

Riordan Leadership Institute Nonprofit Partner FAQ

The Riordan Leadership Institute (RLI) is a 9-month board training and matching fellowship that empowers and prepares diverse professionals for lifelong civic leadership as nonprofit board members.

HOW WILL MY ORGANIZATION BENEFIT FROM BECOMING A NONPROFIT PARTNER?

Unlike other board training programs, RLI also helps local nonprofit organizations build their capacity and connect with prospective board members who are drawn from the professional ranks of major businesses, have a strong history of community involvement, and are ready to make a commitment to serve on the board of a nonprofit organization.

In addition to classroom training, RLI fellows are paired with a local Nonprofit Partner for a six-month field experience to gain a better understanding of the nonprofit's mission and the community it serves, as well as the strategic and tactical issues facing nonprofit boards. During that time, the fellow attends the organization's board meetings and executes a project designed to leverage their expertise and skills and further the work of the Nonprofit Partner board and organization.

HOW CAN I APPLY FOR THE PROGRAM?

Recruitment for Nonprofit Partners begins in June and the application will be available on our [website](#). After submitting the application, potential partners will be invited to participate in an interview process. The Review and Selection Committee then considers the pool of applicants and organizations are accepted. Space is limited so early applications are strongly encouraged.

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS TO BECOME A NONPROFIT PARTNER?

Nonprofit organizations organized under Section 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(6) are eligible to partner with the Riordan Leadership Institute (RLI) if they meet the following criteria:

- Is seeking new board members (RLI Fellows are potential board members and the Field Experience is designed to prepare them for a seat on their Nonprofit Partner's board).
- Has identified potential projects that are board level and that will help advance the organization's mission and/or board success.
- Has designated a staff and/or board member who can commit the time to working closely with the RLI Fellow to ensure the success and value of the RLI Field Experience.
- Implements programs that serve Los Angeles County and/or Orange County (national or state-wide organizations that serve Los Angeles or Orange County are eligible).
- Has established by-laws and financial statements.
- Has regularly scheduled board meetings (with at least two scheduled during the RLI Field Experience time frame).
- Has a board that is actively engaged in board-related work and that consistently attends board meetings.
- Demonstrates a commitment to the primary purpose of the RLI Field Experience as outlined in the following expectations.

WHAT ARE THE EXPECTATIONS OF NONPROFIT PARTNERS?

As partners in the RLI Fellow's learning experience as potential board members, nonprofit organizations are expected to actively participate in the program in the following ways:

- Confirm a senior organization executive or board member to work with and help guide the RLI Fellow through their Board Field Experience. This person must be accessible to the fellow, as needed, and able to provide guidance during the Field Experience.
- Participate in the RLI Nonprofit Partner Matching Event.
- Work with the Fellow to scope a project that is board level, is of value to the organization or board and that leverages the expertise of the Fellow.
- Provide the Fellow with support, guidance, materials and/or introductions needed to complete the project successfully.
- Provide the Fellow onboarding (orientation) to the organization and to the board:
 - Facilitate the Fellow's participation in board and relevant committee meetings.
 - Provide the RLI Fellow board materials and notices before the board meetings, and any other printed materials helpful to the training experience (i.e. organization charts, by-laws, mission statement, strategic plan, etc.).
 - Discuss the norms for participation at board meetings with the Fellow.
 - Formally introduce the Fellow to the board and other key constituents.
- Provide ongoing coaching to the RLI Fellow, as needed.

WHAT IS AN APPROPRIATE FIELD EXPERIENCE PROJECT?

The RLI fieldwork component is designed to provide Fellows the opportunity to gain hands-on experience to serve as a nonprofit board member, as well as enhance the capacity of the Nonprofit Partner. RLI Fellows are required to work with the Nonprofit Partner to scope and execute a project that is of value to the organization or board, and in which the Fellow can participate actively and productively.

A good project is one that leverages the Fellow's skills and expertise and furthers the work of the board and the organization. Past projects include:

- Conduct a full analysis to determine the value and timing of a capital campaign.
- Conduct a gap analysis to facilitate the strategic and sustainable growth of the Board.
- Create and launch a cause marketing strategy for the organization.
- Update the board governance policy to align with current best practices and to support the strategic growth of the organization.
- Create marketing materials specifically for the Board and update materials for the organization.
- Create a diversity and inclusion policy and best practices for the board.