

NATIONAL
LEADERSHIP
CENTRE



Accelerate Programme 2021/2022

Programme Brochure



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Sir Kenneth Olisa
OBE, CStJ, FRSA, FBCS, FloD

The National Leadership Centre is a first of its kind in supporting England's public sector leaders to deliver world-leading public services. Underpinning our modus operandi and programmes is a simple concept – 'systems leadership'.

Now, I am the first to acknowledge that in a world already knee-deep in jargon, there is a danger that a concept like 'systems leadership' becomes just another cliché on a departmental buzzword bingo card! Happily, in this case, our foundation is rather more substantive. Austrian biologist Ludwig von Bertalanffy was an early proponent of General Systems Theory, the idea that everything from anthropology to zoology could be described by a single set of equations. Or, put more simply, that everything we experience is part of a unified whole.

As public servants you know more than most just how interconnected things are. While laws, policies and their implementation are separate parts of a whole, none of these levers of the State can be exercised without having regard for their interconnectedness, nor without the positive engagement of charities, businesses and, of course, the public. Our 'system' aka our country, is self-evidently a complex, dynamic organism consisting of many parts.

The pandemic has provided a sort of hadron collider laboratory environment in which we have been able to see General Systems Theory in practice. The actions of those who passed the laws, enforced the laws and obeyed the laws had a material impact and dependency on areas as disparate as the NHS, charities, businesses and individuals.

Having a common enemy in Covid-19 triggered an inner community spirit not seen before in peacetime. On balance, although the results were far from perfect, we can take collective pride that the UK's general systems functioned pretty well. Our greatest achievements came when we worked together – often in surprising and novel ways.

As Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant in Greater London I have been deeply moved to see how micro-charities rallied to provide meals to over-stretched healthcare staff; how shopkeepers, working with Local Authorities, set up food banks to feed the vulnerable and marginalised; and how blue light services took advantage of the lower demand for their usual work to deliver PPE to hospitals and care homes.

The bulk of these interventions were spontaneous. People from all walks of life and backgrounds saw a problem and applied their talents to do whatever it took to solve it, often riding roughshod over historic demarcation lines, breaking out of silos and acting without the need to seek permissions. All in pursuit of a common goal.

Systems leadership is the formal embodiment of that informal response. It is the 'wiring' which delivers improved lives for citizens by connecting talented people within a framework of shared Objectives.

As a key element of our mission to deliver world-leading public services, the Accelerate Programme does what it says on the tin. We offer skills, support and a cross-disciplinary network so that our alumni can play leadership roles in this complex system which we call the United Kingdom.

About the National Leadership Centre

The National Leadership Centre was launched by the Government in 2019, and it works across UK public services, with senior leaders in the Civil Service, local government, health, education, police, military and others. The NLC works only with the most senior leaders, typically those who have recently reached Chief Executive level or equivalent. Given this scope, the NLC also plays a coordinating and convening role across service-specific leadership academies, including the Defence Academy, National Health Service Leadership Academy, Civil Service Leadership Academy, as well as Solace and the Local Government Association.

Since July 2020, the NLC has integrated with other functions engaged in training, career pathways and skills, to establish a 'Government Skills and Curriculum Unit'. Its goal is to realise the Learning Campus vision of a 'core curriculum', universal to specialist, entry level to senior leader, defined with and through Departments, Professions, and Academies.

The NLC programmes, and contribution to the design and delivery of formal and informal training, will break down barriers between Policy and Operations, between London and the rest of the country, and between Civil and Public Service. The Unit's Leadership Advisory Board is chaired by Dame Sara Thornton.

The NLC aims to help senior leaders work together to improve public services, by supporting increased collaboration and innovation across the whole public sector system.

The NLC has three core objectives:

1. Demonstrably improve the quality of public service leadership;
2. Facilitate effective collaboration between public service leaders, and;
3. Through research, improve the understanding of public sector leadership and its relationship with social and economic outcomes.

Our work has three strands:

1. **Programme** - three intensive professional programmes: the flagship NLC programme for around 100 top public service leaders, the Accelerate programme for 20 high-performing ethnic minority public service leaders and the Catalyst programme for 20 senior leaders with a disability or long-term condition.
2. **Network** - a professional hub for all public service leaders, not just those served by the programme, to support communication between leaders and subject matter experts.
3. **Research** - to better understand public service leadership and the impact of the NLC.

We define success as:

- Demonstrably improving the quality of leadership of public services.
- Facilitating wider and more effective collaboration between public service leaders.
- Helping public service leaders to become more resilient, more adaptive to change and more innovative.
- Improving the understanding of public sector leadership and its relationship with social and economic well-being.

What is the National Leadership Centre Accelerate Programme?

The National Leadership Centre Accelerate Programme brings together high performing ethnic minority leaders from across public services who are aiming to become senior leaders within their respective fields. The programme acts as a talent pipeline into the flagship National Leadership Centre Programme.

This programme offers the opportunity to widen your network beyond the service you work within, as well as increase your visibility and your experience of senior leadership events. We will stretch you with stimulating content and inspiring speakers which will draw on your skills and experience as an effective leader.

The programme has events and activities across the year including:

- Launch and close events
- Webinars
- 3-day residential element
- Coaching
- Action Learning Sets
- Diagnostics

Themes that will be covered include:

- Storytelling and finding your narrative as a leader;
- Challenging assumptions and the 'inner ring';
- Understanding the executive recruitment process;
- Media training;
- Systems leadership.

Who our Programme is for

We strongly believe that public service leaders should represent the people they serve. This programme is exclusive to leaders from ethnic minority groups, currently working at Deputy Chief Executive level (and equivalent) from publicly funded organisations delivering public services, who are hoping to secure senior leadership roles within the next 3-5 years. This includes, but is not exclusive to:

- Deputy Chief Executives of Ambulance Trusts
- Deputy Chief Executives of Further Education Colleges
- Deputy Chief Executives of Multi-Academy Trusts
- Deputy/Assistant Chief Executives of Local Authorities
- Deputy Chief Executives of NHS Trusts
- Pro-Vice-Chancellors / Deputy Vice-Chancellors of Universities
- Deputy Chief Constables of Police Services
- Deputy Fire Officers of Fire and Rescue Services
- Directors across the Civil Service
- Directors / Deputy Chief Executives of Arms Length Bodies
- 1* and 2* Military Officers

Given the seniority of the cohort, we will take up to 20 delegates.

Sectoral Development

Learning and development tailored to your sector inc. armed forces, health and education.

Professional Development

Training and development tailored to your professional needs.



Key Dates and Time Commitment

This programme runs over one year (November 2021 to October 2022) and will involve:

Recruitment and Selection	
• Applications open	Wednesday 1st September 2021
• Deadline for applications	12pm, Friday 24th September 2021
• Outcome of applications and diagnostic evaluations begin	Wednesday 6th October 2021

Formal Learning Activities	
• Launch event	Monday 29th November 2021
• 1:1 Coaching	December 2021 and March 2022
• 3 day residential	Monday 10th January 2022 to Wednesday 12th January 2022
• Close event	October 2022 (Date TBC)

Ongoing Activities	
• Reflective practice groups	6 sessions throughout the year
• Sponsorship	Quarterly
• Self-reflection resources	Ongoing
• NLC leadership events	Ongoing

Sponsorship

As a delegate, the NLC will match you with a sponsor as part of the programme.

Sponsorship can involve spotlighting specific job and project opportunities for high-potential individuals so that they can learn and extend their skills from new experiences. They will have a personal commitment to recognise and give visibility to you as an individual; this could involve increasing visibility of the work you do or by widening your network of senior leaders.

Your sponsor will be a senior leader (CEO/Director General level or equivalent) who will be briefed on their role prior to being matched with you. Sponsors will be asked to:

Sponsors will be asked to:

- be available to support participants in their career and provide exposure to opportunities and wider networks;
- be an advocate for the individual and offer opportunities to the participant that they may not normally have access to;
- look out for opportunities for the individual in areas that have been discussed as developmental;
- offer career advice, support and provide constructive challenge to help the individual to take on unfamiliar tasks to support their development.

Feedback from Previous Participants

“The Accelerate Programme has provided a unique opportunity to ‘pause’ and ‘reflect’ on my own leadership journey, whilst also hearing of the inspirational leadership journeys of my fellow participants. I have learnt so much from my peers and the excellent speakers that have been engaged in the delivery of the programme, and then applied this through my coaching sessions and discussions with my sponsor. I’m very grateful to the entire Accelerate team for the opportunity and look forward to continuing my engagement both as a learner and as a supporter of others.”

Gurpreet Jagpal
Pro Vice Chancellor Business and Entrepreneurship
University of Suffolk



“I really valued the opportunity to be part of the NLC Accelerate Programme. It was a great gathering of senior Black, Asian and minority ethnic talent who are delivering brilliantly across the public sector. I got to meet some wonderful people and will follow their careers to C-suite roles with interest. The course was informative, thought provoking and really makes you reflect on the future... well done to the organisers.”

Rodney Berkeley
Director Energy and Infrastructure
Department for International Trade



“The three aspects I valued the most about this programme were the opportunity to expand my network across public services nationally, deepening my understanding of my impact as a system leader through personal coaching and being inspired by the speakers to reaffirm my personal commitment to continue being in service to the public, whilst working with others on addressing some of the toughest challenges we face as a nation.”

Salma Yasmeen
Executive Director of Strategy and Change
South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust



“It was a privilege to be part of the first cohort on this programme. The collective experiences of the group, their diversity and the roles they operated in spanned every facet of the public sector. The cohort was exposed to the most senior and influential leaders that modelled the objectives of the Programme. The team at the Cabinet Office designed an amazing programme and I hope it goes from strength to strength.”

Mal Singh
Chief Financial Officer
Money & Pensions Service



“Not many programmes have provided the scope of understanding and recognised the intersectionality between the various public services like the Accelerate programme. The meaningful, honest discussion with the illustrious presenters and with colleagues in the programme provides the oomph and drive to rethink the approach and difference that I can make in my role as a senior leader in the public sector. It’s a programme like few others and the support from the programme team has been outstanding. I am pleased I had the opportunity to participate and the relations I have built will be a tremendous boost to the delivery from my organisation to our residents. My heartiest endorsement of this programme.”

Dr Mohit Venkataram
Executive Commercial Director
East London Foundation Trust



Find out more about the NLC’s Accelerate Programme Delegates:
<https://www.nationalleadership.gov.uk/who-we-are/delegates/>

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is the cost commitment?

A: The National Leadership Centre covers course costs, including food and accommodation for all residentials. Delegates will be expected to claim back expenses (including travel) from their employers.

Participants are expected to attend all residential sessions and opening and closing events. If participants do not attend compulsory elements of the programme, we will seek to recoup some or all of these costs from employers. Please see our terms and conditions for further information.

Q: I can't spare the time this year, can I book a place on next year's course?

A: We are currently inviting delegates for 2021-22. We will be setting out further detail of our selection process for future years in due course, but a place this year does not guarantee a place on a future cohort.

Q: How do I apply?

A: Your leadership academy will receive information about this programme at the start of September and will be able to discuss with you further. If you are interested in participating, please complete the application form [here](#) by 12pm on Friday 24th September 2021:

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/QUW0SY/>

The NLC will review applications and decide on the final selection, in collaboration with Leadership Academies. Delegates will be assessed on their answer to the smart survey question: Why would you like to take part in the programme? (Please limit your answer to 150 words).

Q: Who can I contact for more information?

A: If you would like more information on the programme, please email the Programme Team via: NLCProgrammeEnquiries@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

Terms and Conditions (1)

1. This agreement is between you and your organisation, and The Minister for the Cabinet Office of 1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ acting on behalf of the Crown and through the National Leadership Centre (the “NLC”).
2. The NLC shall invite individual employees of the Organisation (the “Participant”) to attend a leadership development course (the “Course”). If the Participant wishes to attend the Course, the Participant shall confirm their intention to attend within 14 calendar days of such an invitation.
3. The Course shall commence in November 2021 (the “Start Date”) and shall consist of a pre-course assessment, webinars, residential training days (a “Residential Training Day”), sponsorship and other ad hoc events and sessions.
4. The NLC will cover the costs of all learning, accommodation and sustenance during the Course. This includes the cost of speakers, facilitators, trainers and accommodation on a full board basis.
5. The Organisation and/or the Participant shall cover the cost of any additional accommodation required (i.e. dates before or after the Course), and any expenses incurred during the Course including but not limited to travel and additional services such as room service.
6. Where the Participant has accepted a place on the Course pursuant to clause 1, the Organisation is not entitled to postpone that Participant’s attendance on the Course. The NLC will undertake reasonable endeavours to facilitate any request to postpone the Participant’s place but reserves the right to deny this request.
7. Where a Participant has accepted a place on the Course, if a Participant needs to withdraw from the Course prior to the Start Date:
 - The Organisation shall, in a timely manner, propose a replacement participant who shall have a similar level of experience and seniority as the Participant who accepted a place on the Course pursuant to clause 2; and
 - The NLC shall, at its sole discretion, accept or reject the proposed replacement participant; and
 - Where the NLC rejects the proposed replacement participant, the Participant’s place shall be cancelled and clause 8 shall apply.

Terms and Conditions (2)

8. Where a Participant's place on the Course is cancelled pursuant to clause 6, the Organisation shall pay:
 - None of the Total Cost where such cancellation takes place more than 6 calendar months prior to the Start Date;
 - 50% of the Total Cost where such cancellation takes place less than 6 but not more than one calendar month prior to the Start Date; or
 - 100% of the Total Cost where such cancellation takes place less than 1 calendar month prior to the Start Date.
9. The Organisation shall pay £3500 if the Participant fails to attend the Residential Event.
10. Payments due under clauses 8 and 9 shall be made within 30 days of the NLC's first request for payment. The NLC shall have the right to charge interest on late payments at 4% above the Bank of England's base rate from time to time but at 4% per year for any period when that base rate is below 0%.
11. The Organisation and the Participant acknowledge that confidential information may be disclosed during the Course and at any and all times shall:
 - Keep any confidential information secret and confidential;
 - Not use or exploit the confidential information in any way; and
 - Not disclose the confidential information except to the extent required by law or any order of any court of competent jurisdiction or any regulatory, judicial, governmental or similar body of competent jurisdiction.
12. In carrying out its obligations under this agreement, each party shall undertake to comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 (the "Act") including the GDPR regulations 2018 as applicable, when processing the other party's personal data as defined in the Act. The NLC may share Participant's personal data with third party suppliers for the purposes of arranging and facilitating the Course.
13. The NLC reserves the right to cancel the Course at its sole discretion.
14. This agreement and any dispute or claim (including non-contractual disputes or claims) arising out of or in connection with it or its subject matter or formation shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the law of England and Wales.
15. Each party irrevocably agrees that the courts of England and Wales shall have exclusive jurisdiction to settle any dispute or claim (including non-contractual disputes or claims) arising out of or in connection with this agreement or its subject matter or formation.

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