



LAUNCH CAROLINAS

Leadership Accelerator Program

Strengthening Non-Profit Leaders and Funders for Lasting Impact

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

2026 - 2027



Launch Carolinas Leadership Accelerator Program is a multi-year leadership, resource, and network-expanding program designed to connect and strengthen relationships between trusted non-profit leaders and philanthropic partners who have a vested interest in addressing social challenges in communities with limited resources in North Carolina and/or South Carolina.

Annually, twelve non-profit leaders will be selected through a competitive application process to participate in the program until 48 leaders have been identified.

This document provides a comprehensive program overview of the program's:

- ▶▶▶▶ Purpose
- ▶▶▶▶ Key Participants
- ▶▶▶▶ Goals and Structure
- ▶▶▶▶ Financial Investments and Benefits
- ▶▶▶▶ Key Definitions

If you have any questions or need additional details about Launch Carolinas, please contact GOODSTOCK Consulting at adminsupport@goodstockconsulting.com.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Launch Carolinas Leadership Accelerator Program is to strengthen the non-profit ecosystem in North Carolina and South Carolina to support positive social impacts for underresourced communities. Though these states have economic and political differences, there are common, persistent social and environmental challenges that can be best addressed regionally, as the neighboring states often share residents and resources. The intentional investment in non-profit leaders, their organizations, and funders is essential to ensuring that these changemakers have the skills, tools, and networks needed to sustain change.

KEY PARTICIPANTS

There are four integral Launch Carolina participants: the non-profit leader, the non-profit organization, the funding partner, and the strategic thought partner (STP).

The **non-profit leader** must hold the position of Chief Executive Officer, Executive Director, or President within a North Carolina or South Carolina organization. They should be committed to remaining with the organization for the entire program year and demonstrate a dedication to at least ten additional years of work in the non-profit sector. The leader should exemplify strong values and characteristics associated with effective leadership and have a distinguished history of community service recognized by peers, colleagues, and the community.

Preferred candidates will also have a strong interest in building relationships with both peers and the philanthropic community, enhancing their organization's capacity, and committing to long-term community impact through their organization or broader network. The camaraderie and supportive community that develops among the non-profit leaders in the cohort are essential elements of the experience.

The **non-profit organization** must be federally designated as a 501(c)(3) organization and provide culturally competent services and programs informed by community needs, with an operating budget between \$250,000 and \$1,500,000. Additionally, the organization must serve an area facing one or more of the social or environmental challenges outlined.

Ideal organizations may have experienced limited access to philanthropic funding in their service area or population, yet they should continue to offer culturally competent services and programs focused on community needs. Furthermore, the organization must be trusted by and closely connected to the communities it serves. However, organizations operating under a fiscal sponsorship or whose primary focus is grant-making are not eligible to participate.

The **funding partner** is a foundation in North Carolina and/or South Carolina that pledges to financially invest in the development of a non-profit leader and their organization over four years.

The **strategic thought partner (STP)** is a philanthropic leader who commits to one-on-one partnerships with participating non-profit leaders. The STP relationship is marked by joint responsibility for supporting a mutual learning experience between the two to inspire deepened interpersonal relationships. The dyad challenges one another to explore, grow, and think expansively.



Non-Profit Leader Benefits

Leadership Development: The program provides access to training and resources that help leaders enhance their skills, improve effectiveness, and grow as community leaders.

Networking Opportunities: Leaders can build strong relationships with other non-profit leaders and philanthropic partners, expanding their professional network, partnerships, and further funding opportunities.

Increased Visibility: Participating in a recognized program can raise the profile of the leaders and their organizations within the philanthropic community, potentially leading to greater support and advocacy for their causes.

Enhanced Organizational Capacity: Through collaboration and shared learning experiences, leaders can gain insights and strategies that strengthen overall agency performance.

Community Impact: Ultimately, by strengthening organizational capacity, leaders are better positioned to document outcomes and contribute to long-term social benefits.

Financial Support: Leaders receive a personal stipend and general operating support during the first year, and subsequently for three additional years to enhance the organization's operational capacity.

Funder Benefits

Broadening of Perspectives: Funders can expand their understanding of the capacity of leaders, their organizations, and underresourced communities.

Networking Opportunities: Funders will expand their relationships with non-profit leaders and peers in the Carolinas, which can strengthen regional and bi-state collaborations and partnerships.

Strengthened Internal Processes and Strategies: By increasing their understanding of the deeply rooted challenges, funders will be better positioned to adapt internal processes and strategies that strengthen community agility and response.

New Opportunities for Impactful Funding: An increased understanding of the region's broad range of issues that can strengthen future funding decisions.

PROGRAM GOALS AND STRUCTURE

Launch Carolinas Leadership Accelerator Program seeks to cultivate the collective skills of leaders and funders to amplify their invested time, talents, and financial resources to achieve greater community impact within five social priorities.

Launch Carolinas Social Priorities

- **Health Outcomes**, to include a person's physical, behavioral, and/or mental condition
- **Healthcare Access**, to include access to treatment for a person's physical, behavioral, and/or mental condition
- **Educational Attainment**, to include the promotion of academic access, quality, completion, and workforce development; and
- **Social Vulnerability**, demographic and socioeconomic factors (such as poverty, lack of access to transportation, and crowded housing) that adversely affect communities.

Twelve non-profit leaders, twelve strategic thought partners, and funding partners are engaged in a 10-month program of quarterly in-person workshops and monthly virtual learning sessions, followed by annual meetings during the subsequent three years. Throughout that time, the goals are to:

- Build the knowledge and skills of non-profit leaders and philanthropic partners relevant to non-profit management and leadership development;
- Understand the potential for system-level impact and sustainable change within underresourced communities in North Carolina and South Carolina;
- Promote new approaches to grantmaking and greater access to traditional and non-traditional resources;
- Encourage trust-building, synergy, and collaboration between non-profit leaders and philanthropic partners; and
- Open access to networks for non-profit leaders and philanthropic partners, thus expanding professional connections throughout the region.





Program Structure

For each cohort, the ten-month curriculum period will include four in-person workshops (2.5 days/each) and six virtual learning sessions (2 hours/each). Following the first year, non-profit leaders meet annually for the next three years to provide updates, maintain and build bonds among the cohort, and participate in evaluation activities.

Strategic thought partners attend all four in-person workshops and at least three virtual learning sessions. During these sessions, the agenda will be crafted to allow separate discussions specific to foundation leaders, 1:1 time with their assigned non-profit leaders, and networking with all non-profit leaders and their foundation colleagues.

Funding partners (Foundation CEOs/Presidents who are not serving as STPs) and board chairs of the non-profit organizations are requested to attend two in-person workshops (orientation and graduation). They are also invited to participate in virtual discussions appropriate for their roles.

Program participants should anticipate graduate-level discussions that center innovation, problem-solving, systems change, and collaboration. Discussions will include organizational and professional development topics like: strategic planning, finance management and fund diversification, human resources management, fundraising and event planning, communications and marketing, board

development, policy and advocacy, management and leadership, ethics and integrity, personal brand management, effective networking, measurement and evaluation, and work/life balance. However, participant interviews and a skills assessment are used to customize the curriculum and supplemental activities.

 Workshop #1: Orientation In-Person, August 12-14, 2026	 Learning Session #4 Virtual, January 2027
 Learning Session #1 Virtual, September 2026	 Workshop #3 In-Person, February 2027
 Learning Session #2 Virtual, October 2026	 Learning Session #5 Virtual, March 2027
 Workshop #2 In-Person, November 2026	 Learning Session #6 Virtual, April 2027
 Learning Session #3 Virtual, December 2026	 Workshop #4: Graduation In-Person, May 2027

FINANCIAL INVESTMENTS AND BENEFITS

Each non-profit leader and their organization receives \$185,000 over four years. During the first year, the leader receives a \$10,000 personal stipend, and the organization receives \$25,000 for general operating expenses. After year one, \$150,000 is provided for general operating support during the subsequent three years (\$50,000/year). **Because of support from participating foundations, Launch Carolinas will invest more than \$8,000,000 to support 48 non-profit leaders** from four cohorts and across the bi-state region through 2030.

General operating support for the post-program years is disbursed annually in August, contingent on the non-profit leader's continued engagement with Launch Carolinas and the non-profit organization's compliance with financial documentation. Launch Carolinas' non-profit leaders must participate in an annual review of individual and organizational progress and challenges. This information is used to inform the program's impact and provide opportunities for content or process improvements. In addition, organizations must submit financial documents (i.e., prior year 990s and current year budget vs year-to-date actual) annually for review and to initiate the payment process.

While The Duke Endowment is the convening foundation and supports the project's overall administration, facilitation, and evaluation; GOODSTOCK Consulting serves as the project management firm and subgrantor for the funding partners. Each non-profit organization is required to sign a subgrant agreement with GOODSTOCK before receiving funds. Funding partners will receive an annual report of significant findings and recommendations to amplify their investments further.

Leadership and Organizational Changes

Annual organizational investments are explicitly connected to the non-profit organization of the non-profit leader at the time of their Launch Carolinas enrollment and participation. While the intent is to create a multi-year relationship to support sustainable community impact, it is understood that professional and organizational changes are inevitable. Specific conditions and eligibility statuses are outlined.

If a non-profit leader transitions **to a different role or non-profit organization before the program orientation**, the leader and their organization will be ineligible to participate in the cohort and will not receive any financial support (personal stipend or general operating support). Participation in Launch Carolinas is not transferable to the succeeding leader of the non-profit organization.

If a non-profit leader transitions **to a different role and a different non-profit organization during the program year**, the leader and their original organization will be ineligible to receive any financial support (personal stipend or general operating support).

If a non-profit leader transitions **to a different organization after the program year**, the original organization may be eligible for continued general operating support. The organization and its new leadership, in consultation with the board chair, will be reassessed for continued receipt of general operating support.

This general guidance may not cover every circumstance that may result from leadership changes; however, it provides a framework by which decisions will be made by the funding partners. The non-profit leader is responsible for notifying GOODSTOCK of impending changes to determine the best course of action.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

All program participants will be asked to provide feedback on their personal knowledge and capacity, perceived development and engagement of their peers, and their satisfaction with the program structure. Quantitative and qualitative methods will be used.

Additionally, longitudinal impacts of the Launch Carolinas will be tracked through annual data collection from participants to assess how they continue to apply learnings from the program, the impact of their relationship with other non-profit leaders and funders, and how non-profit leaders and organizations have leveraged their general operating awards to strengthen their community.

KEY DEFINITIONS

Health: A person's physical, behavioral, and/or mental condition.

Social Vulnerability: The demographic and socioeconomic factors (such as poverty, lack of access to transportation, and crowded housing) that adversely affect communities that encounter hazards and other community-level stressors.

Trusted Leader: An individual who has the community's belief in their integrity, reliability, and intentions.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

Non-profit leaders and funders are the primary stakeholders for this program. They sit at the center of all activities and shape the work together. As future cohorts of leaders and funders participate, we expect additional refinement of the goals, learnings, and overall approach to uplifting the Carolinas. **For more information about Launch Carolinas, contact GOODSTOCK Consulting at adminsupport@goodstockconsulting.com.**



About GOODSTOCK Consulting, LLC

GOODSTOCK is an organizational development firm committed to partnering with organizations that value the strategic engagement and development of their staff and key partners. The team has extensive experience leading nonprofits, philanthropic organizations, hospital systems, and government agencies through a full spectrum of organizational development and community engagement initiatives, including equity-centered community assessments, external stakeholder engagement, management and facilitation of multi-sector and stakeholder partnerships, educational training, and continuous quality improvement.

We are eager to extend these services to Launch Carolinas to fortify the program's commitment to building relationships between philanthropic and nonprofit leaders serving underserved communities across the Carolinas. Learn more at www.goodstockconsulting.com.





promotes

a Growth Mindset:

a belief that you can improve through effort, learning, and persistence

Transformation:

a thorough change in perspectives and infrastructures that are just and community-centered

Inspiration:

the process of being mentally stimulated and confident to do something creative and innovative; hopeful

Connection:

quality and balanced relationships within and outside of the program that motivate participants

Pivotal Changes:

vital learnings, conversations, introspection, and applications that affect the impact of the program and its participants