

Letter of Intent to Host a Lead For America Fellow

Communities and organizations like yours are building the future. We deeply admire your action in service of stronger communities, and a more resilient country. This letter indicates your commitment to join a group of communities dedicated to local changemaking. Once you have reviewed and agreed to the terms, please submit the following online Host Application [form](#). We are honored that you are a part of the LFA community!

Agreeing to the terms of this document signifies that my office or department intends — pending a well-suited match with a Fellow and the procurement of sufficient financial resources to cover the fellowship costs — to participate in good faith as a host community for the Hometown Fellowship Program with Lead For America. We recognize the need to identify and develop the next generation of dynamic and diverse leaders to assume positions that strengthen public institutions and communities.

As a host partner, we agree to meet the following requirements in the hosting process:

1. Provide meaningful work for a Fellow.
2. Envision and submit a project scope.
3. Assign an internal champion/mentor to the Fellow beyond their day-to-day supervisor.
4. Make an effort to retain the Fellow in the community long-term.
5. Contribute to the fellowship cost to the best of our financial ability, and work with community partners and LFA to raise any outstanding costs if applicable.

We understand the following expectations and components of LFA programming:

Logistics:

- During the two years, we will be participating in a quarterly evaluation process that will strengthen the program in the coming years.
- While LFA provides robust support externally and the Fellow will have a direct day-to-day supervisor, we understand that it is essential that a key internal stakeholder, (executive director, city/county manager, mayor, council-member, department head, tribal elder, etc), directly mentors the Fellow during the two years.
- We will encourage our Fellow to find meaningful employment in our offices or elsewhere in the community to help retain them locally beyond the two years of the fellowship.

Program activities:

This fellowship is a long term investment in your community, both in a Fellow's ability to add critical capacity to your department's work, but also in their strengthening of the fabric of the community writ large. In service of this vision of community revitalization, the Fellowship is framed around 4 key components, the project scope, leadership development, a community project, and the multiplier effect. Please read on below to see how hosts are involved in each component!

1. Project Scope

- We will submit an initial project scope to LFA. LFA staff will joyfully assist us in creating and drafting the scope as is helpful. We understand that a completed project scope is essential for LFA staff to effectively recruit for a candidate and/or initiate fundraising for a position.
- In all cases, the purpose of the project scope is to create an enriching professional learning experience for the Fellow that focuses on tackling challenges of high importance in the community that went previously unaddressed or under-resourced. The scope may evolve later in the process with contributions from the Fellow.
- If we are a pre-confirmed placement, we will submit the project scope to LFA staff before interviewing with Endorsed Finalists.
- If we are an applicant-driven placement, we will submit the project scope in collaboration with our LFA Endorsed Finalist.

2. Leadership Development

- Fellows undergo a four-week summer training institute with LFA before their two-year term begins on August 1st, 2020. Fellows receive ongoing LFA training throughout their two years and benefit from mentorship and retreats with other Fellows, as well as workshops through local government associations and universities.
- We will allow time for the Fellow to participate in scheduled program calls and learning activities with LFA staff (approximately 1 hour every 2-4 weeks) and bi-annual leadership and professional development retreats over long weekends for which the Fellow will not miss more than 2 workdays a year. Fellows will conduct listening tours to learn from and meet with community stakeholders and members over the first few months of their fellowship.

3. Community Project

- All Fellows begin their placement with a listening tour of the community to reground in the challenges and possibilities facing their community. Fellows then design and implement a community project to respond to these learnings. This process will magnify a Fellow's efficacy in their job by understanding deeply, those they serve. We agree to support these efforts broadly speaking and through connecting Fellows with relevant stakeholders.

- The Fellows will dedicate 1-2 workdays a month to do such activities and will alert their supervisor and LFA staff at least 1 week in advance with a summary of their plans for the dedicated time.

4. Multiplier Effect

- A core element of the fellowship's theory of change, is the ability of Fellows to build a bench of leadership around them. Fellows are expected to recruit 5-10 young leaders back home during the course of their 2 year term (and beyond). We agree to support our Fellow in these efforts.

Finances:

- Our financial contributions are a direct investment in sustaining the growth, development, and living needs of our Fellow. In order to cover the cost of hosting a Fellow (including the living and housing scholarship to cover the Fellow's basic needs, the one month summer training, biannual Fellow leadership retreats, ongoing trainings, mentorship, recruitment costs, and full-time staff support), we understand that we are expected to contribute funding to the best of our ability. If we cannot contribute the full amount to host a Fellow, then we will collaborate with LFA to help identify additional funding sources through local philanthropy, grants, or in special circumstances, LFA financial scholarships conditional on available funding.
- LFA cannot proceed with confirming any Fellow match unless the full cost of the fellowship has been raised or pledged.
- The cost to host a Fellow is rooted in a livable wage. As such, the total cost of a Fellow will vary depending on the cost of living in our community.

This Letter of Intent designates our intention to participate as a host in the LFA Fellow Program. The Letter of Intent does not require us to host a Fellow or guarantee that LFA will provide a Fellow — it is a commitment to make a good faith effort to procure funding for the fellowship or work with community partners and LFA to raise any outstanding fellowship costs, and to participate in the Fellow applicant interview process. If for whatever reason we do not find a match with candidates through the LFA process, the fellowship costs cannot be raised, or if either party (host or LFA) determines that we are not a strong fit to host a Fellow at this time, we may postpone our commitment until the following year, or withdraw from the process.

Welcome to the community! We are so excited to be on this journey with you. Please submit the [Host Application Form](#).

If you have any questions about the letter of intent please contact Erica Ng, Director of Community Partnerships, at erica.ng@lead4america.org.

Special thanks to the ICMA Fellows Program and Rob Carty for their guidance in developing this letter of intent.