Piper Fellows Program

Sabbaticals to Build Leadership & Excellence in Social Profit Organizations
Each year the selection committee may choose to award a fellowship(s) to an Emerging Leader(s) whose organization has operated for five or more years. For consideration, the nonprofit leader must meet all candidate-specific requirements.

Qualified Organizations  The candidate’s employing organization must be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that has provided services primarily within Maricopa County for at least 10 years* in human services, health, education, arts and culture, or religion. The employing organization must:

- Fully support the candidate’s request for leave to participate in the Piper Fellows program and submit a work plan for organizational management during the candidate’s absence and upon the candidate’s return.
- Guarantee all salary and benefits and continue full-time employee status of the candidate during the period of leave.
- Be able to sustain regular operations during the candidate’s absence.

Candidates  Leaders who have significant responsibilities for a social profit organization serving Maricopa County in the areas of human services, health, education, arts and culture, or religion may apply. Employees of organizations classified as private foundations under Section 509(a) are not eligible. A candidate for the Piper Fellows program should:

- Be an outstanding leader who has a demonstrated track record of leadership within the organization and service to the community.
- Be responsible for a significant level of management of the organization’s programmatic or operational activities.
- Have worked a minimum of seven years in the nonprofit sector, though not necessarily for a single organization.
- Be a full-time employee of the applicant organization.

Requirements of a Piper Fellow

- Begin his/her work plan in January of the year following selection.
- Submit a report to Piper Trust within three months of completion of the Piper Fellowship. Reports should detail the professional development activities during the release period and how the experiences will be applied and help better serve the mission of the organization.
- Participate in periodic activities during the fellowship year and in subsequent years to build on individual and shared experiences, foster continued professional development, and stimulate potential collaboration among the Piper Fellow organizations.

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“I viewed my Piper Fellowship as an ‘investment’ that allowed me time to develop a vision for Chicanos Por La Causa—it helped the organization grow and become one of the largest Latino nonprofits in the country.”

“Edmundo Hidalgo
Vice President of Partnerships, Arizona State University; former President, Chicanos Por La Causa (2008 Piper Fellow)"

“The Piper Fellows program came at a pivotal time for me and for Beatitudes Campus, as it provided the space to dedicate myself to our vision. What manifested was a deeper understanding that, even during growth and change, our community can sustain our sense of identity, ministry, and mission.”

“Avein Saaty-Tafoya
CEO, Adelante Healthcare (2010 Piper Fellow)"

“My Piper Fellowship was the most rewarding time of my professional life. I combined nonprofit management and leadership training with visits to best practices sites and gained a network of new colleagues, access to resources, and new opportunities. It was an invaluable opportunity of a lifetime.”

“Karl Gentles
Executive Director, Back-To-School Clothing Drive (2011 Piper Fellow)"

“As I reflect on my Piper Fellowship, I think that the greatest gift was time—time to imagine possibilities and time to reflect on how gardens, both historic and contemporary, connect us to place.”

“On the cover:
Vincent VanVleet
Managing Director Phoenix Theatre (2014 Piper Fellow)"
To apply for a Piper Fellowship, submit an application online at pipertrust.org/pfapply; the application is comprised of the following questions:

1. Why are you working in your field; how did you get there?

2. Why are you applying to be a Piper Fellow and how is this in alignment with your professional goals?

3. How would you use the resources of a Piper Fellowship award and release time for personal development to enhance leadership, services, and operational effectiveness within your organization (include narrative and specifics about your action plan, study, and timeline)?

4. What do you hope to achieve/gain as a Piper Fellow?

5. How would your experience as a Piper Fellow benefit your organization?

6. What significant lessons have you learned in your work?

7. What do you see yourself doing in five years?

8. Share any thoughts/considerations you have about how practices that include building organizational and/or community resilience could strengthen your organization’s mission?

**Support Materials**
- Description of your organization, its mission, and its services.
- Résumé that covers the past 10 years of your career and includes your contact information.
- Proposed budget for your sabbatical expenditures.
- Professional letter of recommendation as to why you would be a strong Piper Fellow. Must include contact information for the reference.
- Names and contact information for two additional references (Maricopa County-based).
- Brief letter of endorsement supporting your proposal as a Piper Fellow signed by your organization’s board chair or other appropriate person, and includes: 1) the plan for organizational management during your sabbatical study and upon your return; 2) guarantee of maintenance of your regular salary and health/other benefits during the award period.

**Deadline**  Applications are due via the online portal—pipertrust.org/pfapply on September 1.

**Piper Fellows Selection**  The selection committee is comprised of Maricopa County leaders who are knowledgeable about the value and contributions of the social profit sector. The committee reviews the applications, conducts interviews, and makes its recommendations to Piper Trust’s Board of Trustees for final selection.
The value of a Piper Fellowship relies on creating a well-planned sabbatical program that includes a variety of courses, programs, and projects designed to collectively achieve identified leadership objectives.

**Field Work**  Sabbatical experiences have included seminars at leading business schools, leadership development programs, best practice site visits, and personal coaching. For further insight, we encourage applicants to review Piper Fellows’ sabbatical plans at pipertrust.org/piperfellows.

Piper Fellows have expressed appreciation for their sabbatical coursework and travel, site visits, and reflection time. More than anything though, they value the new relationships; while some relationships emerge outside of Maricopa County, most develop among the class of Piper Fellows and through organized experiences with the larger community of Piper Fellows. The shared advice and support are invaluable.

Piper Trust works to enhance this relationship-building in the following ways:

**Retreats**  Each new class of Piper Fellows has a one-day retreat early in the fellowship year. This retreat establishes relationships and further strengthens networking within the new class. In addition, an annual retreat open to all Piper Fellows occurs each fall.

**Meetings**  Through informal breakfast meetings, periodic gatherings with community leaders and visiting thought leaders, and other timely convenings, Piper Fellows have opportunities to stay connected indefinitely.

**Leadership Circles**  Piper Fellows can participate in monthly facilitated leadership circles where they can share both personal and professional issues often common within the social profit sector. These circles focus on the concept of building community among social profit leaders.

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**Application/Selection Timeline**

**September 1**
Deadline for completed applications via online portal at pipertrust.org/pfapply

**October-November**
Finalist interviews at Piper Trust offices

**Early December**
Public announcement of Piper Fellows

Questions? Contact:
Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust
480.948.5853 | pipertrust.org/piperfellows

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Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust supports organizations that enrich health, well-being, and opportunity for the people of Maricopa County, Arizona. Piper Trust grantmaking areas are healthcare and medical research, children, older adults, arts and culture, education, and religious organizations.

Piper Trust works side-by-side with nonprofit organizations as a partner, helping them to identify problems, build expertise, find solutions, and become continually stronger and more effective. The Trust strives to be a vital part of Maricopa County—not only as a source of leadership and financial support, but as a neighbor sharing a lasting stake in the county’s future. Piper Trust introduced the Piper Fellows Program in 2001 to enable nonprofit leaders to take sabbaticals for renewal and professional development.
“We should call these organizations what they are instead of by what they are not. We should call them social profit organizations. Social profit is better schools, access to medical care, great art and music, clean water, high-functioning public transportation—it is anything that benefits people and their places and the planet we live on.”

David Grant
Author, The Social Profit Handbook