The Leaders Plus Fellowship

Career development
for working parents

A bigger career doesn't have to mean a smaller family life

LeadersPlus

Who is the Fellowship for?

You want to progress. More impact, more influence, more pay. You also want to be the parent you want to be, and a family life that works. You don't want one to come at the expense of the other.

The Leaders Plus Fellowship is a nine-month programme that helps you do both: by showing you how progression really works, getting clear about what matters to you at work and at home, and making deliberate changes in both.

The Fellowship is for individuals who:

- are raising children up to the age of 18, from parental leave onwards
- want to take control of their careers
- have experience in a current or recent role involving management and/or leadership
- want to be part of a movement challenging a root cause of the gender pay gap.

All family set-ups are equally welcome.

Funding your place: many Fellows are funded by their employer, and we can help you make the case. Charity, self-funder and Hardship Fund rates are also available, and self-funders can pay in instalments. See page 7.

Previous Fellows have included programme and project managers, leads, advisors, lecturers, directors, partners and heads/deputy heads of department, from organisations such as:

NHS, colart, The Salvation Army, King's College London, Frazer-Nash Consultancy, citizens advice, IHS, CIPD, Santander, CBRE, BT, global witness, RSPCA, John Innes Centre, THALES

> Leaders Plus opens doors to a world of knowledge, inspiration and advice and a community of parents and professionals that can be an ongoing source of support. You'll never regret filling in that application form!
>
> Alice Harrison, Leaders Plus Fellow

> Leaders Plus has given me invaluable strategies, time to think and peer support. This has helped me be both a better father and more effective at my job. Leaders Plus is an excellent programme that I would recommend to any parents.
>
> Omar Salem, Leaders Plus Fellow

More isn't the answer

You're already doing more.

More meetings. More responsibility. More emails. More organising. More remembering. More school runs. More trying to be everywhere.

It's an understandable response to competing expectations: work harder, fit more in, be a "better" parent. But more effort often brings more overwhelm, guilt and self-criticism. You hold back, wait to be noticed, and your progress stalls.

Trying harder isn't the answer when your approach to career and family isn't getting you where you want to go.

Progression isn't the reward for doing your job well.

You can't just work hard and hope somebody notices. Progression also depends on visibility, networks, sponsors, self-promotion, negotiation, asking and access to decision-makers. These are skills, and they can be learned.

From trying harder to taking charge

BEFORE		AFTER
Working harder		Reflecting
Reacting		Deciding
Carrying everything		Asking
Feeling guilty	→	Negotiating
Waiting		Setting boundaries
Drifting		Sharing
Hoping to be noticed		Self-promoting
		Acting

> I am much more active in directing my own career, not just driving along. I am much more in charge than I have ever felt before.
>
> **Pirita Paajanen, Leaders Plus Fellow**

Most five-year career plans have a problem.

They only include your career.

Most leadership development focuses on the leader: promotion, visibility, influence, networks, negotiation. Leaders Plus adds the **PLUS**: your children, your partner, your home, your values and what actually matters to you.

Your career doesn't exist separately from the rest of your life. Career decisions affect home, and home arrangements affect career opportunities. So during the Fellowship you build one plan for both.

A bigger job doesn't have to mean less family.

Many parents assume that seniority means more hours, more pressure and less time at home. It doesn't have to. A more senior role can bring more autonomy, flexibility, influence and choice. Fellows learn how to progress while protecting what matters at home.

Alongside that, you get:

- a personal senior leader mentor with lived experience of combining a senior career and family
- a peer community of ambitious working parents, with lifelong alumni membership of a network of 600+
- an award-winning programme, externally evaluated and described as 'life-changing' and 'world class'.

What only Leaders Plus does

+ **A long-term vision for career and family together**
You get clear about where you want to be in five to ten years, at work and at home, and what you are and aren't prepared to sacrifice to get there.

Plus, sessions with and for those who can help you get there:

+ **A session with your line manager** (if applicable)
Structured support for you and your manager to talk about your career ambitions, and how they can support you.

+ **A session for you and your partner** (if applicable)
Couples explore their visions together and have a different conversation about careers, children, ambitions and how responsibilities are shared. For Fellows not in a partner relationship, we run a Solo Parents Workshop.

> The partner sessions have led to more open conversations with my partner about home life challenges and sharing the load.
>
> **Rosie Howatt, Leaders Plus Fellow**

Nine months to build one plan

Over nine months you learn how progression really works, get clear about what matters, and put your plan into action at work and at home.

MODULE 1
Planning for Impact
Set your intentions for what you want to change, at work and at home.

MODULE 2
Vision, Negotiation and Liberating Assumptions
Challenge the assumptions holding you back, and build skills in negotiation and setting boundaries.

MODULE 3
Mentor Introduction
Meet your senior leader mentor.

MODULE 4
Sharing Your Vision
Share your five-to-ten-year vision for career and family, communicate with authority and tackle imposter syndrome.

MODULE 5
Internal Promotion and Managing Upwards
Learn how promotion decisions are made, with an expert HR panel.

MODULE 6
Networks, Sponsors, Self-promotion and Reputation
Build the visibility and sponsorship that progression depends on.

MODULE 7
Inclusive Line Management
Bring your line manager in to support your plan.

MODULE 8
Action and Implementation
Turn your vision into a long-term action plan.

MODULE 9
Taking the Learning Forward
Celebrate what's changed and hear from senior leaders who have progressed while being present parents.

Plus: sessions for partners, solo parents, dads, those from minoritised backgrounds and aspirational employers.

Choose your format

Blended (UK)
4 full-day in-person workshops and 4 online sessions

Online only
12 interactive two-hour virtual sessions in small groups

Both cover the same content and need around 5.5 hours a month. **Every session is child and baby-friendly.**

What changes

100% of Fellows to date report a positive or highly positive impact.

We measure the impact of every cohort. Here's a detailed look at what Fellows who completed the Fellowship in May 2025 told us.

AT WORK

68%	were promoted or took on extra responsibility during the Fellowship
55%	received a pay rise, averaging 8.5%
89%	took proactive action to progress their career
54%	pursued an opportunity they wouldn't have considered before
100%	would put themselves forward for an internal promotion

AT HOME

88%	are more confident balancing career and family
85%	are more present at home
85%	feel less overwhelmed combining career and parenting
96%	saw an improvement in their overall wellbeing

Career progression that works with the life you want as a parent, rather than despite being one.

> The Fellowship has had a profoundly positive impact on my home life. It has empowered me to give myself permission to prioritise my family and my own well-being, by providing me with the tools and confidence to structure my work for a healthier work-life balance. Taking more control at work and having greater self-confidence has significantly improved my overall well-being and inner strength, which in turn has had a very positive influence on my family.
>
> The Fellowship has had a huge impact on my work life. It has helped me to recognise and share my successes, and to be proud of my achievements. This has empowered me to decide what I expect from an employer, to want and expect more from my career and to open my eyes to my full abilities and seek opportunities beyond my immediate scope or level.
>
> **Alison Fletcher, Leaders Plus Fellow**

An investment in your next step

More than half of our Fellows received a pay rise during the last Fellowship, averaging 8.5%, and two thirds were promoted or took on extra responsibility.

	Online	Blended
Employer funded	£3,589 + VAT	£3,990 + VAT
Charity	£2,950 + VAT	£3,250 + VAT
Self-funder	£2,100 + VAT	£2,300 + VAT
Hardship Fund	£90 + VAT	£90 + VAT

Spread the cost. Self-funders can pay in four equal instalments.

Asking your employer

Every employer-funded Fellow in our latest cohort stayed with their employer, and 79% said the Fellowship improved their ability to perform to their highest potential. **We can help you make the case ›**

Hardship Fund

Heavily subsidised places are available for parents experiencing financial hardship, for example if you are in insecure employment. **Find out more ›**

Meet our mentors

Every Fellow is matched with a senior leader mentor who has combined a senior career with raising children. Our mentors include:

Jennie Baker
Chief People Officer, Rightmove

Abigail Haynes
Strategy Director, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

Sylvia Opara
Director of People, Noah's Ark Children's Hospice

Dominic Holmes
Partner, Head of Employment, Steele Raymond LLP Solicitors

Anusha Pache
Organisational Design and Effectiveness Partner, Financial Ombudsman Service

Find out more about our mentors ›

Ready to take charge?

Applications close 17th November 2026 for the January 2027 cohort

1 Apply

Complete our online form. It takes around 15 minutes.

2 Interview

Suitable applicants are invited to a short online conversation to make sure we're the right match for each other.

3 Confirmation

Places are confirmed by email.

Application tips

- We know life is full of distractions. You can save your application and come back to it.
- You don't need confirmed funding to apply.

START YOUR APPLICATION HERE ›

Still deciding? Book a call with our team **here**. They're happy to answer any questions, big or small.

About Leaders Plus

Leaders Plus is an award-winning social enterprise founded by Verena Hefti MBE to create gender equality in senior leadership by supporting working parents. Our Fellowship offers career progression for working parents that considers the whole picture. To date we have supported over 600 working parents across the globe.

AWARDS

> It's been a life-changing experience that will stay with me as I continue in my career.
>
> **Nicky Frampton, Leaders Plus Fellow**

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