



ARSL Leadership Institute FAQs

What is the ARSL Leadership Institute?

The Association for Rural and Small Libraries recognized that there are people working in small and rural libraries that would benefit from a comprehensive leadership institute to help propel them into library and community leadership along with enabling participants to further our library profession.

How much would this cost me?

This is an experience worth approximately \$8000; however, because of a generous grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) this Institute is free to participants and covers tuition, travel, lodging, and meals.

Participants will receive substantial financial support for conference attendance, including complimentary registration, at least two nights' lodging at a conference hotel, and reimbursement for most travel expenses. In addition, two years of individual ARSL membership will be provided for each participant. After the conclusion of the Institute program in November 2025 participants will be responsible for their own member dues.

What is the time commitment?

Participants will be expected to dedicate a substantial amount of time to leadership development activities during the Institute's 18-month duration. This includes:

- Approximately 5 hours per month of asynchronous/independent preparation and active synchronous participation in online learning sessions
- In-person attendance at the 2024 and 2025 ARSL Conferences*, including participation as a session presenter during the 2025 Conference
- Development and implementation of a unique, self-guided Leadership Project within their organization during Year 2 of the program
- Active engagement with one or more professional mentors in connection with their Leadership Project or other professional development goals
- Quarterly supplemental professional development provided by ARSL

The ideal candidate would also plan to become and/or remain actively involved in ARSL** after completion of the Institute program through participation in [Professional Networking Groups](#) and other [ARSL professional development opportunities](#); volunteering on one of our [Committees](#); or running for an [organizational leadership role](#).

When is the leadership institute?

Participants will be involved for 18-months starting June 2024.

Will there be other opportunities to attend this Institute?

The Leadership Institute is a pilot program of the Association for Rural & Small Libraries. Based on the results we hope to continue in future years.

How does this work? Is it online?

It is both online and in-person. In addition to the in-person intensive and the ARSL conferences, there are 10 online workshops. These workshops use a flipped-classroom approach where the participant will receive a pre-recorded video to watch when convenient and then participate in a synchronous meeting with the instructors and other participants to discuss, question, and apply the content.

What are the requirements for participation?

Participants are expected to have:

- Regular access to an Internet-connected computer or laptop, with audio or telephone
- Ability to attend the 2024 (Sept 11-14) & 2025 ARSL Annual Conference.
- Employment in a library for immediate application of learning
- A commitment to view the workshop recordings; and the capacity to participate in the ten live online workshops.
- Completion of an Institute project; between workshop assignments; engagement in the online community
- A willingness to learn and make change in their selves, libraries, and communities!

I am not sure if this is a good fit for me, can you tell me more?

- If you have just completed an MLIS and are starting a job as a shelver or other entry-level position, this may not fit right now.
- We will have content at ARSL conferences and online that will interest you.
- If you have more than 5 years of experience running a library and have several successes, this may not fit for you as a participant but you may want to be a mentor.
- If you don't work at a library, this opportunity is not for you.
- Participants will be applying learning to their library position and doing a project that improves their library or community. For these reasons, we will only accept applicants that are currently working in a library.
- If you have done other leadership programs, this is probably not the program for you.
- We want people who are emergent leaders, those that are seen by colleagues as having leadership potential and a position in which they can apply leadership lessons.
- If you are not a supervisor, yet it's possible you will be soon. This institute may be a good fit for you.
- If you are a newer supervisor with the need for more skill in managing staffing and the organization, apply now!