

Cohort-based Learning Community: [NextGen Professors Program](#)

[Cornell University - Graduate School](#)

Brief description

NextGen Professors is a collaboration of the Graduate School Offices of Inclusion and Student Engagement, and Future Faculty and Academic Careers at Cornell University. It is a career development and group mentorship program focused on preparing graduate students and postdocs for faculty careers across institutional types. The primary audience for this program is doctoral students (in year three or beyond) and postdocs from backgrounds historically underrepresented in the professoriate and/or those with a demonstrated commitment to advancing diversity, inclusion, access, and equity in academia. Participants are members of a cohort-based learning community who engage in a series of professional and career development activities including monthly NextGen Professors meetings, [Power Mentoring Sessions](#) with invited faculty, and as a capstone experience, either the biennial [Future Professors Institute](#) or the biennial [NextGen Professors Public Keynote](#). Participants are also placed in “home groups,” which are groups of 3-5 NextGen Professors from similar disciplines who engage in more contextually specific discussions. Participants also strategically engage in complimentary program offerings provided by the Graduate School, such as the [Academic Job Search Series](#), and those of our internal and external partners.

Program Objectives

Participants will be able to:

1. Understand various institutional types & faculty career pathways within those institutions
2. Identify and leverage resources to support your preparation as future faculty
3. Explore applications to future faculty programs at other institutions
4. Review Individual Development Planning tools
5. Establish intellectual and social communities, and professional networks. Learn to productively and professionally interact with faculty, peers, and others.

Partners, or who to engage, and why

- Graduate Fields/Programs
- Provost Office for Faculty Development and Diversity
- Office of Postdoctoral Studies
- Center for Teaching Innovation
- Office of the Vice President for Research and Innovation

And/or equivalent departments and offices

Logistics

Application

We include examples of the application survey used for the Cornell program as a Word document and file that may be imported to Qualtrics.

- Qualtrics
 - o Word doc version of the application ([hyperlink](#))
 - o QSF file version ([hyperlink](#))

Modality

Options include:

- Hybrid – predominately in-person
- Fully Virtual
- Hybrid – predominately virtual

Communication

Technologies we have used to coordinate the program include:

- Canvas Site (or other course-management system)
- Listserv
- Slack
- Zoom
- Video Library

Community Agreements and Participant Expectations

- Word version of FY2022 expectations ([hyperlink](#))

Planning & Structure

The NextGen Professors Program is an academic year-long commitment for the members of this cohort-based learning community in which the selected 25-35 participants experience small and large group mentoring. To support large group mentoring, the cohort members meet as a full group for 90 minutes once per month from October through May. Each monthly meeting includes time for a round-robin exercise during which each member shares one professional and/or personal highlight. This exercise provides the group with an opportunity to celebrate each other's professional and personal accomplishments and facilitates the development of a sense of belonging and community. Following this exercise, the facilitators transition the group into a 60-minute session on a focused topic. The following are example topics for the NextGen Professor monthly meetings:

- Navigating Academia Professionally and Personally
- Taking Charge of Your Professional Trajectory
- Creating and Leveraging Colleague Network Groups – Lessons Learned
- Influence without Authority – Strategies for supporting positive systemic change from across the faculty ranks
- Navigating the Promotion and Tenure Process
- Lessons Learned from NextGen Alumni: Preparing for the Transition and Socialization as a New Faculty Member
- Exploring Academic Careers Within and Beyond the Tenure Track
- Surviving & Thriving as a Junior Faculty Member: Pandemic Edition
- Understanding and Navigating Faculty Leadership Pathways

To support small group peer mentoring, the larger NextGen Professors cohort is divided up into smaller “home groups” of 3-5 participants from the same disciplinary area. Members of the “home groups” meet at least once in between the monthly NextGen Professors meetings. Participants utilize their “home groups” to engage in deeper discussions around issues of interest, share job materials for feedback, practice chalk talks, and other activities supportive of their preparation for the academic job market and entry into the professoriate.

Associated Costs

Item	Unit cost
Internal / External Faculty Speaker Thank You Gifts	\$70/Gift
External Faculty Speaker Fees	\$500/Session
External Speaker Travel Fees (only if in-person)	Variable
Food/Refreshments (only if in-person)	Variable
Room Rental (only if in-person)	Variable
Subscriptions and Memberships (ex. National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity)	Variable
Resources & Books (ex. “The Professor is In”)	Variable
Program Support Personnel	Variable

Evaluation

We provide examples of our Formal Pre- and Post-Program Survey instruments as Word documents and as files that may be imported to Qualtrics. As these instruments were developed and refined, we shared with our IRB office, who approved a request for Exemption from IRB Review under protocol ID#: 1711007598. We recommend institutions who wish to conduct evaluation of their program to check in with their own Human Subjects Review body at their institution about why and how data will be collected and used.

- Formal Evaluation: Pre-Program Survey Instrument
 - Word doc version ([hyperlink](#))
 - QSF file version ([hyperlink](#))
- Formal Evaluation: Post-Program Survey Instrument
 - Word doc version ([hyperlink](#))
 - QSF file version ([hyperlink](#))
- Informal Formative Evaluation
 - Solicit ongoing feedback via discussions, mini-surveys, and/or polls to inform program improvement, content, and adjacent, complementary programming

External Resources

- [CIRTL Network](#)
- [Equity in Graduate Education Resource Center](#)
- [National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity](#)

Contact for more information

[Cornell University – Graduate School](#)

Future Faculty and Academic Careers

Web: <https://futurefaculty.cornell.edu/>

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Office of Inclusion and Student Engagement

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Attribution Statement

For those that might adapt and adopt this program model, please provide attribution to the [Cornell Graduate School NextGen Professors Program](#), established in part with support from the [National Science Foundation-funded CIRTL AGEP Alliance](#).