

Harbor Freight Fellows Guidebook

A Guide for Fellows, Mentors and Advisors

The purpose of this guide is to facilitate support for youth for whom a traditional or 21st Century skilled trade is their chosen and appropriate post-secondary path to a fulfilling career through the Harbor Freight Fellows Initiative. A Harbor Freight Fellow pursues this goal with a professional mentor and a personal, often school-based, Teacher/Advisor.

Definition of Roles:

Fellow: A youth who engages in an apprenticing experience within the initiative with a professional mentor in one of the skilled trades. Fellows are generally high school seniors, or exceptionally well qualified juniors.

Advisor: 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: 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) Advisor and youth are sent link to **Application**
- 3) Youth **submits Application** with Advisor support
- 4) Application is **accepted, denied, or deferred**
- 5) If **accepted**, preliminary documents submitted
- 6) Youth and Advisor identify a **Mentor**
- 7) Mentor, Advisor, and Fellow meet to **set up the Fellowship and submit Fellowship Agreement**
- 8) Fellowship **Commences**
- 9) **Advisor, Mentor and Fellow communicate regularly** to support and track progress
- 10) Fellowship **wrap-up and reflection**

Youth Interest:

The strongest candidates to become Fellows are those students who have evidence of their interest in and commitment to pursuing a trade after high school. Such experience can be CTE courses, independent work at home or in the community with family or community members, part-time jobs, etc. Advisors of these students should encourage youth to consider applying for a Harbor Freight Fellowship.

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 agrees to act as an Advisor for that student's fellowship.

The Nomination Form is available on the Harbor Freight Fellows website, www.harborfreightfellows.org. Once a youth is nominated they are evaluated. If qualified they are emailed a link to complete and submit the Application.

Submit Application:

Applications should reflect the youth's authentic interest in engaging in this Fellowship. Once an application is submitted it will be evaluated and either accepted, declined or deferred.

Acceptance and Preliminary Documents:

Once an applicant is accepted they are notified by email. At that time they are requested to submit additional forms including the **Pre-Fellowship Work Plan**, **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).***

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. 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 on a large construction job site, but a small local contractor would be willing and happy to mentor a Fellow. A large manufacturing plant may be hesitant to allow students to work with heavy machinery, but local machine shops or auto repair shops are good places to try.
- 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, you may want to 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 **Harbor Freight 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.

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 and submit several photos of the Mentor and Fellow working together, and video if possible, for use on the website and in social media.

At or near the end of the Fellowship the Fellow, Mentor and Advisor will each submit the **Post-Fellowship Survey** that include evaluations for the Fellow's progress and performance during the Fellowship. The Fellow also submits the **Post-Fellowship Work Plan**.

Wrap-Up and Reflect:

The Advisor will support 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.