

2015 Leopold Leadership Fellowship Application Packet

Fellowship Overview: Core Program

The Leopold Leadership Program provides researchers with the skills, approaches, and theoretical frameworks for translating their knowledge to action and catalyzing change to address the world's most pressing sustainability challenges.

Leopold Leadership Fellows lead change in many dimensions. Examples of previous Fellows' initiatives include:

- Working with business and local communities to create thriving economies while protecting areas of unique biological richness on land and in the oceans;
- Participating in multi-stakeholder efforts to chart sustainable resource management in regions such as the Mississippi River Basin;
- Advising state, federal, and international agencies, Congress, and the public on complex issues such as ocean acidification, invasive species, mountaintop-removal mining, and hydraulic fracturing for natural gas production;
- Engaging on sustainability questions with populations routinely omitted from public discussions about environmental quality, including prisoners and low-income communities;
- Involving stakeholders outside academe in framing interdisciplinary research agendas that focus on environmental problem-solving; and
- Leading efforts within universities to encourage engagement across disciplines and outward to other sectors to tackle sustainability challenges.

The Leopold Leadership Program seeks to provide leadership training that is useful and relevant wherever Fellows choose to work. For its core training, the program selects up to 20 outstanding academic researchers from across North America who are working on environmental and/or sustainability issues. It provides these Fellows with two intensive leadership training sessions a year apart. During the intervening year, the Fellows practice skills from their training at their home institutions and in other venues to learn what works and what doesn't in furthering their vision for change.

After their fellowship year, Fellows are expected to:

- Build on what they've learned to create a positive impact on decision-making about the environment and sustainability;
- Share with their graduate students skills learned in the course of the fellowship and mentor students and others in their development as leaders; and
- Contribute to the sustainability of the Leopold Leadership Program by providing ongoing feedback, sharing best practices, and serving as coaches and mentors to other Fellows.

Core Training Design

The training is designed around a powerful question: *What does it mean to be a leader in addressing today's environmental and sustainability challenges?* It is informed by feedback and evaluation data from previous cohorts of Leopold Leadership Fellows and draws on key concepts from leadership research. Insights gained from these sources guide our thinking about leadership development. Preparing leaders for the realities of today's environmental challenges assumes:

- An increased demand for collaboration and interdisciplinary problem-solving;
- A need for insightful, innovative strategies that inspire and influence; and
- An ability to use multimedia and social networking tools as well as traditional print media strategically.

Given the challenges cited above, the goals of the core training are twofold:

- Provide academic environmental leaders with the skills, strategic thinking, and presence to mobilize and set directions for building solutions; and
- Create a network of environmental leaders who share both a common language and set of experiences and practices.

Prior to the training, Fellows are expected to do some background reading. A primary source is [Switch: How To Change Things When Change Is Hard](#) (2010) by [Chip Heath](#) and Dan Heath, which informs the framework of the training design. In addition, Fellows do some preliminary preparation for communicating complex ideas.

The first week of the core training engages Fellows around three central leadership strands — innovation, communication, and collaboration — woven together and leading to the creation of an individual action plan for the practice year. The overall flow of the week is as follows:

Forming a collaborative team	Leading change	Communicating complex ideas	Creating an action plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership styles • Group problem-solving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Switch</i>: Applying a change management framework • Strategic thinking skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a message • Learning from journalists • Selecting appropriate digital and print media tools for your audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviewing for information • Developing a personal action plan for integrating and practicing skills throughout the year

During the first week of training each Fellow completes:

- A preliminary network map: a visual illustration of other collaborators, decision-makers, and organizations who share Fellows’ vision and interests;
- A communications plan: a work plan to build Fellows’ repertoire for engaging with their selected audience; and
- An action plan for the practice year.

What the training is like

The program addresses a series of leadership questions and helps Fellows build on their individual experience and competencies. The learning is both facilitated and self-directed, and as concepts, tools, and strategies are presented, participants are provided time to practice and get feedback. Fellows are engaged from morning to evening, balancing the day between highly interactive sessions and reflective activities such as journal writing or one-on-one processing conversations. Time is set aside at the end of each afternoon for Fellows to take a walk or run, challenge one another to a pick-up game of basketball or croquet, or take part in other unstructured activities. Evening sessions are devoted to stories and case studies from previous Leopold Leadership Fellows and other invited guests.

In the year between their training sessions, Fellows practice new skills at their home institutions or in other venues to learn what works and what doesn’t in furthering their vision for change. Activities may include:

- Developing a repertoire of communications tools, including stories that connect their research with their life experience;
- Experimenting with social media;
- Writing a blog post;
- Interviewing for information to fill gaps in their network needed for fulfilling their vision for change;
- Incorporating what they’ve learned about collaboration, innovation, and communication into their work mentoring students and postdocs; and
- Expanding their skills in facilitating interdisciplinary groups.

Fellows are on the leading edge of developing the practices that are needed for complex problem-solving; they are, in many ways, critical resources to each other. As a network, the Fellows provide powerful ongoing support to each other. During the practice year they organize periodic check-ins in pairs or small groups to remind themselves of the short- and long-term goals they set for themselves in their action plans. Fellows are expected to manage their time in order to engage fully in learning from their practice.

The following June, the Fellows reconvene in a final session to report back, integrate their learning from the practice year, and articulate to each other their refined vision for linking knowledge to action. An outcome of the experience is that Fellows are better able to decide where, when, and how to engage for the greatest impact in furthering their vision for change.

Fellowship Support

As members of the Leopold Leadership Network, Fellows receive ongoing opportunities for peer networking and mentoring from trainers and previous Fellows. Please note that there is no direct financial award or stipend associated with this Fellowship.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

1) As of 2015, ***Fellows are responsible for their travel expenses to and from the training.*** In addition, they are asked to contribute \$1,000 toward the cost of their lodging. This request is one of a number of experiments that the program is undertaking as it seeks a sustainable funding model. Ability to pay is ***not*** a criterion for assessing candidates' competitiveness for a fellowship; the selection process is need-blind. For the 2015 round, there is a pool of funds available for outstanding candidates who need assistance.

2) It is the policy of the program that spouses, partners, family members, and friends do not accompany Fellows to the training sites or participate in any of the activities.

2015 Fellowship Training Schedule

The 2015 Leopold Leadership training will take place over the course of one year as follows:

Core session: June 15-22, 2015

Practice year:

Fellows practice new skills over the course of the academic year in context at their home institutions, with the support of webinars and conference calls with peers and mentors.

Final session: June 20-24, 2016

Notes:

- All Fellows are expected to participate in both training sessions and are responsible for designing their own goals and schedule for the practice year.
- Leopold Leadership Fellowships may not be deferred. Selected Fellows are eligible to participate in training only during the year for which the fellowship is awarded.
- The fellowship entails two training sessions ***as well as a year in between spent practicing new skills.*** This is a significant change from prior years.

Application Guidelines

Target Audience

The Leopold Leadership Program seeks candidates from a broad range of disciplines including the biological, physical, and social sciences, and technical, medical, and engineering fields related to the environment and sustainability. "Science," "scientist," and "scientific" in these guidelines refer to the full range of these disciplines.

The program serves academic environmental scientists working in public and private academic and research institutions of various sizes in Canada, Mexico, and the United States. It targets mid-career researchers (typically mid 30s to early 50s in age) whose contributions to environmental science and leadership in addressing pressing sustainability issues will be significantly enhanced by receiving a Fellowship.

The program does not accept applicants at the graduate or post-doctoral level. Individuals who work for government, NGOs, museums, and corporations are also ineligible for the core training program. Academic scientists with fewer than five years of experience since earning a Ph.D. and more than a year until tenure review are encouraged to apply in the future, although applications from exceptional early career candidates

may be considered.

Eligibility Criteria

Candidates are reviewed on a range of criteria with an emphasis on scientific record, credibility, and judgment and the ability to take a leadership role in transferring environmental knowledge. Applicants must show, based on their activities to date, ability and promise in actively applying their expertise for the benefit of the environment and society.

Applicants from a wide range of disciplines are encouraged. All must demonstrate:

- A faculty position;
- An active role in research and teaching in an area of environmental and sustainability science at a Canadian, Mexican, or U.S.-based institution of higher education or research;
- A reputation for outstanding science;
- Interest, willingness, and an appropriate professional position to synthesize, interpret, and communicate the results of their work, connect scientific knowledge and decision-making, and engage with stakeholders on solving sustainability challenges;
- Passion and capacity to exercise leadership in the environmental arena and enthusiasm to communicate science for improved environmental policies and practices;
- Commitment to participate in all the activities of the yearlong Fellowship, including both training sessions and the practice year in between;
- Intent to share what is learned in the training program with students, colleagues, and other stakeholders through courses, workshops, and other outreach efforts; and
- Desire to remain an active member of the Leopold Leadership Network after the conclusion of the fellowship year and assist other Fellows as mentors and coaches.

Applications are initially reviewed, scored, and ranked by members of the Leopold Leadership Program Selection Jury to establish a pool of no more than 40 finalists. Fellows are reviewed and selected based on the three criteria detailed below.

Scientific record, relevance, and potential

Candidates should be outstanding scientists who are generating new knowledge that is relevant in their field and has the potential for national and/or international influence in the realms of the environment and sustainability. Participation in interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral activities is a positive attribute.

Scientific credibility, judgment, and leadership

The program seeks candidates who convey integrity and are (or will be) strong, respected public representatives of science. They should have a reputation for excellent science, good judgment, and credibility in their field. Factors for consideration include research leadership as PIs or co-PIs on projects, publications, and service on advisory bodies and editorial boards, among others.

Linking knowledge to action

As noted above, the ultimate goal of the Leopold Leadership Program is to create a community of engaged scientific academic leaders who have an impact in addressing society's most pressing environmental and sustainability challenges. Successful candidates are outstanding scientists who show evidence of, or strong potential for, leadership in addressing these challenges. Such roles may be found inside or outside the academy. General areas of engagement may include the following:

External engagement. An important component of the scientific leadership envisioned by the program is engagement with external audiences. The program seeks candidates who are engaging, or have significant capacity to engage, in ways beyond those generally available within academe and who want to communicate or collaborate with stakeholders on local to global scales to solve sustainability challenges. Factors for consideration include interest in and commitment to addressing environmental and sustainability issues actively; outreach to broader audiences (or a strong indication of the potential and willingness to conduct such outreach); and/or involvement in an appropriate capacity with nonacademic stakeholders, such as scientific and technical advisory work with planning commissions, citizens' groups, and NGOs.

Academic culture shift. Another major goal of the Leopold Leadership Program is to help spur a shift in academic culture by encouraging more and improved interactions between scientists and decision-makers.

Toward this end, Fellows should be able to transfer the skills and knowledge learned in the training to peers and students.

Candidates should have an underlying capacity as leaders: the purpose of the training is to accelerate this capacity, not to provide basic skills. The Selection Jury weighs a candidate's potential to use the training and share the skills he or she learns with new audiences in teaching, outreach, and other professional activities both internally and externally.

Selection Process

A Selection Jury of 10 to 15 members drawn from the Leopold Leadership Program's Advisory Board, previous Fellows and others reviews the applications and selects new Fellows.

Each application is initially reviewed, scored, and ranked by three Selection Jury members. The rankings are used to create a pool of no more than 40 finalists from which up to 20 Fellows are selected.

To ensure an objective evaluation with no actual or possible perceived conflicts of interest in the review process, no Selection Jury member is assigned to review a Fellowship candidate in any of the following categories:

- The applicant is a current or former employee or employer, a relative, or an employee of an organization for which the Selection Jury member serves on the board;
- The applicant is a co-author, research associate, or otherwise a collaborator on professional work; or
- The applicant has any other significant ties to the reviewer, including financial.

Repeat applicants from previous years are not evaluated by the same reviewers.

Communicating Selection Results

Applicants will be notified of the selection results in late November, approximately seven months after the submission deadline. Public announcement of the new Fellows will be made in January of the fellowship year.

Note: All application materials are confidential and become the property of the Leopold Leadership Program. Applications will not be returned to the candidates. The program does not provide written or verbal reviews of applications either before or after selection. Portions of successful candidates' applications will be shared with their Leopold Leadership cohort and with the training facilitators to inform the design of the cohort's training.

2015 Application Instructions

The call for applications is now open.

Schedule and Deadline

The deadline for applications for the 2015 Leopold Leadership Fellowships is **April 28, 2014**. Candidates will be notified of the outcome of their applications in late fall 2014. The public announcement of the 2015 Leopold Leadership Fellows will occur in January 2015.

Application Criteria

Applicants are strongly encouraged to read this entire packet and browse the [Fellows Directory](#) and the [Leopold Leadership Program blog](#) before applying.

The program does **not** accept applications for the core training from scientists employed by NGOs, the private sector, or government agencies.

How to Apply

Applications must be submitted using [this online form](#). Applications submitted by fax, email or mail will not be accepted.

Application

Components of the 2015 Leopold Leadership Fellowships application include the following:

1. Applicant Information

2. Policy Relevance of Research (150 words maximum)

Briefly describe the relevance of your research to decision-making; that is, how your work could be used to inform discussions and decisions by policy- and decision-makers at the local, state/provincial, national, and/or international level.

3. Science Leadership Evidence (500 words maximum)

Leopold Leadership Fellows are linking knowledge to action all the ways shown in this [concept map](#). Which of these areas have you worked in, and how do you think your efforts have contributed to change? In which areas are you most interested in setting goals for the future?

4. Statement of Commitment (500 words maximum)

The fellowship entails a year of self-directed practice to refine skills learned during the first training session in June. What leadership skill would you most like to learn in your training? What is your current thinking about how you might practice this skill, and with what groups?

5. Two letters of recommendation submitted by references

List two individuals who will be submitting letters of recommendation for you. The letters should be from individuals familiar with your scientific record and leadership abilities and who can provide testimony on your commitment broadly to linking your knowledge to action and/or working collaboratively with others for change. References should be carefully selected and given ample notice to write a solid recommendation. See “Instructions for References” below for more information.

Applicants are responsible for contacting their references and providing them with the “Instructions for References” below, along with the link to the online reference form and your application ID, which will be generated on your application form.

6. Current CV with only your most recent and relevant work (5 pages maximum in PDF)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR REFERENCES:

A candidate applying for a Leopold Leadership Fellowship has requested that you write a letter of recommendation on his or her behalf. Please note that all recommendations are confidential.

Please read these instructions carefully!! To ensure that your letter of recommendation is submitted correctly and associated correctly with your candidate, it is important that you follow the guidelines below.

The Leopold Leadership Program provides researchers with the skills, approaches, and theoretical frameworks for translating their knowledge to action and for catalyzing change to address the world’s most pressing sustainability challenges. Fellows lead change in many [dimensions](#), and the program seeks to provide leadership training that is useful and relevant wherever Fellows choose to work. For a complete description of the program, see [“Fellowship Overview: Core Program”](#) above.

The Leopold Leadership Fellowships are competitive. Up to 20 fellowships will be awarded from a candidate pool anticipated to be 75-100 individuals. Complete application guidelines and criteria can be found under [“Application Guidelines”](#) above.

Please focus your comments on the candidate’s scientific and professional record in the following areas and make a comparative evaluation of the candidate’s ranking with other individuals with a similar professional focus at a similar career stage:

Scientific record, relevance, and potential: Please comment on the quality of the candidate’s scientific work and future potential for productivity. How does his/her work compare to that of other scientists you know at a similar career stage in the field? Is his/her work seen as innovative? Does it have the potential for national

and/or international influence in the realms of environment and sustainability? Is he/she involved in any interdisciplinary or cross-sectoral activities?

Scientific credibility and judgment: We seek candidates who convey integrity and are (or will be) strong, respected public representatives of science. Please comment on the candidate's standing among peers in this regard. Is he/she seen as a credible, principled professional? Does he/she show good judgment in speaking as a scientist? Do colleagues trust him/her to speak on their behalf?

Leadership and leadership potential in applying science to address environmental problems: The goal of the Leopold Leadership Program is to create a community of engaged scientific academic leaders who help to address society's most pressing environmental challenges. Please comment on the candidate's ability to engage others to work toward this goal. The attached concept map illustrates some of the modes of engagement chosen by previous Fellows. Does the candidate have existing capacity as a leader? Does he/she seek out leadership roles in academic settings and/or external settings? Does he/she show evidence of interest in connecting his/her knowledge to decision-making?

Please add any other comments you believe will be relevant to your review.

Please submit your letter of recommendation using the [online form](#). Letters submitted by fax or mail will not be accepted.

On the online reference form website, please first create your own username and password to log in. You will also need to enter your candidate's application ID, which your candidate is responsible for providing to you.

Concept Map: Modes of Engagement by Leopold Leadership Fellows

