



UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

BIRMINGHAM
LEADERSHIP
INSTITUTE

inlogov
INSTITUTE OF LOCAL
GOVERNMENT STUDIES



Office for Health
Improvement
& Disparities

The 21st Century Public Servant Leadership Programme for Aspiring Directors in Public Services

APPLICANT INFORMATION 2022

The Purpose of the Programme

The public sector has many experienced and skilled leaders. They work in complex politically-charged environments to improve the quality and outcomes of services for people in their communities, through ever more challenging economic times.

If we want to develop leaders and leadership capability for the future public sector, we need to understand what good and effective public sector leaders do. Established and traditional leadership traits – the drive to compete and win, to control through positional authority, and to direct human and financial resources towards achieving organisational targets – are proving ill-suited to the demands of leading across complex, adaptive systems, where problems are ‘wicked’, solutions disputed and those with influence and interest in the issues are often to be found outside traditional organisational boundaries. In these complex systems, evidence shows that successful leaders effect change through influence, share resources and power, and collaborate with diverse groups over the long-term for the greater good.

Recent years—and more specifically, our experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic— have seen increasing focus on place-based and systems leadership. There is recognition in all parts of the system of the need to develop the skills and behaviours of leaders who can lead confidently and collaboratively across organisational and system boundaries.

The challenge for public health leaders is to become leaders who are able to work with others to transform the health and wellbeing of their local population and make a difference to population health management and the prevention agenda. Leadership development programmes have a key part to play in providing people with the knowledge, the skills and the space to develop systems leadership and collaborative leadership approaches. This programme has been delivered to 90 participants over four years and is designed to support leaders in public health, and other roles focused on delivering better health and wellbeing for populations, to find, make, and take up their roles and authority more effectively in their local systems.

Programme Design & Structure

This Programme is designed in collaboration between the University of Birmingham's Health Services Management Centre (HSMC), Institute for Local Government (INLOGOV) and the Birmingham Leadership Institute (BLI), and former Public Health England.

We aim to support leaders in Public Health, and across the public sector, to step up to Director-level leadership and deliver the transformational change required across whole systems. The Programme design is based on the principle that 21st Century Public Leaders¹ must be capable of combining a host of skills and attributes as influential systems leaders. They need passion and commitment, to motivate and inspire; the energy and courage to commit to a vision and lead others towards long-term goals; persistence and resilience, to deal with the challenges of leading across boundaries; a sense of connectedness and the ability to build relationships with others at all levels in the system; the curiosity to explore, test and experiment, the pragmatism to focus on what is achievable.

The roles that successful future public health leaders will take up in the new world of service transformation are not always traditional role descriptors. Instead, they can be variously described as:

- *Systems Architects*
- *Commissioners of services*
- *Brokers and Navigators*
- *Story tellers*
- *Networkers*
- *Municipal Entrepreneurs*
- *Resource Weavers*

Through the Programme we will explore why these roles are so important, enabling participants to lead through uncertainty, building resilience, developing capability for collective leadership and looking after the people they manage and work with, as they move towards taking up director-level roles.

Participants will learn from a variety of sources: from expert faculty, case studies, from peers and from their own experience on the Programme. Over the course of nine months they will develop technical skills and explore practical solutions and will generate learning through their own actions and reflection. They will be supported throughout by faculty, and through action learning and coaching.

¹ <https://21stcenturypublicservant.wordpress.com/>

Learning will be delivered in a range of interventions:

- **Five modules delivered as three one-day and two, two-day (residential) workshops.** These immersive events incorporate theory 'bursts', experiential learning, reflective practice and hearing from subject matter experts. They provide space and time to experiment and learn from and with the group, developing new skills, behavioural approaches and deepening understanding of what it means to be a successful 21st Century Public Leader.
- **Action Learning:** three half day sessions, in small groups with a facilitator, focused on translating Programme learning into specific actions and building deeper connections/support with programme participants. Two of these will be during the residential workshops and the remaining one will take place online via zoom or Teams.
- **Coaching:** 2 one-hour individual sessions with an experienced coach to support participants with individual development plans and needs.
- **Personal Study:** exploring a variety of texts/online resources, covering concepts relevant to leadership in the public sector, and applying the thinking to a professional 'wicked issue'.
- **Alumni event:** opportunity for Programme participants to come together after the formal end of the programme, to develop a connected and collaborative learning community across the public health improvement system.

Programme Eligibility & Selection Criteria

This Programme is for individuals who have been working at a senior level in the following areas for at least 2 years:

- Public Health
- Children, Young People and Family Services
- Adult Health and Care Services
- Commissioning & Service Development
- Education, Housing & wider Community Services
- Others with significant responsibility for the delivery or planning of public health related services.

This is a national, highly-competitive Programme and places are limited. Priority will be given to applications from people who can demonstrate their ambition and readiness to step up to a director level role within the next three years. We welcome applications from people who meet the criteria and who can demonstrate the passion and commitment to personal, team and organisational development which we need from our future public health leaders.

Programme cost

The Programme is funded by the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) and is designed as a collaboration between the University of Birmingham and former PHE.

For those in Public Health working in England, the course is free: this includes accommodation during residential sessions and all materials used on the programme. You will be responsible for travel costs and for overnight accommodation prior to the workshops if required. For those in Public Health Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland, or if you are working in any of the other services listed above (except Public Health) in England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland, there will be a cost of £1500 plus VAT. This represents a significant subsidy on the total cost of the programme.

Successful applicants will have, and will have the ability to demonstrate, all of the following:

Criteria
The ability and desire to be a Director of Public Health, or work at Director level in their own profession, within 3 years of the end of the Programme.
Support from their manager or a senior organisational sponsor to undertake the Programme.
The commitment to attend each of the 7 days of Programme events between October 2022 and June 2023, and to undertake personally-directed learning throughout and beyond the Programme.
Significant experience and demonstrable leadership potential in Public Health or if in other public sector roles, in their current position.
An enthusiasm for improvement and interest in creating opportunities for shared leadership and system-wide transformation as a leader in the public sector.
A strong commitment to their own leadership development and in sharing learning and experience with others.
Willingness and energy to find ways to apply programme learning to their leadership practice and to continue their learning and development beyond the life of the Programme.
An understanding of how their role can and will contribute to improving health outcomes for the population they serve.

How to Apply

Application to the Programme is via an application pack, which can be requested by emailing the programme office at 21stcenturyaspiringdirectors@contacts.bham.ac.uk. Completed forms should be returned to the above email address by 12pm on Monday 5th September.

Applications received after the closing date will not be considered.

For informal enquiries please contact Rhiannon Sharp (Programme Manager) by email at 21stcenturyaspiringdirectors@contacts.bham.ac.uk.

Application Process

To be considered for the Programme you must submit a completed application form, which includes the information from your sponsor. If you or your sponsor prefer, we can send the sponsor form directly to them for submission, but both forms must be submitted by the deadline of 12pm on Monday 5th September 2022.

All eligible applications will be considered by an assessment panel, who will ensure consistency and fairness in vetting applications. The assessors will use the information contained in the application form. The information provided on the Sponsor Form may be taken into account by assessors when making their decision. All applications will be anonymised prior to assessment.

The decision of the assessment panel will be communicated to applicants by Monday 19th September 2022. Any applicant who has not been successful in being offered a place on the Programme may be signposted towards other development opportunities.

If applicants feel that they want to appeal against the panel decision they must submit their appeal in writing within five days of the date of the email advising them of the assessment panel's decision.

Before You Apply

Make sure you have read all the information about the Programme, have checked that you are eligible to apply and can demonstrate how you meet the selection criteria. Please be sure that you can attend all of the Programme dates. Have a conversation with your Programme sponsor and ensure they have the information they need to complete and submit the Sponsor Form.

Programme Dates & Venues

Module 1	(1 day)	11 th October 2022
Module 2	(2 day residential workshop)	5 th – 6 th December 2022
Module 3	(1 day)	7 th February 2023
Module 4	(2 day residential workshop)	18 th – 19 th April 2023
Module 5	(1 day)	14 th June 2023
Alumni event		20 th September 2023

Applicants to the Programme must be able to commit to all of the scheduled workshops, the additional on line ALS and coaching sessions (dates to be arranged with ALS facilitator/coach) and to an average of 3 hours per week personally-directed learning, reflection and application. In practice this could mean 100+ hours in total and participants will be expected to think about and plan for the application of their Programme learning and their personal study.

The 1 day workshops will take place at The Exchange, Centenary Square, Birmingham City Centre. Two day residentials will take place at the Edgbaston Park Hotel, Edgbaston. Birmingham is a lively and vibrant city, with an exciting and diverse cultural life and within easy transport reach of most of the UK. The University of Birmingham has been challenging and developing great minds for more than a century. Characterised by a tradition of innovation, research at the University has broken new ground, pushed forward the boundaries of knowledge and made an impact on people’s lives. As such, we believe it provides an ideal venue to host a development programme for future leaders in the public sector.

Accommodation for residential modules will be provided and fully funded and full details given when you start the Programme. In the event that COVID-19 restrictions are reintroduced, alternative arrangements will be made.

You will be working hard during Programme days but we hope you will also find time to explore what the University, and the city, has to offer.

Sponsoring Organisations

[Birmingham Leadership Institute](#)

[University of Birmingham Health Services Management Centre](#)

[University of Birmingham Institute of Local Government Studies](#)

[Office for Health Improvement and Disparities \(OHID\)](#)