

Request for Proposal (RFP) for the AAHSL Leadership Fellowship Professional Coaching Pilot

April 2024

AAHSL is issuing a Request for Proposal to firms and individuals who provide quality professional coaching for early and mid-career academic health sciences librarians aspiring to become leaders.

Below is the background and specifications for responding.

Send RFP response to: AAHSL Office (office@aaahsl.org) and Program Director, Judy Cohn, judith.s.cohn@gmail.com

Deadline date: April 30, 2024

For additional information: Contact office@aaahsl.org or Program Director, Judy Cohn, Judith.s.cohn@gmail.com

Project, Overview, Scope, and Budget

The Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries (AAHSL) is eager to establish a Professional Coaching pilot that will pair an accepted applicant with a professional coach to work on developing the applicant's leadership potential through six one-on-one sessions. There is a growing need for developing new leadership in academic health sciences libraries due to trends in recent retirements and available management and leadership positions. AAHSL seeks to retain professional, credentialed coaches who have successfully worked with librarians or other academicians in identifying areas of weakness and improving their leadership skills.

The focus of the program is on developmental coaching, rather than remedial. The overall award for the project is \$45,540; of that, a percentage is allocated to cover administrative and indirect costs. To streamline and effectively manage the financial aspects of the program, AAHSL is seeking to work with one firm or individual to perform developmental coaching for all accepted applicants.

AAHSL seeks to engage an individual or professional coaching firm which has the capacity to provide developmental coaching for up to nine (9) librarians accepted into the program during its pilot year commencing in June 2024. A contract with the selected individual or firm will be executed in June/July 2024.

The expectation is that coaching will commence in September 2024 and conclude no later than March 2025. The coaching schedule will be determined by the coach and applicants accepted once matches are made. Eligibility criteria and application processes are in development and will be fully managed by AAHSL and its Future Leadership Committee. The primary goal is to develop the leadership potential of all accepted applicants.

Background and Introductory Information

AAHSL was established to foster excellence in academic health sciences librarianship. The [NLM/AAHSL Leadership Fellows Program](#) was conceived and began in 2002 for the purpose of developing future academic health sciences library directors. Annually, AAHSL accepts senior academic health sciences librarians to participate in its Leadership Fellows Program (LFP), now in its 21st year. The librarians targeted in this RFP *are not yet prepared* for acceptance into the LFP. Rather, they are skilled librarians who are early to mid-career who aspire to develop their leadership potential. Marketplace trends necessitate the need to prepare aspiring librarians for more middle and senior management roles. These trends include the flattening of organizational structures and reporting, mergers with university research libraries, and a surge of pandemic and post-pandemic retirements.

This RFP addresses a need which has been expressed by AAHSL leaders whose nominees have been unsuccessful Leadership Fellows Program (LFP) applicants. AAHSL is looking to further develop leadership skills of early to mid-career librarians as future leaders in academic health sciences libraries. Recruitment of applicants from diverse backgrounds, diverse geographic areas, and under-represented minorities will be emphasized through focused outreach to AAHSL member libraries.

Examples of competencies for library leaders and managers include skills in the following areas:

- change management
- well-developed communication skills
- ability to work collaboratively and in partnerships
- exhibit conflict resolution skills
- ably employ emotional intelligence
- deploy evidence-based decision-making
- maintain high ethical conduct
- engage in forward-thinking
- utilize effective problem-solving techniques
- ability to lead in project management
- effectively utilize marketing and advocacy techniques
- engage in team building.¹

As part of the application process, applicants will identify areas of growth and skills on which they intend to focus in their coaching sessions.

¹ Leadership and Management Competencies, <https://www.ala.org/core/continuing-education/leadership-and-management-competencies> accessed 2/19/24

Description of Services Sought

We are seeking to work with a firm or individual that provides quality one-to-one confidential, professional coaching services for early to mid-career librarians with leadership aspirations. Up to nine librarians will be accepted into the program during the pilot year with professional services rendered from September 2024 – March 2025. The AAHSL Future Leadership Committee will establish eligibility criteria, an application and selection process. Adherence to the project milestones listed below is mandated by our funding source.

Timeline of Project Milestones

Complete agreement with professional consulting firm	June - July 2024
Open call for mid-career manager development participants	July - August 2024
Selection of participants are determined and announced	August - September 2024
Participants work with professional consultants for 6 sessions.	September 2024 - March 2025
Participants and consultants must complete an evaluation for NNLM & AAHSL.	April 2025
NNLM shares evaluation data to AAHSL	April 2025
AAHSL evaluates and votes on the continuation of pilot program	May 2025

Session engagements will be driven by the selected participants and their coaches. Web-conferencing applications coordinated by the respective coaches will be used to conduct the confidential coaching sessions. The project will fund accepted applicants with up to six individual sessions with an approved professional coach. Selected applicants and their coaches will be required to complete an evaluation. While the coaching sessions will remain confidential, participants will be asked to assess their knowledge in key leadership areas upon acceptance and at the completion of the program. Coaches will provide feedback on programmatic aspects.

Applicants will submit an up-to-date curriculum vitae, 1-2 page interest statement, and supply up to three letters of references in addition to submitting a basic contact and career information following details posted on the AAHSL website. The CV and Statement of Interest will provide more specific details about the applicant’s career development interests and experiences. These materials will be used to match accepted applicants with coaches.

The AAHSL Future Leadership Committee will review applicants and select up to 9 diverse participants (geographically, experientially, and under-represented minority) in the pilot project.

¹ Leadership and Management Competencies, <https://www.ala.org/core/continuing-education/leadership-and-management-competencies> accessed 2/19/24

Challenges or Barriers to Success

A potential barrier to success for applicants will be in understanding the eligibility criteria for participation in the professional coaching pilot and distinguishing it from the application process for the Leadership Fellows Program. Clear criteria and publicity to AAHSL directors and librarians will be critical to understanding the target audience and that acceptance to the coaching program is not for those who have completed the Leadership Fellows Program. Virtual sessions for interested applicants will be offered to present information about the pilot program, encourage potential applicants, and address questions.

Intended Results

Participants will gain self-awareness, identify and address leadership deficits, and gain confidence as aspiring leaders. Evidence of success includes career progression and assuming positions of higher leadership. Readiness and future acceptance into the Leadership Fellows Program is another indicator of success. All accepted applicants completing the program will be required to complete an evaluation, noting that the specifics of the sessions remain confidential between the coach and the coached.

Coaches will also be required to participate in an evaluation at the conclusion of the program.

Required Documentation

- 1) Background information including expertise addressing the specific competencies listed above for each of the coaches who will be working on the project.
- 2) Include the coaching experience for each of the coaches who will work on the project including number of individual coaches, years of experience, types of coaching situations, etc.)
- 3) For each coach, what is the coach-specific training (an ICF accredited training program, or other coaching credential) for each of the participating coaches?
- 4) Are your coaches credentialed? If not, what background/expertise/training do they bring to the coaching experience?
- 5) What coaching specialties are possessed or areas in which the coaches most often work?
- 6) What types of organizations do you work with most often? And, at what levels (executive, upper management, middle management, etc.)?
- 7) What types of assessment instruments are you certified to deliver? Please state which, if any, are included in your proposal.
- 8) Describe the process to be used for matching accepted applicants with coaches.
- 9) Delineate the Information needed from accepted applicants for successfully pairing with coaches.
- 10) Share experience working with the nuances in leadership for librarians of color and other under-represented or marginalized groups. How does the process differ?
- 11) References and testimonials from past clients.
- 12) What measures are taken to ensure confidentiality?

¹ Leadership and Management Competencies, <https://www.ala.org/core/continuing-education/leadership-and-management-competencies> accessed 2/19/24

Costs

As this is an externally funded pilot program, it is essential that we adhere to the allocated funding for the coaching program. To identify costs by specific work requested, please provide individual amounts on the following:

- Cost per accepted applicant for 6 coaching sessions including introductory, working sessions, and final session/takeaways.
- Any other fees for assessments, additional virtual sessions, or access to recommended materials.

Selection Criteria

Our selection criteria will be based on the following rubric: Please be sure to address each of the areas below in your written response to this RFP. If available, please submit a sample of your work which demonstrates your capability in each of the respective areas.

SELECTION CRITERIA		
		Possible Points
Experience/Qualifications/Coaching Expertise		25
Process for matching accepted applicants w/coaches		15
Use of credentialed vs non-credentialed coaches (IFC)		10
Ability to conduct the 1:1 coaching sessions in the allotted timeframe (September 2024 – March 2025)		15
Willingness to participate in an evaluation of the program from the coach's perspective		10
Total cost		15
References		10
Total points		100

¹ Leadership and Management Competencies, <https://www.ala.org/core/continuing-education/leadership-and-management-competencies> accessed 2/19/24