

Direct Impact – Frequently Asked Questions

What is Direct Impact?

Direct Impact is Echoing Green’s nonprofit board leadership program which equips the next generation of corporate leaders to make a positive social impact on the world. The curriculum is designed to allow participants to learn from curated experiences that improve their ability to be an effective driver of social impact within the private sector.

What will participants learn in Direct Impact?

The Direct Impact curriculum focuses on the following concepts and capacities:

- **Leadership Development:** Individuals learn and practice our six core principles for exceptional leadership, with a focus on how to best support and drive social impact as private sector leaders.
- **Strategic Governance:** Individuals learn the requirements and principles of exceptional governance, with a focus on practical techniques that allow individuals to embody new and innovative boardroom techniques.
- **Philanthropy and Fundraising:** Individuals develop an understanding of their own fundraising style. Participants will practice fundraising strategies and develop an understanding of what it takes to become a sustainable nonprofit organization.
- **Social Entrepreneurship and How Change Happens:** Individuals will understand what it takes to create impact, achieve scale, and change systems. They will understand how nonprofits operate on the ground and how movements can change the world.

How is the program structured? What is the time commitment?

We are currently offering two unique ways to participate in Direct Impact.

Option 1:

- Six day experience in one location, which includes the following:
 - Four Days of Leadership Development, Workshops, and Educational Experiences
 - Two Day Site Visit
- Opportunity to join Echoing Green’s Board Introduction Process

Option 2:

- Weekend Retreat in New York City (NYC) #1 (three days)
- One Domestic or International Site Visit (2-5 days)
- Weekend Retreat in NYC #2 (three days)
- Opportunity to join Echoing Green’s Board Introduction Process

Why was Direct Impact created?

Direct Impact was founded in 2015 for three core reasons:

1. There is a **board leadership deficit** in the nonprofit sector—most boards are not effective, yet they have the potential to provide immense value for an organization. With

few training programs for prospective board members in existence, we knew there had to be a better way to prepare board members.

2. We believe that an **ecosystem approach is required** to make progress towards solving the world's biggest problems. There are many players who must contribute their unique perspectives and skillsets to developing solutions. To do this effectively, transformational change is required: individuals must become better leaders, more knowledgeable board members, and globally-minded individuals with broadened perspectives who think innovatively about how we make the world a better place.
3. Echoing Green Fellows have looked to us for support with their nonprofit boards for many years. There are **few effective board development resources** in existence, and even fewer channels available for finding great board members. Our unique training and placement program supports our Fellows with this increasingly important part of their organizations.

Who participates in Direct Impact?

Each Direct Impact cohort is comprised of a small group (10-15) of exceptional leaders from the private sector who are committed to making a deeper social impact, and are ready to join a nonprofit board. We believe boards should be composed of people who hold diverse perspectives, identities, and experiences – and so should our program. In addition to other intersections, we are intentional about ensuring gender and racial diversity in each cohort, which mirrors what we believe a highly effective boardroom should look like.

In previous cohorts, Direct Impact candidates have hailed from BlackRock, Citi, General Atlantic, PepsiCo, SAP, Toys-“R”-Us, and many more.

Is there a professional experience requirement? What is the average age?

We seek to identify participants who have a demonstrated commitment to pursuing a career in the private sector. Participants typically have at least six years of experience, which may include time spent pursuing an MBA or other graduate degree. The average age of a participant is 34.

What do you look for in an application?

We believe that effective board leadership requires intentional commitment. When it comes to applicants, we are looking for individuals who are deeply committed to making a positive social impact in the world. A strong candidate likely has just begun to tap into the potential they have to make bold impact in the social sector. While we hope each person has had some exposure to the social sector, we are more interested in learning about how you have spent your time, and that you have shown a demonstrated commitment to *something*. We want to understand your story and what makes you who you are—tell us what is unique about you and what you have to offer others, both in the cohort and beyond.

What is the program fee to attend Direct Impact? What does this include?

The program fee for participating in Direct Impact is \$8,500 USD. Included in the fee is the following:

- All leadership retreats, workshops, activities, and meals.

- Travel expenses (ground transport, lodging at site visit, meals, activities)

It does not include the following:

- Airfare
- Any required/optional Visas and Vaccinations

If you select Option 2 (see above) and are not based in New York City, you are required to plan and pay for your travel and lodging for the two weekend retreats.

What is a site visit?

We believe that experiencing social entrepreneurship first-hand is one of the best ways to understand how social change happens. The site visit is an opportunity to spend time with an Echoing Green Fellow, where you'll be immersed in their work and their community. In the past, we have had site visits in El Salvador, Uganda, Rwanda, Nepal, Atlanta, New York City, and beyond. Participants are able to choose either a domestic or international site visit. We then do our best to accommodate location preferences based on the site visit opportunities available for a given cohort.

Will my employer pay for the program fee?

We have found that many participants are able to work with their corporation to fund some or all of their program fee. We work directly with corporations and have materials available for you to share with your employer to make the case for their support. Our team is also able to support successful applicants in speaking with employers as necessary.

Can I crowdfund my program fee?

Yes! We have had several participants successfully crowdfund their participation during past cohorts.

Does Direct Impact offer scholarships?

Echoing Green is a nonprofit organization. We strive to offer a limited number of need-based scholarships for each cohort. If you require financial assistance to participate in Direct Impact, you will be able to complete a scholarship application once you apply for the program. We are also able to offer payment plans.

What if I can't attend the weekend retreats or one of the workshops?

Direct Impact participants are required to attend *all* retreats and a site visit. If you have a conflict with a retreat or site visit, we encourage you to apply for a future cohort—we typically have at least 1 cohort per year.

I represent a corporation and want to sponsor my employees. What do I do?

We would love to connect with you to speak about sponsorship opportunities. Direct Impact works directly with corporations to engage between 1-4 employees in a given cohort, and also offers the option of a company-wide cohort. For more information, please contact directimpact@echoinggreen.org.

Where do I apply? When do I apply?

Applications open in early September for the January 2019 cohort.

What if I have more questions?

Please contact directimpact@echoinggreen.org.