

# Community Leadership Development Program



## Community Leadership Program

## Competencies Framework

2021-2022

# About the Program

Leadership Wood Buffalo is a Community Leadership Development Program offered through FuseSocial. The intent of Leadership Wood Buffalo is to help emerging leaders in Wood Buffalo to discover and grow their individual leadership strengths and styles, equip our participants with practical tools for understanding the dynamics of their community and working within it. We also strive to connect the participants with a network of other community leaders who are working towards a healthier and more vibrant community.

***The Community becomes their Leadership classroom!***

Leadership Wood Buffalo is entering its 15<sup>th</sup> year in 2021-2022 and has graduated over 250 community leaders. Our program is a hands-on, experiential program designed to explore and develop leadership capacity and skills within the context of actual community issues in the municipality of Wood Buffalo.

# Community Leadership Model

This model describes the competencies that a community leader possesses, through which they effectively act and guide others to act, to build a healthy community. Competencies are a combination of practical and theoretical knowledge, skills, and attitudes that enable a person to perform a specific role.

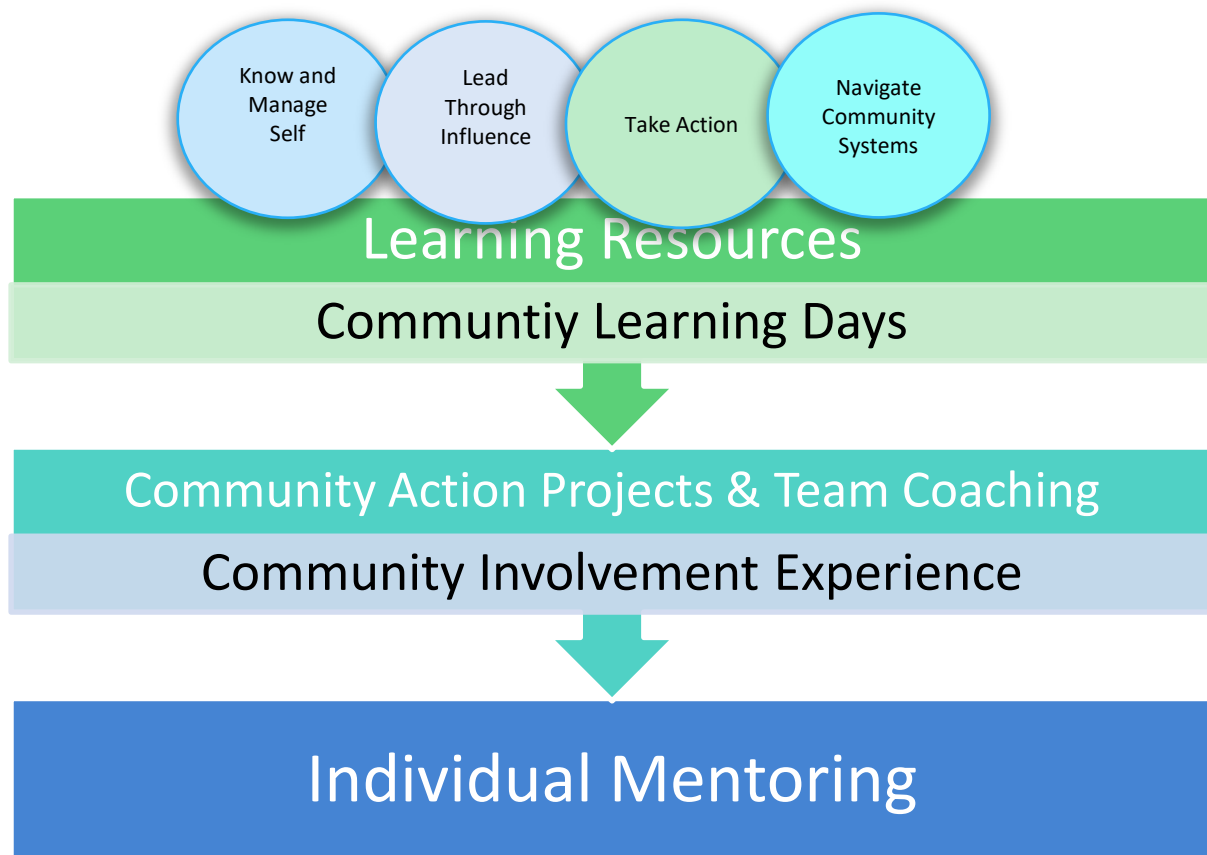


The four pillars of competencies for community leaders are supported by four foundational concepts in our programming:

- **Change** – supporting self, others, and community through a variety of change processes;
- **Diversity** – acknowledging cultural diversity as well as diverse viewpoints from different sectors;
- **Healthy Community** – building capacity and empowerment of individuals, organizations and communities towards community health and well-being; and
- **Systems Thinking** – understanding communities and organizations as systems, and our roles in the bigger picture.

## Experiential Approach to Leadership Development

The Community Leadership Development Program has multiple components. Our framework for designing and facilitating each component allows learners to explore different aspects of their community leadership competencies throughout the program.



# Cross – Sector Representation and Collaboration

Leadership Wood Buffalo brings together emerging leaders from multiple sectors and many diverse social backgrounds. By helping people understand different perspectives, working styles, and collaboration approaches, our programs reflect the real-world conditions of community leadership. The diversity of our participants is a key strength and driver of learning in our programs.

## Leadership Competencies

### Know and Manage Self

#### **Identify and Apply Personal values to Inform a Personal Vision**

Community leaders identify their most important personal values, use those values to guide their choices and actions, and evaluate competing priorities or options by using a values-based framework. Community leaders use their values and beliefs to articulate a personal vision and mission of leadership, and confidently share that vision/mission with others.

#### **Recognize and Build Leadership Styles and Strengths**

Community leaders recognize the personal preferences and strengths that contribute to their own leadership style, understand alternative leadership styles, and continuously seek to enhance their leadership effectiveness in a variety of contexts.

#### **Cultivate Positive Self-Management and Personal Accountability**

Community leaders build credibility and trust by acting with integrity, good judgement, confidence, and courage. When facing challenges or tension, they are aware of their trigger points, and strive to reflect and respond effectively. Community leaders develop healthy habits for stress management, time management, and fulfilling their commitments.

#### **Commit to Lifelong Learning**

Community leaders identify that leadership is an ongoing learning journey, and that their past experiences help to inform the way they approach opportunities and challenges. They give and receive constructive feedback with a spirit of curiosity and grace. Community leaders reflect on their actions and experiences to continually learn and improve. They seek out opportunities to learn from diverse sources and share their wisdom and strengths with others.

#### **Cultivate Cultural Awareness and Support for Reconciliation**

Community leaders work respectfully, knowledgeably, and effectively with indigenous people. Community leaders build their understanding of the history and impacts of colonization, and the goals of reconciliation. They strive to use culturally-appropriate practices to create a sense of safety for all.

## Lead Through Influence

### **Create a Shared Vision**

Community leaders respond to issues or needs by developing a vision for change that reflects shared values and motivations in the community. They build needed support for their ideas by framing them in a way that is understandable and appealing to others. Community leaders invite others to contribute to setting goals and priorities.

### **Mobilize Others**

Community leaders build coalitions with key partners and build momentum to get things done. They gather people together and create conditions for civic or institutional engagement. Stepping forward as needed (regardless of position), they engage a critical mass of people and enough resources to take action and achieve specific outcomes. Community leaders recognize and build on the strengths of others.

### **Convene and Facilitate Gatherings**

Community leaders engage people through invitation, not mandate, and develop a sense of ownership and relatedness to community issues. They use effective facilitation and problem-solving techniques to connect or bridge differences between individuals or groups to make it possible for them to work together.

### **Communicate Openly**

Community leaders listen openly and send clear and convincing messages. They understand their own personal perspective and beliefs, and present views with confidence and diplomacy. Community leaders listen fully to both verbal and non-verbal responses. They respectfully address and clarify points of uncertainty.

### **Manage Conflict Constructively**

Community leaders negotiate and resolve disagreement. They seek to create an environment where disagreement can be openly addressed to foster new possibilities and creative solutions. Community leaders are assertive and cooperative in moving self and others from “position” to “interests” and orchestrate win-win solutions.

### **Support Effective Group Dynamics**

Community leaders create a culture and community where uniqueness and individuality are valued, respected, and appreciated. They actively seek to use and strengthen the broad range of capabilities within a group and apply strategies to move a group forward. Community leaders exercise personal influence in a group setting to intervene and facilitate progress.

## Navigate Community Systems

### **Know the Community**

Community leaders know and are connected to the community they serve. They appreciate the social, political, and economic realities of their community, including civic and political processes. Community leaders are able to identify and ask for the support of local business, government and not-for-profit organizations to facilitate positive change.

### **Embrace the Complexity of the Community**

Community leaders understand and embrace the complexity of communities as living systems. They apply systems-thinking frameworks to help them understand community issues and develop innovative and adaptive solutions to community challenges.

### **Build Capacity for a Healthy Community**

Community leaders recognize the factors that contribute to a healthy community, and their role in engaging as community members. They strive to appreciate and build on the physical, social, environmental, and economic assets of the community to create conditions for health and wellbeing.

### **Engage Diverse Perspectives**

Community leaders understand that community issues cannot be resolved in isolation. They look for diverse perspectives, analyze stakeholder needs and respectfully seek input and collaboration from people who are affected by the issue. They encourage cross-sectoral collaboration in building solutions and action.

### **Catalyze Change**

Community leaders have the courage to challenge conventional thinking and create a clear and compelling vision for the future that enlists others as change champions. They understand the dynamics of change and transition, anticipate resistance, and provide appropriate support to individuals in each stage of the change cycle to maintain the enthusiasm of stakeholders throughout the change process.

## Take Action

### **Translate Vision into Action**

Community leaders formulate a comprehensive proposal for an activity or intervention that will have a lasting, positive impact on a community issue. They commit to each step of the process, including identification of the need, outlining an idea, exploring assumptions, defining steps, identifying, and gathering necessary resources, and keeping work going on a timeline.

### **Support Collaboration and Accountability**

Community leaders apply best practices in planning and time management to work within the dynamic nature of their chosen project, activity, or event. They commit to clear priorities and convene others as needed to maintain a group's alignment with key objectives.

Through collaboration, community leaders mobilize people and resources to do what the community wants done.

### **Innovate and Respond to Challenges**

Community leaders are responsive to challenges or changes in conditions or resources affecting a project, activity, or event. They encourage creativity, learning, and innovation among a team or group to overcome barriers or obstacles. Community leaders anticipate the unexpected and are prepared to improvise or experiment to make progress.

### **Promote Ideas and Gain Support**

Community leaders prioritize the design and implementation of a plan to reach out to and influence stakeholders, partners, and audiences. They skillfully orchestrate their message on social media channels, community engagement and through mainstream media. They create and deliver persuasive and professional verbal and written presentations to promote a project, activity, or event.

### **Attract, Acknowledge, and Retain Resources and Volunteers**

Community leaders are adept at developing and implementing a targeted strategy to raise funds and in-kind contributions and recruiting committed volunteers. They understand the pivotal role that recognition plays in sustaining support for an idea or project. They create communication programs that honour the wishes and contributions of volunteers, donors, and sponsors.