



NATIONAL
INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE LEADERSHIP
ACADEMY

Connecting Leaders | Sharpening Vision | Innovating Change

FUNDING GUIDANCE TOOLKIT



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INTRODUCTION

Most institutions are willing to help employees to grow professionally, but when it comes to a funding request, approaching the right department and individual in the right way can be difficult.

While Academy expenses are easy to quantify, it is harder to assign a dollar figure to the benefits of the program. When proposing participation in the National Inclusive Excellence Leadership Academy, focus on what you will bring back to your institution as a return on their investment.

Use this simple guide to make your funding request, demonstrating why the Academy is a crucial opportunity for both yourself and your institutional community.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

- How does your institution implement its commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion?
- What are the greatest diversity and inclusion challenges faced institutionally, both by your team and by the funding partner you are approaching?
- What new diversity project, committee, or initiative could your participation in this program help to spearhead, in order to drive better outcomes for your institution?
- Who are the key leaders and departments that are clear diversity champions, who may want to partner in sponsoring an individual or team to attend the Academy?

IDENTIFY POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

While the precise departments may vary by institution, funding generally exists for leaders who determinedly seek opportunities:

- Start by making a list of potential funders at your institution.
- Funding is often available through your direct supervisor, human resources department, dean's office, chief diversity officer, provost, faculty development unit, or other units.
- Share the Academy's brochure, website, and collateral materials as a roadmap for making an effective and lasting impact on your institution's mission and priorities.

TALKING POINTS FOR CONVERSATION ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Benefits of Professional Development

- Professional development opportunities are essential to achieving continued and impactful results in any workplace.
- Whether you work at a small liberal arts institution, a community college, a system of higher education, or a large research university, employers are always looking for opportunities to get better.
- You can position your participation in the Academy as an active part of your institution's drive to get better on diversity and inclusion efforts.

Tangible Benefits of the Academy

- Be ready to discuss the facts, benefits, and tangible takeaways of the Academy. Though you won't need to include every detail in your pitch, have the information readily available to answer any follow-up questions.
- Be sure to provide the potential funder with a full picture of how valuable the Academy experience is, along with how it connects with your institution's values and their existing commitments to diversity and inclusion.

- Highlight the benefits to your institution: the Academy offers an opportunity to save a great deal of both time and money, by learning from others about all aspects of diversity and inclusion initiatives, from successful diversity plans and popular strategies for activating change, to techniques for responding to diversity crisis moments and building an institutional diversity brand.
- Focus on your institution's challenges: are they struggling to diversify faculty, improve the campus climate, respond to the diversity crisis of the moment, or lead in a way that is culturally responsive to a new student demographic? The Academy offers workshops, discussions, and practical resources to address these issues.

What You Will Gain

- Practical tools and resources to help drive and incentivize change.
- Exposure to best practices in diversity and inclusion in higher education.
- Cutting-edge, interactive sessions with experts in the field.
- Engagement with diverse and inclusive community members from across the country.
- Skills-building opportunities, using real-world case studies and simulations.
- A chance to bring an institutional team to the Academy, and to grow together as a cohesive stewarding group for diversity and inclusion efforts.
- The opportunity to harness your institution's diversity potential, by learning from the ideas and experiences of others in higher education.
- An expanded network, as the Academy experience is specifically designed to foster connections among colleagues who can provide ongoing support for each other's work.
- A full collection of relevant research data, resources, and successful practices compiled by presenters and coaches, that can be translated into practical, actionable steps at your institution. All speaker materials will be made available to Academy participants and teams.

BALANCING THE ACADEMY AND WORK

- Assure your employer that you can fulfil the requirements of the program without taking time away from your regular duties and work commitments.
- Provide them with a clear plan, setting out how you will manage your existing workload while the Academy is in session.
- You may need to ask for a flexible workday once a week during the four weeks of the program, to best facilitate your participation in the program.

Passing on the Learning to Your Colleagues

- Commit to bringing the benefits back to your home institution, and to sharing the Academy insights with your colleagues.
- Offer a post-Academy briefing for your institution, so that best practices and tactics can be passed on. You may give a talk, distribute speaker handouts, or conduct a question and answer session on what you have learned and how it can benefit your team, or even the entire campus.
- Explain that the Academy represents an important opportunity to network with other institutions and build a cohort of thought partners as you engage with issues of diversity and inclusion moving forward.
- Explain how this experience will increase your expertise on a given topic and help develop an Inclusive Excellence Leadership Manifesto to guide your work.

THE WRITTEN PROPOSAL

- Leadership happens on paper, so provide a written request to your supervisor and/or other funding partners, using the template provided with this overview.
- Craft a proposal detailing not only how the National Inclusive Excellence Leadership Academy will impact you professionally, but also how it will relate directly to your institution's mission.
- Bear in mind that this proposal may be forwarded to others for budget approval or collaborative funding.
- Consider asking multiple sources to cover some part of the overall cost associated with participation.

IF YOU ARE NOT FUNDED

- Always remember, a "no" now is not a "no" forever.
- If your institution doesn't have the budget to fund your participation in the Academy this year, ask if they can include it in the budget for next year.



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