About VFA

Venture For America (VFA) is a two-year fellowship program for recent grads who want to work at a startup and create jobs in American cities.

Our Mission: VFA is creating economic opportunity in American cities by mobilizing the next generation of entrepreneurs and equipping them with the skills and resources they need to create jobs.

Our Program: Venture For America is a two-year fellowship program for recent grads who want to work at a startup and create jobs in American cities. Fellows apply for jobs within our private job portal, learn important startup skills at our month-long Training Camp, and work for two years as full-time, salaried employees in one of 14 cities. Throughout the Fellowship and after, VFA offers programming to help Fellows grow into startup leaders and grow their business ideas into reality.

Commitment to Diversity, Equity & Inclusion: Diverse teams and companies are more productive, resilient, and successful. This is why Venture For America is committed to these efforts across our Team and community of Fellows, and in the companies that hire them. Our program is a unique opportunity for historically-excluded groups – like women and underrepresented racial and ethnic minorities – to begin their careers as entrepreneurs. Even further, our newest class of 2020 Fellows is both majority female and majority minority.

Where We Work

Baltimore • Birmingham • Charlotte • Cincinnati • Cleveland Columbus • Detroit • Kansas City • Miami • New Orleans Philadelphia • Pittsburgh • San Antonio • St. Louis

Current Fellow
Anastacia Valdespino
Harvard University
VFA San Antonio '18
Media Producer at Searchspring

VFA Alum & Startup Leader
Eli Schwarz
Haverford College
VFA Philadelphia '13
Vice President, Data Strategy & Partnerships at Jornaya

VFA Alum & Founder
Garrett Ransom
Morehouse College
VFA Miami '15
Founder of Ravel Labs

Apply to VFA
August – January

Find a company match
April – June

Go to Training Camp
July

Move & start work
August – September

Learn on the job & with VFA
2 Years

Emerge as a Startup Leader or become a Founder

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Learn on the job & with VFA
2 Years

Emerge as a Startup Leader or become a Founder
Creating Startup Leaders and Founders

VFA is committed to developing Fellows into leaders, either within a startup or as a founder. After two years working and learning on-the-job, Alums can continue at that startup and grow into a leadership role. Alums are leading teams, managing employees, and being promoted to Director, VP, and C-Level positions. For Alums who are interested in starting a business, they can leverage their on-the-job experience as well as VFA’s resources and support to take their next step as a founder. Whether a Fellow is just toying with an idea or is ready to go to market, VFA will be there to help Fellows every step of the way.

“By putting me in contact with experienced engineering leads and CTOs, VFA has provided me opportunities to learn from the best mentors and colleagues.”

— Leigh Stauffer ’16, Software Engineer at Mobkit

“VFA is one of the main reasons why I was able to even start my company. Simply put, VFA has had its hands in every stage of growth for Pinch Boil House.”

— Sean Wen ’14, Co-Founder of Pinch Boil House

VFA has helped Fellow-Founded companies participate in some of the country’s most prestigious and competitive incubators and accelerators, including Y Combinator, Microsoft Ventures Accelerator, TechStars, Project Entrepreneur, and Entrepreneurs Round Table.

Publications like Forbes 30 under 30 and Time Magazine’s Best Invention have acknowledged the impact and potential of Fellow-Founded companies.

150+ Fellow-Founded companies

368 Jobs created

$115M Raised
Application Process

What we look for: We seek to select a class of future startup leaders and founders from diverse backgrounds that meets the hiring needs of our communities. Our application process is designed to learn how the applicant's career goals align with our mission and program as well as assess their if they have the character, disposition, and ability to be a strong performer at a startup.

Our reviewers and interviewers: We ensure our application reviewers and Selection Day judges are diverse in terms of identity and background. VFA Fellows, Alums, and Team members review written applications and conduct video interviews. Selection Day judges include startup founders, finance and corporate executives, prominent investors, and local supporters from our 14 cities as well as VFA Alums and team members.

1. Online Application
Applicants register and share their academic and demographic background. Then, applicants upload their resume and tell us about their impact during three involvements.

2. Online Essays
Applicants complete two essay questions about why they want to be a VFA Fellow and how their experiences have prepared them for a job at a startup.

3. Video Interview
Applicants interview for 30 minutes with a Fellow, VFA Alum, or member of the VFA Team.

4. Selection Day
Selection Day is the final step in our application process and a full-day interview that includes both a group and individual interview.

Our application process includes:

210+ Majors represented all-time
150+ Schools represented all-time
3000+ Applications received for the Class of 2020
11% 2020 admissions rate
200 Fellows expected in 2021
Match: Our Private Job Portal

Unlike many Fellowship programs, we don’t place Fellows in specific roles. Instead, we help Fellows find the right fit given their skillset and career goals. Match is our private job portal exclusively for incoming Fellows to connect with startups, who we call Company Partners. Through Match, we simplify the startup job search process, but make no mistake—it is still a job search. Fellows are responsible for driving their search, but we’re there to support them along the way.

How Match Works
Match is a private job portal for incoming VFA Fellows and the startups that want to hire them. Fellows leverage Match to view jobs across our network and connect with hiring managers.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top Industries:</th>
<th>Top Roles:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Account Management</td>
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<td>Food &amp; Beverage</td>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
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<td>Healthcare</td>
<td>Finance</td>
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<td>Marketing &amp; Analytics</td>
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<td>Operations &amp; Project Manager</td>
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<td>Product Management</td>
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<td>Sales &amp; Business Development</td>
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<td>Software Engineering</td>
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Match Support
Our Team supports incoming Fellows every step of the way while they look for the right startup jobs. We conduct resume reviews, train Fellows on how to write a strong job pitch, and offer feedback on mock interviews.

Salary and Benefits
Fellows are full-time, salaried employees with health benefits, employed by the startup. The middle 60% of the Class of 2019 earned a starting salary between $42,000 and $50,000. Fellows in sales and software engineering roles traditionally earned starting salaries within or above this range. Lastly, VFA requires the startups we partner with pay Fellows a minimum of $38,000 with health benefits.

450+ Partner companies have hired our Fellows
1200+ Fellows since 2012
14 Cities where Fellows live & work
The Fellowship Experience

The journey to becoming a startup leader and founder is challenging. Fortunately, Fellows have the support of the VFA community to drive them toward their professional goals.

TRAINING CAMP
The launch of our Fellowship is Training Camp. The month-long startup boot camp combines training from industry experts and team challenges to get our Fellows ready to add value in their jobs from day one. VFA covers the cost of Fellows’ housing, food, and programming.

WORK AT A STARTUP
At work, Fellows are thrown into fast-paced businesses where they wear a lot of hats, discover their strengths, and contribute firsthand to the growth of something new, with all the frustration and satisfaction that entails.

ONGOING PROGRAMMING
Locally, Fellows have the support of a Community Director. They also have the opportunity to participate in trainings, entrepreneurial workshops, and VFA events. Fellows can even join our seven identity-based resource groups or connect with mentors via our internal platform.
After the Fellowship

After two years on the job, Fellows have the opportunity to continue working at their startup and grow into a leadership role. While many Fellows stay at their startup, others depart to work at another startup or start their own business. VFA Alums have access to VFA’s network of mentors, Accelerator, fundraising opportunities, professional development opportunities, support, and resources.

“Being in VFA helped me not fear taking risks when attacking problems, especially when you are supported by an organization that will be there to provide you the resources you need to be successful.”

— Chisom Uche ’14, Senior Investment Associate at SixThirty Global FinTech Fund

“VFA gave us the resources, time, and space to launch Stix. From early market research to product validation, they supported us every step of the way. Stix wouldn’t exist today if it weren’t for VFA!”

— Cynthia Plotch & Jamie Norwood ’15, Co-Founders of Stix

Alum Salaries by Class Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Year</th>
<th>Up to $49k</th>
<th>$50–$99k</th>
<th>$100k &amp; over</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>2012</td>
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<td>2013</td>
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% of Class Earning Salary

14% of Alums work full-time on their own company
44% of Alums work at startups
14% of Alums work at a larger tech company
9% of Alums have attended a top grad school program
46% of Alums are living in a VFA city