

grass  
routes

2010  
Summer Edition

## Applicant Handbook



Road-trips for social change.

[www.grassroutes.in](http://www.grassroutes.in)



## About Grassroutes

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[Grassroutes](#) is a Fellowship Program for youth to go on road-trips for social change. Traveling across India, meeting change-makers, working with social ventures, learning developmental issues, living on less than \$2 a day, these youth return with stories of social change, and the program enables them to use these stories to inspire a larger community.

An initiative of a non-profit for-impact society [Youth Factor](#), Grassroutes aims to be a novel social venture aimed at driving youth to social action in India.

### Mantra

The Grassroutes mantra is *to use travel as a means to enable youth to discover the change maker within.*

The team believes that immersion experiences in areas where social entrepreneurs are battling odds to create sustainable, significant impact, have the potential to create deep impact on the way we perceive social change.

*“He, who does not travel, does not know the value of men.”*

*-Moorish Proverb*

### Values

The values we actively promote and admire in fellows are:

- Diversity
- Responsibility
- Yes-I-Can attitude
- Optimism
- Commitment to a cause



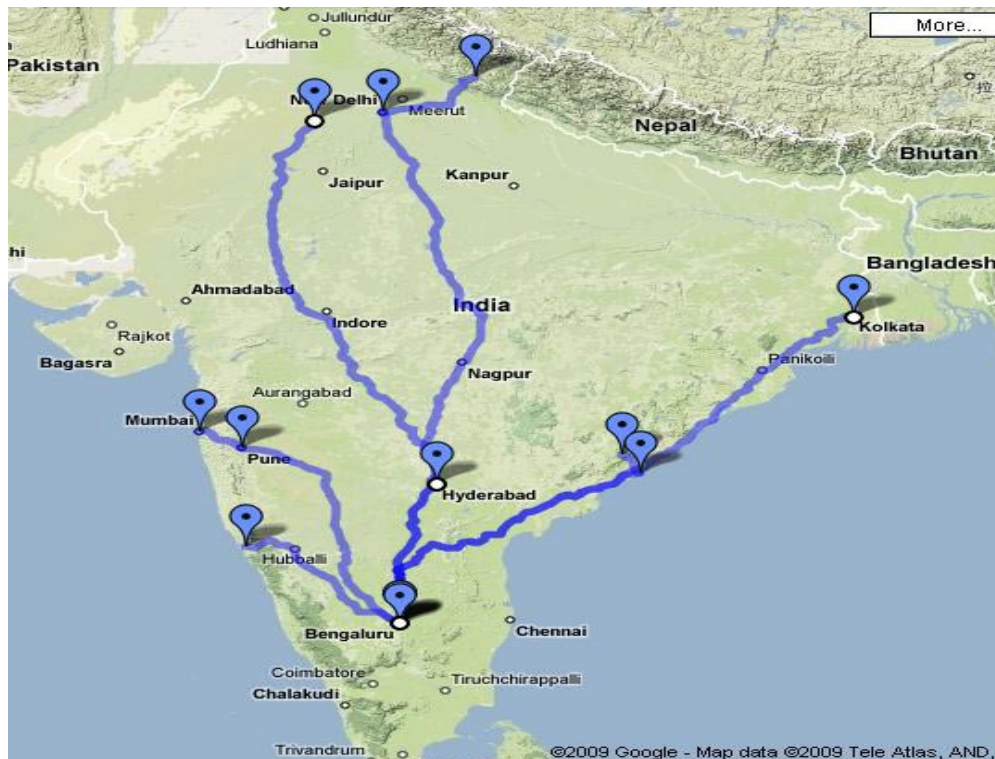
## Objectives

There are three golden objectives at Grassroutes viz:

1. Providing a transformational experience to selected fellows
2. Create incremental value for our partner NGOs
3. Inspire larger community through experiences of fellows

## History

The program has so far completed two editions (2008 winter edition & 2009 summer edition) where 24 youth travelling to 7 different organizations across the country. They studied variety of problems ranging from Tribal Rights to Malnutrition to Environment Protection to Women Empowerment. Our fellows come from different backgrounds – they have been engineers, doctors, commerce graduates and working professionals.



*Map showing different places fellows came from and travelled to for Grassroutes 2009 summer edition*



## Impact

We believe the full impact of the program can be measured only in the long run but there are already visible signs of positive impact. Some of the achievements are mentioned below.

- *Anurag Dutta* won the *Habitat Young Visionary Award*, 2009
- *Abhishek Nayak* represented the Indian youth at the recently concluded COP15, Copenhagen summit
- *Rishabh Kaul* has been selected as a staff writer at Nextbillion.net
- *Raghav Mimani* will be attending 1<sup>st</sup> NMC World Youth Meet in Jan, 2010 at Bari, Italy.

There are other fellows who have found interest in Social enterprises, started active volunteering and a few other who are exploring more options through various fellowships.

## Applying for the Program

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### Eligibility

The following conditions have to be met by candidates for the Grassroutes Fellowship Program

1. Only Indian nationals below the age of 25 as of March 2010 are eligible
2. Applications are invited from individuals. (Read Selection criteria for more details)
3. Candidates should be able to dedicate 30 days from third week of May (Read Requirements section)
4. Believe in Social Change and Youth Factor!

### Rolling Applications

We are accepting applications in two phases to encourage people to apply early. First round of evaluations will start by 1st Feb, 2010, selected fellows will be intimated by the 15th Feb 2010. The second and final phase of applications will end on 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2010.



## Application

The Application form consists of 2 parts –

- [1. Personal Details,](#)
- [2. Individual Questions](#)

The application process has been tailored to be quite rigorous and demanding, reflecting the true nature of the Grassroutes program itself. Apart from a set of essay-questions, each applicant is required to volunteer for any social cause or run a mini-campaign of their choice. The experience is designed in a way to help the candidates realize whether they are a good fit for this program. For further details,

Please read through the application form.

## Selection Criteria

Each question in the application details the rationale behind the question, and the specific quality of the candidate that we are seeking to evaluate.

Here is a round-up of the same.

### *An ideal Grassroutes Fellow would*

- Have an open mind, be ready to learn and more importantly unlearn
- Be a good listener
- Have a penchant for travel
- Translate inspiration into sustained positive action
- Learn from experiences
- Be a good story-teller
- Be tenacious
- Be conversant with social media tools

## Selection Process

The selection process is divided into two stages.

### *Stage 1: Online Application*

All applications will be evaluated against our selection criteria. The parameters that we used to judge the application criteria are mentioned in the previous section. Application is designed to evaluate different parameters of the individual.



### *Stage 2: Telephonic Interview*

After the first round of evaluation of the online application, some applicants may have to go through another round of telephonic interviews. This will be decided on a case-to-case basis.

## **Mapping to partner organizations (non-profits)**

The selected fellows are mapped to our partner non-profit organizations based on their interests mentioned in the application, skill sets, the requirement of the organizations and language they can communicate in. Partner organization shall map them to a project in their area of interest.

Both the fellow and the partner organizations are engaged in the mapping process. But, the Grassroutes team has the final say on the mapping.

### **Important Dates**

Dates	Timeline
02 Jan 2010	Application process starts
01 Feb 2010	Last date for first phase of applications (early-decision deadline)
01 Mar 2010	Last date for submitting application
01 Apr 2010	Announcement of fellows selected
15 Apr 2010	Orientation program begins
15 May 2010	Day zero

*All dates mentioned above are tentative*



## Program Structure

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### Pre-trip Orientation

The Grassroutes orientation is an intensive month long process where the Fellows embark on a steep learning curve to learn about various facets of the social sector and the tools required as a change agent. It is designed to help the Fellows make the best out of their road-trip in terms of learning and to equip them with adequate tools and knowledge.

The orientation process will begin after the Fellows have been selected through the application process and continue until the beginning of the road-trip. The orientation program is mainly non-residential and information is provided to the Fellows over internet and phone.

#### *Purpose of the orientation program:*

Through the orientation program we aim to:

- Bridge the knowledge gap about the social sector by helping Fellows understand the vastness and rich diversity of the sector.
- Help fellows get a deeper understanding of the community and the non-profit organization that they will be associated with during the course of the program
- Help fellows get into the gear for the road-trip

The orientation was a day of listening to some very experienced people.... Definitely one of the most inspiring days of my life

- Abhishek Nayak,  
Grassroutes Fellow  
2008

### Planning the road-trip

During this phase, the teams get in touch with their respective mapped non-profit organizations and engage in a conversation culminating in a plan for the road-trip phase. This is in order to ensure that the Fellows have a good understanding of their objectives during the road-trip.



## Day Zero

As a culmination of the pre-trip orientation, a 2-day residential event called 'Day Zero' will be held just before the road-trip. All Fellows are 'required' to attend this event as a condition of their Fellowship. This will serve as a platform for all selected Fellows to meet and interact with each other and with other Grassroutes alumni and distinguished change-makers.

*A sample Day Zero schedule would resemble this:*

- Introductions
- Talks by social entrepreneurs/journalists
- Talks on the power of media and tips on effective usage of media
- Presentation by the Grassroutes alumni
- Presentations of the preparation that has been made for the trip and expectations from the road-trip by the Fellow teams
- Video making workshop
- Talks relating to travel experiences
- Safety and first aid

### Note:

Pre-trip orientation is a very intense program with a packed schedule. Fellows will be introduced to as many people and concepts as possible to make their work in the field effective. Fellows should be mentally prepared to devote their full attention and energy to understanding the Grassroutes program, and its approach to development. High levels of commitment in both time and learning aptitude are expected from the Fellows. A requirement of 5-8 hours on a weekly basis for 4 weeks is required. Grassroutes holds the right to withdraw the Fellowship in case any team is not showing the required commitment levels or fails to attend the Day Zero event.

## Road-trip

*During the road-trip, Fellows are expected to*

- Travel extensively in and around the place
- Strike conversations with community and change makers
- Be an activist by working on projects allotted.
- Complete all deliverables of the fellowship program. (Mentioned in the program requirements)



#### **Accomplishments at the end of the road-trip:**

- A deep understanding of the on-ground reality – the problem at hand, the non-profits, the change-makers and their actions, the community and the local government.
- Capture the stories of all the people involved in community development: the local folks, the change-makers.
- Satisfactorily complete the project

#### **Other than a road-trip Grassroutes fellow can also expect:**

- To be officially announced Grassroutes fellow at the completion of all the deliverables
- As a Grassroutes Alumni, every fellow has access to Grassroutes/Yofa events and conferences
- Access to opportunities on working with Yofa/Grassroutes and our partners
- Access to network of Grassroutes fellows group for opportunities and networking

#### **Responsibilities as a Grassroutes fellow:**

- To maintain regular communication with Grassroutes team
- To complete the reports and deliverables
- To share experiences and stories from the fellowship program to groups of young people

#### **Expenses**

All the costs other than travel cost are borne by the Grassroutes team. Fellow is expected to pay for his/her travel expenses. This includes travel for orientation to Bangalore. From our experience the total travel cost is around three thousand rupees (estimate). We work with partner organizations to provide you with safe accommodation and food. If the partner organization is unable to provide food, we shall provide you with a daily allowance to cover for the same.



## Program Requirements

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**This section is particularly addressed to a Fellow, in order to emphasize the importance of personally knowing and understanding the requirements before applying.**

In order for you to prepare for this experience and successfully complete the Grassroutes Fellowship program we have outlined specific requirements, which are conditions of the Fellowship.

The Grassroutes Fellowship Program is dedicated to producing change-agents from among the youth of this country, who can not only create positive change themselves, but also inspire others to take the plunge into social action. Having said that we also want you to understand that for it to happen, you will have to demonstrate immense commitment and take up responsibility in documenting every bit of your experience. We at Grassroutes believe that ‘Good documentation will remain as a milestone in any project’

### *Documenting your experience serves multiple-purposes:*

1. The stories and experiences that you bring back have tremendous inspirational and educational value for the rest of the nation and will get them to do their bit.
2. It will instill a sense of ownership amongst yourselves and aid you in streamlining your ideas, clarifying your goals and inspire new actions during and after the course of the road trip.
3. Develops a work culture that is transparent and helps us identify places where we can support you and work together in bringing about commendable change to our society. Also serves instrumental in helping us capture the nuances of your fellowship experience beyond measure.
4. Adds value to our partner organisations by enabling us to systematically cooperate with them and work towards the common goal of creating tangible impact and providing resources to promote their activities.



As a Grassroutes fellow, you will be required to meet certain documentation requirements.

*Different forms of documents that you are expected to maintain:*

- Blogs
- Videos & Photos
- Pre road-trip report on NGO/issue
- During Road trip weekly Report

### **BLOGS, VIDEOS & PHOTOS:**

Given one of the objective of the program is to inspire the larger community it is very important capture your experience in the form of stories which can be told using blogs, photo essays or videos. Some specific themes will be provided to you for your assistance.

### **REPORTS**

Reports will be a major form of documentation that will be used extensively by the teams to record their work and experiences at every stage of the program.

**Pre Road trip report:** Before embarking on the road trip you will be taken through a month long orientation program during which you will interact with your host NGO, trying to understand the social issues at the grassroots and the ways in which the NGO is addressing them. Towards the end of this orientation, you will have to submit a report on your understanding of the issue and the NGO's work. This will ensure that you have a fair knowledge of the social issue at hand and the NGO's work before you go on your road trips, so that you, and all other stake holders in the program, make the maximum out of your road-trip.

**Weekly reports:** During the month long road trip you will be required to write a report on a weekly basis which will include a description of all that you saw, did, learnt and experienced on that day.

**Fellowship report:** One of the most exciting parts of the fellowship program is the road-trip. The experiences at grassroots, interaction with the change makers and exposure to the rural communities helps in creating a new perspective of how you look at development in the rural heartlands of the country. It is during this time that you spend at the host-organization that you develop a sense of belonging to the place and connect emotionally to the stories of people and change. This takes your enthusiasm to participate in the process of change and do something yourself to its peak.



Final report is your answer to translate inspiration into sustained, positive action even beyond the duration of the fellowship program. It is a layout for the roadmap ahead.

**We hope the information provided was helpful. We are waiting to see your application. If there are any questions please mail us at [team@grassroutes.in](mailto:team@grassroutes.in) .**