



SOURCE Nonprofit Consulting

2020-21 Hiring Transformation

In Fall 2020, SOURCE began a complete transformation of its organizational hiring and recruiting practices. Dedicated to improving the applicant experience and producing more inclusive, fair hiring decisions, Managers Kelly Lyons '21 and Katrina Frei-Herrmann '22 rebuilt SOURCE's approach from the ground up. SOURCE is thrilled to share our new process, applicant feedback, and key takeaways as we work toward greater diversity and inclusivity as a Claremont McKenna College organization. We believe these changes in our hiring process mark a great stride forward, and we're excited to keep improving!

Summary & Key Takeaways



We adjusted our hiring team size, hiring timeline, and evaluation criteria to be more accessible and fair in our process



We changed our written application to simplify our requirements and reduce the need for background knowledge or prior experience



We expanded our recruiting efforts to provide more opportunities for applicants to connect, learn more, and feel welcome in SOURCE



We prioritized accessibility and inclusivity in our outreach, such as affinity group collaboration and content captioning/alternative text



We offered feedback for all applicants to support growth, and asked for anonymous applicant feedback to improve our future processes

Introduction & Background

SOURCE is a student-run nonprofit consulting organization at Claremont McKenna College (CMC) dedicated to empowering nonprofits and developing students. Each year, we hire students from CMC to work directly with local nonprofit leaders, build their professional skills, and join our SOURCE student community. In all of our work, we strive to be *service-oriented, team players, active learners, critical thinkers, and engaged community members.*

In SOURCE, we value different perspectives, backgrounds, and identities; this diversity strengthens our work and enriches our student community. However, we recognized that our previous external hiring process did not reflect a commitment to diversity and inclusion in the way we hoped. Unintentionally, we were perpetuating barriers and biases that prevented SOURCE from offering a fair and inclusive hiring experience for *all* students. Passionate about taking important steps forward as an organization, we researched, learned, reimagined, and created a new process with inclusivity and accessibility top of mind. While we are still growing as an organization, we see the impact these changes have had on our community and applicants. In the pages that follow, we have outlined the transformation and some of our applicant feedback in response to our shifts.

Our Approach & First Steps

First, Managers Kelly and Katrina hired 3 SOURCE members to join the SOURCE Hiring Team: Somu Amujala '23, Kira Hirsch '23, and Lucie Kapner '22. Previously, SOURCE's hiring team consisted of 9 members: all 7 Client Leads and both Managers. While each member brought a valuable perspective to the process, the large size of the team made for an intimidating interview setting and difficulty coordinating change. As a small, focused team, we had greater flexibility and space to reimagine the process from the start.



Kelly Lyons



**Katrina
Frei-Herrmann**



Somu Amujala



Kira Hirsch



Lucie Kapner



Second, we met with CMC staff and administrators to ask questions, expand our perspectives, and get feedback. We met with Nyree Gray, CMC’s Associate Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion and Chief Civil Rights Officer, to discuss ethical hiring and action for greater inclusivity. She was instrumental in helping us to identify our own biases, explore new options for our process, and build structures for more fair decision-making. We also met with Kari Rood, CMC’s Assistant Dean of Students for Disability Services and Academic Success, to learn more about ways to we could make our process more accessible for all students. Kari helped us to identify concrete action steps to help students of all identities engage successfully and fairly in our process. Together with these incredible mentors, we began refining our goals and drafting a new process that reflected our hiring needs and objectives.

Setting Clear & Guiding Hiring Goals



Identify concrete and inclusive applicant attributes that matter most to success in SOURCE for more fair candidate assessment



Develop hiring materials and structures that reflect these attributes and promote success for a diverse range of students



Ensure our language, processes, and expectations are clear, transparent, encouraging, and approachable for all students



Help applicants evaluate their fit with SOURCE through open and accessible recruitment efforts and materials



Facilitate intentional feedback exchanges and record impact for future iterations and growth

Creating Accessible Recruiting Sessions & Materials

The success of our process starts with the first interactions we have with students and on-campus groups. Prioritizing accessibility and transparency, we designed recruiting efforts to help CMC students learn about SOURCE, ask questions, and feel comfortable! Here are some of the highlights of our recruiting efforts:

Recruiting Sessions

- General Information Session (offered live and as a recording)
- Applying for SOURCE Support Session (offered live and as a recording)
- General Office Hours with SOURCEies (every day for a week, 6 hours total)
 - Including a session hosted by a member of APAM for APAM students
- Application Support Office Hours with Managers (4 hours total)

Online Materials

- “Day in the Life of a SOURCEie” on Instagram (3 takeovers to highlight different experiences)
- Regular Q&As on Instagram for quick questions, with captioning and alternative text
- SOURCEies personal testimonies on Instagram about different components of SOURCE
- Emails from affinity group leaders introducing SOURCE and our recruiting resources
- Comprehensive Google Document with all hiring deadlines, materials, and expectations

“Applying for SOURCE” Support Session

Hoping to join our SOURCE team? Join us for the Applying for SOURCE Support Session! We will outline the application process, our hiring timeline, and answer any questions you may have. This session is *highly encouraged* for anyone who is looking to join SOURCE this spring. Applicants can also email us with individual questions.

Date: Monday, February 1, 2021 at 5:30-7:00pm PST

Event Access: Zoom [link](#) (Meeting ID: 926 9727 7736, Password: apply2021)

Recording: [Video](#) (Password: wajRR=+5) & [Slide Deck](#)

Excerpts from
our public
hiring
document

1/31	2/1 Applying to SOURCE Session	2/2 General Office Hours	2/3 CMC Club Fair General Office Hours (x2)	2/4 Application Support Hours General Office Hours	2/5 Application Support Hours	2/6
2/7 Application Due @ 1:00 pm PST	2/8	2/9	2/10	2/11	2/12 Individual Interviews	2/13 Individual Interviews

“The calendar was a great way to communicate the deadlines and requirements to students. It was really helpful having all the information in that one document.” — 2021 Applicant

Building a New Process

Based on our work with campus mentors, we redesigned our process! Here are some highlights:

Written Application

Includes 3 short personal statements (Ex. “What excites you?”) and a nonprofit case asking applicants to answer 5 questions using the provided information about a fictitious nonprofit.

Key Improvements:

- Removed extracurricular question to remove pressure for first-years
- Removed GPA question
- Asked applicants to identify skills they are interested in rather than those they already have
- Provided all information necessary to answer the case questions to reduce advantages based on prior knowledge or experiences that are not necessary for success in SOURCE
- Provided clear evaluation criteria: writing, critical thinking, and synthesization skills

First Evaluation & Cut

For this initial evaluation, we completely anonymized applications to minimize bias. We used student IDs to track applicants and used a rubric with sample answers to focus our scoring on our hiring criteria. This new approach facilitated a more thoughtful, fair deliberation process.

Individual Interview

Includes 6 questions to assess SOURCE fit and interest, followed by time for applicant questions

Key Improvements:

- Removed the group interview round for a more approachable process
- Created a group collaboration analysis video for applicants to watch before the interview, showing different group dynamics and collaboration efforts in action
- Questions were shared with applicants 24 hours ahead of the interview
- Removed formal dress code for more inclusivity

Final Evaluation & Hiring Decisions

We conducted independent and group deliberations to minimize bias and balance the incoming class. For all applicants, we offered to give feedback and asked for feedback about our process.

Inside Look: Individual Interview Questions

With our five hiring values in hand (service-oriented, team player, active learner, critical thinker, and engaged community member), we wrote focused and approachable interview questions such as “Describe a time you challenged yourself to learn something new to accomplish a goal. What was that goal?”

These questions were shared with applicants 24 hours before their interview to allow applicants to collect their thoughts and come feeling comfortable. Rather than assessing their ability to talk on the spot, we prioritized applicant ease and quality answers that showed us the applicant’s personality and interests.

Inside Look: Individual Feedback for Applicants

As a student group dedicated to student development, we offered to give any applicant feedback on their application. Nearly 30 applicants that we did not hire requested feedback, so we offered each a personalized feedback sheet answering the following questions:

1. What is something that really stood out to us from your application?
2. What is something that you could improve in?
3. How can you work towards improving that area?

About Our Applicant Pool

We received a more diverse pool of applicants than ever before, in terms of interests, class years, and backgrounds. While we did not collect formal information about applicant identities, such as race or gender, our written questions invited applicants to share their different perspectives and identities in whatever ways felt most comfortable for them.

56%

First Year Students

37%

Second Year Students

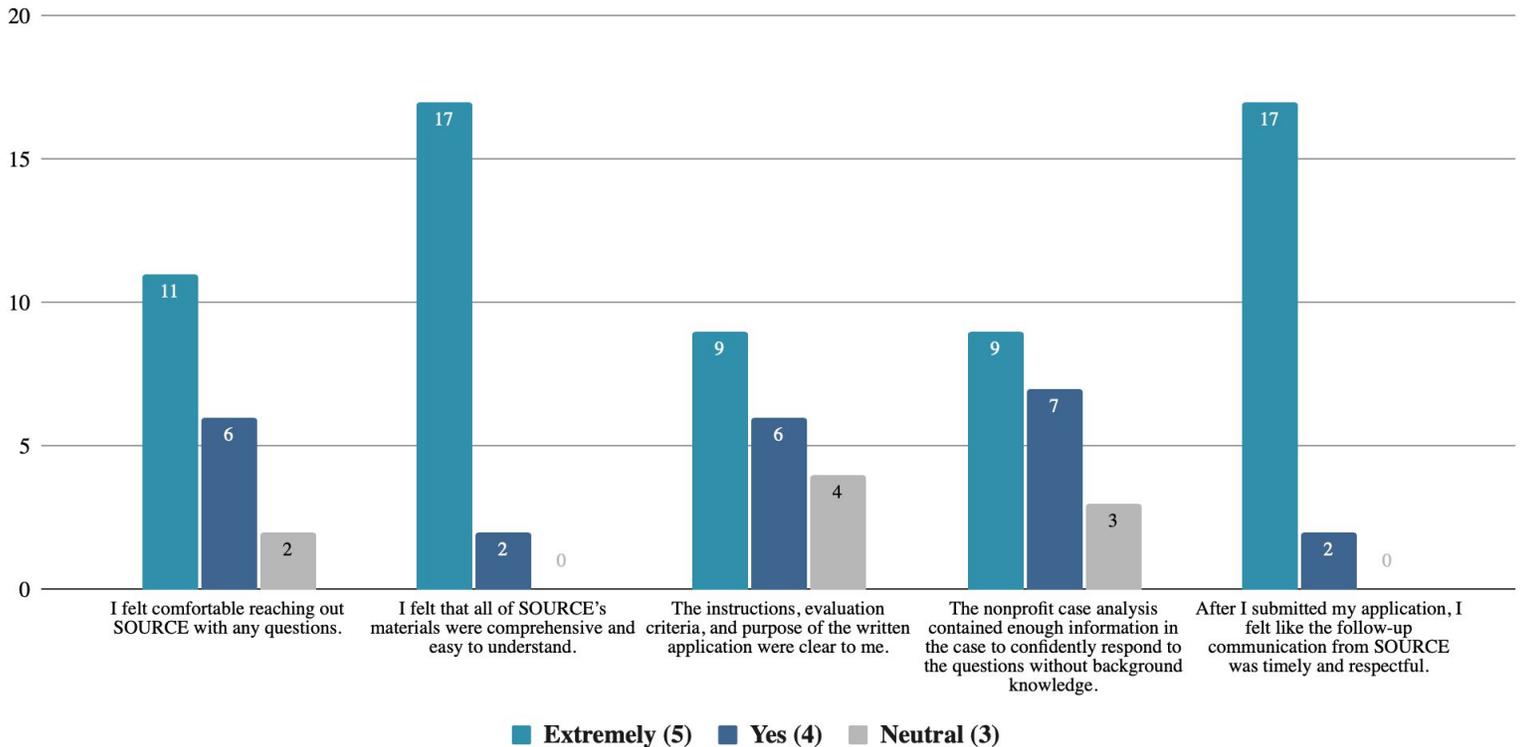
7%

Third Year Students

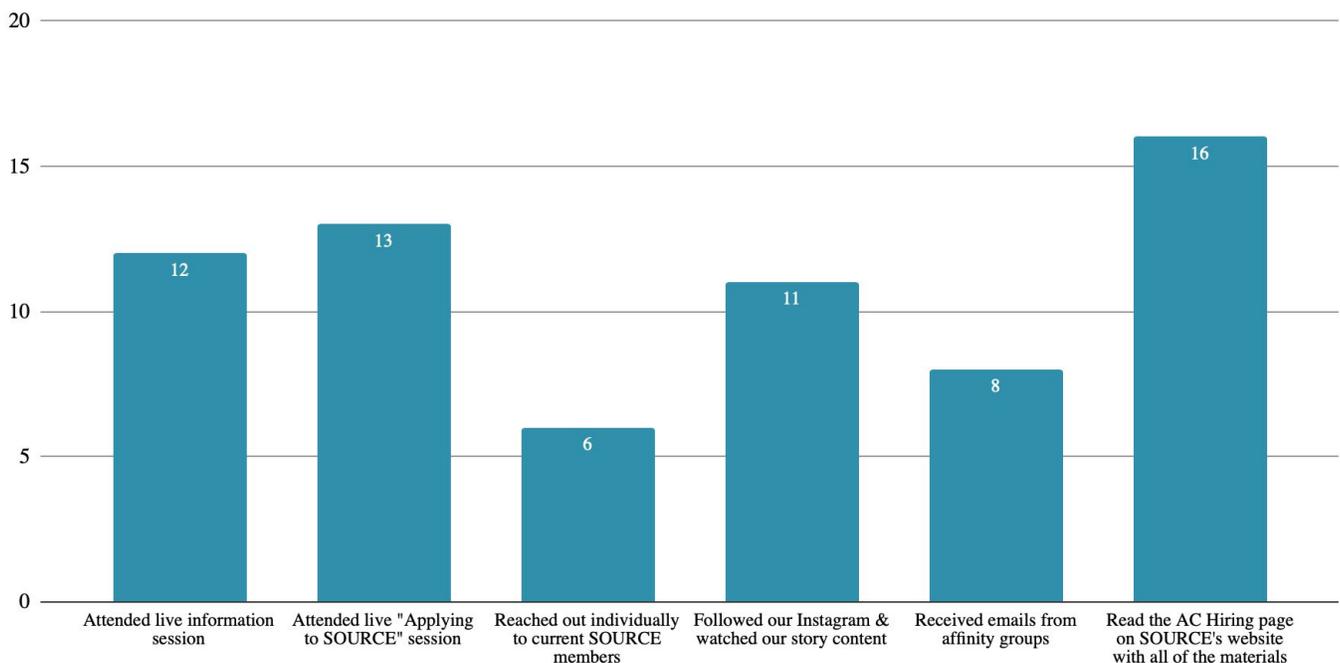
Applicant Feedback

We asked all applicants to provide anonymous feedback to help us learn from this year and make improvements moving forward. Here are some highlights from the 19 responses we received:

Written Application Feedback

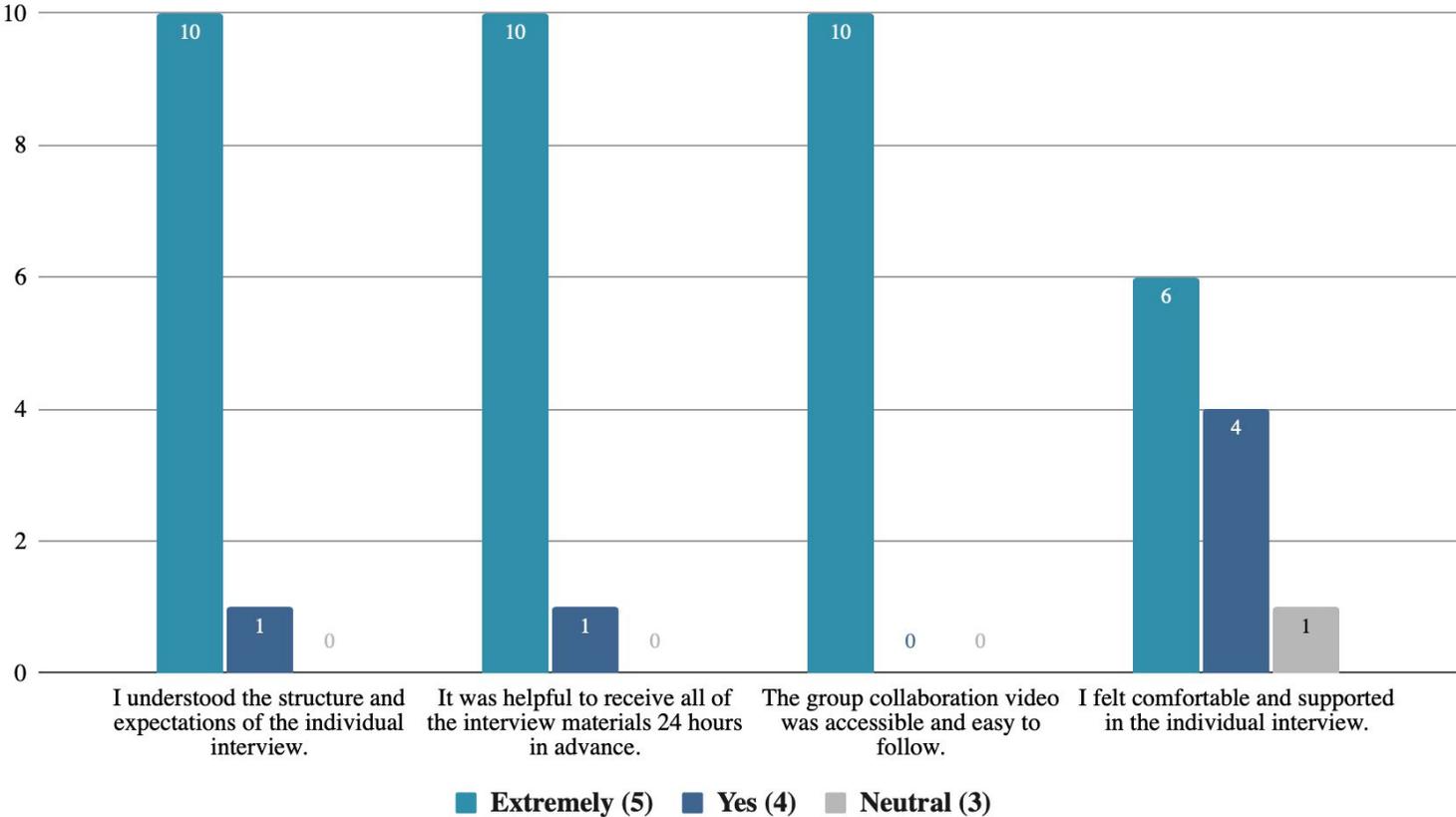


Recruiting Resource Usage



Of the 19 responses we received, 8 were from applicants who did not move beyond the written application round. Although they did not advance in the process, they generally had very positive feedback about their experience!

Individual Interview Feedback



“I appreciated how applicants knew exactly what to expect during the individual interview.” — 2021 Applicant

“The application Google Document was the most helpful because it made consulting seem less daunting!” — 2021 Applicant

**“I thought the application was well written, and the sessions were all helpful. I really appreciate the feedback I received!”
— 2021 Applicant**

Main Takeaways & What's Next

- 1** *We should continue with this year's recruiting approach, with more focus on connecting with affinity groups and providing more informal sessions*

Our online materials and sessions were well-focused and helpful for applicants, especially our hiring landing page and social media content. To improve, we should continue building relationships with affinity groups on-campus and expand our outreach efforts to welcome all students.
- 2** *Our written application process was much improved, but needs additional adjustments to be more approachable and inclusive.*

While many applicants said the written application reflected SOURCE's work well and felt approachable, some applicants felt it was too long and overwhelming. To improve, we should reevaluate our nonprofit case to ensure it is focused and as accessible as possible to all applicants. *This is our greatest area for growth based on our applicant feedback.*
- 3** *We should continue without a group interview round and conduct the individual interview with greater focus on supporting applicants in the process*

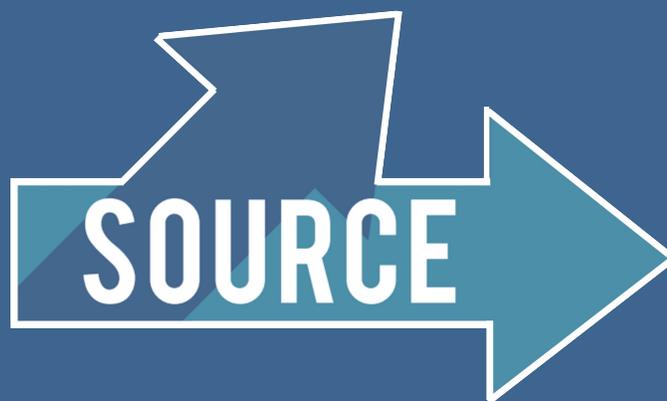
Applicant feedback from the individual interview round was quite positive, especially about the integration of a group collaboration video in place of the group interview. We should continue with this approach, and work on helping applicants to feel more comfortable in the interview itself.

Our Plan of Action

Based on the success and shortcomings of this year's process, we are ready to take intentional action to continue improving our hiring process! Here are some of our next steps:



Thank you for reading! This is an important initiative for SOURCE and really appreciate your support as we work to make our organization a more diverse and inclusive space. If you have any questions on the content of this report, email source@cmc.edu.



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