

LEADERSHIP/LEAD ATLANTA CLASS OF 2026 COMMUNITY CAPACITY PROJECTS OVERVIEW

Applications accepted through June 6, 2025

WHAT IS LEADERSHIP ATLANTA?

Leadership Atlanta is a nine-month, executive level civic and leadership program. We choose approximately 80 established leaders each year to represent a broad cross-section of metro Atlanta. The class meets monthly between August and April for programming around specific community issues. Through retreats, full-day seminars, service projects, discussion groups and community tours, members explore critical community issues, examine themselves as leaders and build relationships of trust and mutual understanding.

THE OPPORTUNITY

We believe in the power of service to bring people together and create positive change in our communities. As such, an important component of Leadership Atlanta and LEAD Atlanta is community engagement projects. Each year during their program, class members work collaboratively in project teams on critical, capacity building initiatives that support and help Metro Atlanta's nonprofit organizations achieve their mission.

Leadership Atlanta is seeking to partner with Atlanta-area nonprofit organizations for the community engagement projects for the Class of 2026 (Fall 2025-Spring 2026). The goals of the community engagement projects are:

1. Provide a civic engagement opportunity for Leadership Atlanta and LEAD Atlanta class members during their program year to collectively learn about and address a critical community need.
2. Provide an opportunity for class members to work in teams toward a common goal, practicing the leadership skills they're learning in real time during the program year.
3. Bring to life the program days and see firsthand the challenges and opportunities nonprofit organizations face.
4. Provide added value and added capacity to nonprofit organizations.

WHAT YOU GET FROM LEADERSHIP ATLANTA

- Selected nonprofit organizations will be assigned 10-12 class participants to serve as pro-bono consultants for the organization for nine months on a strategic, capacity building project. This group will consist of diverse individuals from a variety of backgrounds and sectors, representing the government, business, academic, and nonprofit sectors. The class members will all be senior-level professionals who have demonstrated significant leadership in their profession and their community work. See this year's class list to get a sense of the team: <https://www.leadershipatlanta.org/lacurrentclass>
- In addition to the team, we will assign each organization a volunteer Leadership Atlanta alumnus to serve as a Project Facilitator and Liaison. This facilitator will work with the organization and class members throughout the process to provide technical assistance and support as needed.
- Projects will be completed with measurable outcomes and presented to your Board of Directors and senior leadership team by mid- April 2026.

ORGANIZATION CRITERIA/REQUIREMENTS

- A 501(c)3 nonprofit organization or affiliated with a 501(c)3
- Serve the Metro Atlanta region
- Priority will be given to organizations that focus on underserved populations
- At least 1 full-time staff member
- A governing board and an Executive Director/CEO
- Sound financial standing and operational stability
- Cannot have a paid staff member in the Class of 2026

PROJECT CRITERIA

- The project must be capacity-building, meaning that it should not be direct service but rather a project that will help enhance or expand the organization's existing operations. Perhaps it is an initiative that you are "saving for a rainy day" or would be "nice to have" but for extra capacity, you wouldn't be able to realize.
- Project must be aligned to a component of the organization's strategic plan. If the organization does not have a strategic plan, the project must be aligned to a strategic need or priority of the organization.
- Projects that align to one of the Leadership Atlanta program topics will be given priority. The topics include Criminal Justice and Public Safety, Education, Healthcare, Social and Economic Mobility, and Affordable Housing.
- Executive Director/CEO must be intimately involved, and accessible to the team throughout the project.
- The project has the full endorsement of the organization's Board of Directors.
- The organization has the capacity to fund and staff the project when completed.
- Project should be realistically completed during the nine-month program year in approximately 16-24 hours of work.
- All organizations must have the ability to kick off the project with an immersion activity to allow the team to get an intimate understanding of the nonprofit and its mission, the community it serves, the impact it is seeking to make and the overall outcomes it is working to achieve.
 - An example of a previous immersion activity included: Team members were invited to the Furniture Bank warehouse to help build kitchen tables from scratch. Each table would immediately be put to use by a family or individual transitioning out of homelessness and into permanent housing. Class members met a client who was moving into her first apartment with her three children. This was the first piece of furniture she received as part of her "move in" package from the Furniture Bank.
- Examples of successful projects include but are not limited to the following areas:
 - Business Strategy
 - Human Capital Strategy/Training Program Development
 - Marketing/Branding Plans
 - Volunteer Engagement/Recruitment/Programming
 - Analysis of Earned Income Streams
 - Board Development

LIMITATIONS AND EXCLUSIONS

- We will not consider projects from nonprofit organizations who have been a Community Leadership Project partner with Leadership Atlanta or LEAD Atlanta in the past five years.
- We will not consider projects that involve "busy work," such as stuffing envelopes, working at events, or painting/repairing buildings, participating in an activity or working directly with clients of the organization.
- To protect the integrity of our class members' relationships, we do not allow fundraising or board recruitment projects.

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED

Completed proposals must include the following components:

1. Completed application online form (see questions below)
2. A list of your organization's current board members, including title and company
3. Verification of your organization's 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status
4. Your most recent end-of-year financial statements

TIMELINE AND REQUIRED MEETINGS

Projects Timeline:

- **Q&A Sessions** for interested Non-Profits (Please email LeadershipAtlanta2@leadershipatlanta.org to register)
 - Wednesday April 30, 1:00 – 2:00 pm, Zoom
 - Wednesday, May 7, 2:00- 3:00 pm, Zoom
- **Proposals due** Friday, June 6: via [online submission](#).
- **In-Person Interviews** for those accepted to second round | June 16- 27, 2025: with organizations moving to second round.(Location: Leadership Atlanta Office)
- **Virtual Interviews** with organizations selected as finalists | July 7-11, 2025
- **Final projects awarded** July 18, 2025
- **Project Orientation** with chosen organizations and alumni Project Facilitators | August 1, 2025 | 8:30 – 10:30 am
- **Class of 2024 Opening Retreat** (Project Leadership will meet with their Class team and Project Facilitator) | August 22, 2025 | Camp Twin Lakes | 1:00 – 3:00 pm
- **Immersive Project Team Meeting** (Mutual date chosen by organization and project team) | September 8-September 12, 2025
- **Final Presentation to the Organizations Board of Directors** April 2026

Selected nonprofit partners and members of the Class of 2026 will work on projects between September 2025 – April 2026.

Please complete the [online application](#) in its entirety including the required attachments. Email questions to LeadershipAtlanta2@leadershipatlanta.org or staff can be reached at 404-876-4770.