



Institute Partner Staffing Guidance

Implementing a Mandela Washington Fellowship Leadership Institute requires a great deal of planning to execute successfully, and it is important that each Institute have a committed, supportive, and accountable staff structure in place to carry out program activities. This document includes notes on key staffing roles and functions, best practices from previous years, and sample staffing structures for consideration.

Key Program Roles

In order to effectively manage a Mandela Washington Fellowship Institute, it is important to ensure that the major programmatic components below are overseen by program staff. Key roles include:

- **Administration:** Management of program logistics; housing; local transportation; arrival/departures travel coordination; budget and finance; university relationships; event planning; Institute weekly and post-program surveys; Fellow health and wellness; accessibility accommodations; and 24/7 Fellow support available during the Institute.
- **Academics:** Overseeing the Institute agenda and program quality and continuity; designing curriculum; securing and preparing faculty and guest speakers; designing Institute assignments and deliverables; and integrating site visits, cultural outings, and community service into the curriculum. Ideally, the Academic Director should be present with Fellows at all sessions and should highlight and provide connections on how various components connect to broader Institute themes and Fellowship goals.
- **Leadership Development:** Overseeing classroom sessions and experiential leadership activities; ensuring leadership development is woven throughout all Institute activities; facilitating the Institute-led leadership sessions; facilitating sessions and supporting any sessions led by external facilitators; and linking concepts from the CLC and the LDAP into complementary program sessions and activities. Where possible, Institutes should identify a single staff member to oversee all Institute leadership activities, including facilitation of the CLC sessions.

Additional program roles that should be included in a staffing plan include:

- **Community Engagement:** Managing relationships with external and university organizations involved in the Fellowship through community service, networking, site visits, and cultural outings; organizing networking opportunities; helping Fellows navigate the local organizational landscape; and assisting Fellows in making connections with appropriate industry contacts or mentors.



- **Focus Project Coaching:** Identifying appropriate Coaches to provide individualized guidance and feedback during three one-to-one sessions for each Fellow; communicating expectations and providing support to selected coaches; and ensuring that all Fellows schedule and complete their coaching sessions as well as their Focus Project Toolkit.

Each Institute's staffing structure is unique based on institutional approaches and resources. Please be aware, however, that all of the above components require significant staff time so the staff structure should be organized accordingly.

Suggested Best Practices for Successful Institute Staffing

Maintain Curriculum Continuity Through High-Level Oversight

The curriculum is one of the most important aspects of the Institute. As such, it is crucial that there is continuity and consistent quality throughout the six-week academic program. Institutes have the discretion to arrange sessions that play to their university's academic and community strengths, making each Institute unique. A designated Academic Director should oversee all aspects of the curriculum to ensure session topics and activities intentionally build on and reinforce desired concepts throughout the program. They should also work closely with the Leadership Manager to ensure leadership is central to programming. The most impactful Institutes reinforce common themes and issues to link academic and leadership classroom sessions, leadership trainings and activities, site visits, cultural activities, and community service into a single cohesive experience.

Strengthen Relationships with University Leadership to Mobilize Resources

It takes a significant amount of staff time and effort to successfully implement an Institute so staff should maintain productive and collaborative relationships with university leadership throughout planning and implementation. These relationships will foster university leadership's investment in the program, providing an important ally and ensuring senior leadership's engagement during the Institute.

Designate Staff for Major Program Functional Areas

While securing strong staff for the three required roles – Academic Director, Administrative Director, and Leadership Manager – is key to setting the tone of your Institute implementation team, it is important to also ensure you have appropriate staff designated to cover major program functional areas. There are several administrative, academic, leadership, and community engagement roles which can be divided up. Regardless of how roles are assigned, it is most important to identify early on who will serve as the lead for each area/task to ensure smooth planning and implementation; note: these three lead staff must be clearly identified in all application and budget materials.

Secure Logistics Managers Early

Throughout the spring, IREX and the U.S. Department of State will be working with Institutes on logistical arrangements including, but not limited to, travel, housing, and disability accommodations for Fellows. It is important to secure an experienced and detail-oriented logistics lead early and have

this staff member work closely with the Administrative Director in all phases of planning for the Fellows' time in the United States. While we encourage Institutes to bring on additional support staff to help with on-the-ground logistics during the Fellowship, the individual leading these efforts must be in place early to ensure that all items are handled appropriately and in a timely fashion.

Use Program Support Staff Strategically

While Institute leadership is very important, it is just as important to have motivated, agile, and collaborative support staff to plan and implement the Institute's day-to-day activities. Many programs employ program coordinators and/or graduate students for temporary positions beginning mid-spring through the end of the Institute, which has proven very successful. Undergraduate students may be used for some support roles, but careful consideration should be given so their assigned tasks are appropriate given the differences in age/experience/maturity level between them and the Fellows. Administrative and Academic Directors should provide leadership and oversee all aspects of the program; however, they cannot implement the Institute on their own, and a strong support staff can provide critical assistance in matters such as logistical planning, finance and expenses, Fellow travel coordination, and 24/7 Fellow support during the Institute. Institutes should anticipate having two or three full or part-time support staff employed for the duration of the Institute (approximately 80-120 hours per week).

Given Fellows' high educational and professional levels, carefully consider who is appropriate to carry out certain activities during the Institute. For example, someone from Institute leadership should always be present at off-campus activities to brief and debrief with the Fellows, rather than support staff. Likewise, it is more appropriate for a coordinator or intern to handle logistics and transportation, as opposed to serving as the primary point of contact or face of the Institute.

Maintain 24/7 On-Site Support

Institute staff will need to dedicate a significant amount of time during the implementation of the Institute; however, it is impossible to plan for every situation that may arise. It is crucial to have staff available 24 hours a day during the Institute, whether they are on-site or close by and reachable by phone. As it is highly probable that Fellows will become sick or experience another emergency outside working hours, Institute staff must be prepared to assist at all times. It is best practice to rotate staff members responsible for responding to emergencies throughout the Institute, particularly on evenings and weekends, while designating one main staff member as the point of contact for serious issues that require ongoing support. IREX also has a Participant Emergency Line that is managed 24 hours a day year-round by staff to help Institute partners and Fellows handle urgent issues as they arise.

Use Consultants Strategically to Augment Full- or Part-Time Staff

Most Institutes are managed by staff that work full- or part-time for the university. However, some Institutes have used consultants to manage or run discrete parts of the program with great success. Typically, these individuals have experience in executive education and/or program logistics but may also be experts in leadership development, entrepreneurship, community engagement, or another key program area that supports curriculum design. Consider how a consultant might be used to augment your current staffing plan to provide certain expertise or support that may be lacking.

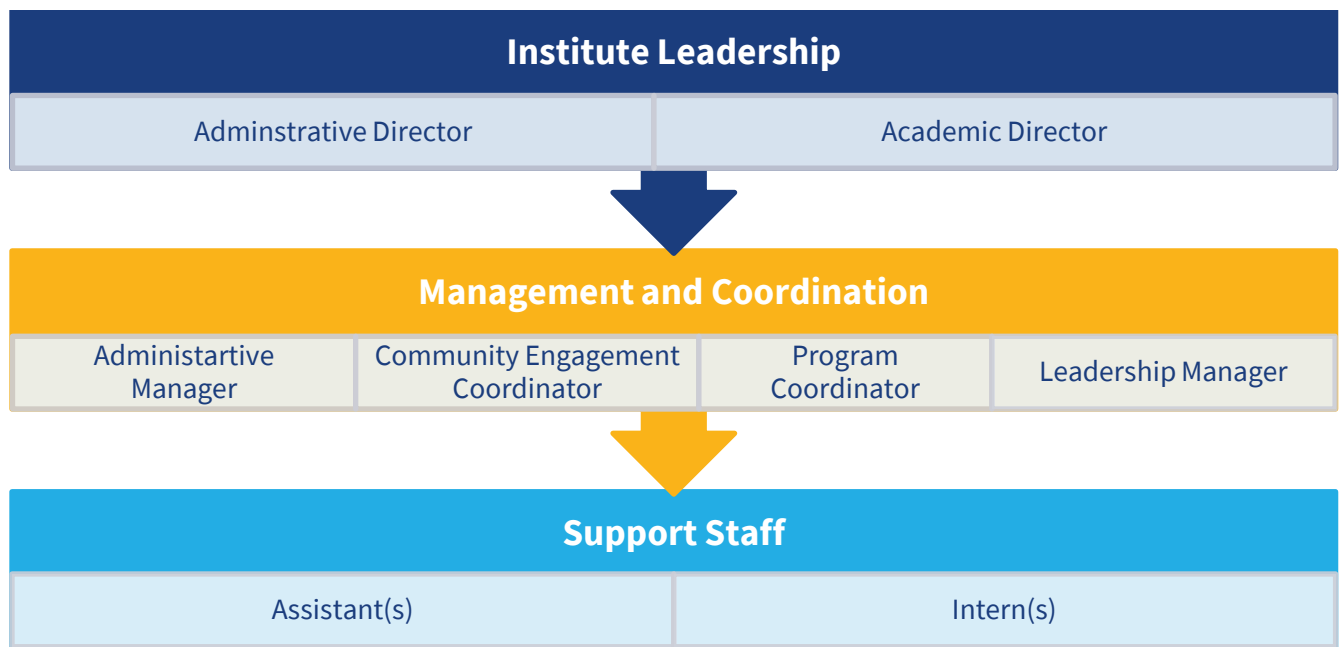
Sample Staffing Models

Model 1: High-Level University Leadership Engagement



In this model, university leadership is involved in the planning and implementation of the program, spearheading major aspects of the Institute. There are multiple people involved in the academic and administrative aspects of the program, with much of the day-to-day tasks being carried out by coordinators and other support staff. Typically, the high-level administrator from university leadership is very involved in the first year of the program and takes on fewer roles in later years.

Model 2: Basic Co-Directors Structure



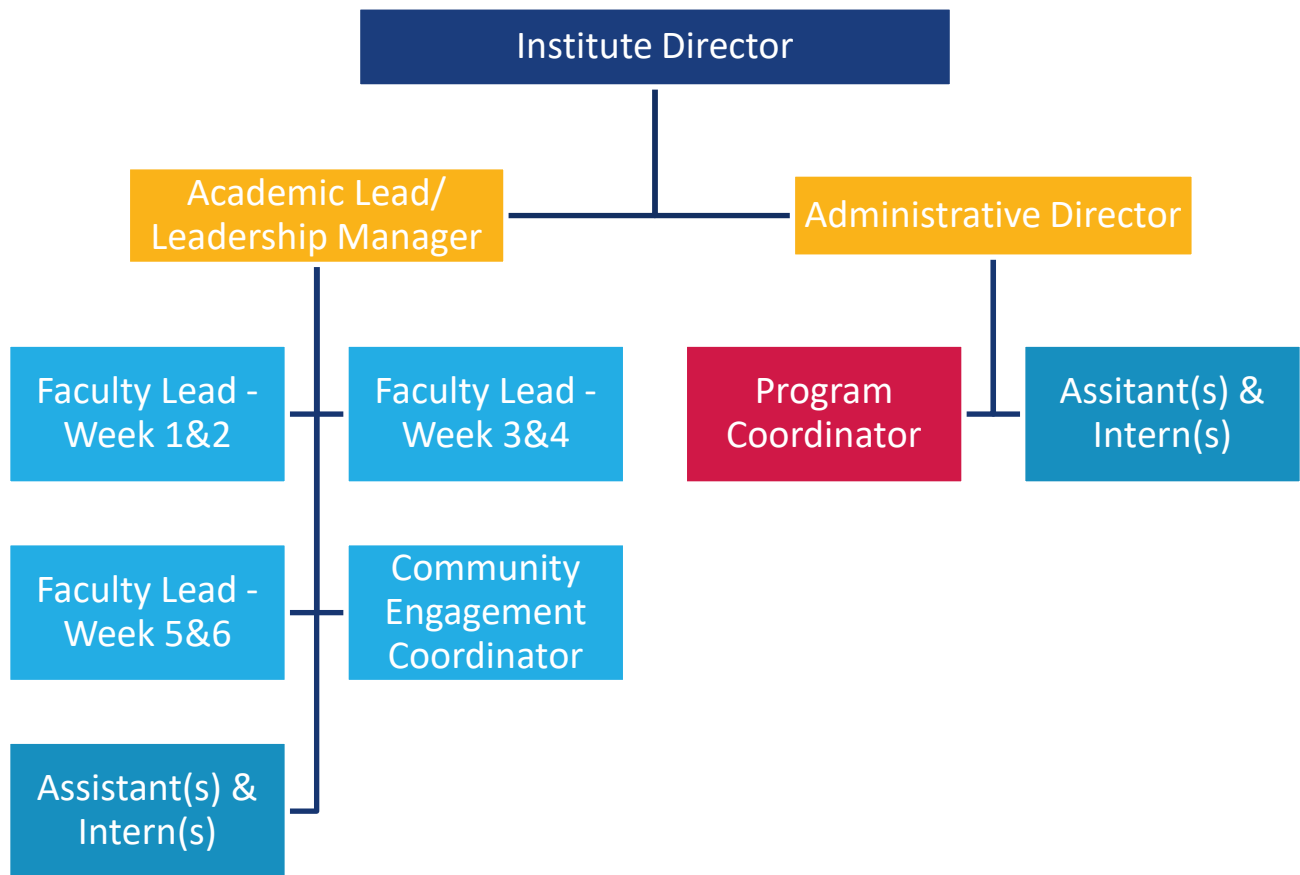
In this model, the Institute is led by Administrative and Academic Directors, with support for program administration and day-to-day tasks from full-time staff. Additional on-site support staff in the form of a consultant, graduate student, and/or intern can help manage the logistical aspects of the program and keep things running smoothly.

Model 3: Advanced Co-Directors Structure



In this model, a director handles each major program element, with support staff to help with planning and implementing each segment. Close coordination between the Academic Director and Leadership Manager is key to ensuring continuity but designating a director specifically for leadership can help ensure this component is fully developed and related themes and activities are incorporated across all programming aspects.

Model 4: Peer-Based Program Management



In this model, there is centralized Institute leadership, but the majority of implementation is handled by a variety of similar-level staff. Typically, the Academic Lead in this model also oversees leadership activities, including facilitation of the Common Leadership Curriculum. This structure allows for equitable sharing of the workload and resources by peers during both planning and program implementation. It is important to also have interns and other temporary staff on hand during implementation for logistical and administrative support.