

Leaders Plus Mentoring/Sponsoring Overview 2020/2021



“Thank you for your interest in becoming a Mentor/Sponsor to one of our Fellows. It is an incredibly rewarding experience as you will support someone during what is often one of the most intense times of their life as a leader with young children.”

Verena Hefti, CEO & Founder, Leaders Plus

What is Leaders Plus?

Leaders Plus is a Social Enterprise dedicated to supporting leaders with babies and young children to progress their careers, therefore making a significant impact on the Gender Pay Gap.

The Leaders Plus Fellowship is a multi-award-winning 9-month intervention designed to help talented individuals stay in the leadership pipeline and continue to develop their careers while enjoying their young families. Out of last year’s cohort, a third have been promoted already as highlighted in the [external impact evaluation](#).

The Fellowship offers access to a cross sector peer network, career acceleration workshops rooted in research about career progression, senior leader mentors, workshops with key supporters (e.g. their line manager and their partner if applicable) and support to drive change within their organisation.

We aim to support individuals to progress in their careers and build a positive movement for change so that new parents can thrive in leadership roles. Men, women, and all genders welcome.

All our events and sessions are baby-friendly. Due to the impact of Covid-19 we have moved our Fellowship Programme online for 2020/2021.

Who are the Fellows?

Leaders with babies and young children who are passionate about their career and love their children. They come from all sectors and are usually middle and senior leaders. You can be matched with anyone within the sector.

Why do we talk about ‘Mentor/Sponsor’ rather than just ‘Mentor’?

Research (e.g. Hewlett 2017) suggests that sponsorship is critical for career progression of groups that are underrepresented at senior leadership level. Sponsorship means that you are willing to open doors for the individual if the situation arises, willing to share insider knowledge where there is an opportunity and willing to invest in the individual with your social and cultural capital. Sponsorship cannot be engineered; it emerges when trust and respect are present. We ask that

Mentors/Sponsors are open to encouraging a sponsorship if the trust develops and if the opportunity arises.

Who are we looking for?

We are looking for senior individuals across industries who:

- Have combined leadership careers with looking after young children. Past mentors have for example included a Partner at Boston Consulting Group, a CEO of a NHS Trust and a Senior Director in a Social Enterprise.
- Are personally passionate about supporting leaders with babies to thrive in their careers, and who are willing to support these individuals to achieve the career path that works with their ambition and their values.
- Have colleagues who are willing to sponsor the Fellow if the situation arises.

Time commitment:

The commitment of mentors/sponsors is to attend the half day online matching event plus at least four 1-2-1 meetings over 9 months, with a view of the relationship likely to be evolving beyond that.

Leaders Plus Principles:

- We believe in supporting more **leaders with young children to fulfil their potential** in their leadership career while looking after young children.
- We are **invested** in each other's development and ability to balance happy family lives with work.
- We support individuals to choose **diverse** journey's congruent with each persons' values, whatever they may be.
- We access high quality professional development which is **informed by evidence**.
- We organise **baby inclusive professional development activities** so that we can take our babies along if we want to.
- We empower new parents to **shape the debate** about parents in leadership.

Next steps:

Selection of mentors happens through a phone conversation where the mentor has a chance to find out more about the Fellowship and a colleague from Leaders Plus can ensure that the mentor is supportive of the Leaders Plus values and has the relevant experience.

“An amazing programme which gives Fellows an independent and practical perspective on their career objectives balanced with family life. My role as a mentor is interesting, challenging, rewarding and fun.” Jane Green, Former Partner, Ernest and Young.