



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



What are the eligibility requirements to apply to AYLF?

- Applicant must be 18-22 years old by the Fellowship start date.
- Applicants must be a resident of Miami-Dade County, the Chicago metro area, or the Arkansas/Mississippi Delta region, who have completed high school in the area. U.S. citizenship is not required.
- Have a desire to lead and contribute to creating positive change in their home communities of either Chicago, Miami-Dade County, or the Arkansas/Mississippi Delta region.
- Grades and GPA do not factor into eligibility or the selection process.

What will I gain from this experience?

AYLF not only introduces you to changemakers and other people your age striving to make a difference, it also teaches you a lot about yourself. You will learn new perspectives about what it takes to lead, discover new things about who you are in the context of your community, and connect to an incredible network of support that will nurture you throughout your life. You'll gain exposure to tools for facilitating dialogue; you'll travel and experience cross-cultural development; you'll have access to college and career assistance and resources and one-on-one coaching sessions; and you'll be given a platform to contribute your voice and vision locally and beyond. It will be transformative, to say the least, and give you the resilience, confidence, and skills to pursue your goals.

Should I be accepted, what is the commitment to AYLF?

Fellows commit to engaging in 9 one-and-a-half-day sessions, and one regional summit, totalling 10 sessions. You will also contribute their skills and talents as collaborative leaders to the community impact project (CIP), which entails an additional ~10 hours a month outside of sessions during the final four months of the first year of the program.

What is the cost of the program?

The program is at no cost to you thanks to generous underwriters. You even receive a stipend!

What is a Community Impact Project (CIP)?

Fellows in each cohort will work together to identify needs in their community and gain valuable social innovation and entrepreneurship skills to launch a project that addresses those needs. There are tools and guidance to help you along the way. It's your chance to design and lead a solution to a community need. There is a stipend paid for this part of the program.

How much is the stipend for the Community Impact Project (CIP)?

Fellows who successfully engage in the creation and implementation of the community impact project receive a stipend of up to \$1,260.



AYLF FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS *CONTINUED*

How long is the program?

The Fellowship is 5 years long. The first year is comprised of 10 seminars that happen one weekend a month and culminate with the community impact project (CIP) and a graduation. After the first year, you become a Senior Fellow and have access to several benefits along with continued programming.

What are the seminars like?

The seminars are held on Saturdays and Sundays, once a month for 10 months. There are readings (articles, poems, excerpts from books) and videos to be reviewed ahead of each one. When in the seminar, everyone references the readings to explore shared humanistic values and connect their experience to community and societal conditions. Each session builds upon the next one, deepening an understanding of self, community, leadership, and enacting change.

What is a Senior Fellow?

Upon successful completion of the first year of the fellowship, you then become a Senior Fellow. You continue to receive support and resources to ensure you complete your professional credentialing (e.g., college, vocational training), access career pathways, and have the resources and support to create positive change. You will have opportunities for leadership development and events, access to safety net funding for emergencies and meeting basic needs, academic support, life coaching, catalyst funds to drive community leadership projects, and a lifelong connection to Aspen's robust and diverse network of global leaders on the front lines of building a more free, just, and equitable society.

What is the summit?

Everyone in the Fellowship from your region and others, along with leaders and educators from the Aspen Institute and beyond, will convene for a weekend summit. While there, everyone learns more about each other, renews, celebrates community and engages in seminars and design thinking sessions. The summit usually takes place in Washington, DC or Aspen, CO where the Aspen Institute is located, or other locations in the U.S.

What happens if I cannot attend a seminar because of an emergency?

Since sessions build upon one another and prepare the group for the CIP, it is important that each Fellow follow-through on the agreement to attend each of the ten sessions. There is a Local Action Coordinator (LAC) with whom you will closely work, and if something (work, school, childcare, etc.) becomes a barrier to your attendance, the LAC would work with you to overcome the barrier.

I see the Aspen Institute in the logo – what is it?

The Aspen Institute is an international nonprofit organization founded in 1949 as the Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies. The institute's stated aim is the realization of "a free, just, and equitable society" through seminars, policy programs, conferences, and leadership development initiatives. AYLF is a program of the organization. Its headquarters are in Washington, DC and it has a campus in Aspen, CO, where it was founded, as well as New York City. Its programs and partners operate all over the world.

MORE QUESTIONS?

visit aspenyoungleaders.org or email aylf@aspeninstitute.org