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*Salome Henrico Samson  
EARTH Class of 2022 & Fellow 2023, Tanzania*

MASTERCARD FOUNDATION – EARTH UNIVERSITY

# Fellowship Program Guide



*Precious Akampurira*  
*EARTH Class of 2019 & Fellow 2021, Uganda*



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# Alliances to create opportunities

Since 2011, EARTH University and the Mastercard Foundation have partnered to provide educational opportunities for young leaders who are committed to giving back to their communities. In 2021, we launched the Mastercard Foundation – EARTH University Fellowship Program, an initiative of competitive, remunerated post-graduate Fellowships for EARTH and other Mastercard Foundation Scholar Alumni across different institutions, focused on agriculture and rural development. The Fellowship Program matches Fellows with Host organizations for a period of twelve months to support their professional development and entrance to employment and entrepreneurship opportunities. It seeks to catalyze the impact of these bright young leaders on the African continent.

# Fellowship Program Tracks



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As part of the Fellowship Program, EARTH and select Host partners provide one-year placement opportunities in employment and entrepreneurship in African countries, across four tracks:

- 1. The Agricultural Employment Track** allows Fellows to contribute to the future of agriculture and food systems through placements with partner institutions in the private, public, or social sectors.
- 2. The Agricultural Entrepreneurship Track** provides support to Fellows in growing their own market-based endeavors that offer innovative solutions to food systems challenges.
- 3. The Agricultural Education Track** provides teaching and training opportunities to support the expansion of innovation and best practices in agricultural education.
- 4. The Agricultural Innovation Through Science and Research Track** places graduates in national and international research organizations, universities, and other research-focused institutions.

During one-year placement opportunities beginning between July and September each year, Fellows receive a modest monthly stipend and annual health insurance in addition to mentoring services to support their career development and impact potential.

EARTH also organizes periodic convenings among Fellows in Africa as spaces for peer-to-peer learning and professional development. Beginning in 2024, the program is open to recent Mastercard Foundation Scholar Alumni of select partner institutions in the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program network.

The Fellowship Program plays an important role in establishing best practices and contributes to the creation of viable pathways to transition from school to employment and entrepreneurship. The Fellowship Program is facilitating and accelerating transitions of 140 Mastercard Foundation Scholars over a period of 8 years to realize their potential and exercise their abilities as leaders of change in and for Africa.



# Criteria for Selection of Fellowship Host Partners



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Fellowship partners are selected across the three employment-oriented tracks of the program, and Host partners include:

- Agricultural and forestry producers / enterprises
- Distributors of agricultural products
- Service organizations for the agricultural sector
- Non-governmental organizations and social enterprises focusing on agricultural development
- Financial and/or advisory institutions
- Technical, vocational education, and training (TVET) institutions
- Agricultural export and marketing enterprises
- Universities and private or public centers dedicated to applied research in the field of agriculture and/or natural resource management
- Government Ministries of Agriculture and other public sector entities

The Program prioritizes placing Fellows in their countries of origin, although exceptions may be granted in the event a suitable partner is only identified in another country.



*Yamikani Funsani  
EARTH Class of 2022 & Fellow 2023, Malawi*

# Criteria for of Fellowship Placements



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The dual purpose of the Fellowship is to advance the professional and personal growth of each Fellow and to also add value to the Host partner organization.

With this in mind, the basic placement criteria include:

- The Fellow should be placed in situations where she/he can provide a significant contribution to the Host organization. The acquisition of new experiences and the application of acquired knowledge and skills are important to the mutual benefit of the experience, for both the Fellow and the Host partner.
- The Host should provide opportunities for the Fellow to develop professionally, especially in areas of leadership and management, as well as in the acquisition of technical skills. Ideally, the job should have diverse responsibilities providing the Fellow with varied experiences.
- The position should be compatible with the Fellow's professional goals and provide professional contacts for future work, research, and job placement upon the Fellow's completion of the program.
- The assignment should be compatible with EARTH's strategic aspiration of preparing and empowering a global movement of leaders for our food systems, ethical management, and the responsible administration of natural resources.



*Nancy Musa  
EARTH Class of 2021 & Fellow 2023, Zimbabwe*



# Benefits for Host Partners

- Fellows bring fresh perspectives, new ideas, creative energy, knowledge, and soft skills to Host organizations.
- The Program introduces new talent to Host organizations with the possibility of transitioning the Fellow to longer-term employment.
- The program serves as an opportunity to contribute to the professional development of impactful young people.
- Hosting a Fellow introduces them to a wide network of young professionals across the continent and beyond.





# Expectations of Host Partners



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- Provide supervision and mentoring at the work site for the duration of the Fellowship Program.
- Where possible, contribute to the cost of hosting the Fellow. This may take the form of a salary or stipend and/or the provision of certain in-kind benefits received by regular employees of the Host enterprise.
- Collaborate with the Fellow and Fellowship Program staff to develop a work plan before the Fellow begins his/her Fellowship.
- Provide an opportunity for the Fellow to participate in the convenings of Fellows organized by the Fellowship Program.
- Participate in the evaluation process of the Fellowship experience.





# Expectations of Fellows



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- Contribute to the mission and strategic objectives of the Host partner.
- Comply with the work assignment as outlined in the job description, as well as all workplace rules and regulations.
- Maintain direct communication with his/her immediate supervisor at the site of the Fellowship and with Fellowship Program staff.
- Participate in convenings organized by the Fellowship Program.
- Make an effort to integrate him or herself into the work environment during the Fellowship.
- It is the responsibility of each Fellow to identify an in-country health insurance service provider and plan that meets their needs and the expectations of the Fellowship Program. The Fellowship Program will cover the cost of the agreed-upon plan for each Fellow.





# Role of the Fellowship Program



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*Oketch Peter Onyango  
EARTH Class of 2020 & Fellow 2023, Uganda*

- The Fellowship Program provides all Fellows with pre-departure orientation and mentoring during the Fellowship. The Fellowship Program is committed to providing support and guidance to the Fellow and the Host partner during the Fellowship.
- The Fellowship Director, in cooperation with the Host Partner and Fellow, will develop an agreement highlighting the roles and responsibilities of the Fellow and any specific conditions of the Fellowship.
- The Fellowship Program believes in the importance of investing in fellows, and Program staff as well as faculty from partner Universities under the Mastercard Scholar's Program will act as a resource to provide mentoring and professional development opportunities during the year. This support is designed to facilitate Fellows' professional advancement as well as to enhance their ability to add value to the Host partner institution.
- The Program will also organize periodic convenings to promote peer-to-peer learning, networking, and professional development.
- The Fellowship Program will provide the Host partner with tools to evaluate the Fellow's experience and performance.

# General Procedures



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The selection of Fellows and Host partners is the responsibility of the Fellowship Program. The pairing of Fellows with Host partners is also led by the Program in consultation with both the Fellow and the Host institution.

Admission into the program is competitive. Fellows who are accepted are accomplished individuals committed to Africa's development as well as contributing to the mission and strategic objectives of the Host partner.

The selection of Host partners is equally rigorous. Partners are expected to share EARTH

University's values, focus on ethics, leadership, and commitment to sustainable development.

While efforts are made to place Fellows in their own country, in the event a Fellow is placed in a different country, it is the responsibility of the Fellow and the Host partner to ensure that all immigration and other relevant regulations are followed.

Upon completion of the Program, the Host, the Fellowship Program, and the Fellow will evaluate the experience.



# Financial Considerations



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In the process of approving Fellowship placements, EARTH ensures that the Fellow's essential costs are covered. To that end, the Fellowship Program provides a modest monthly stipend to cover basic needs. The stipend is intended to cover housing, utilities, food, local transportation, basic telephone service, and minimal incidental expenses. The Program also covers the cost of a local health insurance plan for each Fellow during the period of their Fellowship.

Whenever possible, Host partners are encouraged to contribute with the covering of these costs and to offer additional benefits provided to regular employees such as on-site medical facilities, etc. The ability of a Host partner to contribute financially is not an eligibility criterion in the selection of partners; however, potential partners are strongly encouraged to consider doing so in the spirit of partnership with the Program.

**For more information about the Fellowship Program and about being a Host partner, please contact us at: [fellowship@earth.ac.cr](mailto:fellowship@earth.ac.cr).**