

Mississippi Women in the Lead (MWL) Participant Application

The Mississippi Women in the Lead program, co-sponsored by The Women's Foundation of Mississippi's Women's Policy Institute, the Mississippi Black Women's Roundtable's Black Women's Leadership Institute, and One Voice of Mississippi's Mississippi Black Leadership Institute, is a leadership program designed to help Mississippi women navigate the challenges of running for elected office and prepare them to become effective public policy advocates. The program will help participants become well-equipped to run for elected office and champion progressive and equitable public policies that impact the lives of women and most vulnerable populations in our state. By bringing individuals who may experience gender and/or race-based discrimination into the policy process, MWL will support leaders who will advance a policy agenda that is responsive to the needs of Mississippi's women, girls, and vulnerable populations.

Who is Eligible?

- Cisgender and transgender women, and non-binary people living and working in Mississippi. **NOTE:** Women who are considered non-traditional leaders in their communities are strongly encouraged to apply. This includes women who live in low-income, underserved communities.
- Cisgender and transgender women, and non-binary people working in a community-based or non-profit setting with the full support of their employer and/or supervisor.
- Cisgender and transgender women, and non-binary people who are interested in running for public office or supporting women who run for public office.
- Cisgender and transgender women, and non-binary people who are interested in working to improve the policy landscape of Mississippi for women and children.
- Individuals who agree to all participation requirements listed below - AND whose employers agree to all participation requirements (if applicable). If you need permission from another entity, such as a college program, the appropriate person must also sign the agreement.

Program Details and Structure

The program will begin with a two day in-person kick-off retreat, followed by:

- A series of retreats and webinars to cover topics related to running for office and policy advocacy; and
- Group activities and workshops to increase learning about elections and policy work in Mississippi (in-person and online).

NOTE: MWL will continue to monitor COVID restrictions and case numbers. Program activities may shift to virtual rather than in-person. In addition, participants may also be required to follow protocols including, but not limited to, wearing a mask for the duration of the training and practicing social distancing.

Program Dates

- Retreat 1: Friday and Saturday, August 12 – 13, 2022 (in-person)
- Retreat 2: Friday, September 9, 2022 (virtual)
- Webinars: Fridays, October 14, 2022, November 18, 2022, and December 9, 2022
- Retreat Four: Friday, January 6, 2023 (virtual)
- Retreat Five: Friday, April 14, 2023
- TBD: Election Day activities, leadership development workshops, and non-profit policy agenda informational sessions.

Participant Selection Criteria

Individual applications will be judged based on the following criteria.

1. Interest in affecting change in their communities through political and/or civic engagement:
 - a. Individuals must be able to articulate a policy issue(s) they are interested in and how they will apply the skills they learn to address the issue; and
 - b. Individuals must have the ability and desire to bring the training back to their community.
2. Interest in running for public office or supporting women who run for public office:
 - a. Individuals must be able to articulate the reasons they want to run for office.
 - b. Individuals must be able to articulate which political office(s) in which they have interest in pursuing.
3. Commitment to policy advocacy work:
 - a. Individuals must be able to articulate the value of learning about local and state policy to their own work and to the broader social justice movement; and
 - b. Individuals must be able to articulate why now is a good time to go through the program.
4. Organizational support:
 - a. Individuals must demonstrate that they have full support of their employers to participate in MWL.
 - b. Individual must receive authorization from their employer to spend staff time working with a social justice organization on a policy issue.
5. Time commitment:
 - a. Individuals must affirm their ability to participate in one retreat, check their email daily throughout the program, and dedicate an average of 20 hours per month to MWL.
 - b. Individuals who are placed with a social justice organization must affirm their ability to dedicate time to the advocacy work of the organization, as decided by the participant and the host organization.
 - c. Individuals must allow enough flexibility in their schedule to watch the program webinars and complete homework assignments.

In addition, applications will be evaluated based on the thoroughness of responses to the application questions.

Applicant Requirements

1. In the event an expense needs to be reimbursed, the applicant understands that reimbursement requests are due three weeks from the date of the expense and that checks may take up to 30 days to arrive after MWL receives a complete and accurate reimbursement request.
2. The Applicant's Employer will fully support the Applicant during the WML knowing that this will require a minimum of 20 hours per month for full program participation, including placement with a social justice organization during the 2023 legislative session.
 - a. NOTE: If the applicant's organization has an advocacy agenda, the participant may be allowed to work on the organization's agenda as their placement.
 - b. Applicant's Employer will fully support Applicant to attend all trainings in their entirety and participate in all webinars and homework assignments in their entirety. Applicant understands that attending the in-person retreats and participating in all webinars are requirements.
3. Applicant understands that while exceptions to webinar attendance requirement may be made in case of personal emergencies, participants who miss more than two of the total number of trainings may lose their fellowship. **NOTE:** There are no exceptions to attending the in-person opening retreat.
4. Applicant will maintain an email address that is checked daily and communicate with the MWL point of contact if potential barriers to participation arise.
5. Applicant will provide feedback to the MWL on the Applicant's experience in MWL by filling out evaluations after the retreat, completion of each webinar, and completion of the program.
6. Following the Applicant's completion of the program, Applicant understands that they are strongly encouraged to stay connected and keep us informed on how their MWL experience is impacting their organization, community, and/or political campaign.

Cost to Participate

- The MWL program is offered free of charge. MWL is committed to eliminating financial barriers to access.
- MWL will cover childcare expenses, if needed. If childcare is a barrier, please indicate this need on your application.
- MWL will provide hotel accommodations and mileage reimbursements (upon completion of a W-9 form and other documentation if needed for in-person meetings).
- Meals will be provided during in-person trainings, meetings, and events.
- Participants are required to have computer and internet access. If this is a barrier, please indicate this need on your application.
- Participants who satisfy program requirements will be eligible to receive a \$2,500.00 fellowship stipend.

How to Apply – Application Guidelines

Deadline to Apply: July 25, 2022

Notification of Acceptance: July 29, 2022

Contact Information

1. First Name
2. Last Name
3. Email*
4. Phone Number*
5. Address*
6. Address Line 1
7. Address Line 2
8. City
9. State
10. Zip Code

Demographic Information

1. Please indicate the gender with which you identify.
2. Please indicate the race with which you identify.
3. Please indicate the ethnicity with which you identify.
4. Please indicate your party affiliation, if any.
5. Current Employer.
6. Current Job Title/Position.
7. How long have you been in your current role?
8. What are your roles and responsibilities in your current role?

Short Essay Response

1. Please respond to the following questions in 250 words or less.
2. Why do you want to participate in the Mississippi Women in the Lead program?
3. What are your leadership strengths?
4. What are your leadership challenges or roadblocks?
5. What issues are you interested in addressing in your community?
6. Are you interested in running for public office? If yes, why, and what office?
7. What are your career goals (Next 12-24 months)?
8. Are you interested in policy advocacy work? If yes, why?
9. How did you hear about this program? Please be specific as possible.

Resume Upload

Please upload your resume as PDF. **Upload Resume.**

Please upload headshot, if available.

Thank you for completing the MWL application!

By clicking “Submit,” you affirm that:

- You are confirming and acknowledging that if accepted into MWL you will abide by all the program rules and requirements and actively participate in all the sessions.
- You have provided all information requested and have filled in all applicable sections of the application.
- Finally, you declare that all information that you have provided in this application is correct and complete to the best of your knowledge.

I agree to the terms above.

Yes, I agree.

No, I disagree.

Employer: I agree to the terms above.

Yes, I agree.

No, I disagree.