



LDR – Program Description

Leadership Development Roundtable (LDR) is the signature program of Five Frogs, Inc., a nonprofit with the mission to build a powerful movement of diverse leaders with the competencies, mindset, drive and relationships necessary to create lasting, positive change for an equitable Connecticut. LDR is a strengths-based, action-oriented experience.

Over the course of the program, leaders:

- acquire the mindset, knowledge, and vision to lead organizations effectively;
- learn from different experiences and perspectives in a diverse cohort of peers;
- clarify their own strengths, work one-on-one with a leadership coach, and implement a personalized development plan to ensure continuous improvement;
- execute a leadership project that tackles a challenge at their organization and stretches their skills;
- connect with LDR alumni and other Five Frogs' friends to expand their professional network; and
- establish relationships that will last a lifetime.

History: LDR was launched in 2008 by [Meghan Lowney](#), MSW, then a consultant to nonprofits, and with the support of Fairfield County's Community Foundation. The need for the program was apparent to Meghan from her own work as an Executive Director; she had herself faced challenges recruiting, retaining and growing leaders for her small, resource constrained organization. As a consultant, she heard similar stories from her peers and clients. Then, on behalf of the CT Association for Nonprofits, she convened focus groups in response to an article by Tom Tierney, "The Nonprofit Sector's [Leadership Deficit](#)," wherein she sought to understand what support younger generations needed and wanted. Following additional research and design, Lowney launched the pilot. Over the years, LDR has been improved based on feedback from leaders.

Approach: LDR uses a cohort model to deepen relationships and encourage collaboration among Connecticut leaders. The cohort gathers for ten full-day **Roundtable sessions** to learn and work together. The sessions are professionally facilitated and provide opportunity for discussion, practice and reflection. They are professionally facilitated, cover key concepts (e.g. Duke University's [Six Domains of Leadership](#), system inequities), include special guests, and challenge LDR leaders to push their own learning, and be a resource to their peers.

Leaders practice their leadership between Roundtable sessions. They utilize guided, individual reflection as well as the live support of their **Changemaker Group**, a small peer support group that meets or uses conference calls to connect. In addition, leaders are assigned a volunteer mentor with whom they meet twice. Through the "**Mentor Match**," each leader is connected with a seasoned nonprofit executive—an opportunity for the LDR leader to develop a professional relationship with an experienced mentor and learn from their individual leadership style.

During the Program, leaders craft an **individual learning plan** and receive **one-on-one coaching** from a professional leadership coach to help achieve their development goals. LDR leaders also work with their executive directors to plan and execute a **leadership project** that tackles a business challenge at their respective organization.

LDR leaders say it best in assessing the value of the program:

"While every non-profit organization tackles its own obstacles on the path to executing its vision, there is an existing wealth of experience among the non-profit leaders in Connecticut. LDR works to connect those leaders, who share their experience and insights, in a program that fosters development of the strengths that each leader brings to the table." –LDR Participant

"This is an opportunity to become more connected with peers in the CT nonprofit community, to share what's working well both as an individual and at specific organizations. It's a rare opportunity to have structured time to be in a learning community with minimal interference from workplace politics, where you can problem solve together." –LDR Participant

The program is delivered by an energetic and talented [team](#). This includes program facilitators, leadership coaches and program administrators. Many alumni are thrilled to participate in these roles and as guest speakers, mentors and supporters. In addition, hundreds of volunteers participate each year.

Who should apply?

LDR is open to all leaders currently employed by a 501c3 nonprofit organization in Connecticut. Recruitment is based on the belief that the strongest LDR cohorts reflect diversity in race, socioeconomic status, gender, age, and experience. Five Frogs is especially focused on recruiting leaders of color and those representing underserved populations.

In order to participate, applicants must:

- receive written endorsement of their executive director/CEO (or board chair if the applicant is the most senior leader of the organization)
- manage at least one staff member or hold significant supervisory experience over interns, volunteers, and temporary staff
- demonstrate a commitment to the [mission](#) of Five Frogs

Leaders should exhibit an eagerness to learn by doing and a willingness to share lessons with others. The ideal LDR candidate is a self-motivated nonprofit leader who is curious, reflective, and passionate about effecting social change.

Note: Selection for participation in the cohort will be based upon priority criteria as well as composition of a strong, diverse cohort.