



Leaders in Equitable Evaluation and Diversity

Mentor Overview



What is LEEAD?

[Leaders in Equitable Evaluation and Diversity \(LEEAD\)](#) is a program of the [Expanding the Bench® \(ETB\)](#) Initiative led by [Change Matrix](#) and funded by a generous group of ETB Funding Partners. ETB's mission is to apply [culturally responsive and equitable evaluation \(CREE\)](#) principles and practices to disrupt the current state of the evaluation field, which has suppressed the perspectives and voices of Indigenous and racially/ethnically diverse evaluators and communities who have been and/or are presently marginalized in the United States.

LEEAD is an evaluation pathway program for diverse mid-career leaders who will advance CREE in the field of evaluation. Since it began in the fall of 2015, 81 Scholars have completed the LEEAD Program. Check out our [LEEAD Alumni!](#)

Scholars must be able to commit to a rigorous 15 month training program to develop their evaluation competencies through the following components:

- Online curriculum (fall) – This includes the completion of an online evaluation curriculum. The coursework covers evaluation content focused on CREE and includes a mix of didactic learning and social learning supports, such as online discussions, activities, and guest lectures.
- Practicum Practicum (spring/summer) – After completion of the online curriculum, Scholars have the opportunity to apply new knowledge through a paid CREE-focused evaluation project with a Practicum Site. Practicum Sites are evaluation firms, foundations, think tanks, universities, or non-profit agencies with an interest in integrating a CREE approach into an existing evaluation project.
- Mentoring (throughout) – At the beginning of the program, using a pairing assessment, LEEAD Scholars are matched with an evaluation expert who serves as a mentor throughout the Program. LEEAD Mentors reinforce content learned through the online curriculum, bolster networking skills and connections, and advise Scholars in professional matters.

Who Are LEEAD Mentors?

LEEAD Mentors are experts in the field of evaluation with at least 10 years of experience. We seek diverse evaluators and allies who are committed to the professional development of LEEAD Scholars. This mode of mentoring is encouraged to approximate a close professional relationship, like that of an expert-to-protégé model. Check out the last cohort's [LEEAD Mentors!](#)

Why Serve as a LEEAD Mentor?

To support LEEAD Scholars' transition from accomplished professionals to successful leaders in evaluation committed to integrating a CREE approach, LEEAD provides Scholars with training and mentoring throughout the program. The mentoring component is central to the LEEAD model, with most Scholars rating the relationship with their Mentor as valuable to their experience. Many Mentors have had positive experiences and have served multiple cohorts.

Both Scholars and Mentors complete an assessment, which is used to match a complimentary mentor-mentee pair. The matching process is based on a number of factors including personal background, research interests, mentoring needs and approach, work settings, geographic location, and other priorities identified by Scholars. One-to-one matches are made based on opportunities for strong connections. Thus, Mentors are selected based on the cohort's overall characteristics and career interests.

Scholars receive help from their Mentors in a variety of areas, including opportunities for career development and advancement in the evaluation field, navigating the field of evaluation, advocating for and applying CREE, and building a professional network. Mentors specifically offer support during Scholars' completion of the online curriculum and their Practicum Site placement. This could involve helping them negotiate their contract and the scope of work or providing guidance on completion of evaluation deliverables. Mentors are given a modest honorarium for their time and commitment.

Why Are the Goals for LEEAD Mentors?

We aim to surround each Scholar with a vibrant and accessible network in order to provide adequate opportunities to develop valuable relationships that can further their career. In addition to providing each other with peer support, the program also wants LEEAD Scholars to cultivate solid relationships with their Mentors.

Participation in LEEAD includes the following:

- Meet regularly with the Scholar throughout the Program — the suggested frequency is a monthly meeting, connecting via phone, email, or video-chat (or in person).
- Provide guidance and feedback on the Scholar's Practicum Site experience, such as negotiating evaluation contracts.
- Attend two in-person events — The kick-off meeting, the LEEAD Symposium, in the fall of 2025 and the culmination event at the 2026 American Evaluation Association conference.
- Travel will be reimbursed for the LEEAD Symposium.
- Foster a genuine, trust-based relationship through consistent engagement, active listening, and authentic interaction.
- Create a brave space where the Scholar feels comfortable sharing challenges, aspirations, and uncertainties.
- Bolster networking skills and connections in the evaluation field.
- Engage in a community of practice to build connections with other Mentors.
- Participate in regular check-ins with the ETB Team to provide feedback on the experience.
- Complete evaluation surveys to provide feedback on the LEEAD model and experience.

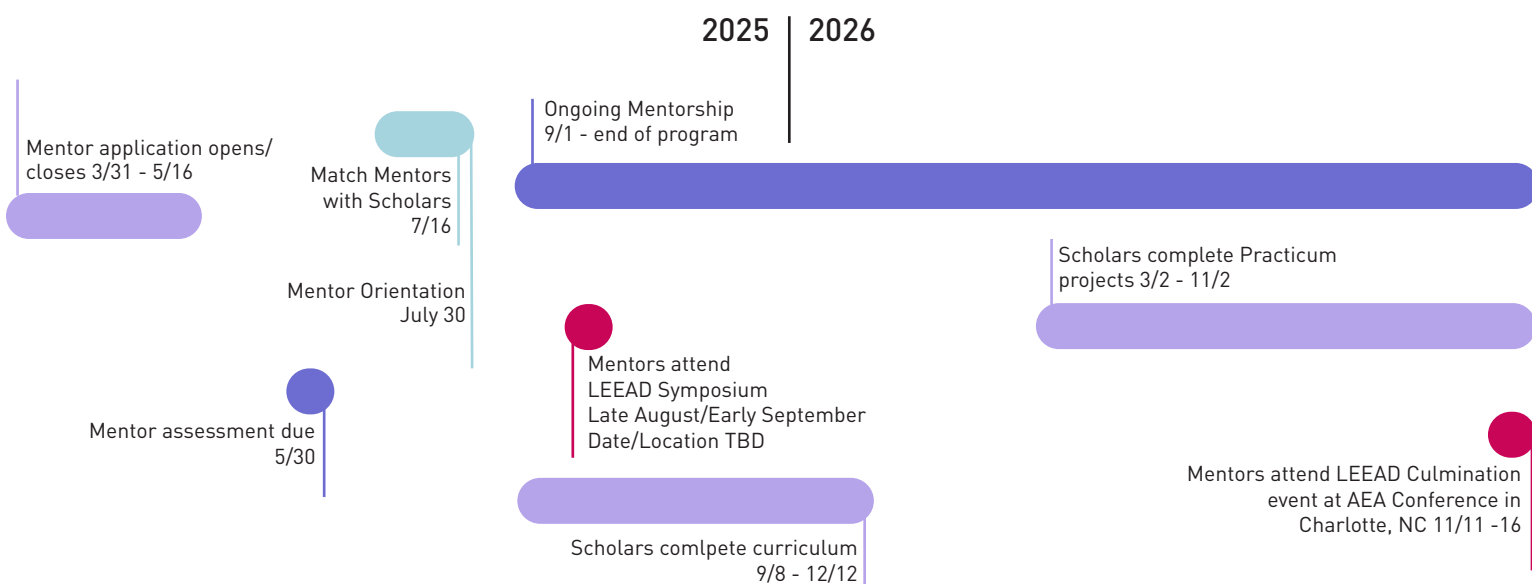
How Can I Apply?

Applications are due by 5pm EDT on May 16, 2025

APPLY NOW

Have Questions About Applying?

Please send any questions to team@expandingthebench.org with 'LEEAD Application Question' in the subject line.



Mentoring has connected me with other like-minded, passionate, expert researchers and evaluators. Through the mentoring relationship, I end up getting as much, if not more, than what I gave. The thought exchange, brainstorming, collaboration, and problem solving opportunities make me a better researcher and a better person.

— Cohort 5 Mentor

