



2022 Institute Partner Application FAQs

Q: What are the dates of the program?

It is anticipated that the Leadership Institutes will begin on June 8, 2022 with Fellow arrivals and conclude on July 16, 2022. Fellows and designated Institute staff will travel to Washington, D.C. on July 17, 2022 for the Mandela Washington Fellowship Summit. The Summit will be held from July 18 to July 20, 2022.

Q: Can one institution host multiple cohorts?

Institutions may apply to host up to two cohorts. Applicants that propose hosting two Institutes must submit two complete applications that demonstrate separate and distinct programming in different thematic tracks for each cohort. No institution may host two cohorts of the same theme (i.e., no host will have two Leadership in Civic Engagement cohorts). Institutions may designate only one official entity as the lead administrator on the subawards.

Q: When will applicants be notified if they are selected to be an Institute Partner?

It is anticipated that all applicants will be notified of their status in mid- to late November 2021.

Q: Are the Fellowship participants students?

No. Fellows are between the ages of 25 and 35 and have established records of accomplishment in promoting innovation and positive change in their organizations, institutions, communities, and countries. Academic content should be designed using adult learning principles and experiential training techniques.

Q: When do selected Institute Partners receive the list of Fellows placed at their institution?

We anticipate that selected Institute Partners will receive initial information on their Fellow cohorts in Spring 2022. It is important to note that these initial lists are subject to change as Fellows may drop and alternate candidates may be added during the time leading up to the Fellowship. For that reason, we recommend that Leadership Institute curricula, at this stage, be structured so that they are applicable to Fellows from a wide variety of backgrounds, rather than specializing based on anticipated Fellow backgrounds.

Q: Will the Fellowship/Leadership Institutes be in person or virtual this year?

We are currently planning for an in-person Fellowship; however, due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, selected Institute Partners must demonstrate the flexibility and responsiveness to adjust planning and programming as necessary to meet the needs of the Fellowship and individual Fellows.

Q: What type of support do Institute Partners provide?

- All university fees
- Program-related labor

- Program materials, including Fellows' course materials and textbooks (you must provide all required program materials at no cost to the Fellows)
- Fellow housing, including linens, for 39 nights; basic cooking supplies/utensils should be provided if Fellows will have access to kitchen facilities
 - Note that single rooms, defined as an individual bedroom with a door, are recommended for pandemic-related health and safety reasons
- Three meals per day (universities to provide a mix of cash stipend and prepared meals) for 40 days
- All transportation during the Institute, including local airport transfers for arrival and departure (from the nearest international or other IREX-identified airport)
- Supplemental allowance of \$650 per Fellow to cover books or materials in Fellows' areas of interest, optional events and activities of personal interests, and incidental expenses
- Support for Fellows to access medical care as needed

Q: Are Fellows required to receive the COVID-19 vaccine before arrival in the United States?

Fellows will be subject to all U.S. federal mandates for travel to the United States, including any testing or vaccination requirements in place at the start of the Fellowship. ECA will monitor pre-arrival requirements and coordinate with U.S. embassies and consulates accordingly to ensure Fellows' compliance. Selected Institute Partners should follow their institutional protocols for COVID-19 and non-COVID immunizations once Fellows are on campus.

Q: How much detail is required for the proposal?

Successful proposals show a balance of theoretical knowledge and practical skills that is responsive to the topics and sub-themes for the track, as well as the seven ECA priorities and expectations described on page 2 of the RFA.

Additionally, successful applications highlight some of the on-campus and community resources that can be leveraged to form a unique Institute experience that builds on the individual strengths of the host institution and community, which may be outside of the prescribed sub-themes. Though the narrative does not need to be a full program agenda, we have found it helpful in previous applications to see some specific examples of faculty members that might be engaged, sessions they might facilitate, and community members or organizations Fellows might interact with in the host community. For the weekly themes, we recommend applicants demonstrate how all the required program components will be integrated and connected to create a cohesive program.

We also highly recommend that applicants review the evaluation criteria and evaluation guidance found on pages 29 – 31 of the RFA.

Q: How many hours of structured session time and unscheduled time should we include in our agenda?

Academic and practical sessions should be balanced with cultural enrichment and unscheduled time. Reflection time should be included for Fellows to process new learning and experiences during their program. Institute Partners should plan for one free afternoon each week during regular business hours for Fellows to network and pursue individual professional interests. There should also be



unscheduled time during evenings and weekends for Fellows to socialize with each other and U.S. citizens, and to rest.

Q: What are the costs associated with the Fellowship?

- IREX anticipates awarding 28 subgrants of up to \$215,000 each for a total of 28 Institutes. It is anticipated that each Institute will host 25 Fellows.
- Cost-share of at least \$37,000 by the Institute Partner is mandated. All costs incurred in implementing the Institute over \$215,000 must be cost-shared by the host university. Cost-share can include, but is not limited to, university fees, transportation, and personnel costs.

Q: What are some examples that Institute Partners have used to contribute to the \$37,000 in cost-share?

Previous Institute Partners have met this requirement in a variety of ways, including direct and in-kind contributions from community/corporate partners, university donation of staff salaries and benefits, reducing the cost of housing accommodations or local transportation, and reducing/waiving university NICRA.

Q: What housing standards are expected for Fellows during the 2022 Leadership Institutes?

Given that Fellows are mid-career professionals, and that flexibility may be needed for health and safety reasons due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we recommend that single rooms (defined as an individual room with a door) be included in the \$215,000 budget. Private or shared bathrooms and common spaces are permissible. ECA and IREX will reevaluate housing standards in the months prior to the Fellowship and will coordinate logistics with selected Institute Partners as needed.

Q: The RFA recommends that single rooms be included in the budget. Are single rooms required for 2022 Leadership Institutes?

Single rooms are not required, but we do recommend that they be included in the \$215,000 budget so that Leadership Institutes are best prepared to support Fellow needs if any policies change between now and program implementation.

If you are unable to offer single room housing, please submit a budget that includes double occupancy rooms that meet the lodging requirements outlined on page 26 of the [RFA](#).

Q: Does housing need to be on campus?

Housing should be either on campus or an easy walk or public transit ride to campus in a facility dedicated to mature adults (i.e., not undergraduates). If public transit is used, service should be frequent and have enough capacity to transport all Fellows to campus as needed during programming hours (for example, a city bus that runs every 10 minutes from 7:00 am – 6:00 pm).

Q: What COVID-19 costs are required in the proposed budget?

Institutes should cover reasonable costs for COVID-19 prevention and response based on institutional protocols. These costs should include testing, COVID-19 vaccines or boosters, and basic personal protective equipment (PPE), as required by the hosting institution, as well as reasonable accommodations if 1-2 Fellows require support following a positive test (e.g., quarantine housing and



additional testing). COVID-19-related costs may be included as cost-share or as an allowable expense under subaward-requested funds. A university health insurance or benefits plan to supplement [ASPE coverage](#) may be included in the budget as cost-share.

If more than 1-2 Fellows require support following a positive COVID-19 test, assistance will be arranged on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with IREX and ECA.

Q: Is health insurance provided for the Fellows?

Fellows will be enrolled in the U.S. Department of State's Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE). This is not health insurance – it is a health benefit plan that covers Fellows in emergency situations while they are in the United States. ASPE is provided by the State Department. A university health insurance or benefits plan may be provided as a supplement to the ASPE benefits provided by the U.S. Department of State, but it is not required.

Q: How many Focus Project Coaches are we required to have?

Institute staffing structures vary, so Focus Project Coaches may be incorporated in the way that best aligns with your institutional resources and capacity. Coaches may be assigned to work with more than one Fellow; however, all sessions must be conducted individually with each Fellow. Models with only 1-2 Coaches for the entire cohort should also include consideration of alternate coverage if a Coach is unavailable for any session(s).

Q: If we are planning for an in-person Institute, are we allowed to incorporate some external presenters virtually?

For an in-person Institute, we anticipate that most presenters would be in person. However, to ensure equitable and inclusive programming that incorporates diverse viewpoints and aspects of U.S. culture, some virtual presentations are acceptable.

Q: What is the expected compensation for Focus Project Coaches?

If a Focus Project Coach is an Institute staff member compensated by the subaward on a salaried basis, the cost can be included as part of that staff member's total effort. If a non-staff member will be incorporated as a Coach, this cost can be included in subaward requested funds using the \$250 maximum per day honorarium rate, with any additional costs included as cost-share.

Q: Can administrative staffing overlap if we are applying to host two Leadership Institutes in different tracks?

Per the RFA, the program model for the Fellowship includes identification of an Academic Director, Administrative Director, and Leadership Manager for each Institute. We have had success with Institute Partners implementing two Institutes with limited overlap in administrative responsibilities; however each Institute must have its own team. Note that CLC sessions must be scheduled separately for each cohort, as they are *not* designed to be facilitated for a group of more than 25 Fellows.

Q: Will Institute Partners need to budget for Fellows' international or domestic travel?

IREX will arrange and cover the cost of international flights for Fellows to travel from their home countries to the nearest international or other IREX-identified airport, as well as their return flights



from the Summit to their home countries. IREX will also arrange and cover the cost of Fellows' domestic travel to Washington, D.C. for the Summit. Institute budgets should include local transportation to and from the closest international airport on arrival and departure days.

Q: Can we budget for multiple housing options for an individual Fellow on the same night as part of COVID-19 prevention and response or Institute activities for the 2022 Leadership Institute?

It is appropriate to budget for multiple Fellow housing options that may be charged at the same time on the same day for reasons related to COVID-19 prevention and response (e.g., quarantine accommodations) or Institute activities (e.g., overnight excursions for site visits, cultural exchange, or networking opportunities). This allows Institute Partners to respond to COVID-19 on the ground, meet quarantine needs should they arise, and provide Fellows an impactful experience through Institute activities. Institute Partners should first explore whether long-term housing charges can be suspended while temporary housing is in use. If charges cannot be suspended, simultaneous housing arrangements may be made.

Q: Can we include Institute staff travel expenses for the Planning Retreat and Summit into the budget?

IREX will cover the lodging and travel costs for the designated Leadership Manager and one additional Institute representative to attend the Planning Retreat in late January 2022, and for one staff member to travel with Fellows and attend the Summit. Up to two other representatives can attend the Planning Retreat and/or the Summit, and their travel costs can be cost-shared or included in subaward-requested funds.

Q: For per diem planning purposes, how many meals will be on-your-own during the Institute Partner Planning Retreat and Summit programming?

For the Partner Retreat, IREX typically provides three breakfasts and two lunches. For the Summit, we typically provide four breakfasts and four lunches.

Q: The IREX budget worksheet includes multiple lines for transportation costs. Can you please explain the difference between these categories?

There are a few sections of the budget template which refer to transportation in different circumstances:

- **Line 40 - Ground Transportation:** Ground transportation expenses related to the optional CliftonStrengths® facilitator training. If needed, Institutes may include transportation costs for attending the Successful CliftonStrengths® Coaching course for the designated staff/faculty CLC facilitator under subaward-requested funds or as cost-share.
- **Lines 52-53 - Institute Staff Travel for Planning Retreat:** Travel costs for up to two additional Institute staff members traveling to the Planning Retreat in Washington, D.C.
- **Lines 76-77 - Institute Staff Travel for Summit:** Travel costs for up to two additional Institute staff members traveling to the Summit in Washington, D.C.
- **Lines 147-148 - Guest Speaker Travel:** Travel costs related to Institute guest speakers.
- **Lines 165-166 - Airport Transportation:** Transportation expenses for airport transfers to the Institute from the nearest international or IREX-identified airport and return to the airport for



departure to the Summit. Please note that Fellows will not arrive all on the same flight, but they will depart as a group.

- **Lines 170-171 - Ground Transportation:** Ground transportation for Fellows, not including airport transportation, during the Fellowship. This line item should include bus/van/taxi rentals for Fellows to attend all site visits, community service, cultural excursions, networking, grocery shopping, etc.

Q: Can you explain the tax withholding and the IREX-provided debit cards?

The IREX-provided debit cards provide Institute Partners with a way to distribute funds directly to Fellows without having to set up internal payment mechanisms or reconcile the tax withholdings. A number of Institute Partners have used this option to distribute the required \$650 per Fellow supplemental allowance, and some have also used it to distribute monies as part of their overall meal plan.

If you opt to use the IREX-provided debit cards, you must list the cost for all funds to be paid directly to Fellows via this debit card in Column I, rather than Column G, of the appropriate line item on the budget worksheet.

Column G and Column I should be totaled individually at the bottom of the budget worksheet. All monies allocated to the IREX-provided debit cards will be deducted from the maximum allowable subaward-requested funds, so the combined totals for Columns G and Column I may not exceed \$215,000.

You must apply a 14% tax withholding to all funds distributed via the IREX-provided debit card in order to offset IREX's tax liability in distributing these funds. This withholding amount should be calculated on the "IREX-Provided Debit Card Tax Withholding" line of the budget worksheet and the total should be listed in Column I. This 14% withholding should be calculated on all funds listed in Column I, including the Supplemental Allowance. The 14% withholding will be part of your overall budget and reduced from the total available subaward amount of \$215,000.

If you do not opt to use the IREX-provided debit cards, you should follow your institutional policies regarding distribution of funds and associated tax withholding. Institute-specific tax withholding should be reflected in Columns G and/or H on the appropriate line in the budget worksheet. IREX is not able to provide tax guidance for Institute-specific funds.

