

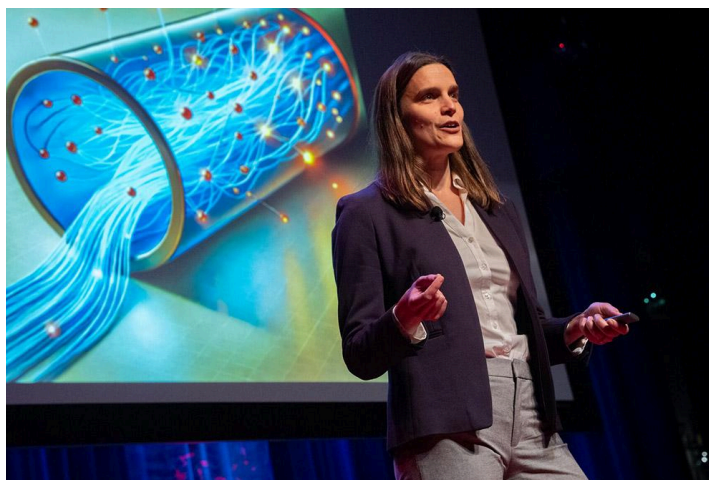
SUNY Research Leadership Academy

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Program Overview

The SUNY Research Leadership Academy is a year-long leadership development program led by Stony Brook University, designed to strengthen research capacity by supporting STEM faculty in communicating and engaging more effectively within and beyond the academy.

Up to 30 participants will develop skills at the intersection of research, inclusion, and public trust through hands-on training and structured cohort experiences in this inaugural cohort. Participants will experience the world-renowned Alda Method® to help them communicate with greater confidence, clarity, and empathy, while building meaningful,



cross-campus relationships across the SUNY system and beyond. The Alda Method® is a communication approach developed by the Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science in partnership with Stony Brook University's School of Communication and Journalism.

The Academy includes four in-person meetings and virtual programming centered on inclusive leadership, science communication, and institutional impact.

Eligibility Criteria

- Full-time STEM faculty (tenure-track or non-tenure track) working at a SUNY campus¹
- Minimum rank of Associate Professor or equivalent

¹ Faculty working directly in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math, Medicine) and STEM adjacent fields are encouraged to apply.

- Highly active in research with a current track record of productivity as evidenced by publications, grants (funded or in application); mentorship of students, postdoctoral researchers, and faculty; and/or other markers of research excellence
- Commitment to developing their capacity for inclusive leadership, strategic communication, and advancing equity and engagement across the research enterprise

Key Features and Outcomes of the Academy

Participants selected to the academy will develop their own skill set enabling them to grow and create impact in five areas, working with experts and facilitators to:

1. Strengthen audience-centered communication skills
2. Deepen their capacity for inclusive and community-engaged leadership
3. Gain tools to address gender and systemic biases in STEMM
4. Build public trust through effective engagement
5. Foster a SUNY-wide leadership network grounded in shared purpose

Participant Commitments

- Attend four in-person meetings (all are located in New York):
 - September 17–19, 2025 and November 5–7, 2025
 - Two meetings will be held in Spring 2026 (dates TBD)
- Engage fully in year-long programming, which includes a combination of virtual and in-person experiences.
- Implement strategies to strengthen their research leadership.
- Champion research communication and inclusive excellence in leadership.
- Design and lead a collaborative project that reflects the Academy's strategic priorities.

Institutional Support Requirements

To support participation, applicants must upload a signed letter from campus leadership (Dean, Provost, Vice President for Research, or other campus leader) confirming:

- A brief statement on why the applicant is being nominated and how their participation will serve both them and the home institution
- A commitment to provide \$5,000 in direct costs and support for travel expenses (each campus will provide guidance on funding to support participation)

Application Materials & Submission Instructions

Applicants must submit the following:

- Current CV

- 1-2 page statement outlining:
 - Why you are interested in the SUNY Research Leadership Academy
 - Your approach to inclusive leadership and communication and how you hope to grow capacity in this area
- Institutional support letter confirming funding and institutional support. Please download it [here](#) and upload to the application portal via Google Form.
- Applications will be submitted via [Google Form](#). Click the link to the application. All materials must be uploaded in PDF format.
 - **Please note: A Google sign-in is required to submit your application due to file upload settings. If you do not have a Google account, you can create one [here](#).**

Selection Criteria

Participants will be selected based on:

- Strength and clarity of research and leadership profile
- Demonstrated commitment to inclusion, engagement, public impact and personal growth
- Desire to communicate across disciplines and communities and provide leadership in research for SUNY
- Institutional support and availability to complete the full program

Timeline and Key Dates

- Applications open through July to August 18, 2025.
- Application Deadline: August 18, 2025
- Notification of Selection: August 22, 2025
- Program Launch: September 1, 2025
- First In-Person Meeting: September 17-19, 2025
- Second In-Person Meeting: November 5-7, 2025

Contact Information

For questions about the SUNY Research Leadership Academy, contact research_academy@stonybrook.edu

About Academy Leadership

Laura Lindenfeld, PhD

Executive Director of the Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science

With over 20 years leading organizations in higher education, and a scholarly focus on building meaningful engagement between science and society, Laura brings clarity,

conviction, and insight to the SUNY Research Leadership Academy. At the intersection of communication and leadership, she advances the art and science of connection, helping researchers engage diverse communities and translate knowledge into impact.

An advocate for inclusive research ecosystems, Laura has spent much of her career designing academic, training, and leadership programs that cultivate environments where empathy, equity, and innovation thrive in and beyond higher education. She is driven to help researchers lead not only with technical expertise, but with awareness. Her vision for the Academy is one of opportunity: research leadership must be reflective, collaborative, and grounded in the belief that experts lead best when they connect their work to the world, revealing its meaning and potential to improve lives.

Her full academic bio can be accessed [here](#).

Kevin Gardner, PhD

Vice President for Research and Innovation

Dr. Kevin Gardner is a dedicated leader focused on fostering a collaborative and inclusive research environment across SUNY. As Vice President for Research and Innovation at Stony Brook University, he recognizes that breaking down disciplinary, geographic, and demographic barriers is essential for significant progress. He believes that research success is directly linked to the diversity and inclusion of research teams, and he is committed to dismantling the biases that often impede innovation.

Dr. Gardner's career is marked by his dedication to creating research environments where every voice is heard and emerging leaders are supported. He has a proven history of expanding research initiatives through strategic investments and cross-sector partnerships. His vision for cultivating research leadership aligns with the need to connect people across institutions, support inclusive excellence, and ensure that SUNY's research enterprise fully reflects the strength and diversity of its community.

His full academic bio can be accessed [here](#).

Judi Brown Clarke, PhD

Vice President for Equity & Inclusion

Chief Health Equity Officer at Stony Brook University

A national leader in advancing equity in STEMM, Dr. Judith Brown Clarke brings a rare blend of strategic leadership, lived experience, and academic insight to the SUNY Research Leadership Academy. Clarke brings more than 17 years of experience in working with

senior management teams. Over the course of her career she has helped institutions build lasting frameworks for inclusive excellence, ensuring diversity is not only valued, but sustained.

Dr. Clarke is known for aligning mission with measurable outcomes, drawing on a robust grant portfolio and a data-informed approach to drive institutional transformation. Her leadership reflects a belief that equity and excellence are inseparable, and that research ecosystems are strongest when they mirror a full diversity of talent and perspective.

She is also a four-time national collegiate champion, Olympic silver medalist, and 1987 Sports Illustrated Woman of the Year, bringing to her work the same discipline and determination that defined her athletic career.

Her full bio can be accessed [here](#).

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