# Community Foundation Tampa Bay Aspiring Leaders Fellowship

**2026 Inaugural Cohort Overview**

## About Community Foundation Tampa Bay

Community Foundation Tampa Bay (CFTB) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to creating a lasting, positive impact across our region through strategic philanthropy. For more than 35 years, we've helped individuals, families, and businesses support the causes they care about by connecting them with pressing community needs and opportunities to give with purpose. With over $1 billion in assets and deep community insight, CFTB serves as a catalyst for collaboration, learning, and long-term investment in Tampa Bay's future.

The Tampa Metro Area Council (TMAC) is a volunteer advisory group established by the CFTB to represent and support the Foundation's mission within the Tampa region. TMAC members serve as ambassadors who foster local philanthropy, build donor relationships, participate in CFTB events, and provide insight into regional needs and opportunities.

## About the Aspiring Leaders Fellowship

The Aspiring Leaders Fellowship is a new initiative of TMAC, designed to engage Tampa's rising leaders, professionals who are already making a difference in their organizations and communities and invite them to help shape the future of philanthropy in our region.

Fellowship members will act as ambassadors between their peers and CFTB, helping CFTB stay attuned to the values and priorities of the next generation of community-minded leaders.

This is a unique opportunity to connect with a purpose-driven network, contribute to community learning, and gain insight into regional philanthropy and impact strategies.

## Ideal candidates

We welcome applicants from all industries and professional backgrounds who:

- Are under 40 years old.
- Are established or emerging leaders in their field, organization, or community.
- Live and/or work in the Tampa metro area.
- Have an interest in learning more about philanthropy, nonprofit strategy, and community issues.
- Are curious, collaborative, and eager to get more involved in civic life.

No prior volunteer or nonprofit experience is necessary.

## Member expectations

This is a 12-month commitment that will begin in January 2026. Members are expected to:

- Attend monthly meetings (hybrid options available, with preference for in-person participation). Meetings will be held during the work week at a date and time that works best for the selected applicants. The expected time commitment is approximately 2 hours per month.
- Serve as ambassadors for the CFTB within their networks.
- Participate in the Tampa Metro Area grant making process.
- Assist with independent research and community landscape mapping related to regional focus issues.
- Assist in planning the annual Tampa Metro Area year-end event.
- Share insight into generational values and trends around giving and impact.

## What members will gain

- Mentorship opportunities with senior leaders within TMAC and CFTB.
- Invitations to CFTB events and programs.
- Exposure to local philanthropic strategy and community partnerships.
- Opportunities to build meaningful relationships with fellow civic leaders.
- Recognition in select CFTB communications and community channels.

## Application prompts

Please answer the following questions and include when you submit your interest in the fellowship program. Please keep your answers to questions one through three under 200 words.

1. Why are you interested in the CFTB Aspiring Leaders Fellowship?
2. What are you looking to gain from this program?
3. Tell us about a cause, nonprofit, or community initiative you care about and why.
4. Please include a list of other organizations you've been involved in, corresponding dates, and any leadership roles you've held.

## How to apply

**The deadline for applications is October 17, 2025**.

Please submit your completed application and your resume via email to Diana Santangelo (dsantangelo@cftampabay.org) and Brittany Toolsie (Brittany.Toolsie@seacoastbank.com) with the subject 'Aspiring Leaders Fellowship Application'.

Applications will be reviewed by members of Aspiring Leaders Selection Committee. Selected applicants will be invited to participate in an interview process. We will reach out to schedule interviews the week of October 20, 2025.

Applicants will be notified of next steps and onboarding details in December 2025.