
White House Leadership Development Program

Nomination Guide

2016

Introduction

Thank you for your interest in nominating candidates to the White House Leadership Development (WHL) Program. This is an opportunity to identify high-potential career GS-15 employees who would benefit from a unique rotational and developmental experience that provides broad federal perspective on high-priority challenges. The program offers the opportunity for employees to gain experience on cross-agency initiatives while building the skillsets and networks to address challenges through a cross-agency lens and implement solutions across organizational boundaries. For more information on the program and its structure, please visit our website at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/participate/whldp>.

The enclosed information is provided to give agencies guidance in the nomination process. Detailed program information can be found in the WHLD Program Manual. As they become available, rotational assignment overviews will be released to interested agencies.

Interested agencies may nominate between two to four candidates and are responsible for running their own internal selection process, ensuring that the process follows applicable laws and regulations.

Enclosed in the nomination package are the following items:

- WHLD Program Manual
- WHLD Program Application Form
- Attributes of an Ideal WHLD Program Fellow
- Sample Agency Nomination Letter

Required Nomination Information

- Candidate Resume
- WHLD Program Application Form
- Formal nomination letter from Agency (If desired, the agency may include all candidates in one letter.)

Please note: Each of the items requested above must be submitted in one email but as separate attachments for each candidate.

WHL Program Deadlines

- June 6, 2016 – Nominations Due to WHLD Program
- June 27, 2016 – WHLD Program selection process begins
- July 29, 2016 – Candidate notification of status with program
- August 1, 2016 – Rotation matching and onboarding process of finalist begins
- October 3, 2016 – Formal onboarding begins

Please direct questions or requests for information to WHLD Program Director, Jenny Mattingley at Jennifer.mattingley@gsa.gov.

Attributes of an Ideal WHLD Program Fellow

The following information is provided to assist agencies in their internal selection processes. The list below provides guidance on the attributes candidates should possess in order to thrive in the WHLD Program.

All candidates are expected to be high-performing employees (with annual ratings of exceeds expectations, or the equivalent, or higher) with the demonstrated commitment to public service. Candidates must also have an interest in stepping outside their current lanes to develop an enterprise viewpoint of government and a willingness to take on a variety of roles and work to further the mission of the cross-agency initiatives that serve as rotation assignments.

Additionally, the roles that Fellows will serve in during the rotational assignment are not direct supervisory positions. As such, candidates in a current SES CDP must already have strong supervisory background prior to taking on this rotation in order for it to meet CDP requirements.

Although agencies may choose their own nominations process, generally, the successful WHLD Program candidate should possess many of the following attributes:

Commitment to Serve

Candidates should possess a clear desire to serve in the Federal government and commitment to the spirit of public service. Candidates should have demonstrated interest in developing leadership skills to increase their ability to serve their agency as they move into positions of increasing responsibility. Candidates should also demonstrate interest in serving at the Senior Executive (or equivalent) level.

Adaptability

Candidates should be comfortable with unfamiliar situations and ambiguity. Candidates should also be able to adapt quickly to new environments and cultures and be able to work on projects without clear structure and objectives.

Collaboration

Candidate should hold the belief that government can and should work collaboratively. Candidates should have experience working on a project or program that required coordination across multiple groups.

Communication Skills (Written and Oral)

Candidates should possess strong written and oral communications skills and be able to synthesize complex programs and information into succinct and effective written and verbal briefings. Candidates should be able to communicate with a variety of audiences and team members, including soliciting a variety of perspectives and feedback from a diverse set of stakeholders.

Delivering Change

Candidates should be able to build and communicate a vision of success and engage relevant stakeholders to ensure they are invested in priority goals and outcomes. Candidates should possess the ability to translate vision into action.

Growing Networks

The WHLD Program Fellowship will require the ability to foster collaboration among diverse stakeholders. The ideal candidate should have demonstrated commitment to building networks and collaborating across boundaries to build strategic relationships and achieve common goals.

Strategic Planning

Candidates should possess the ability to understand program objectives and implement long and short-term plans consistent with organizational, individual and team goals.

Political Awareness

Candidates should be able to identify internal and external politics that affect organizations and the impact on achieving program outcomes and should be able to change plans of action accordingly.

Motivation

Candidates should be self-starters and be able to identify paths and projects that are a value add to the rotation assignment, especially in the absence of a formal structure. They should be able to position the project for future success by identifying new opportunities and by developing or improving programs, products and services.

Ability to Identify and Overcome Challenges

Candidates should be able to identify challenges and problems that may negatively impact organizational outcomes. Candidates should also be able to identify and implement alternative solutions while taking calculated risks to accomplish project objectives.

Sample Agency Nomination Letter

On behalf of [Agency Name], it is my pleasure to nominate [Candidate's Name] to the White House Leadership Development Program.

The WHLD Program provides a unique opportunity for an employee to gain experience in a rotational assignment and through formal training on the skills and insight that career leaders need in order to address mission critical challenges through a broad cross-agency perspective. While the WHLD Program experience requires highly talented individuals to enter the program, it will also allow these individuals to develop skills that will assist them and benefit their agency as they move into increasingly senior roles.

[Candidate's Name] possesses the requisite experience and traits to be an asset to the rotation program as well as the motivation to develop the necessary skillsets to take on future leadership positions. Thank you for your consideration of [his/her] selection into the program.

Sincerely,

[Nominating Official]

Deputy Secretary [Position Title]

[Agency Name]