The College of Business and Economics at Boise State University offers exceptional undergraduate and graduate students an experiential learning opportunity to participate as a full serving member of a non-profit board. Called the Student Board Fellows Program, this effort also strives to provide local non-profit boards additive business and millennial insight and participation.

(1) Is this a one-year or multi-year commitment on the part of the individual and the organization?

The goal of the program is to place a student on a local non-profit board for at least one year. If a board is looking for a longer commitment, RBI will accommodate by finding a student who is most likely going to be residing in Boise for the long-term.

(2) How does this work with board governance processes for board director recruitment and nominations?

RBI recognizes that boards often have director recruitment cycles. We seek to place a student board fellow on participating boards in summer or early fall depending on board cycles. In the past, boards have called a special term in order to place a student board fellow outside of predetermined board cycles.

(3) Would this Fellow be expected to fulfill all of the duties of regular Board members during their time (fundraising expectations, volunteer hours, etc.) or are they just observing?

The goal of the program is for the student to participate as a full fledged board member. The organization is expected to integrate the participating student as it would any other board member.

Each board operates differently and many boards have mandatory obligations. Student board fellows actively fulfill board obligations in terms of volunteer hours and fundraising expectations. If a board has a financial giving expectation, this needs to be further discussed to ensure the contribution is at a student-appropriate level or that this requirement is waived.
(4) Can our company still participate without creating a position for a full board member?

Instead of a full board member, nonprofits can create a board fellow position for the participating student. In this position students are still provided an opportunity to attend board meeting, learn about the board governance process and participate in board work. However, the operate more as an intern related to board matters, versus becoming a full voting member of the board. This type of appointment is for a one-year cycle or as determined by the student and the nonprofit board.

(5) How are students placed on the board?

Student Board Fellow are selected through a rigorous application process that includes an interview. The selection committee then works to intentionally place participating students on a board that align with their values and skill sets. We actively recruit students who are passionate about the board mission as well as students who are able to fulfill the board term. Nonprofit boards may also identify specific skill sets they need for their board activities (e.g. finance, accounting, strategy). We also encourage nonprofit boards to review student resumes and interview students before finalizing a commitment to a student to join their board.