

November 2019

Executive Leadership Institute (ELI)

For community foundation VPs



CFLeads

Community Foundations
Leading Change

Background

The Promise of Community Foundations

Strong communities depend on good jobs and a healthy citizenry to thrive. A strong community also requires engaged residents as well as public and private institutions - including community foundations - that work together effectively to address the community's challenges. Every single day, our communities face new and growing challenges—as long-standing issues become more complex, and inequities worsen.

That's why community foundations matter. With missions focused specifically on tackling pressing local issues and seizing important opportunities, they are in a unique position to rally the people and organizations needed to make lasting impact.

Now more than ever, residents in communities across the country need their community foundations to use every resource available to create equitable outcomes - and to help build just and inclusive communities where all residents participate and prosper. They need community foundations to lead change - change that builds strong, resilient communities where all people can thrive.

The Need for Effective Leaders

To drive positive change, community foundations need to mobilize all of the resources in their community—including resident voices, data about community challenges, and financial support. And they need to create relationships across every facet of the community—from the interconnected groups that serve the area to the policymakers who shape the daily lives of residents.

For years, community foundations have been working for the greater good of their communities. But to create real, measurable and equitable change, community foundations must build their capacity to rally community resources and build strong relationships. The CFLeads Executive Leadership Institute (ELI) reflects a growing recognition in the field that the practice of community leadership requires specific skills and strategies.

Today, vice presidents at community foundations must be able to draw upon the full breadth of tools at their disposal to have the most impact in their community, recognizing that grants alone will not build vibrant, healthy places to live. Their ultimate objective - the overall well-being of the community - is immense and not easily defined or measured, but it is what makes their institutions so uniquely valuable. Effectively engaging in community leadership requires thoughtful strategy and deliberate action. It also requires a culture, relationships, resources and skills within the foundation to exercise community leadership.

Executive Leadership Institute

To help strengthen their skills to lead change, CFLeads offers an executive education program specifically for community foundation vice presidents called the **Executive Leadership Institute (ELI)**.

This year-long learning opportunity focuses exclusively on the numerous challenges vice presidents face daily at community foundations. It reflects the recognition in the field that the practice of community leadership is critical and requires specific skills and strategies -- beyond grantmaking.

ELI also incorporates a peer learning approach, which helps participants quickly identify and adopt effective practices that are relevant to their work.

The Executive Leadership Institute includes individuals from large, medium-sized and small communities from across the country who sit at the helm of community foundations of all different sizes and asset mixes. Despite this diversity, participants frequently remark on their common struggles and aspirations.

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

“ This has been the most on-target, impactful professional development experience of my career. CFLeads continues to challenge me and my foundation to step up our game for bigger community impact.

Chris Barge

*Vice President of Strategic Initiatives,
The Community Foundation Serving Boulder County*

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

“ I came to every meeting eager to hear about the progress of my peers and grateful to share the steps in my journey.

Isaiah Oliver

President & CEO, Community Foundation of Greater Flint (participated in previous role as VP, Community Impact)



WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

“ I loved participating in the program and can't say enough about the facilitation and opportunity to connect with peers who are equally committed to communities and the role of community foundations in catalyzing and supporting impact.

Participant

ELI for VPs, Class of 2016

Program Overview

ELI is an exclusive one-year intensive learning opportunity tailored specifically for community foundation vice presidents – from all departments -- who are eager to help their foundations more effectively address difficult challenges in their communities.

Through three, small group, face-to-face meetings, supplemented by one-on-one sessions with special advisors with significant experience in the field, it is designed to help community foundation

vice presidents address a number of challenges including:

- Identifying the internal practices that are important to advancing a community leadership agenda;
- Integrating and aligning departments to more effectively advance the foundation’s mission;
- Making the most of the tools that make the most community impact;
- Making and measuring results; and
- Communicating impact both internally and externally.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES
Create a better understanding of the key elements of community leadership for community foundations;
Advance specific community leadership practices at participating VPs’ foundations;
Build peer connections and seed potential collaboration through peer learning and collaborative problem solving;
Make progress on a self-identified community leadership challenge.

CORE ACTIVITIES
Three two-day in-person meetings where participants assess their organization’s community leadership practice, exchange stories about their organization’s successes and challenges, and debate and explore the appropriate role of community foundations in building vibrant, welcoming places to live. Meetings are conducted in a confidential environment that encourages candid discussion.
Individual work by VPs between meetings on a challenge particular to their organization.
Homework assignments and/or readings prior to each meeting. These assignments/ readings should take approximately 2 hours to complete prior to each meeting.
Optional site visits from community foundation staff in the cities where the meetings are held.

Eligibility & Cost

Up to 15 community foundation VPs will be selected to participate. VPs from all departments in the foundation are welcome to apply. More than one VP from each foundation may apply.

Selection to participate is competitive. Applicants interested in aggressively pushing their practice, open to questioning their own assumptions,

and eager to learn from their peers are strongly encouraged to apply.

The fee is **\$6,950** with a 5% discount for 2018/2019 investors in CFLeads. Community foundations with two VPs selected to participate will receive \$500 off the fee of the 2nd VP. Participants are also expected to pay for their own travel and accommodations. The fee may be paid in two installments in 2019.

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

“ For someone new to the field of philanthropy, ELI was a superb way to meet new colleagues and learn about valuable tools and lessons learned.

Judith Bell

Vice President of Programs, San Francisco Foundation

Ready to apply? Visit cflleads.org to get started.