



DOWNTOWN PROJECT FELLOWSHIP

Over 249 million Americans, or two thirds of the US population, live in cities. With high poverty rates, crumbling infrastructure, and abandoned buildings, many cities are in desperate need of reinvention. Now more than ever, the well-being of human society depends upon our ability to do just that. The Downtown Project Fellowship is designed to help develop young talent to meet these challenges by creating a bridge between academic coursework and real world application. Selected on a competitive basis, ten students will be chosen as “Downtown Project Fellows” in the pilot year to participate in the program.

What Is The Downtown Project?

Spearheaded by Zappos CEO Tony Hsieh, the Downtown Project is a group of people committed to transforming Downtown Las Vegas into the “most community-focused large city in the world.” To accomplish this objective,

Hsieh and a few partners plan to spend \$350 million to develop and build a small city in the roughly 1.5-square mile downtown area around the Fremont East and Arts District areas. They are investing \$100 million in real estate, \$100 million in residential development, \$50 million in small businesses, \$50 million in education, and \$50 million in tech startups through the VegasTech Fund. The Downtown Project’s “big bet” is that accelerating community, learning, and serendipity will lead to accelerating happiness, innovation, and productivity.

Part One: (Spring Semester 2013)

The (610:111) “Reimagining Downtown” course will study cities and communities. What problems are modern cities facing? Why have some old industrial cities like Detroit continued to decline, while others like Chicago, New York, and Boston rebounded?



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The course will also:

- Present concepts of economic development
- Introduce social entrepreneurship
- Utilize Las Vegas' Downtown Project (downtownproject.com) and Zappos (www.zappos.com) as case studies, among others.
- Examine how "big ideas" happen
- Ask student teams to develop and present a project proposal that is designed to enrich lives in the Fremont East and Arts District areas of Las Vegas

Students involved in the course will visit the City's Fremont East entertainment district during Spring Break, observe the Downtown Project initiative directly, and present their proposal ideas to Tony Hsieh/ Downtown Project staff. Tony and the Downtown Project staff will help facilitate the visit, i.e. housing, food stipend, itinerary. Students will be responsible for airfare and minor incidentals.

Part Two: (June and July, 2013)

On a competitive basis, one proposal will be selected for development in Las Vegas and awarded \$50,000. Students

will be staggered over the summer to facilitate the project's implementation. (Months of June and July) Housing and a food stipend are included. Students will be responsible for airfare and minor incidentals.

A critical criterion in the selection process will be the sustainability of the plan. All students who participate in the "Reimagining Downtown" class are committing to the summer experience.

Registration for the course will be competitive and based on the following criteria:

- Commitment to service
- Skill in leading others
- Interest in issues related to social entrepreneurship, urban renewal, community building, or social justice
- Demonstrated ability to complete difficult and ambiguous projects, with diverse and creative approaches, relative to other applicants.
- Junior or senior status and good academic standing

Please note: A concerted effort will be made to select students from varied backgrounds, disciplines, and life experiences.

