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Senior Advocates
for Generational Equity

Great Legacy Fellowship Projects to Help Nonprofits and Our Community

The SAGE Legacy Fellowship is a sixth-month leadership program to train and support individuals and teams to launch community benefit projects of their own design. These projects can be independent (in a neighborhood or workplace, for example) or for an existing nonprofit.

There is a \$1,500 tuition for the program, which covers the coaching, the retreat and five monthly sessions, the graduation ceremony and all meals. After graduation, you are invited to receive personal coaching and support at no additional cost for an additional six months to advance your project. SAGE offers a limited number of partial tuition waivers to candidates who need financial aid and who are interested in projects that strengthen education, restore our environment and promote economic security.

Below are twenty-six project ideas that advance these goals. Some ideas have been submitted by nonprofit partners, and others have been developed by SAGE. These are examples of projects, and all of them can be adapted to fit your timeline and availability. Consider these ideas as conversation starters. There are many other projects that could be pursued.

Contact SAGE to learn more and share your ideas. Email hello@WeAreSage.org or call 971-717-6570.

Projects that Promote Civic Engagement and Leadership

1. **Boost civics education in schools (education that teaches community members to be actively involved in their own governance).** Survey organizations in the public and private sector that focus on civics to clarify strengths, areas for improvement, and resources needed to strengthen education in civics. Coordinate efforts with like-minded initiatives in our region.

Developed as part of the SAGE Citizen Project

2. **Boost civics education and activism among older adults.** Take similar steps to the above initiative: survey groups that focus on civics to clarify strengths, areas for improvement and resources needed. Coordinate efforts with like-minded initiatives such as those run by the leagues and political boot camps. Help community members develop skills for civic engagement (e.g., know the effective levers for political change, gain experience having difficult conversations on politics, and use organizing tools for activists).

Developed as part of the SAGE Citizen Project

3. **Organize a conference between older and younger adults on polarizing political topics.** Work together to illuminate perspectives, bring new voices and stories to the conversation. If possible, host similar conferences in different regions. Consider hosting a keynote speaker at these events to attract new audiences.

Developed as part of the SAGE Citizen Project

4. **Develop and publish questions to frame additional conversations with community members and elected officials to advance civil discourse and good governance.** For example, questions may focus on where to identify shared and trusted information sources, how to gain agreement on the roles of different governments (local, state and federal), and how to safeguard the interests of those who cannot vote (e.g., future generations).

Developed as part of the SAGE Citizen Project

Projects to Strengthen Education

5. **Mentorship.** The Oregon Department of Education published eight critical elements to increase high school graduation rates. Mentors could support these efforts by helping students to stay engaged and to think critically about the many challenges they face. A fellow could develop a science literacy club or mentorship program that connects college, high school and elementary school students. The fellow could also lead an initiative to increase volunteering in schools, more broadly, as a teaching assistant, coach or mentor.

Recommended by SAGE's Young Leaders Advisory Board

6. **Nurture school gardens during the summer.** School gardens are a wonderful asset to help children learn about nature and to grow nutritious foods. Many of these gardens are run by students and parent-volunteers and it can be difficult to maintain them throughout the school year and especially over the summer when gardens are in full bloom. As a Legacy Fellow, you would evaluate options and partnership opportunities to create a garden volunteer support team to help maintain school gardens during the summer on a rotating basis. With this support, school gardens can be ready for students and volunteers to continue to nurture and support these gardens at the start of the school year.

Supporting Partner: The Intertwine

7. **Engage Volunteers at an Innovative School.** KairosPDX is a non-profit organization focused on delivering excellent, equitable education to underserved children, their families and their communities. As a Legacy Fellow, you would assist the organization in recruiting volunteers to support all capacities of our work. Our vision is to build partnerships with local universities, businesses, and leaders to recruit consistent volunteers. We have some systems and communication in place already but need someone who can devote time to being out in the community and online actively recruiting volunteers.

Supporting Partner: KairosPDX

Projects to Restore our Environment

8. **Elevate Earth Day.** Earth Day Oregon is a statewide initiative designed to increase the impact of Earth Day. Through the initiative, Oregon's earth-focused nonprofits reach out to their sustainably minded business partners and request a cash donation be made on April 22nd, in honor of Earth Day and in recognition of the good work that the nonprofit organizations do in our communities. The Earth Day Oregon steering committee supports both the nonprofit and business partners with communications and marketing materials, PR and outreach, and a celebratory event that brings together the businesses, nonprofits and larger community. A SAGE fellow would lead the efforts to design and implement the celebratory event. This would include securing donated food, beverage, and location; communicating with business and nonprofit partners; gathering raffle prizes; spreading the word to the general public about the event via press releases, social media and through partners; facilitating the event itself and thanking partners post-event. There exists a great deal of creativity within this fellowship to design a meaningful community event.

Supporting Partner: Earth Day Oregon

9. **Expand Earth Day Oregon to other regions.** Earth Day Oregon is a statewide initiative designed to increase the impact of Earth Day. See above for details. A SAGE fellow would work closely with the Earth Day Oregon steering committee to gather the successes and lessons-learned from Earth Day 2019 and transform that information into a model which could be utilized in other states. This fellow would utilize graphic design to punch-up materials, and create pdf documents, and webpages which could be customized to inspire the nonprofits, businesses and citizens of other states to take on their own version of Earth Day Oregon. Tapping into existing networks, this fellowship can be involved in the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day at the national level.

Supporting Partner: Earth Day Oregon

10. **Community solar.** Portland and Multnomah County are committed to transitioning our region to 100 % renewable energy by 2050. There is great promise in community solar, but many communities lack funds to pursue a project. A fellow could work with partners to raise money and in-kind support for a community in need. These projects also promote clean air, cost savings, and educational opportunities.

Recommended by SAGE's Young Leaders Advisory Board

11. **Connect with nature.** Many of us can remember a time in nature that inspired us to want to conserve natural resources and protect our environment. Unfortunately, today's young adults do not spend as much time outdoors, so they have not learned as much as they could about conservation and the personal rewards from being outside. There are programs to connect young adults to nature, but they are underfunded. A fellow could help establish a fund for low-income youth to participate in outdoor programs that enrich their lives and spark an interest in conservation.

Recommended by SAGE's Young Leaders Advisory Board

12. **Build capacity for renewable power.** Organize neighbors to pursue strategies that generate solar and wind power in your neighborhood. Help share information about existing programs and incentives to transition to renewable power.

Supports Climate Plan Actions: 1F, 3B, 3C, 3D
Supports City goal regarding 100 % clean energy by 2050

- 13. Strengthen resiliency through asset mapping.** Identify funding and other obstacles that impede the ability of neighbors to identify and map community assets to respond to climate change (e.g., cooling centers, nurses). As a fellow, you could also perform research to identify strategies to overcome these limitations and support asset mapping in a specific neighborhood.

Supports Climate Plan Actions: 14B, 14C, 14D, 15C, 16B, 16C

- 14. Become a Neighborhood Guide for Climate Action.** Organize and help facilitate neighbor-to-neighbor discussions about the region's response to climate change, plans for serving vulnerable communities, and actions to reduce carbon emissions. As a fellow, you could also leverage the tools available from the City and others to spread word about actions residents can take to reduce carbon emissions from homes and other locales.

Supports Climate Plan Actions: 4J, 4O, 8B, 12A, 12B, 18A, 18B, 20A, 20B, 20G

- 15. Promote low-carbon foods and local food production.** Lead a campaign to promote low carbon diets. You could also facilitate workshops on reducing food waste or buying local foods to reduce transportation emissions, strengthen the economy, and preserve farms.

Supports Climate Plan Actions: 8B, 9A, 9B, 12A, 12B

- 16. Organize neighbors for energy efficiency.** Reduce the environmental footprint in your community by motivating neighbors to receive energy audits and undertake at least one new conservation measure. You could leverage existing programs to support audits and home efficiency projects.

Supports Climate Plan Actions: 1C, 1F, 3B

- 17. Start a Net Zero Hero program in your community.** With initial support from a coach, learn how to set up a Net Zero Hero program in your community to help individuals and small groups reduce their carbon footprint. Participants in the program come together as affinity groups (e.g., friends, classmates, colleagues) and meet for a short period of time to learn about their own carbon footprint and to share strategies to reduce their footprint over time. After each participant makes a personal action plan, they decide what support they could use from each other and the community to accomplish their goals.

Supports Climate Plan Actions: 12A, 12B, 20A, 20B, 20G
Supporting Partner: Lake Oswego Sustainability Network

- 18. Expand urban forests and greenspaces.** Advance projects that increase greenspaces and natural areas in neighborhoods. You could focus on projects anywhere, including areas where there are populations at risk of adverse outcomes from urban heat island effects. Develop relationships, build partnerships and find funds to support greenspaces.

Supports Climate Plan Actions: 13A, 13B

19. **Innovation sessions to accelerate climate solutions.** Organize and help facilitate community dialogues on how the City can more rapidly reach our 2030 interim goal and 2050 goal to reduce carbon emissions. These dialogues could identify promising solutions to research, pilot and fund. Solutions featured as coming attractions on www.drawdown.org (e.g., smart highways, hyperloops, building with wood) might warrant local research, testing.

Supports Climate Plan Actions: 4GG, 8B, 19O

20. **Innovation sessions to expand renewable power.** Organize and help facilitate community dialogues on how neighbors and neighborhoods can pool resources to reach the City of Portland's 100 percent clean energy goal. This project could overlap with other community efforts to accelerate climate solutions in our region.

Supports Climate Plan Actions: 3A, 3B, 8B, 19O. Supports City goal regarding 100 % clean energy.

21. **Climate Advocacy in Skits, Stories and Songs.** Design and organize one or more events with speakers to share skits, stories and songs about actions that people can take to meet our region's climate action goals. The events can engage audiences to advance solutions in homes, neighborhoods, schools, businesses, community centers, and places of worship.

Supports Climate Plan Actions: 8B, 12A

22. **Clean mobility.** Verde is looking for support in developing the Cully Clean Mobility Pilot. Clean mobility includes electrified transportation (EVs, E-bikes, E-scooters), shared vehicles (uber, car2go, etc.), public transit, walking and biking. Verde completed a clean mobility assessment with Cully residents during the summer of 2018 and is now interested in strategizing and moving forward the assessment recommendation. The assessment recommendations include:

- Launch a Cully neighborhood shuttle pilot
- Provide more EV and E-bike education
- Research alternatives to financial and technology requirements
- Explore utilizing rideshare credits for senior residents

A Legacy Fellow would work on developing one or all assessment recommendations for implementation of the Cully Clean Mobility Pilot.

Supporting Partner: Verde

23. **Help Students Organize for Climate Justice.** As a Legacy Fellow, you would help identify and organize community members to support high school aged students who are organizing for climate justice in the Portland area and regionally. Students meet twice per month, and need food (bread, soups and salads and something sweet) and transportation to meetings. They also need skills training for event planning, communications, marketing and outreach, and project management. With advice and support from experienced mentors, these students can achieve impactful results for the future they are inheriting and expand the number of their peers who show up for climate justice.

Supporting Partner: Help PDX.

Projects to Promote Economic Opportunity

24. **Microloans.** Economic inequality and stagnating wages, coupled with an increased cost of living, have forced many Americans to live “paycheck to paycheck.” When emergencies arise, often the only recourse is payday loans, which carry astronomically high interest rates and other conditions. The LAB has put together a blueprint for a small-scale alternative to payday loans, which a fellow could further develop and implement with the support of community partners.

Recommended by SAGE’s Young Leaders Advisory Board

25. **Food security.** Several neighborhoods and low-income communities in Portland struggle with access to healthy and nutritious food. For families without access to a car, it can be challenging to buy in bulk or receive the maximum quantity of food from a food bank. A fellow could conduct outreach to further investigate this issue and partner with organizations such as the Oregon Food Bank to identify ways of connecting local food producers with those most in need and enable food bank customers to obtain as much food as they need for themselves and their families.

Recommended by SAGE’s Young Leaders Advisory Board

26. **Financial literacy.** With limited financial education in schools, it can be challenging to navigate our complex financial system – from understanding credit and student loans to taxes and retirement. Working with Financial Beginnings Oregon, a nonprofit providing financial education to both children and adults, a fellow could conduct outreach and increase volunteer retention to build the organization’s capacity and help expand services in communities across the state.

Recommended by SAGE’s Young Leaders Advisory Board