



BOARD FELLOW PROGRAM
Collaborative Governance for Social Impact

2021/1/31

WIT

<http://worldintohoku.org/>

WIT envisions a world where we all work together to better the world, regardless of where we are from. To embody this vision, we have provided nonprofit organizations, corporations, and business leaders with opportunities to learn from each other and co-create across boundaries to better the society since 2011.

Nonprofits are serving the people in need in ways the government and private sector cannot address alone. However, such nonprofits often work with limited resources and capacity. We need more cross-organization and cross-sector collaborations to tackle the systemic issues effectively. We need more trust relationships and a holistic understanding of social issues among different stakeholders, which lays a foundation for more innovative, sustainable, and impactful collaborations.

To that end, this summer, WIT will launch a six-month Board Fellow Program where nonprofit and corporate leaders discuss and collaborate to address pressing social issues. Our inaugural theme in 2021 is Inclusion and Empowerment – Advancing wellbeing for mothers and creating a society where mothers can bring out their potential.

The Board Fellow Program will strengthen the leadership and organizational capacity of innovative nonprofit leaders from organizations serving mothers, and enable them to develop effective programs and reach more mothers in need. We will engage corporate leaders to discuss challenges and opportunities with the nonprofits and collaborate with them. By cultivating cross-sector collaboration, we will contribute to advancing the wellbeing of mothers, preventing child abuse, and creating more inclusive workplaces.

Why Advancing Wellbeing for Mothers?

1 in 4 mothers in Japan suffers from postnatal depression. 46.9% of women leave their work after childbirth, finding it hard to continue working and take on leadership positions. The child poverty rate among single-mother households hits 55 percent. The gender gap in Japan is one of the worst in the world--121st out of 153 countries in the Global Gender Gap Index by the World Economic Forum. Japan has the second-worst pay gap among OECD countries. The COVID-19 crisis has worsened the situation.

Objectives of the Board Fellow Program

- Facilitate cross-border collaboration across different organizations and sectors to address complex social issues.
- Contribute to the mission achievement of nonprofit organizations that serve mothers' needs through the lens of nonprofit governance as a platform for collective mission achievement.

Participants

- 3-5 nonprofit organizations in Japan that serve the needs of pregnant and new mothers. 2-3 leaders from each organization participate in the program as a team. The following three organizations already decided to participate in the program:
 - Madre Bonita (<https://www.madrebbonita.com/>) – Postnatal care for all
 - Nobel (<https://nponobel.jp/>) – Inclusive society where women can work without after childbirth
 - Kizuna Mail Project (<https://www.kizunamail.com/>) – Text content services to support pre/postnatal mothers and families
- 9-15 business leaders who want to contribute to the nonprofits' missions with their expertise and experience. Anyone with experience in managing a team/project/business is eligible to apply. Japanese proficiency is required to attend this program.

Program Schedule

- June 2021: Orientation
 - July - December 2021: Board Fellow Program
 - Monthly joint sessions
 - Monthly peer-mentoring sessions
 - Speaker series on the 2021 theme and board & governance
 - Field visit and/or in-person gathering (if the COVID-19 situation allows)
 - Consulting sessions with each participating nonprofit
 - Program assessments and interviews with each participant before and after the program
- *All the program components will be conducted virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Part of the program might be implemented in person if the situation allows.

Why Governance?

Governance is not only an overseeing and controlling system to prevent frauds and manage risks, but an essential mechanism where different voices are heard and people's strengths are used to achieve shared goals. At WIT, we strive to explore and practice Governance for Impact – governance in which people from diverse backgrounds collaborate with their perspectives and resources, and collectively make decisions to achieve the organizational mission and social impact. (See also Mio Yamamoto/WIT (2010). Nonprofit Governance. Tokyo: Eiji Press.)



Program Structure

- **Cultivate Compassion:** Participants from the nonprofit and business sectors start building trust relationships by understanding each other's passion, work, and experience holistically.
- **Broaden Capacity:** Participants learn about essential tools to grow mission-driven organizations including systems thinking, nonprofit governance, cross-sector collaboration, and end game model.
- **Embody Future:** Participants engage with generative discussion to collectively frame issues around women's empowerment and inclusion, identify effective solutions, and how each can contribute to the solutions and the mission impact of the participating nonprofits.

Contact Us

Please feel free to reach out to us for any questions and/or interest about the program.

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