

# Project InSight Fellow Guidebook

Project InSight is a paid fellowship opportunity for High School students meaningfully interested in engaging with the broad reaching fields related to vision. Project InSight Fellows work with a professional mentor and a personal advisor (often a school-based advisor) to complete 120 hours of workplace learning in a professional setting. Because we know that youth are often not exposed to subspecialties related to vision, Project InSight suggests several open-source activities that may be used and adapted by any school wanting to encourage student prospective interest in these areas or support students toward a Fellowship nomination.

Fellows completing 120 hours are eligible for a \$1,000.00 scholarship. Professional Mentors and Personal Advisors are each eligible for a \$500.00 stipend for supporting the completion of a Fellowship.

Funding for Project InSight is made possible by the Fox Family Foundation, a nonprofit organization whose mission is to provide the most vulnerable and under-resourced populations, especially people who are blind or visually impaired, with equal opportunity to thrive in their schools, careers, and communities.

For more information about Project InSight and the fellowship program, please visit <https://www.projectinsightfellows.org/>.

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If you have questions about the curriculum or Project InSight opportunities, contact us directly at:

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# Project InSight Fellow Guidebook

## A Guide for Fellows, Mentors, and Advisors

The purpose of this guide is to support youth with a deep interest in engaging in fields related to eye health, vision care, or supporting visually impaired populations. A Project InSight Fellow explores this interest with a professional mentor and a personal, often school based, Advisor.

### Definition of Roles

**Fellow (Student):** A youth who engages in real-world work with a professional mentor in a field related to eye health, vision care, or another area related to supporting people with visual impairment. Fellows are generally High School seniors, but Juniors with demonstrated interest will also be considered.

**Advisor (Teacher):** A school or community based adult who will guide the Fellow through the process of securing and successfully completing the Fellowship. Advisors are often teachers or counselors at school or another community resource center with which the youth is affiliated.

**Mentor (Professional):** The workplace professional responsible for providing the Fellow with opportunity for skill development, workplace readiness, and membership in the professional community. This can be both offline and online.

### Fellowship Flow

- 1) Advisor Nominates a Youth
- 2) Interview with Project InSight Director
- 3) Advisor and Youth are Sent an Application Link
- 4) Youth Submits Application
- 5) Youth Accepted as an InSight Fellow
- 6) Youth and Advisor identify a Mentor
- 7) Mentor, Advisor, and Fellow Set-Up the Fellowship
- 8) Fellowship Commences
- 9) Fellowship Wrap-Up and Reflection

# Description of the Fellowship Process

## Interest

*The genuine interests of the student are at the center of all work.*

### **Youth Interest:**

Students may identify themselves as committed to a deep exploration of fields related to eye health, vision care, or support for visually impaired populations in a variety of ways. Schools that encourage student personal narratives may notice a personal history with visual impairment. Schools with Academies, Pathways, CTE programs, or clubs may notice students gravitating toward the helping fields (e.g., medical, educational, assistive technology) in related fields. Schools hosting career talks may notice students engaged in conversations with ophthalmologists, optometrists, opticians, special education teachers, lens manufacturers, braille writers, developers of adaptive technologies or guide dog trainers. Advisors of these students should encourage youth to consider applying for a Project InSight Fellowship.

## Relationships

*Meaningful relationships are developed between students and adults.*

### **Nominating Youth:**

An Advisor is a trusted adult who can support the Youth in the application, participation, and culmination of the Fellowship. An Advisor is often a teacher or counselor, but Advisors can be any adult who agrees to help the Youth manage participation in this experience. Advisors do not need expertise in the professional area the Youth is investigating. Advisors do need to believe in the Youth's capacity and enthusiastically support the deep pursuit of authentic interest. By nominating a Youth for the Fellowship, the adult is agreeing to act as an Advisor for that student's fellowship.

### **Interview:**

Advisors can help students prepare to share their personal interest and future plans with the Project InSight Director. We are most interested in hearing about a student's interest arc, including evidence of exploration in the field for which a student is applying as a Fellow. Fellowships are opportunities for growth and learning. Fellowships are *not* for preliminary investigation of a given field. Students will be contacted once the nomination is reviewed to schedule an interview.

## **Submit Application:**

Applications should reflect the Youth's authentic interest in engaging in this Fellowship. Please note that Advisors identified via the nomination will be included in all communications with the Prospective Fellow. Advisors are welcome to support the completion of the Application.

## **Identify a Mentor:**

Advisors should work with students to find an appropriate mentor. A mentor may be a known contact to the Advisor, school community, or within a student's personal network. A mentor may also be someone a student and the advisor are meeting for the first time. Finding the right mentor is important to the success of the Fellowship. We suggest allocating 6-8 weeks in the search for a new mentor. Some suggested steps for finding a new mentor are:

1) Research local professionals and organizations who employ professionals in the field of interest. Schools using ImBlaze may already have identified willing or prospective mentors in a field of interest. Be creative. It may be a challenge, for example, for a minor to secure a mentor working in a hospital, but health care professionals also do work in neighborhood clinics, on mobile units, and in schools. A large manufacturing plant may be hesitant to allow students to work with heavy machinery, but a local optician or pharmacy may have on-site lens crafting services.

2) Request an informational interview with prospective mentors. A student and mentor should share similar interests and show potential for a strong working relationship. In most circumstances, a student will need to meet several prospective mentors before finding the right fit. Advisors can support students in making cold calls, preparing for informational interviews, and writing follow-up thank-you notes.

3) If an informational interview shows promise, request a shadow day with the mentor to understand the daily realities of that mentor's workplace. Fellowships have a greater likelihood of successful completion if the Fellow has a genuine understanding of what the mentor does all day prior to committing to 120 hours of work together.

4) Propose the Fellowship to the mentor. By this time, the Fellow and prospective mentor should have a relationship that allows for discussion of further work together. Fellows should remain persistent if their first requests cannot accommodate a full Fellowship. Remember, the prospective mentor is a member of a professional community. If the Fellow has made a good impression, a

request for referrals to other potential mentors will likely result in additional leads. Finding a mentor is a process.

### **Set-Up Meeting:**

The Fellow, Advisor, and Mentor meet to discuss the terms of the Fellowship. At this meeting, the Project InSight Fellowship Agreement is used to set goals, expectations, and exchange logistics (e.g., scheduling and means for communication). Other necessary forms such as W-9 and Media Release will be completed. If necessary, an ImBlaze demo can be arranged to facilitate the use of that tool for tracking and attendance of the Fellowship.

### **Practice**

*Students have opportunities to engage in deep and meaningful practice of the skills they will need in life.*

### **Fellowship:**

The Fellow will use ImBlaze for each check-in and check-out of the Fellowship. ImBlaze logs hours and captures real-time data on student goals, learning, and interest in the Fellowship. The Advisor will monitor ImBlaze each day the Fellow is at the Fellowship Site, and the Mentor will verify attendance and provide brief feedback using ImBlaze. The Advisor will check in weekly to support the Fellow in reflecting upon and navigating the Fellowship. The Advisor will conduct at least 2 site visits during the Fellowship. The Advisor will organize the Fellow's and Mentor's participation in a Mid-Fellowship check-in at or around the 60 hour mark of the Fellowship.

### **Wrap-Up and Reflect:**

The Advisor will support the Fellow and the Mentor in completing the Post-Fellowship Survey and Work-Plan. A presentation including a formal reflection on the experience, a celebration, and sharing gratitude are all encouraged. Scholarships and stipends will be distributed upon the receipt of final documentation for the Fellowship.

## Document Checklist

The following table shows a check list of documents required by each - the Fellow, the Advisor and the Mentor. For detailed descriptions of how these documents are submitted, please refer to the [Fellowship Guidebook](#).

Note: The Pre-Fellowship Work Plan, W-9 Form, Media Release Form and Fellowship Agreement must be submitted before the 120 hour Fellowship starts.

| <b>For Fellows</b>   | <b>For Advisors</b>  | <b>For Mentors</b>   |
|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Application</li><li>● W-9 Form</li><li>● Media Release Form</li><li>● Fellowship Agreement</li><li>● Uses ImBlaze App</li><li>● Fellow Survey (Post-Fellowship)</li><li>● Post-Fellowship Presentation</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Nomination Form</li><li>● W-9 Form</li><li>● Media Release Form</li><li>● Fellowship Agreement</li><li>● 2 Site Visits</li><li>● Fellow &amp; Mentor Photos</li><li>● Check ImBlaze</li><li>● Advisor Survey (Post-Fellowship)</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● W-9 Form</li><li>● Media Release Form</li><li>● Fellowship Agreement</li><li>● Check ImBlaze time logs</li><li>● Mentor Survey (Post-Fellowship)</li></ul> |

# For Fellows (Students)

If you are a student who is nominated and qualified to become a Project InSight Fellow, the first step is that you will receive an email inviting you and your nominating advisor to interview with the Project InSight Director. You may, then, be invited to submit a formal application for the Fellowship. You should speak to your Advisor about whether the Fellowship is right for you based on the information offered in the interview. The Application should indicate your interest in engaging in this Fellowship, and your Advisor can also be helpful completing the application. Once an application is submitted it will be evaluated, and the applicant is notified by email that they are either accepted, declined or deferred.

When an applicant is accepted they are requested to submit additional forms including a W-9 Form and Media Release Form, which should be submitted within one week. Please note that the 120 hours for the Fellowship does not officially start until all the preliminary documents are successfully submitted, including the Fellowship Agreement (see below).

## **Finding A Mentor:**

The Fellow should work with the Advisor to find an appropriate mentor. A mentor may be a known contact to the Advisor, school community, or within a student's personal network. A mentor may also be someone a student and the advisor are meeting for the first time. Finding the right mentor is important to the success of the Fellowship. We suggest allocating 6-8 weeks in the search for a new mentor. Some suggested steps for finding a new mentor are:

1. Think about who you already know who works in your field of interest, or who you already know who may know someone who works in your field of interest. Have you been to an eye doctor in the past? Where does your Mom get her prescription lenses? Do you know a Special Education teacher in your school or district? Do you know someone who uses a seeing eye dog or a white cane? This is your existing network, and many people in it may be willing to introduce you to colleagues or contacts who would be interested in being your mentor.
2. Research local professionals and organizations who employ professionals in the field of interest. Schools using ImBlaze may already have identified willing or prospective mentors in a field of interest. Be creative. It may be a challenge, for example, for a minor to secure a mentor working in a hospital, but health care professionals also do work in neighborhood clinics, on mobile units, and in schools. A large manufacturing plant may be hesitant to allow students to work

with heavy machinery, but a local optician or pharmacy may have on-site lens crafting services.

3. Request an informational interview with prospective mentors. A student and mentor should share similar interests and show potential for a strong working relationship. In most circumstances, a student will need to meet several prospective mentors before finding the right fit. Advisors can support students in making cold calls, preparing for informational interviews, and writing follow-up thank-you notes.
4. If an informational interview shows promise, request a shadow day with the mentor to understand the daily realities of that mentor's workplace. Fellowships have a greater likelihood of successful completion if the Fellow has a genuine understanding of what the mentor does all day prior to committing to 120 hours of work together.
5. Propose the Fellowship to the mentor. By this time, the Fellow and prospective mentor should have a relationship that allows for discussion of further work together. Fellows should remain persistent if their first requests cannot accommodate a full Fellowship. Remember, the prospective mentor is a member of a professional community. If the Fellow has made a good impression, a request for referrals to other potential mentors will likely result in additional leads. Finding a mentor is a process.

### **Set-Up Meeting:**

The Fellow, Advisor, and Mentor meet to discuss the terms of the Fellowship and complete the Fellowship Agreement. At this meeting, the Project InSight Fellowship Agreement is used to set goals, expectations and exchange logistics (e.g., scheduling and means for communication). If necessary, an ImBlaze demo can be arranged to facilitate the use of that tool for tracking and attendance of the Fellowship.

### **Fellow's Documents:**

- Application - AFTER you have been nominated and had your interview, check your email for a link to apply.
- W-9 Form - This form is required for the scholarship to be paid to the Fellow.
- Media Release Form - This form is required to allow us to take photos & video of the Fellow to be used on this website and in related media.

***Note: The W-9 Form, Media Release Form & Fellowship Agreement must be submitted before the 120 hour Fellowship starts.***

- Fellowship Agreement - This form is completed by the Fellow, Advisor and Mentor before the Fellowship can begin
- Post-Fellowship Survey - Includes evaluation before and after the Fellowship.

- Post-Fellowship Work Plan - Includes description of goals achieved and plans after completing the Fellowship.

### **Fellowship Responsibilities:**

As a Project InSight Fellow, you are expected to:

1. Be on time for the Fellowship. Communicate promptly any need to be tardy or absent.
2. Follow all work site rules and procedures, especially those concerning work/site safety.
3. Participate in any research conducted by Project InSight by completing all required documents.
4. Use ImBlaze to record hours and accomplishments at the work site.
5. Use existing and newfound skills for the good of the community.
6. Submit photos and videos to celebrate interesting moments and accomplishments related to the Fellowship by either posting to your social media accounts and tagging Project InSight or sharing with the Project InSight staff to post.
7. Submit a Post-Fellowship Survey that includes evaluations for the Fellow's progress and performance during the Fellowship.

### **Wrap-Up and Reflect:**

The Advisor supports the Fellow and the Mentor in completing the Post-Fellowship Surveys. A presentation including a formal reflection on the experience, a celebration, and sharing gratitude are all encouraged. Scholarships and stipends will be distributed upon the receipt of final documentation for the Fellowship.

# For Advisors (Teachers)

The Advisor is a trusted adult who can support the youth in the application, participation, and culmination of the Fellowship. An Advisor is often a teacher or counselor, but Advisors can be any adult who agrees to help the youth manage participation in this experience. Advisors do not need expertise in the professional area the youth is investigating. Advisors do need to believe in the youth's capacity and enthusiastically support the deep pursuit of authentic interest.

The first role for the Advisors is to **nominate** the student to become a Fellow, described on the [Fellowship Nomination](#) page. When an applicant is accepted they are requested to submit additional forms including the W-9 Form and Media Release Form, which should be submitted within one week. Both the Advisor and Mentor also must submit the W-9 Form and Media Release Form at the beginning of the Fellowship (unless they have previously submitted these documents). The Advisor is responsible for ensuring that all documents are submitted.

Please note that the 120 hours for the Fellowship does not officially start until all the preliminary documents are successfully submitted, including the Fellowship Agreement.

## Finding A Mentor:

Advisors should work with students to find an appropriate mentor. A mentor may be a known contact to the Advisor, school community, or within a student's personal network. A mentor may also be someone a student and the advisor are meeting for the first time. Finding the right mentor is important to the success of the Fellowship. We suggest allocating 6-8 weeks in the search for a new mentor. Some suggested steps for finding a new mentor are:

1. Research local professionals and organizations who employ professionals in the field of interest. Schools using ImBlaze may already have identified willing or prospective mentors in a field of interest. Be creative. It may be a challenge, for example, for a minor to secure a mentor working in a hospital, but health care professionals also do work in neighborhood clinics, on mobile units, and in schools. A large manufacturing plant may be hesitant to allow students to work with heavy machinery, but a local optician or pharmacy may have on-site lens crafting services.
2. Request an informational interview with prospective mentors. A student and mentor should share similar interests and show potential for a strong working relationship. In most circumstances, a student will need to meet several prospective mentors before finding the right fit. Advisors can support students in

making cold calls, preparing for informational interviews, and writing follow-up thank-you notes.

3. If an informational interview shows promise, request a shadow day with the mentor to understand the daily realities of that mentor's workplace. Fellowships have a greater likelihood of successful completion if the Fellow has a genuine understanding of what the mentor does all day prior to committing to 120 hours of work together.
4. Propose the Fellowship to the mentor. By this time, the Fellow and prospective mentor should have a relationship that allows for discussion of further work together. Fellows should remain persistent if their first requests cannot accommodate a full Fellowship. Remember, the prospective mentor is a member of a professional community. If the Fellow has made a good impression, a request for referrals to other potential mentors will likely result in additional leads. Finding a mentor is a process.

### **Set-Up Meeting:**

The Fellow, Advisor, and Mentor meet to discuss the terms of the Fellowship and complete the Fellowship Agreement. At this meeting, the Project InSight Fellowship Agreement is used to set goals, expectations and exchange logistics (e.g., scheduling and means for communication). If necessary, an ImBlaze demo can be arranged to facilitate the use of that tool for tracking and attendance of the Fellowship.

### **Advisor's Documents:**

- Nomination Form - Available [HERE](#).
- W-9 Form - This form is required for the stipend to be paid to the Advisor.
- Media Release Form - This form is required to allow us to take photos & video of the Advisor to be used on this website and in related media.

**Note: Please complete your W-9 Form & Media Release Form at the beginning of the Fellowship. You do not have to submit these forms if you have previously submitted these forms unless there is a change to the information on the form.**

- Fellowship Agreement - This form is completed by the Fellow, Advisor and Mentor before the Fellowship can begin, after consulting with the Regional Coordinator.
- Post-Fellowship Survey - Includes evaluation before and after the Fellowship.
- Also please note that at least 2 site visits and several photos of the Fellow & Mentor working together are required.

### **Fellowship Responsibilities:**

As an Advisor to a Project InSight Fellow, you are expected to:

1. Provide planning support in developing the youth's individual program at the work site and the post-fellowship path in the Pre-Fellowship Work Plan.
2. Partner with both Mentor and Fellow to facilitate a successful experience for both through timely communication and site visits.
3. Serve as liaison with the Project InSight director/coordinator.
4. Ensure that all documents are submitted by Fellow, Mentor and self in a timely manner.
5. Use the online tool, ImBlaze, to support both the Fellow and Mentor.
6. Check in weekly to support the Fellow in reflecting upon and navigating the Fellowship.
7. Conduct at least 2 site visits during the Fellowship.
8. Submit several photos of the Mentor and Fellow working together, and video if possible, for use on the website and in social media.
9. At or near the end of the Fellowship, submit the Post-Fellowship Survey that includes evaluations for the Fellow's progress and performance during the Fellowship.

### **Wrap-Up and Reflect:**

The Advisor supports the Fellow and the Mentor in completing the Post-Fellowship Surveys. A presentation including a formal reflection on the experience, a celebration, and sharing gratitude are all encouraged. Scholarships and stipends will be distributed upon the receipt of final documentation for the Fellowship.

# For Mentors (Professionals)

The Mentor is a workplace professional responsible for providing a Fellow with the opportunity for skill development, workplace readiness, and membership in the professional community, both offline and online.

When an applicant is accepted, they are requested to submit additional forms including the W-9 Form and Media Release Form, which should be submitted within one week. Both the Advisor and Mentor also must submit the W-9 Form and Media Release Form at the beginning of the Fellowship (unless they have previously submitted these documents).

Please note that the 120 hours for the Fellowship does not officially start until all the preliminary documents are successfully submitted, including the Fellowship Agreement.

We expect our Project InSight Fellows Mentors to:

- 1) Be committed to working directly with the Fellow. The listed mentor should be the direct supervisor for the Project InSight Fellow. If another staff member in the business or clinic is responsible for the day-to-day supervision of the Fellow, that staff member should be listed as the Fellow's mentor. A Mentor does not need to be with a Fellow 100% of the time, but the Mentor should direct and supervise all of the Fellow's activities. Mentors should commit to holding at minimum a weekly 1:1 meeting with their Fellow to check in.
- 2) Be responsible for verifying all Fellowship hours via the Big Picture [ImBlaze](#) platform for internship management. As soon as a Fellow is approved, a Project InSight representative will assist you in getting set up on ImBlaze. The Mentor only needs to click through on an automated email message from ImBlaze to approve hours and leave optional daily feedback on the Fellow's performance.
- 3) Participate in opportunities for Project InSight to collect feedback, progress updates, and summative reflections. This will include requests to post photographs and videos on social media. We often invite alumni Fellows, Mentors, and Advisors to co-present with us at conferences to share experience and practice.

## Set-Up Meeting:

The Fellow, Advisor, and Mentor meet to discuss the terms of the Fellowship and complete the Fellowship Agreement. At this meeting, the Project InSight Fellowship Agreement is used to set goals, expectations and exchange logistics (e.g., scheduling and means for communication). If necessary, an ImBlaze demo can be arranged to facilitate the use of that tool for tracking and attendance of the Fellowship.

### **Forms For Mentors:**

- W-9 Form - This form is required for the stipend to be paid to the Mentor.
- Media Release Form - This form is required to allow us to take photos & video of the Mentor to be used on this website and in related media.

***Note: Please complete your W-9 Form & Media Release Form at the beginning of the Fellowship. You do not have to submit these forms if you have previously submitted these forms unless there is a change to the information on the form.***

- Fellowship Agreement - This form is completed by the Fellow, Advisor and Mentor before the Fellowship can begin, after consulting with the Regional Coordinator.
- Post-Fellowship Survey - Includes evaluation before and after the Fellowship.

### **Fellowship Responsibilities:**

As a Mentor to a Project InSight Fellow, you are expected to:

1. Mentor the Fellow in their professional and personal growth.
2. Provide hands-on, real-world learning and work opportunities at the work site.  
The listed mentor should be the direct supervisor for the Project InSight Fellow. If another staff member in the business or clinic is responsible for the day-to-day supervision of the Fellow, that staff member should be listed as the Fellow's mentor. A Mentor does not need to be with a Fellow 100% of the time, but the Mentor should direct and supervise all of the Fellow's activities.
3. Meet 1:1 with their Fellow for at least 15 minutes each week to discuss how things are going, goals, and next steps.
4. Support the fellow in entering a community of practice, and network of professionals.
5. Maintain professional expectations re: attendance, respect, and interactions with customers, the public, and fellow workers.
6. Help the Fellow plan his/her future.

7. Participate in opportunities for Project InSight to collect feedback, progress updates, and summative reflections. This will include requests to post photographs and videos on social media. We often invite alumni Fellows, Mentors, and Advisors to co-present with us at conferences to share experience and practice.

### **Wrap-Up and Reflect:**

The Advisor supports the Fellow and the Mentor in completing the Post-Fellowship Surveys and Work-Plan. A presentation including a formal reflection on the experience, a celebration, and sharing gratitude are all encouraged. Scholarships and stipends will be distributed upon the receipt of final documentation for the Fellowship.