

Ready, Set, Lead! Aspiring Leader Expectations and Program Overview

About: Part of the ALL IN Initiative, Ready, Set, Lead! is a data-informed WNY Women's Foundation program. It addresses the gender gap in leadership by facilitating career, personal, and community development for women and gender minorities in the first five years of a career. Aspiring Leaders will receive six months of structured mentorship from established community leaders, six educational sessions focused on building leadership acumen, formal coaching, and access to a diverse community network of cohort colleagues. They will develop new skills, identify areas for growth, and develop a pathway to prepare for future leadership positions.

Program length:

- 9 months total
- 6 months of structured mentorship January 2026 through July 2026

Expectations of an Aspiring Leader:

- Attend "Meet your Mentor" event in January 2026 and the additional four educational sessions.
- Complete Clifton StrengthsFinder Assessment and return results to WNY Women's Foundation.
- Develop a mentorship plan with your mentor using a template provided by the WNY Women's Foundation.
- Meet with your mentor **at least** monthly, holding yourself and your mentor accountable to a schedule.
 - Aspiring Leaders are responsible for initiating contact, providing goals, and planning of the meetings.

Mentors will provide mentees with:

- Motivation to create a self-development plan and achieve three obtainable goals based on intake.
- Guidance and support by creating an atmosphere of openness, meaningful communication, and trust.
- Assistance in identifying career goals and objectives and ways to achieve them.
- **Please note: mentors are not a leadership coach or a sponsor.**

Aspiring Leader learning outcomes will be measured by:

- Goal tracking and outcome updating
- Reflection and surveys after each educational training

Timeline

2025

- Applications due & notifications of acceptance sent

January - July 2026

- "Meet your Mentor" event
- Mentoring - meet with your mentor at least monthly. Formal mentorship ends July 1st.
- 6 educational sessions
- WNYWF Women's Leadership Summit
- Networking event

Summer 2026

- One hour long coaching session
- Optional networking event

Fall 2026

- Program graduation

Cost: \$500 per Aspiring Leader. Monthly payment plans available for individuals.