

GSBI Programs: Frequently Asked Questions

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1. APPLICATION

For FAQs related to completing the application form, please take a look at the [first page of the application](#).

2. PROGRAM INFORMATION

Q: Who should apply to the Women-Led Global Social Benefit Institute (GSBI®) program?
Women leaders of for-profit, non-profit, or hybrid social enterprises who are operational (post-pilot) and addressing the needs of those living in poverty, and/or serving girls/women as customers or beneficiaries, ideally through a market-based approach. Ideal candidates can provide financial documentation and other business planning documents.

We welcome all applicants who identify as women (cisgender, transgender, and those who hold fluid/non-binary identities).

Q: My organization is a non-profit enterprise - do I qualify?

Yes, women leaders of non-profit, for-profit, or hybrid social enterprises are all encouraged to apply.

Q: How is “women-led” defined?

Miller Center defines women-led as social enterprises that have a woman in a leadership position with strategic decision-making authority, meaning that at least one of the following criteria with a focus on companies founded and led by all-women teams from the local context:

- *founded by a team of at least 50% women*
- *have a woman currently serving in a top leadership role (CEO, Executive Director, COO, etc.)*
- *51% or more women ownership*

Q: Is there a geography focus for this program?

No, the program is global and social enterprises operating all over the world are welcome to apply. However, the program is delivered in English so a strong command of the English language is required.

Q: What is the relationship between Santa Clara University, Miller Center for Social Entrepreneurship, and the GSBI?

Housed at Santa Clara University in Silicon Valley, Miller Center for Social Entrepreneurship is a center of distinction founded to connect the University's mission, values, and resources to the global community. GSBI accelerator programs are run out of Miller Center, and support social enterprises around the world through executive-level mentorship and robust programming.

Q: What are the different programs that the GSBI offers and how do I know which one I qualify for?

GSBI offers a range of programs and curricula through its stage-specific programs. Upon selection of the cohort, we identify the program that is best suited for the enterprise:

- **GSBI JumpStart accelerator** - For early-stage enterprises that are seeking to [blueprint](#) their impact strategy and business model. JumpStart is a 4-month virtual program.
- **GSBI Online accelerator** - For entrepreneurs who are either:
 - seeking to [validate](#) their impact and business models, develop a financially sustainable growth strategy, and secure the funding necessary to grow.
 - seeking to refine their expansion strategies, [scale](#) their impact, and prepare for investment.

Up to 40 enterprises are recruited into a single cohort for four-six-months. Each participating enterprise is matched with 2-3 executive mentors. The work is conducted online with videos, slides, and webinars via the Miller Center Community platform, combined with weekly one-on-one mentor calls. Each participating enterprise will develop a business plan, complete with a stage-appropriate action plan and operational and social impact metrics, as well as a slide deck for investor presentations, a two-page investment summary document, and a plan for pitching them.

- **GSBI In-Residence accelerator** - Following an assessment, a subset of the GSBI Online accelerator participants will be invited to attend a 5-day in-person program held in the San Francisco Bay Area. The In-Residence culminates with a showcase event at the [SOCAP conference](#) in October 2020. Participating enterprises will have developed a folder of materials including financial statements and strategic planning documents, plus information on governance and the board of directors. These materials demonstrate the organization's investment readiness and make it easier for potential investors to conduct due diligence, which can speed the investment process.

Check out the [GSBI page](#) on the Miller Center website to get an overview of the three programs.

Q: How many cohorts of GSBI In-residence accelerator, GSBI Online and JumpStart accelerator does the GSBI run per year?

The GSBI In-Residence accelerator is run one or more times per year. The GSBI Online accelerator and JumpStart programs are run approximately 2x a year.

Q: What are the deadlines for applying to a GSBI accelerator program?

Interested applicants can sign up for the [Miller Center newsletter](#) to receive updates on cohort dates and application deadlines. Please also [check our website](#) for cohort key dates in the sidebar. To be considered for the 2020 Women-Led GSBI Online cohort, applications must be submitted by March 2, 2020.

Q: My enterprise is not yet operational - can I still apply?

GSBI's programs are designed to best serve social enterprises that have already begun to operate, meaning that you have begun to sell your product and/or service. Earlier stage enterprises who are still in the idea stage are too early to be accepted.

Q: My enterprise does not directly address poverty - can I still apply?

It depends. GSBI programs are designed for social entrepreneurs that directly serve people living in poverty. Social enterprises with B2B (business-to-business) models that serve other social enterprises (for example through technology platforms) are eligible for GSBI and are invited to apply and have been highly successful in previous GSBI programs. Fundraising platforms are generally not a good fit for GSBI. Also, organizations that measure their primary impact with environmental metrics (as opposed to social impact metrics) are unlikely to be accepted.

Q: Can other people from my team participate in the program?

The main participant should be someone in a leadership role (ex: CEO, Executive Director, COO) who has a strong understanding of the business and the authority to make strategic decisions on behalf of the enterprise. Other members from your team are encouraged to engage where it makes sense to be involved (for example, they oversee the financials or marketing of your business). We encourage multiple participants, but rely on one main point person to manage the engagement.

For the GSBI In-Residence accelerator, Miller Center covers the cost of one participant per social enterprise, excluding airfare to and from Santa Clara, CA. One additional team member is encouraged to attend, however they are responsible for the cost of their room and board (\$1,000 USD).

Q: Do you provide funding to entrepreneurs?

Miller Center does not provide any funding to entrepreneurs. Our goal is to get the entrepreneur investment-ready and support connections to impact investors.

Q: How much does the program cost?

There is no cost for participating in the programs. All costs are covered by the fundraising efforts of Miller Center. The only expense that the social entrepreneurs are responsible for are travel costs to and from Santa Clara University for the GSBI In-Residence accelerator in October.

Q: What is the time commitment for entrepreneurs?

It varies, but the time commitment is generally 3-4 hours per week.

Q: Do the social entrepreneurs receive investment after participating in GSBI?

Often. Most [GSBI alumni](#) go on to receive funding either in the form of debt, equity, or grants. GSBI programs are designed to help social enterprises validate their business models, develop a strong justifiable ask (investment amount, type of capital, intended use of funds, return on investment, and expected impact), and develop the diligence and communications materials required for investment so the entrepreneur is confidently able to approach investors that will help them get to that next stage of growth.

Q: I currently have a full time job and am running my social enterprise on the side. Can I still apply?

Yes. If your enterprise program meets all of the eligibility criteria and you are committed to being an active participant (if selected into a GSBI program). However, most participants are those whose full-time focus is running their social enterprise.

Q: What will you gain from participating in GSBI?

If selected into one of our programs, you will come out of the GSBI with a thorough understanding of your business model and your expected social impact, a really clear financial ask, all under the guidance of executive-level Silicon Valley mentorship. In addition, you will be connected with a global network of social entrepreneurs, foundations, and impact investors.

3. MENTORSHIP

Q: Who are the mentors?

The mentors are carefully selected business executives who have demonstrated strong business acumen as well as values and skills that enable effective mentorship (trusting, honest, listening, supportive). They are high-caliber individuals who are considered trusted advisors by our social entrepreneurs and team. Each SE is paired with two to three mentors for the program duration (4-6 months). Many of them may not know your specific context or have experience in your industry, but all of them are experienced with running businesses, managing growth and risk, building teams and boards, and are skilled in asking the right questions that will help you grow your abilities as a leader.

If you would like to learn more, please [visit our Mentor webpage](#).

Q: How many mentors will I work with - do I work with the same mentor for the duration of the program?

You will be assigned two or three mentors to work with you weekly for the duration of the program. If you need more specific support, they may pull in other content experts to work with your team.

Q: How will I be paired with mentors?

We pair each team with a mentor based on your organizational needs and the expertise of our mentors.

Q: More Questions?

Please email us at: gsbi@scu.edu

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