five or ten years from now, what specifically will you measure to determine what effect you've had on the world? It's okay if you don't have all the details figured out, just explain what you're currently thinking in terms of measuring your impact.

The Applicant

In this section, we'll ask you to tell us why you should be an Echoing Green Fellow. This section will help us understand why you are the leader(s) to do this work. If applying as a partnership, please respond to these questions with both applicants' perspectives included.

When and how did you come up with the idea for the organization? (500 characters)

- A successful answer will help us understand how the idea for this organization originally started. This includes a description of who was involved, how and when the idea occurred to you, and what motivates you to pursue the work.
- Partners, this answer should reflect both individuals.

Explain why you are so passionate about the problem and the population you described above. (1,000 characters)

- Starting a new organization can be a risky and difficult task. A successful answer will help us understand what motivates you to do this work, and why you are dedicated to resolving this problem.
- Although a strong personal passion to solve a problem is not sufficient in itself, it can certainly help overcome many of the obstacles start-up leaders face. In this response, we are less interested in your passion for the particular technical solution you are proposing, and more interested in learning about your passion for working in this place, with this population, on this particular problem. If you have a strong personal connection to this community that has motivated you to take action, we want to hear about it. Your answer should NOT be that "the problem is so huge, I had to act." Most people are not choosing to act on this problem. So, what is your own personal motivation?
- Partners, this answer should reflect both individuals.

What skills or experiences demonstrate that you will be able to attract money, people, and other resources to your organization? (1,000 characters)

- A successful answer will showcase a specific example of how you have been able to gather outside resources to help you complete a goal. Your example does not need to be related to this organization – any example from your past that highlights your ability to attract resources is acceptable.
- Provide us with examples that show you possess skills to attract resources to your organization. Think about your experiences and describe a time when you were able to start something new or when you influenced others to join you in a challenging endeavor.
- Partners, this answer should reflect both individuals.

Describe one example of your entrepreneurial spirit. (750 characters)

- A successful answer will provide an example of something you have done in your life that demonstrates your ability to launch something new.
- Being a social entrepreneur sets you apart from most people. Even among passionate people, very few are willing to give up the security of a traditional job and paycheck to start a new organization. What makes you comfortable with these risks that most people choose not to take?
- Partners, this answer should reflect both individuals.

Provide one or two examples of your ability to overcome adversity. (1,000 characters)

- Launching a new organization is hard work. A successful answer will provide an example of an instance when you persevered despite setbacks. What was the adversity you faced, and how did you overcome it?
- Describe a time in your life when you were faced with challenges that compromised your success and how you managed the situation. Your answer should help us understand how you deal with difficult situations and could even highlight a time that you failed.
- Partners, each individual should list at least one personal example of adversity.

Describe one past experience or accomplishment that demonstrates your leadership potential. (1,000 characters)

- A successful answer will explain your leadership style by using a specific example. The specific example does not need to be related to this organization – any example from your past that highlights your leadership ability is acceptable.
- Partners, each individual should list at least one personal example of leadership potential.

Fellowship Specific Questions

Echoing Green runs three Fellowship tracks: Black Male Achievement, Climate, and Global. You may choose to be considered for any of these Fellowships in the online application. Carefully review the information below, which describes each of the tracks, to make an informed decision about which makes best sense for you and your organization.

- **Black Male Achievement Fellowship** – This Fellowship is awarded to social entrepreneurs working on innovative ideas for new organizations focused on improving the life outcomes of black men and boys in the United States. Your organization must be focused on addressing issues facing black men and boys in the United States.
- **Climate Fellowship** – This Fellowship is awarded to social entrepreneurs who are starting new organizations that innovatively approach climate change through mitigation, adaptation, or policy. Your organization may be located anywhere across the globe. Your organization must be focused on innovations in climate adaptation, mitigation, or policy initiatives.
- **Global Fellowship** – This Fellowship is awarded to social entrepreneurs who are deeply connected to the needs and potential solutions that may work best for their communities. Your organization may be located anywhere across the globe. Your organization or idea may be focused on innovations across any program area.

Black Male Achievement Fellowship Applicants ONLY: Why are you dedicated to improving the life outcomes of black men and boys in the United States? (750 characters)

- A successful answer will show (1) why this issue is important to you as an individual(s); (2) demonstrate your life-long commitment to black men and boys; (3) and illustrate how your organization intentionally benefits black men and boys.
- Partners, this answer should reflect both individuals.

Climate Fellowship Applicants ONLY: Why are you dedicated to the issue of climate change? (750 characters)

- A successful answer will show why this issue is important to you as an individual(s) and describe past and present experiences that have led you to be passionate about this issue. You may like to describe how climate change has directly affected your life or those in your community.
- Partners, this answer should reflect both individuals.

Budget

Don't worry if you have yet to raise any money or develop a budget. We fund entrepreneurs at all points within the start-up phase, but we want to get a sense of where your organization currently stands and how you're thinking about it. The purpose of these questions is to have applicants seriously consider their organizational costs, so they know approximately how much money will be needed for their program to function and be sustainable.

Describe how you expect your organization to grow over the next two years. (1,000 characters)

- Organizations can grow in a variety of different ways. For example, an organization may hire more staff, hold more events, or franchise its model. A successful answer will describe your anticipated growth and provide a realistic plan for how you will achieve this growth.

How much money do you anticipate you will need in two years to reach the level of growth you described?

- Your response to this question will help us better understand your aspirations for growth.
- Your response must be written in U.S. Dollars (USD) currency. Numbers and periods are accepted. Letters, commas, and symbols will not be accepted.
- Accepted: 2500 or 2500.00
- Not Accepted: "\$2,500" or "2,500 USD"

Previous Applicants

Please note: this section is only required for those who have applied for an Echoing Green Fellowship in previous years.

Since you have applied for an Echoing Green Fellowship before, what has changed about you and your idea since your last application? (750 characters)

- Please tell us what has changed about you as an applicant since your last application. If you are applying for the same organization, please also talk about what has changed with your organization in the answer.

Partnership Questions

You might have noticed that Echoing Green supports people who have co-founded the organization they're launching. Echoing Green supports two-person partnerships only when both applicants are truly co-leaders and co-founders of an organization. Partnerships that do not meet these criteria will be disqualified from the Echoing Green application process.

Please note: this section is only required for those applying with a partner.

In order for us to better understand your partnership we are interested in learning about how you came to start this organization together? How long have you known each other, and in what context? (500 characters)

- Provide a context for your partnership, including how you met, how long you have known each other, how well you know each other, and any previous collaborations. As conflicts are inevitable among partners, how will you and your partner work to resolve problems? Also, tell us who came up with the idea, who started the organization, and what prompted you to work together on it. If there are other founders or organizational leaders not included in the application, please elaborate on both their initial and current roles, including if they are still involved in the organization and the reason why they are not applying for the Fellowship.

Describe your individual roles within the organization and the nature of your working relationship. (500 characters)

- Tell us in what way are your roles similar or different. Give us an example of how you support each other within your organization.
- Like any relationship, a successful partnership requires compatibility in many areas, including delineation of responsibilities. Explain what your respective titles will be and how you chose them (or how you will choose them in the future). When describing your responsibilities, please be extremely precise, explaining which specific tasks each of you will be responsible for within the organization. Explain how your roles complement each other in the leadership of your organization.

Find more information and resources, and start your application, at www.echoinggreen.org/apply