The Social Enterprise Summer Fellowship Program at Columbia Business School provides support to students engaged in summer internships that create social and environmental value. Fellowships take place in the U.S. or abroad at nonprofit, government or nongovernmental organizations, for-profit and nonprofit social ventures, and social venture capital firms. MBA students seeking to transition between sectors, industries and functional areas use the summer to apply their business skills and explore social enterprise areas. These fellowships:

- Provide social enterprises that create social and environmental value with access to much-needed MBA talent that they could not otherwise afford to hire; and
- Provide students with experience and opportunities to apply their MBA skills to practical issues faced by these organizations.

**MBA Summer Fellows Creating Value**

The diversity of organizations and MBA students participating in the summer fellowship program reflects the breadth of the social enterprise field, which covers public and nonprofit management, sustainability, social ventures, international development, education, healthcare and microfinance among other areas. Past organizations that employed summer fellows include: Robin Hood Foundation, Education Pioneers, NY Department of Education, NYC Mayor’s Office for Long-Term Planning and Sustainability, Nonprofit Finance Fund, Harlem Children’s Zone, WNET.ORG / Thirteen.org, Freedom from Hunger, Endeavor, Enterprise Solutions to Poverty, Acumen Fund, Clinton Global Initiative, TechnoServe, Save the Children, Frogtek and ConnectUs.

Fellows help organizations across a range of projects and issues, including strategic planning, start-up business plan development, marketing and product strategies, financial analysis, operational improvements and performance evaluation.

**Internship Guidelines**

The Summer Fellowship Program contributes $200 to $600 per week for up to 10 weeks to selected summer fellows, depending on availability of funds. Summer fellowships must meet the following criteria:

- The internship description is well-scoped, has clearly-defined expectations and deliverables, and identifies the supervisor that the student will be reporting to;
- Activities and projects require the use of MBA skills and knowledge;
- Deliverables are challenging yet realistic and have a meaningful impact on the host organization;
- Students have mid- and end-of-summer reviews with the supervisor; and
- The employing organization provides a sufficient commitment by funding the internship to the maximum of its ability. Employers are expected to contribute $600 to $1,000 per week to the intern’s salary. This amount may include in-kind support such as housing and transportation.
Annie Koo ’14 was a team member with MBAs Across America, a national movement of MBAs and entrepreneurs working to revitalize America. Annie spent six weeks on the road, tackling pressing challenges with six different entrepreneurs in communities outside traditional hubs such as Cleveland and Detroit. In intensive weeklong engagements, she collaborated with entrepreneurs and their communities to deliver lasting impact and help create from the ground-up an MBAxAmerica network of ongoing support. She worked with a wide range of talented and passionate entrepreneurs to learn more about the culture, challenges, and opportunities associated with growing a business. She was especially excited to work with entrepreneurs and communities linked to her interest in social impact real estate, including neighborhood developers in former rust belt cities.

My MBAs Across America experience was eye-opening and inspiring. It showed me that entrepreneurs face common challenges no matter the industry, geography, or level of funding. Whether bootstrapped or well-heeled, we found strikingly similar challenges in areas such as marketing, customer experience, and operations.

Brian Lo ’14 and Scott Miramontes ’14 worked for Tugende, a for-profit social enterprise in Kampala, Uganda. Tugende assists reliable local taxi drivers who rent-to-own their motorcycles, allowing these drivers to begin a path to financial independence. Brian focused on structuring the internal operations of Tugende in preparation for the company’s anticipated scale increase. Building upon the impacts of prior Columbia MBA projects with Tugende, Brian also helped the CEO market Tugende to specific investors interested in social as well as financial returns. Scott helped with implementing technology to increase efficiencies and standardize operations. He also worked on developing their fundraising strategy by measuring impact, developing marketing communications, and identifying potential investors. Brian wrote:

Traditionally, Tugende developed and relied upon a single source of supply for many marketing products, creating a critical vulnerability in the development of our branded motorcycles. I urged the staff to develop and create additional sources of supply in order to create a more reliable process. I also applied many of the skills I learned from classes during the mapping of Tugende’s process flow.

Elise Miller ’15 worked at the Robin Hood Foundation, a nonprofit that fights poverty in New York City by identifying, funding and partnering with over 200 of the most effective schools and programs in the city’s poorest neighborhoods. Robin Hood applies investment principles to philanthropy and philanthropic ideas to investment practices, attacking poverty at its root causes and rigorously evaluating programs to measure results. Elise interned with the Jobs and Economic Security Portfolio, where she analyzed the business models of direct service grantees engaged in start-up revenue-generating activities.

My summer internship afforded me an opportunity to put several MBA skills learned in the classroom into practice. In fact, many of the earned income programs and organizations I was working with were facing business problems similar to those I studied in MBA case studies. Familiarity with common business issues helped me to better understand the challenges faced by each venture, and familiarity with business strategies helped me to propose more thoughtful recommendations for Robin Hood’s management assistance team. My summer experience was an adventure in problem solving, and the MBA skillset prepared me well to help tackle complex issues facing Robin Hood grantees.