



CORO LEAD LA FAQs

What is Coró Southern California?

Coró's mission is to strengthen the democratic process by preparing individuals for effective and ethical leadership.

Coró believes that Southern California needs a community of leaders who can engage in systems thinking and possess the ability to collaborate with other innovators across sectors, ideologies, and backgrounds. To accomplish that vision, Coró's programs blend experiential, classroom, and cohort-based learning to develop key leadership competencies.

Founded in 1957, Coró Southern California runs a variety of programs (Fellows Program in Public Affairs, Lead LA, Women in Leadership, Youth Fellows Program, and CoróX) all toward a goal of providing emerging leaders with critical thinking, self-awareness, communication, collaboration, and network-building skills to impact change.

What is Lead LA?

Solutions to complex challenges in Southern California require leaders across industries who understand its unique civic and political landscape, have the network to leverage resources across sectors, and skill sets to work within and through systems. Lead LA is designed to find and cultivate such leaders.

A nine-month, part-time fellowship program mobilizing Coró Southern California's innovative and unique leadership and public affairs modules via experiential, hands-on, collaborative training, Lead LA is designed for emerging and established leaders to expand their leadership capacity, knowledge and networks in Southern California. The program uses Greater Los Angeles as its classroom with participants coming away with a deeper understanding of themselves, the region, the power players, and the issues that all work in concert to create the unique fabric that is Los Angeles. Through this immersive dive into the city, participants gain the tools and experiences necessary to lead and direct change within their own organizations.

What can I expect from my participation in Lead LA?

Lead LA includes over 110 hours of facilitated training sessions, including a half-day orientation and half-day weekend leadership session, a multi-day opening leadership retreat, three, eight-hour weekend leadership retreats, and six, eight-and-half hour cohort-led public affairs/public policy issue explorations. The program includes optional events where cohorts can engage with participants of other Coró Southern California programs.

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While facilitated by talented leadership and public affairs trainers, Coro uses a cohort-driven experiential model that enables participants to learn from hands-on practice of Coro tools, skills, and frameworks and collaboration with their peers and colleagues.

As Coro alumni often note, you get out of Coro what you put in. So Lead LA participants should be ready to physically and mentally show up for all sessions.

How is Lead LA different from other executive leadership programs?

Aside from being significantly less costly, Lead LA differs from university-based executive leadership programs. The biggest difference is in structure. Lead LA is rooted in experiential learning. While most executive leadership programs based at major universities follow a similar lecture-seminar classroom format (whether online or in-person), Lead LA uses facilitated exploration of leadership techniques and tools in a constant state of practice. Facilitators are not teachers, but rather cultivators of the knowledge and experience for the cohort to drive the exploration.

As a result, the content is less theoretical or abstract and allows for individuals and the cohort as a whole to leverage the frameworks and skills to respond to real-life situations present in the cohort's day-to-day professional and personal responsibilities. Moreover, the content and experiences build on and reinforce each other rather than sit as stand alone courses.

The second difference is the cohort design. As with all Coro programming, the cohort serves as a force multiplier of the facilitator's training. Since cohorts are selected to be representative of leadership styles, backgrounds, experiences, and sectors, and since each member of the cohort has indicated an intent to be present not only for their professional development, but also for the entire cohort's development, Lead LA can provide a deeper and more fast-paced exploration of leadership and public affairs tools, techniques, and knowledge.

Finally, Lead LA differs from other non-university, cohort-style leadership development programs because of Coro's proven model. At the core of Coro's programming is the belief that meaningful impact comes from collaboration: business, non-profits, schools, unions, government, civic organizations, and community groups. Lead LA is just as much about individual development as it is about regional development. This core belief is why Coro programs nationally train over 1,000 people per year with more than 10,000 program alumni actively serving as leaders across all sectors and industries. Lead LA does not just provide you access to a Los Angeles or Southern California network, but to a nationwide network.

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What happens if physical distancing is necessary during the fellowship?

As the Spring 2020 Los Angeles County and State of California physical distancing orders showcased, we must operate in a new reality where pandemics and other disasters may disrupt in-person activities. In response to the COVID-19 “Safer at Home” orders, Coro Southern California pivoted to provide virtual experiences for its programming, including keeping its Fellows in Public Affairs Program fully operational, creating special Lead LA virtual experiences, and developing a dedicated virtual leadership webinar series for the entire Coro community.

The Coro Southern California team has undergone extensive virtual facilitation training to ensure that all programs moving forward can be highly hands-on, interactive, collaborative, and experiential regardless of a virtual, in-person, or blended format.

Coro Southern California has prepared both an In Person and Virtual Lead LA calendar (posted on the Lead LA website) that allows for seamless transition between the two delivery modes, if necessary. Program participants agree to commit to both sets of obligations if transition between the two modes is necessary.

While Coro Southern California will aim to provide as much of the program in-person, if it is necessary to ensure the public health and safety of our participants and community, we stand prepared to do so without any material impact to the quality of the program.

How much does it cost?

Lead LA costs \$5,000 for the nine-month, part-time program. This amounts to about \$45 per facilitated hour of leadership development and public affairs training. Scholarships and payment plans are available and will be communicated to candidates at the time of acceptance.

Accepted candidates will be required to submit a deposit to secure their spot in the cohort. Once a participant has confirmed their participation after acceptance, all payments are final and non-refundable.

What financial support is available?

Many participants receive full or partial financial support for Lead LA from their employers as part of their organization’s professional development efforts. We encourage participants to seek their employer’s or another sponsor’s support. We have prepared an Employer Benefits brochure, which outlines organizational benefits of participating in Lead LA.

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Need-based scholarships are also available. To be considered for a scholarship, please indicate such on your application and answer the subsequent questions on the application. Acceptance letters will include any scholarship and payment plan options.

What is the application process?

Interest candidates may contact Coro Southern California to learn more about the program, complete the Interest Form to be notified of important dates and upcoming Lead LA events, and attend an information session.

Applications open by the end of March for the Fall cohort. Applications are all online and include basic demographic information, three essays, and a professional reference. If you are interested in being considered for limited, need-based scholarship support, be sure to complete those questions prior to submission.

Application forms do not save and must be completed and submitted in one sitting. It is recommended that you type your essay responses in your word processing software of choice and copy and paste your responses into the application.

The application deadline is listed on the Lead LA website and application, but is generally mid-summer.

I have submitted my application to Coro Lead LA. What happens next?

Following review by a committee, applicants who proceed will have their professional reference contacted. Following or prior to a conversation with the provided reference, Coro Southern California may schedule and conduct phone/virtual interviews with candidates. More details will be provided regarding interviews, if necessary.

After the selection committee has made their decisions, Coro Southern California will contact candidates with their decision by the end of July or early August. If accepted, candidates must secure their spot in the cohort by confirming their participation via email within 3 days of notification and submitting a non-refundable program deposit of \$500 within 7 days of notification.

Waitlisted candidates will be notified as/if spots become available and will 3 days to confirm participation by writing and submit the non-refundable program deposit.

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What is the program attendance policy?

Coro uses experiential learning methodology; you will not learn from the cohort and the cohort cannot learn from you if you are not present. Arriving late/leaving early from sessions is counted as a partial absence. Only four absences are permitted under the In Person calendar (six under the Virtual calendar). The Orientation and Opening Retreat are required (no arriving late/leaving early). Expect additional planning hours for Issue Days, Open Sessions, and other events. Review the Program Calendar prior to confirming participation, if accepted. Note: dates and issue day topics are subject to change prior to the start of the program.

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