

NLM/AAHSL LEADERSHIP FELLOWS PROGRAM

2023 / 2024

INFORMATION AND APPLICATION

June 2023



2022-2023 Class

From Left: Melissa Kahili-Heede (Fellow), Kelly Thormodson (Mentor), Diana Delgado (Fellow), Jennifer McKinnell (Mentor), Beth Whipple (Fellow), Dale Prince (Mentor), Michelle Harrell (Fellow), Catherine Soehner (Mentor), Holly Grossetta Nardini (Fellow), Philip Walker (Mentor)

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<https://www.aahsl.org/leadershipfellowsprogram>

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OVERVIEW

Announcing: The 2023/2024 Leadership Program of the National Library of Medicine (NLM) and the Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries (AAHSL)

For the past 20 years, the National Library of Medicine (NLM) and the Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries (AAHSL) have sponsored the NLM/AAHSL Leadership Fellows Program. This leadership program identifies and brings together emerging health sciences library leaders and assists them in gaining the skills and knowledge to lead today's and tomorrow's academic health sciences libraries.

The Leadership Fellows Program began in 2003, when the leadership of the AAHSL recognized there was a looming shortage of well-trained, qualified, and forward-thinking emerging leaders ready to become the next generation of academic health sciences library directors. To address this challenge and to ensure the vitality and influence of libraries far into the future, AAHSL undertook its Future Leadership Initiative. The Leadership Fellows Program, co-sponsored by NLM and AAHSL, was established and remains a highly visible and high priority program within AAHSL.

In addition to learning leadership models and competencies, as a fellow you will explore how to become an effective and inclusive leader. Working with a mentor who is an academic health sciences library director, you will observe and experience a variety of leadership styles and institutional cultures. Through this mentoring relationship, you will gain firsthand an unfiltered exposure to leadership through a site visit to your mentor's institution, as well as participate in candid conversations with your mentor, facilitated discussions among the learning community on various topics, and attend an intensive mid-year, multi-day leadership institute. As part of the program, you will be introduced to and become part of a larger community and network of health sciences library leaders through interactions with mentors, prior fellows, and other AAHSL library directors.

Leaders must value, create, and sustain a work environment where diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging thrives. The NLM/AAHSL Leadership Fellows Program recognizes the importance of such an environment to enrich and support the mission of academic health sciences libraries. The program actively seeks applications from individuals with varying identities, experiences, ethnic, and racial backgrounds. NLM and AAHSL are committed to building diverse candidate pools and ensuring diversity of participation in the program and library leadership by considering the relevance of a broad portfolio of leadership responsibilities. Each year the program selects a small class of fellows (about five) for the incoming class.

To date, one hundred and two (102) fellows and eighty-two (82) different mentors have participated in the program. Fifty-three (53) fellows (52% of prior graduates) have received permanent director appointments. Nineteen (19) prior fellows have now joined the program as mentors.



The most valuable part of the program was the people - facilitators, mentors, and fellows. We were able to share our experiences and hold open discussions about the challenges and rewards that come with being a leader. In addition, as a fellow, my site visit gave me firsthand experience with another academic health sciences library and the high level leaders both inside and outside of the library.

Amy Blevins, Fellow 2018-2019
Associate Director for Public Services
Ruth Lilly Medical Library
Indiana University School of Medicine

The Leadership Fellows Program seeks applicants with progressive leadership experience or traditional management/administrative experience. Your leadership experience can be both within and outside the library community, such as prior work-related experience in a business or organization, or acting as a leader within a community, regional, or national organization over the course of several years. Leadership experiences can be from non-library environments that may include serving as project coordinator, grant PI, chair of a large or complex committee, or officer of a community, regional or national organization. It can be several years within the same position, or more than one leadership role over the course of several years. Your experience should demonstrate a sustained and progressive leadership path. You are not required to have direct supervisory responsibility or administer a large library unit, but your experience should involve working with a variety of people in accomplishing a specific project, initiative, or goal.

Fellows selected to be part of the program receive funding from NLM and AAHSL for travel and other program-related expenses. The only commitment from you and your library is that you will be given release time to participate fully in all program elements.

Learning Objectives and Outcomes

As a fellow participating in the NLM/AAHSL Leadership Fellows Program, you will:

- Explore leadership through a variety of lenses and program components.
- Understand the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusivity as it applies to leadership development and to the benefit of the profession, institution, and community.
- Gain valuable insight on leading across organizational, institutional, and geographic boundaries.
- Establish a network of colleagues to draw upon throughout your career.
- Consider concepts in leadership theory and develop practical skills for implementing change at organizational and professional levels.

- Develop a clear understanding of the contemporary role of academic health sciences library directors.
- Exercise and hone strategic thinking skills.
- Discuss self-awareness, emotional intelligence, and its impact on leadership confidence.
- Practice interview skills for director level positions.
- Gather career guidance from your mentor and other health sciences library leaders.
- Be recognized as an emerging leader with a competitive standing when pursuing director positions.



The AAHSL Leadership Fellows Program was an incredible opportunity to see what successful leadership of health sciences libraries looks like in practice. It gave me a deeper appreciation of the range of challenges leaders in our field face, and the creative ways they find to improvise and respond. I also came away with a new group of colleagues and friends that I know I can always reach out to for personal advice. I highly recommend this program for aspiring leaders.

Stephen Kiyoi, Fellow 2016-2017
 Head of Researcher Services, Shields Library
 University of California Davis

Eligibility Requirements

The NLM/AAHSL Leadership Fellows Program is designed for librarians with prior management experience. In most cases, the baseline for candidates to be considered for selection is a minimum of three to five years of experience that demonstrates a career track in administrative positions or progressive leadership responsibilities. The application process is open to U.S. and Canadian citizens and permanent residents.

Final candidates for fellows must be from or become an AAHSL member institution for *full travel support*. As noted in the Program and Travel Support section, candidates not from AAHSL member institutions will need to pay their own program travel expenses (estimated to be \$7,000 - \$7,500). Please visit the [AAHSL website](#) for [membership information](#).

The purpose of this program is to generate a pool of new candidates for open AAHSL director positions. As a result, current directors of AAHSL member libraries are not eligible to apply for this program. A fellow will be ineligible to participate if the selected fellow accepts a position as director of an AAHSL Library prior to the start of the program.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE & DESIGN

The NLM/AAHSL Leadership Fellows Program balances leadership development training with personal interaction and practical experience. The program combines a group curriculum with individually based events designed to build a “community of learners.” As a fellow, you will engage in face-to-face interactions, virtual sessions, and firsthand experiences through a site visit. In addition to a one-year fellow/mentor relationship, there are in-person leadership events and an opportunity to attend the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) Annual Meeting, as well as the AAHSL Annual Meeting.

As a fellow, you will participate in six components over a one-year timeframe, with each step building upon the previous learning experience:

- Orientation
- Multi-day Leadership Institute that focuses on leadership models and theory
- Site-visit to the mentor’s institution
- Ongoing mentoring relationship
- Monthly webinars and online discussions
- Capstone event at the end of the program

The program is specifically designed to capitalize on the knowledge, wisdom, and training of mentors and program faculty by offering you experiences to observe, interact, role-play, discuss, and absorb a wide variety of topics. This approach leads to rich and long-lasting relationships with a larger leadership community made up of mentors and fellows from current and prior years.

Orientation

The Orientation, held in conjunction with the AAHSL and AAMC Annual Meetings, is the first opportunity for you to meet the members of your learning community (fellows, mentors, and faculty), get to know each other, and develop initial learning plans for the year. The Orientation includes a program overview and explores intentional leadership, creates a personal vision of leadership, and reflects on your leadership style. After completing leadership instruments, faculty guide you through a review of your individual leadership profile to assist you in identifying your strengths and preferences. This leadership assessment informs the work you will do individually and with your mentor. Because the Orientation is scheduled in concert with annual meetings, the program supports your attendance at AAMC (1-day registration) and the AAHSL Annual Meeting, exposing you to the issues and leaders of the academic health sciences community.

Leadership Institute

This multi-day event, scheduled in the spring, delves into leadership topics affecting academic health sciences libraries and the larger professional community, as well as your individual career development goals. Program faculty discuss case studies and facilitate interactive exercises. This

mid-program event brings everyone together to further strengthen the learning community, introduces additional leadership topics, further develops leadership skills, and ensures that the program is addressing the needs of your cohort of emerging leaders. These topics may be delivered virtually or through in-person activities.



The NLM/AAHSL Leadership Fellows Program was an invaluable and timely experience for me as a recently appointed Interim Director. It provided me with multiple opportunities to meet other directors and leaders with a wide range of experience and expertise and from a variety of disciplines. As a new director, I must give credit to my mentor, in particular, but also everyone involved with the program for their practical advice and philosophical wisdom.

Philip Walker, Fellow 2017-2018
Currently Director, Eskin Biomedical
Vanderbilt University Library

Mock Interview

You will participate in a mock interview for a director's position and be provided with guidance and feedback based on your performance. The mock interview simulates applying for a senior level leadership position in an academic health sciences library. Fellows, mentors, and faculty engage in informal discussions about the recruiting process, negotiating a salary and the other demands of starting a new, senior level leadership position.

Mentor Relationship and Site Visit

Your relationship with your mentor is the thread that ties the program components together. You will be paired with a mentor based on your expressed professional development goals and the mentor's fields of interest and areas of expertise, as well as characteristics of the mentor's institution.

With your mentor, you will establish mutual expectations for your newly developed working relationship. You will be expected to communicate on a regular and frequent basis to discuss topics of your choosing, such as challenges faced by you, issues in your home library, and the profession, as well as progress on learning goals. During this time, you will continue to build your relationship with your mentor who can support you as you consider your next career decisions.

The individual site visit to the mentor's home library fulfills the program's goal of exposing you to diverse leadership styles and organizational developments. The site visit gives you first-hand experience under the tutelage of a highly committed and knowledgeable mentor representing the leaders of the academic health sciences library community. The design of the site visit will ensure a meaningful and instructive experience—it will be coordinated to meet you and your mentor's expectations. Virtual meetings with key institutional leaders may be used to augment the site visit.



Having served as a mentor twice, I have seen transformations – new thoughts and ideas, “aha” moments, confidence building, and lifelong learning at the highest level. That happens not only for the Fellows, but for the Mentors as well, proving a growth mindset that can strengthen at any experiential level or age. The NLM/AAHSL Fellows Program functions at the highest level, building future leaders for our profession.

M.J. Tooley, MLS, AHIP, FMLA, Mentor 2016-2017, 2018-2019
Associate Vice President, Academic Affairs
Executive Director, Health Sciences and Human Services Library
Director, National Network of Libraries of Medicine,
Southeastern/Atlantic Region
University of Maryland Baltimore

Virtual Learning Community

A Virtual Learning Community is created to encourage the online exchange of information about program components and the discussion of issues and ideas that surface during the program. Prior to the Orientation, you will be connected electronically to the learning community (fellows, mentors, and faculty) to ensure continued interaction throughout the year. As a fellow, you and your mentor will be involved in developing and facilitating a monthly virtual session on a topic of importance to academic health sciences library leadership. These online topics and discussions comprise the major online component of the curriculum. The virtual curriculum has covered these topics: New and Emerging Leadership Models; Mentoring; Building Relationships and Forming Partnerships; IPE and Library Collaboration; and Cultural Humility and Understanding Anti-Racism as Action.

Capstone

The Capstone brings together program participants, faculty, and national leaders in the library and academic health professions to discuss key issues. This intensive curriculum focuses on environmental forces helping to shape academic health sciences libraries. It will merge concepts raised throughout the year as well as recognize participants' completion of the program. The Capstone will reinforce your community of learners and will serve as a powerful networking opportunity with other leaders. Organizations represented in prior Capstone programs include the National Library of Medicine, Association of American Medical Colleges, Association of Research Libraries, American Medical Informatics Association, and other health professional and information organizations.

CURRICULUM TIMELINE

An important part of the program is the interaction and shared learning among your community of fellows and mentors. While some unexpected scheduling conflicts may occur, the program expects full participation in all major events. *See a sample program schedule on next page...*

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

June 26, 2023	Completed application packets due
August 2023	Successful candidates notified Participant confirmations due Notification letters sent to all applicants
September-October 2023	Log into Basecamp Completion of leadership assessment tools Online video introductions Introduction to the Learning Community Debrief of MBTI (Individual & Group)
November 2-3, 2023 Seattle, WA (AAHSL)	Nov. 2 Orientation - The Orientation is usually held in conjunction with the AAHSL and AAMC Annual Meetings Nov. 1 Arrival Day: 6:00-8:00 PM (Group Dinner) Nov. 2 Orientation: 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM Nov. 3 AAHSL Annual Meeting Fellows and mentors will participate in the virtual AAHSL annual meeting and on-site educational program in addition to the Orientation session.
Nov. 4, 2023 (AAMC)	AAMC meeting Fellows receive funding for registration for one-day of the AAMC conference (in-person or virtually)
November 30, 2023	Learning Plans due Fellows/Mentors finalize site visit schedules
January – March 2024	Site visits
January – August 2024	Facilitated monthly webinars and discussions
April 2024 – Dates / location TBD	Leadership Institute – multi-day program – in-person 3-day immersive program hosted at AAHSL member institution
April – June 2024	Mock Interviews
Fall 2024 – Dates / Location TBD	Capstone and Graduation Hosted at AAHSL member institution

FELLOWS

Time Commitment

As an applicant, you should carefully review the program schedule before applying and consider delaying the application to another year if you are aware of potential conflicts with the program's major events (Orientation, Leadership Institute, Capstone), or if you will not be able to participate on a regular basis in the monthly online discussions and communications with your mentor.

Program and Travel Support

Fellows from AAHSL member libraries have their travel, lodging and per diem expenses covered for all in-person events, according to AAHSL travel policies, including one-day registration for the AAMC meeting.

- Attendance at the Orientation, AAHSL Annual Meeting, and one additional day at AAMC Annual Meeting in November 2023 in Seattle, WA. Expenses include meeting registration, air and ground transportation, lodging and meals. Attendance at the AAHSL meeting is free.
- Travel to site visit library. Expenses include air and ground transportation, lodging and meals.
- Travel to the Leadership Institute (in-person) in the spring of 2024 including air and ground transportation, lodging and meals.
- Travel to the Capstone event (in-person) in the fall 2024. Expenses for an in-person event include air and ground transportation as well as lodging and meals.

If selected, you may use the allotment for travel expenses in accordance with the AAHSL Travel Policy and guidelines provided by the program. The [policy and travel expense form](#) will govern reimbursement of expenses. Please note the use of rental cars must be approved in advance by the program director.

Fellows NOT from AAHSL member institutions will need to pay their own travel expenses for the following (estimated at \$7,000 to 7,500). This includes:

- Travel, meals and other expenses on the days of travel to the in-person events such as Orientation, Leadership Institute, Capstone event and the site visit to the mentor's institution
- Registration, travel, lodging, and per diem expenses for the AAMC meeting

AAHSL supports lodging expenses and meals during the Orientation, Leadership Institute, and Capstone event, and provides free registration to the AAHSL Annual Meeting and educational program for all participants. Information for becoming an [AAHSL member](#) is available on the association's website.

Criteria for Application Evaluation

1. Strong interest in pursuing a **directorship in academic health sciences libraries** regardless of type of library background or current setting.
2. Demonstrated record of leadership initiative and strong potential for future leadership contributions.
3. Clearly articulated personal and professional goals.
4. Commitment to the time and dedication required for full participation.
5. Diversity of experience, background, or perspective, particularly those underrepresented in the profession and library leadership positions.
6. A master's in library/information science or comparable graduate degree.
7. Currently working in academic health sciences libraries, hospital libraries, or other libraries or library-related environments.

Prospective applicants who do not yet meet these requirements may benefit from taking part in other leadership programs (including a short course, institutional leadership training, professional development in leadership, etc.) prior to applying for the fellowship.



The Leadership Fellows program was incredibly important to my professional development and the growth of my organization. I've found myself going back to my notes from our presentations and discussions more than once, and in a year of turmoil, when the operative words were "pivot and adapt," the support from my cohort of fellows and mentors was invaluable. My skills and confidence in myself as a leader grew throughout the year, and the experience ultimately was invaluable in helping me build the case for organizational change to strengthen health and biomedical sciences support at my institution.

Erika Sevetson, MS, Fellow 2019/2020
Currently Director of Health and Biomedical Library Services,
Brown University Library