

Ambition to Lead programme

2025/26

Guidance notes for applicants





The Ambition to Lead programme is designed to support the professional development of experienced nurses and allied health professionals (AHPs) working in the community to become future leaders in healthcare, to the benefit of the people, families and communities they serve.

This leadership programme is open to any nurse or AHP working in a community or primary care setting, including the charity or independent sector.

The areas of practice may include nurses working in district nursing, general practice nursing, community children’s nursing, learning disability nursing, community matrons, community mental health, health visitors, school nurses, specialist nurses working in the community, inclusion health nurses, care home nurses and all adult social care and nurses working in prisons. AHPs from a wide variety of community positions are also welcome to apply.

We actively seek to ensure that all our programmes have an equitable representation of the whole nursing and AHP workforce, and Global Majority applicants are strongly encouraged to apply. Please note, the programme is not exclusive to Queen’s Nurses; it is open to any nurse or AHP who meets the eligibility criteria.

If you are unsure, please contact our Leadership team at qnileaders@qni.org.uk.

Who is eligible to apply?

This programme is open to all nurses and AHPs working in the community and primary care setting including care home nurses from England, Northern Ireland and Wales.

- Applicants must have a minimum of 5 years’ experience working in a community or primary care setting.
- Applicants must demonstrate a desire to progress to a leadership position beyond their current role.
- You must provide a statement of support from your manager. The letter must confirm that your employing organisation will release you to attend all elements of the programme, including how the course fees will be covered and consideration of covering your travel expenses.

How much does it cost?

The fee for this programme is £5,000 which includes face to face study days some of which are residential. The fee also includes MBTI Assessment, mentor support, and much more.

This programme can be funded by your employer, sponsoring organisation or self-funded*. You will need to demonstrate how you will cover the cost on your application form and it must be confirmed by your line manager in their support letter.

Participants are responsible for their own travel costs and any additional accommodation costs that you may incur due to your personal travel arrangements.

*If you are self-funding, you can apply for a £1000 grant from the QNI. [Find out more.](#)

Programme Structure (subject to change)

This is a year-long programme starting in May 2025 and finishing in June 2026 with five bi-monthly study days and two residential modules:

Online Induction	Residential 1:	Study Days:	Residential 2:
Wednesday 7 May 2025	Thursday 5 – Friday 6 June 2025	Friday 5 September 2025 Tuesday 4 November 2025 Thursday 15 January 2026 Monday 9 March 2026 Tuesday 12 May 2026	Thursday 11 – Friday 12 June 2026



Application process

To apply for the programme, you need to:

1. Make sure you fit the eligibility criteria listed above.
2. Obtain a letter of support from your line manager. The letter must confirm that your employing organisation will release you to attend all elements of the programme, including how the course fees will be covered and consideration of covering your travel expenses.
3. **Complete an online application form by 23.59 on Monday 7 April 2025**

Important information:

- Please ensure that you complete all sections of the online application form before you submit it. The application form is quite long, so we recommend you prepare the answers to some of the questions beforehand. **The list of all questions is available at the end of this guidance.**
- You will be required to upload the letter of support from your line manager in PDF or JPG format to the online application form before you submit it, so please make sure you have it before you start the application.
- Change Project Proposal. As part of your application, we would like you to identify an issue within your area of practice that you would like to change in order to improve care or services to patients whilst on the leadership programme. Please note that the project must be completed within the year of the programme. Please see the list of questions at the end of this document for more information.
- When completing the online application form, you will be able to save it and continue later. If you choose this option, the system will generate a link that will allow you to return to the form later. Please make sure you save the link as we won't be able to provide it to you. The link will be available on the screen after click "Save and continue later" button. You will also be given an option to send the link to your inbox. If you don't receive the email in your Inbox, please check your Spam/Junk folder.

Once you submit the online application form, you will receive an automatic email from us with a PDF copy of your application. If you don't receive the email in your Inbox, please check your Spam/Junk folder.

If you have any questions, please contact the QNI leadership team at qnileaders@qni.org.uk.

Closing date

The closing date and time for applications is **Monday 7 April by 23.59**. Late applications will not be considered.

Selection criteria

Your application must demonstrate the following:

- Determination to deliver high quality community care
- Motivation and enthusiasm to participate in the programme
- Insightful attitude to learning
- Insight into self and own abilities
- Individuality and ability to have an independent opinion
- Ability to push boundaries and independently problem solve
- Innovative and dynamic ways of thinking.

Please note - You cannot apply if you do NOT have the support of your line manager.

Selection process

All completed applications received by the closing date, as above, will be reviewed by an assessment panel. It is anticipated that all applicants will be informed of the outcome of the shortlisting by **Friday 11 April 2025**.

Interviews for shortlisted applicants will take place online on one of the following dates: **Wednesday 23 and Thursday 24 April 2025**.



Application Questions

- 1** Full name
- 2** Preferred postal address
- 3** Telephone (work)
- 4** Telephone (home)
- 5** Mobile
- 6** Professional email address
- 7** NMC registration pin or registration for your AHP role
- 8** Job title
- 9** Name and address of current employer
- 10** How do you propose to fund your programme if your application is successful?
- 11** Current role (summary of your current responsibilities and length of time in this role)
- 12** Professional qualifications
- 13** Have you been working in a community setting for a minimum of five years?
- 14** Do you spend at least 50% of your time working in the community?
- 15** Is your DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check current?
- 16** Are you a subject of any disciplinary proceedings?
- 17** Are you under investigation by the NMC or employing organisation?
- 18** Employment history
- 19** Continuing professional development (any previous leadership programme that you have attended within the last five years).
- 20** Other relevant experience/activities or business ventures (details of any other activities either within or outside work that may demonstrate your leadership aspirations e.g. school governor, NHS board etc)
- 21** Personal statement (min 150, max 200 words).
Use this section to demonstrate your commitment to the programme and we would ask you to directly link your skills knowledge and understanding to your project proposal. In particular, the personal statement should focus on the following areas that you would hope to identify as a result of completing the 'future community leaders' programme:
 - Personal development may relate to focusing upon yourself as a leader and your ability to analyse your thoughts, feelings and ideas in a personalised way.
 - Professional development may be about developing knowledge and skills as a foundation and base for practice.
 - In relation to your professional development, please give some indication of your intended career pathway and aspirations as a leader.
 - Practice development is about how you disseminate new information to enhance your practice and change your behaviour and practice as a result.
- 22** Where do you see yourself in 3-5 years? This is your opportunity to talk about your career aspirations as a future community nurse leader (min 100, max 150 words).
- 23** What does leadership mean to you? This is your opportunity to talk about your values and how they influence your understanding of leadership (min 150, max 200 words).



Change Project Proposal

As part of your application for the Ambition to Lead Programme, we would like you to identify an issue within your area of practice that you would like to change to improve care or services to patients whilst on the leadership programme. Please note that the project must be completed within the year of the programme - simplicity is key.

List of questions in this section:

- 1** Project title
- 2** Start date
- 3** End date
- 4** Brief description. Please summarise your proposal in non-scientific language, using words and terms that can be easily understood. Your summary must include a clear statement of the purpose of your proposal (min 150, max 200 words).
- 5** Proposal Background and reason for change. Describe a brief background and rationale for this change (min 150, max 200 words).
- 6** Whom will it involve? In our experience, change projects are more successful when there is a collaborative element to the work and where several parties have invested into the outcomes. Therefore, projects which demonstrate engagement with other agencies and professionals, are preferred.
- 7** Do you anticipate any challenges in developing your Change Project?
- 8** How will this change enhance your area of practice/improve care for patients?
- 9** Costs and funding. Do you anticipate additional funding will be required to deliver your Change Project?
- 10** If so, have you thought about where you will access these funds?
- 11** Please note: QNI is unable to provide financial support to deliver your Change Project
- 12** Future Considerations (if any). e.g. ethical considerations in the implementation of the change project.
- 13** Dissemination. Please state how you intend to disseminate the change throughout your organisation or wider audience.



The Queen's Nursing Institute
1A Henrietta Place
London W1G 0LZ

020 7549 1400
mail@qni.org.uk

www.qni.org.uk

Charity no: 213128
Patron HM The Queen