

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Diversity in Leadership Institute

Strategic Partnership Manager

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### ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

#### What is the Diversity in Leadership Institute (DLI)?

- The Diversity in Leadership Institute (DLI) is a start-up nonprofit organization working to change that. The mission is to create equitable outcomes for Black and Latinx students by building a movement of racially diverse and culturally competent public education leaders.

#### Where has the organization been since its founding in 2019?

- DLI was started in 2020 with the goal of transforming leadership in public schools which involves increasing the representation of leaders of color through fellowships in both Northern and Southern California. With several alumni already in leadership positions and a 75% promotion rate in both regions, the initiative aims to support this growth. Building on its initial mission and vision, the next phase of the Diverse Leadership Initiative (DLI) focuses on expansion.

#### What is DLI's mission and vision?

- The Diversity in Leadership Institute seeks to expand its support of Black and Latinx K-12 administrators in California through the development of a network that not only addresses the professional aspects of leadership but the overall well-being of education leaders. Our ultimate goal is to support and retain a thriving workforce of educators of color.

#### Where is DLI located?

- DLI is located in Los Angeles, California with remote staff throughout California. The Strategic Partnerships Manager role is located in Los Angeles, California.

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### ABOUT THE ROLE

#### What is the desired start date for the current Roles?

- While negotiable, the desired start date will be early to mid November 2025

#### What is the desired travel for this role?

- The position is fully remote, but will require in-person team and partner meetings. Depending on your location in California, you may be required to travel up to 20% to meet and support clients

#### What will success look like for the Strategic Partnerships Manager?

Success in the first 90 days will involve thorough onboarding, developing a deep understanding of the current partnership landscape, building strong relationships, integrating into projects, and beginning to implement strategic actions. By the end of this period, the

focus will be on fully supporting key projects, evaluating progress, and ensuring alignment with DLI's goals and mission.

### **First 90 Days:**

#### **Onboarding & Relationship Building**

- Gain a deep understanding of DLI's mission, programs, goals, key stakeholders, and current partnership landscape.
- Build strong relationships with the internal team through one-on-one conversations to learn their roles, perspectives, and expectations.
- Begin connecting with key partners and stakeholders to understand their needs while representing DLI effectively.

#### **Execution & Impact**

- Strengthen existing partnerships and explore new opportunities aligned with DLI's mission.
- Contribute to the execution of partnership-related programs and ensure initiatives stay on track with intended results.
- Develop and implement processes for tracking and reporting on partner experience to drive continuous improvement.

**Please note that working in a dynamic environment could mean a shift in the above can happen particularly for year 1.**

#### **How will success be measured for the Strategic Partnership Manager?**

Success will be measured by the ability to effectively manage partnerships, achieve project milestones, engage stakeholders positively, align activities with DLI's strategic goals, and maintain efficient operations and reporting. This could also include the following:

- Number and quality of new partnerships established.
- Strengthened relationships and improved engagement with current partners.
- Timely completion of key partnership projects and initiatives.
- Positive feedback from partners and stakeholders about communication, collaboration, and overall relationship management.
- Progress towards strategic partnership goals as outlined in the 90-day and longer-term plans.

#### **What are the steps in the hiring process?**

Here are the steps to expect as you move through the hiring process:

- **Application Review** – Our team carefully reviews your application to assess alignment with the role
- **Phone Screen** – An initial conversation to learn more about your background and answer any questions you may have.

- **Hiring Manager Interview** – A deeper dive into your experiences, skills, and alignment with our mission and values.
- **Performance Task** – An opportunity to showcase your approach to the type of work you'd be doing in this role.
- **Panel Interview** – Meet with a group of team members to review your performance task and discuss your experience and how you collaborate.
- **Meet & Greet** – A more informal conversation to connect with future colleagues and get to know our culture.
- **Reference Check** – We connect with professional references who can speak to your strengths and experiences.
- **Offer** – If selected, you'll receive a formal offer to join our team!

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## ABOUT THE HIRING MANAGER & VISION

### Who is the leader of DLI?

- **The Executive Director of DLI is Dr. Laura McGowan - Robinson.**
- Laura Started as a teacher in Chicago Public Schools, then became a high school English teacher and literacy coach in the Los Angeles Unified School District.
- Began this work of mentorship as Senior VP of Regional Advocacy and COO at the California Charter Schools Association.
- Laura helped spin off the Institute into its own 501(c)(3) organization.
- As a Founder of Crown Preparatory Academy: Established and served as Executive Director of a middle school in South Los Angeles, now part of the STEM Prep Schools network.
- Laura possesses a Bachelor's in English/Rhetoric from the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign.. Master's in Instructional Leadership in English from the University of Illinois at Chicago and a Doctorate in Educational Leadership for Social Justice from Loyola Marymount University.
- Mission Inspired by Family: Named after her grandmother, who valued education despite having to drop out of school in 6th grade. Founded a school in her grandmother's honor in 2010.
- Laura has a commitment to Black and Latinx Communities and is dedicated to supporting Black and Latinx individuals in becoming school leaders and ensuring their success both in and out of the classroom.

### Who is the Department Lead for the Strategic Partnerships Manager role?

#### Manager: Maria Covarrubias

- Dr. Maria L. Covarrubias has extensive experience in leading schools and districts through major instructional improvement initiatives. Prior to earning a Doctorate in Education from USC, she earned a B.A. in Child Development from California State University, Los Angeles, and a Master's in Education from Harvard University.
- Maria's dedication to education and advocacy stems from her experiences as a young girl growing up in East Los Angeles, California. Daughter of Mexican immigrant parents, she experienced first-hand the impact of racial inequity, low expectations

and limited resources. Her experience as a first-generation student is what drove Maria to effect change in schools across California.

- Maria is a school founder and more recently, she served as consultant to school districts on improving college readiness for high school students. Maria's leadership has been shaped by numerous conversations she's had with students, parents and community leaders that have desired much more than what students have been offered in the past. In her new role as VP of Leadership Development, she will encourage the flow and exchange of ideas, and lead greater academic discourse among K-12 school leaders on current and pressing issues to ensure that students of all racial, language, and economic backgrounds can attain high educational goals.

### **Maria's Leadership, Communication and Work Style**

- "I would define my leadership style as collaborative. I like to foster a culture that values synergy, contribution of thought and transparency. I trust my team and delegate tasks accordingly. I am a firm believer in continuous growth & development, as such, I like to be coached and coach others as well. "
- "When it comes to communication, my style is honest and transparent, always aligned to ensure the team is on track towards meeting personal and professional goals. I am an active listener. Receiving and providing feedback is very important to me. "
- "I consider myself a high-achiever. I am well organized and thrive on structure and clear deadlines. I like to set clear goals and diligently work towards achieving them. I enjoy creating to-do lists and like to prioritize tasks to ensure I meet my goals. I like to be productive and manage my time and workload well. "

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## ABOUT THE CULTURE

What are the values and culture norms at DLI?

- **Strong and Effective Leadership:** We foster leaders who are dedicated to transformative change and embody our organization's principles.
- **Spirit of Excellence:** We maintain high but reasonable expectations, striving for excellence in all our endeavors.
- **Intentional Impact:** We are committed to making a meaningful impact, ensuring that our efforts align with our intended outcomes.
- **Collaborative Teamwork:** Our team is highly collaborative, working closely with each other and the advocacy team to achieve our goals.
- **Open and Supportive Environment:** We value openness and adaptability, encouraging team members to embrace our dynamic environment.
- **Regular Updates and Recognition:** We meet weekly to provide updates, give shout-outs, and recognize each other's contributions, boosting morale and teamwork.
- **Interconnected Work:** We avoid working in silos and ensure that no one feels overwhelmed by fostering open communication and mutual support.
- **Proactive Problem-Solving:** We address issues promptly, without judgment, and seek external help if necessary to resolve challenges effectively.

What is it like as a staff member at DLI?

- **Collaborative Spirit:** We maintain a highly collaborative environment.
  - **High Support:** Integral support for all team members.
  - **Authenticity:** Our culture and climate report encourages authenticity.
  - **Feedback Culture:** Emphasizes feedback, visible leadership, and career growth.
  - **Error Admittance:** A culture where admitting errors is safe.
  - **Continuous Improvement:** Ongoing efforts to improve workload and processes.
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## OTHER NEWS & INFORMATION

### About DLI

[https://youtu.be/Socg3qo1gik?si=4HEBUjKZa3SLjpM\\_](https://youtu.be/Socg3qo1gik?si=4HEBUjKZa3SLjpM_)

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