

Achieving Strategic Clarity

A Bridgespan Leadership Accelerator Program

An online- and team-based program for nonprofit executives to clarify their strategy and articulate a path to greater impact.

Overview

Grounded in Bridgespan's deep experience, Achieving Strategic Clarity is a step-by-step program that helps leadership teams get clear on who they serve and how they serve them, so they can focus their resources, bring an equity lens to their work, and have the greatest impact possible.



Team-Oriented

Built for nonprofit leadership teams



Self-Paced

Average program duration is 12 to 16 weeks



Customizable

Structured yet flexible to meet your needs



Interactive

Combines live team workshops with online lessons



Supported

Includes 1-on-1 Bridgespan coaching

What You'll Get

- A statement clarifying who you seek to serve and the impact that you want to have
- A document that specifies how your organization achieves impact
- An articulation of your organization's unique value and qualities—your “secret sauce”
- Criteria that will help you make strategic decisions about which opportunities to prioritize

Program details

Who: Nonprofit leadership teams

Application deadline: August 1, 2019

Timing: September – February; flexible pacing

Price: \$5,500 per leadership team

Scholarships available

Visit our website (bridgespan.org/AchievingStrategicClarity) or email us at leadershipaccelerator@bridgespan.org

Who Should Participate

Most organizations can benefit from this program, but it is especially powerful for organizations that are:

- Starting a strategic planning process
- Anticipating or experiencing a leadership transition
- Experiencing significant changes in their field/environment, such as a shift in funding or policy
- Seeking to bring a more intentional “equity lens” to their work and programs

How it works



INDIVIDUAL LESSONS & REFLECTION

Individual, online lessons and reflection prompts



LIVE TEAM WORKSHOPS

Workshops for your leadership team that are designed by Bridgespan, but customized and led by you



BRIDGESPAN COACHING

Office hours and 1-on-1 meetings with an experienced Bridgespan coach

Curriculum

Step 1: Understanding the Importance of Strategy

Step 2: Defining your Impact

Step 3: Developing a Theory of Change

Step 4: Testing your Approach

Step 5: Developing a Learning Plan

Step 6: Living your Emerging Strategy

Pricing and scholarships

Pricing: \$5,500 for leadership teams of up to eight members. For organizations outside the United States, or those teams with more than eight members, please email us at leadershipaccelerator@bridgespan.org.

Scholarships: A limited number of scholarships are also available to organizations led by people of color.

“We were approaching the beginning of our strategic planning process, and we needed to answer some important questions before getting started. We tried to do it on our own, but realized we needed a structured process. Achieving Strategic Clarity helped us pull together a working theory of change that articulated how we see ourselves and the work we do, as well as where we want to go. The program set us up for success to ensure that our strategic plan is aligned with our long-term goals as an organization.”

John Peller, AIDS Foundation of Chicago

Bridgespan Leadership Accelerator

Frequently Asked Questions

How can I be confident that this content will be relevant for my organization?

Over the last two decades, Bridgespan has helped hundreds of nonprofit organizations effectively address key leadership and strategic issues. We have developed our programs in collaboration with a diverse set of global organizations, nonprofit leaders, and sector experts.

Our time-tested tools and innovative learning approaches have helped clients get clear on their strategies, accelerate their impact, improve their decision-making confidence, and empower their teams to prioritize the work that matters most.

We have rigorously tested our Leadership Accelerator programs to ensure that each program is impactful, actionable, and sustainable.

Our proven programs are:

- Widely applicable across organization types and geographies
- Consistently described by teams as among the most powerful tools they developed and continue to use over time

How does Bridgespan bring an equity lens to this process?

Each Leadership Accelerator program integrates an equity lens. In each program, this manifests differently depending on the topic at hand.

Examples:

- **Achieving Strategic Clarity:** The process of designing an Intended Impact and Theory of Change is powerful in helping you articulate and achieve your goals around equity. In the Achieving Strategic Clarity program, you will be asked to think about the impact you want to have and the communities you want to focus on. This is an intentional opportunity to think about the focus that you want to have on historically underserved communities or specific populations.
- **Investing in Future Leaders:** Identifying and prioritizing development areas and drafting development plans for staff are key elements in building a stronger and more inclusive pipeline of leaders within your organization. In the Investing in Future Leaders program, you will be asked to think about how you develop your emerging leaders and ensure your talent development strategy reflects your goals and values. This is a unique opportunity to consider how your talent goals relate to your equity goals.

What are the prerequisites for teams interested in applying?

Bridgespan Leadership Accelerator programs are designed for nonprofit executive leadership teams (including the ED/CEO) of organizations with a staff size of at least 10 FTEs. There is no maximum organization size. If you are unsure if the program is the right fit for you, we would love to connect to learn more about you and your organization.

Teams should be prepared to select a Project Lead who will serve as team lead and receive additional guidance from Bridgespan.

What do you mean by “executive team”?

The executive team, or senior leadership team, is typically the ED/CEO and senior direct reports. You might also include other individuals whose roles can provide unique insight to conversations about target outcomes and approach. If you enroll in the program, we will work with you to help you identify the right individuals to participate. If your executive team is larger than eight individuals, please contact us at LeadershipAccelerator@Bridgespan.org to see if this program is the right fit.

What commitment will my team need to make?

Team members should be prepared to:

- Spend ~1 hour per week, for 10-16 weeks (depending on the program and your team's pace), doing self-study and pre-work
- Come together as a team every other week for ~2 hours to discuss key issues
- In addition, you will designate one of your team members as the Project Lead. Their time commitment will be an extra 2-15 hours over the full 16 weeks (see below: "What is the Project Lead's role?")

How do you select organizations to participate in the program?

Space in our programs is limited. We will select organizations on a first-come, first-served basis, and base our selection on a mutual assessment of whether the program is the right fit for your organization.

Will my team and I have access to Bridgespan support?

We have carefully designed this program such that your Project Lead can help your team navigate the content, make critical decisions, and advance through the process without intensive direct support from Bridgespan. However, teams do have access to Bridgespan support along the way; Bridgespan will provide ongoing email support and Project Leads can access weekly group office hours via conference call.

Some programs offer a 1-on-1 private coaching call with a Bridgespan coach, who will provide input on emerging deliverables (see individual programs to learn if this support is offered).

What is the Project Lead role?

The Project Lead serves as the glue that holds this learning experience together. The Project Lead's time commitment will be an extra 12-15 hours over the full program.

Responsibilities include:

- **Owning the process:** The Project Lead manages the work plan and meeting schedule for the project
- **Facilitating the conversation:** During team meetings, the Project Lead will help to facilitate conversation, ensuring that all voices are heard and helping the group move towards decisions (drawing upon our unique video facilitated Team Summit process).
- **Delivering results:** After team meetings, the Project Lead works closely with the ED/CEO to translate decisions into action.

How should I choose the right person for the Project Lead role?

Important qualifications of a Project Lead include:

- Strong project management and meeting facilitation skills
- Well-established and respected within the executive team
- Reputation for getting things done, ready to put in a couple extra hours when necessary
- Interest in the strategy related to the program topic area
- An individual other than the ED/CEO. We recommend that EDs/CEOs do NOT serve as project leads. We have consistently found that EDs/CEOs are unable to commit the time necessary to play the Project Lead role. Additionally, the Project Lead role is an excellent opportunity for someone else on the executive team to take on a greater leadership role

Do you offer scholarships?

Limited scholarships may be available. If you do not have the funds to participate, please email us at LeadershipAccelerator@Bridgespan.org to learn if you may be eligible.

Scholarship Opportunities for Organizations Led by Leaders of Color

At the Bridgespan Group, we are committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion within our organization and the social sector more broadly. We believe that diversity, equity, and inclusion are critical elements of a workplace culture that aligns with our values and leads to better work and solutions for our nonprofit and philanthropic clients. At the same time, we created the Leadership Accelerator as a way to bring critical team supports to many more organizations—and we do not want resources to be a barrier to participation.

For this reason, we're excited to offer a limited number of scholarships to organizations led by people of color. Scholarships will be distributed on a first come, first served basis to organizations that are accepted into the program. We will do our best to provide some level of scholarship to as many organizations as possible. At this time, our scholarship opportunities are limited to organizations based in the United States.

These scholarships are intended for organizations for which the ED/CEO identify and/or a majority of the executive team identifies as American Indian or Native American, Asian American, Pacific Islander, Black or African American, and/or Latinx.

If you are interested in learning more about our scholarships for organizations led by people of color, please email us at LeadershipAccelerator@Bridgespan.org.

For more information on diversity, equity, and inclusion at Bridgespan, please visit our website or email Diversity@Bridgespan.org.

Learn about our Leadership Accelerator programs

www.Bridgespan.org/LeadershipAccelerator

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MUMBAI

NEW YORK

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contact@bridgespan.org | www.bridgespan.org