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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Open Access announces Wells Fargo as 2024 Leading Fiscal Sponsor at the Trailblazer Level**

**Nationwide – August 12, 2024** – Open Access proudly announces Wells Fargo as the 2024 Leading Fiscal Sponsor at the Trailblazer Level for the fellowship program. This significant support comes from The Wells Fargo Foundation's Housing Access and Affordability Philanthropy division for Philanthropy and Community Impact. This sponsorship reaffirms Wells Fargo's commitment to fostering an inclusive, sustainable future by opening pathways to economic advancement, championing quality, affordable homes, empowering small businesses to thrive, and driving an equity-focused transition to a low-carbon economy.

The Open Access Fellowship is dedicated to increasing Black and Latinx representation within community development companies serving inclusive communities. Despite concentrated efforts in these areas, there is still a significant lack of diversity among professionals in the industry. Through comprehensive training and job placement assistance, the fellowship develops talent to bridge this representation gap. Wells Fargo's support is instrumental in furthering this mission, contributing to building an inclusive community development sector. Donations directly support the program, which offers industry training with fellowship Sponsors throughout the country for 20+ professionals annually to work in the Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) space.

The program consists of three components:

- **Education:** Provided by training partners to ensure fellows are equipped with industry knowledge.
- **Job Training:** Offered by various firms providing paid job opportunities.
- **Mentorship:** Includes organized events such as Fireside Chats and Virtual Networking Days to expose fellows to other industry professionals.

Financing community development investments in Low-to-Moderate Income (LMI) communities often requires a creative mix of public, private, and philanthropic resources. The Open Access fellowship, a three-month immersion experience, creates an opportunity for professionals from diverse backgrounds to be exposed to the world of community development finance by being placed in an environment where they can receive tutelage and be trained to ultimately pursue career paths in this industry.

**Upcoming 2024 Impact Report** Open Access will release its 2024 Impact Report at the end of the summer. This report will highlight the fellowship program's achievements, the success of the 2nd Annual UpNext mixer - an evening of inspiration and networking for the alumni, board members, sponsors, and community support, which is crucial for sustaining the momentum of the Open Access initiative, year-round virtual events, and the launch of the Open Access podcast series. This report is an essential resource for understanding the impact of the Open Access Fellowship and the continued need for support in this area.

**2024 Program Sponsors:** Trailblazer: Wells Fargo | Executive: US BANK, JP Morgan Chase | Founder's Circle: Baker Tilly US, LLP. National Equity Fund, TELACU, Monge Capital, Classic Lake, Schwab | Underwriters: M&T Bank, Huntington Bank, National Trust Community Investment Corporation, Cherry Bekaert, Sabio Enterprises, Stonehenge Capital, and Dudley Ventures/ Valley. A special thank you to our Trailblazer Sponsor, Novogradac for their in-kind donations.

**About Open Access** The Open Access Fellowship is dedicated to increasing Black and Latinx representation within community development companies serving underrepresented groups, with a focus on Low-to-Moderate Income (LMI) communities. The program offers comprehensive training and job placement assistance to develop talent and bridge the representation gap in the industry. Through its efforts, Open Access empowers underserved groups, giving voice to their needs and priorities, and fostering an inclusive community development sector that truly understands and advocates for the people it aims to help. The application round for Open Access 2025 will open in the late fall, and the cohort will run in late spring/early summer. Learn more about becoming a fellowship host for 2025 or a Sponsor by visiting the provided links:

[2025 Fellowship Host Form](#) | [2025 Sponsor Form](#)

**About Wells Fargo** Wells Fargo & Company (NYSE: WFC) is a leading financial services company with approximately \$1.9 trillion in assets. The company serves one in three U.S. households and more than 10% of small businesses in the U.S. Wells Fargo is a leading middle-market banking provider in the U.S., offering a diversified set of banking, investment, and mortgage products and services through its four reportable operating segments: Consumer Banking and Lending, Commercial Banking, Corporate and Investment Banking, and Wealth & Investment Management. Wells Fargo ranked No. 41 on Fortune's 2022 rankings of America's largest corporations. The company focuses its social impact on building a sustainable, inclusive future by supporting housing affordability, small business growth, financial health, and a low-carbon economy.

For more information about the Open Access Fellowship and how to support this initiative, visit [open-access.us](https://open-access.us) or contact The Gift Agency, LLC at [pr@thegiftagency.com](mailto:pr@thegiftagency.com).

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