

## **Branching Streams Visiting Teacher Fellowship Program (VTFP)**

### **Position Overview**

San Francisco Zen Center's Visiting Teacher Fellowship Program offers resources to support the growth, development and sustainability of Affiliate sanghas. The VTFP provides, as well, the opportunity for the growth, development and leadership training for SFZC committed practitioners.

Visiting Teacher Fellows provide dharma-related services (classes, practice discussions, temple training, ceremonies, etc.) as a partner to the Affiliate sangha guiding teacher, or as a substitute if the guiding teacher (or other spiritual leader) is away from the sangha due to professional development, medical, leave-of-absence, or other reasons.

The practice and administrative responsibilities that the prospective Fellow fulfills at SFZC need to be taken into consideration when being offered a Fellowship position.

### **Duties & Responsibilities**

These will be specified by the requesting sangha, and agreed to by that sangha, the SFZC Branching Streams Liaison, and the Visiting Teacher. The duties and responsibilities may include, but are not limited to:

- Participating in the full temple schedule
- Teaching classes and giving dharma talks
- Training the doanryo
- Offering practice discussion
- Cleaning / chidening the temple
- Supervising or leading ceremonies (as Doshi)
- Teaching rakusu and okesa sewing (if VTF is qualified)
- Assisting with special event planning
- Preparing some meals, especially when Guest Teachers are visiting
- Doing some office work, as needed to support temple functions

### **Term of Position**

The term of the Visiting Teacher Fellow position will be determined according to the circumstances of the specific situation, including the needs of the Affiliate

sangha and the availability of the Visiting Teacher Fellow. The Visiting Teacher Fellow position may extend up to six months in length.

## **Qualifications**

### Prerequisites:

Dharma Transmission, or at least 8 years experience as a priest at SFZC, including having served as Shuso at an SFZC Practice Period.

### *Skills and experience:*

- Successful experience in teaching dharma classes/trainings and deep familiarity with Suzuki Roshi's teaching
- Experience in giving practice discussions, including those involving difficult conversations/behavior, and knowledge of supporting resources (such as counseling, addiction treatment, etc.)
- Demonstrates personal and professional integrity at all times, consistent with SFZC's vision, mission and values, and the precepts of our practice
- Possesses strong written and verbal communication skills
- Demonstrates cross-cultural awareness and sensitivity
- Competent in executing tasks and applying good judgment, especially in the absence of supervision or instruction (important if candidate will be substituting for an absent guiding teacher)
- Ability to meet multiple priorities simultaneously and take initiative
- Demonstrates resourcefulness and flexibility
- Ability to interact at all levels of an organization and to work collaboratively with lay leaders (such as the sangha's Board of Directors), including a willingness to receive feedback to help further develop the position
- Familiarity with SFZC practice forms, and the ability to teach those forms to others from a dharma perspective
- Legally eligible to work in the United States; no sponsorship provided

## **Support and Compensation**

The general principle is that both SFZC and the requesting sangha would share in financial support for the Visiting Teacher Fellow. Travel expenses and room and board would normally be covered by the requesting sangha. SFZC would cover the Fellow's stipend/living expenses, and health insurance; and their SFZC seniority would continue to accrue.