

Making the Case to Participate in LDI

Interested in applying for the WLA Leadership Institute? Now is the time to convince your supervisor to provide professional and financial support. Participants are selected through a competitive application process - be sure you can say yes if you are selected!

In this time of tight budgets and lean staffing levels, making the case to participate is even more important. You must understand the potential benefits to you and your library/institution - and be able to communicate those benefits effectively. Use the following information to help make your case.

About the WLA Leadership Development Institute - Background

The Wisconsin Library Association (WLA) aims to develop goal-oriented and agile library leaders who are creative problem solvers able to navigate uncertainty, rapidly changing technology, and shrinking resources. WLA helps members develop these skills by offering a range of volunteer, networking, and mentoring opportunities, and formally through training opportunities like the Leadership Development Institute - LDI.

The 2023 Leadership Development Institute is a highly immersive training program designed specifically for our profession. Based on several overarching leadership competencies, participants will interact in cohort groups throughout the six-month program. Each module includes the introduction of problem-solving skills and real-life applications. Instructors represent a wide range of disciplines both within the library community as well as outside of the profession.

Based on feedback from past Institute participants and our current membership and including recommendations from UW-Madison Extension instructors, the 2023 LDI program curriculum has been refreshed with updated content and a new format designed to make the program more inclusive. The curriculum was designed in partnership with UW-Madison Extension and will be delivered by experts in adult learning principles and national library consultants.

Who is encouraged to apply?

We strive to have a mix of emerging and experienced leaders representing a variety of roles and library types participate in the program.

- People from various departments in library organizations, including youth services, outreach, adult services, marketing, technical services, etc.

- People across the organizational hierarchy: frontline staff, administration, directors, emerging and incumbent leaders, etc.
- People from all backgrounds and identities, including those who identify as BIPOC, neurodivergent, disabled, or LGBTQ+.

Time Commitment

LDI 2023 will kick off as a one-day, in-person pre-conference workshop in April, followed by twice monthly (10 sessions total) virtual sessions May - September, and conclude with an in-person session in October. Participants are required to attend all sessions.

- April 26 - In-person kick off, Best Western Premier Conference Center, Oshkosh, WI (co-located at the WAPL conference)
- May - September Virtual sessions
 - 2nd & 4th Wednesday of the month, 2 - 3:30 p.m. *Dates/times subject to change.*
 - Participants unable to attend in person will be required to watch the session recording and post feedback/discussion questions to the cohort on the LDI Slack channel within two weeks of the session.
- October 24 - In-person final session/conclusion, Madison Marriott West, Middleton, WI (co-located at the WLA fall conference)

Tuition Fee Includes:

- Thirteen distinct educational programs developed and delivered by highly skilled experts from both in and outside the library sector. As a bonus, participants will also have access to an virtual advocacy series offered through the UW-Madison iSchool Continuing Education Department at a reduced rate.
- Leadership assessments and related curriculum materials.
- Live and online virtual community for networking and opportunities to build community among participants.
- Meals and refreshments for in-person sessions.

Why Your Participation in the WLA Leadership Development Institute Will Benefit Your Library

- You will learn best practices and tips from cohort members and instructors that you can take back to your workplace.
- Equipped with ideas and strategies from experts, you will become a more effective advocate for your library.

- You will strengthen your library's network as you connect with and learn from members of your cohort.
- You will come away with a fresh perspective and new ideas - a positive energy that will impact your coworkers and your patrons.
- Your participation will help demonstrate to the Wisconsin library community that your workplace values professional development and innovation - valuable recruiting tools.

For Supervisors - Why Approve Sending a Staff Person to LDI?

- The program is designed for both experienced and emerging leaders, giving you the opportunity to provide professional development to high-performing staff at any level.
- A strategic mix of in-person and virtual events makes the program accessible to attendees working in any location.
- Affordable tuition offers a cost-effective professional development opportunity when compared to other similar programs.
- Cohort members will bring inspiration and a fresh perspective back to their workplace - an effective employee retention strategy for you!
- Challenge your staff person to share what they've learned with their colleagues - giving them the opportunity to show leadership and optimize your investment.
- Virtual sessions can be watched on attendees' own time to align with your busy workplace and lean staff capacity.
- Employees who have a toolbox of leadership skills at the ready will prepare them to take on greater challenges in the future.