



SOLACE Wales Aspiring Leader Development Scheme

1. Introduction

The Aspiring Leader Development Scheme provides an excellent opportunity for a small number of talented individuals working in Welsh local government and aspiring to be future leaders to enhance their learning, development and experience through access to a professional network and influential national policy forum.

The scheme will be based on a range of work experience and development opportunities, which will be tailored to the interests and experience of the individual and based around the needs of SOLACE Wales. SOLACE Wales will gain from the knowledge and skills of the participants and increased capacity for work on projects, policy development and other activity. Local authorities who participate will benefit from excellent learning and development for their staff which they can bring back into their current and future roles within the organisation.

See the profiles of our current Aspiring Leaders on the SOLACE Wales website, for more information on their professional background, how they have benefitted and how their organisation has benefitted from participation in the Scheme.

The objectives of the Scheme are to:

- Provide training and development for a small number of aspiring leaders, helping them to further their careers in Welsh local government;
- Help develop the skills and abilities of future leaders within the local government sector;
- Raise the profile of SOLACE membership for graduates and middle managers and improve the general membership 'offer' to this group;
- Increase the capacity and resource base available to SOLACE Wales enabling the Branch to make more progress towards its priorities;
- Improve the succession planning and future sustainability of SOLACE Wales.

2. Elements of the Scheme

Participants will be involved in the Aspiring Leader Development Scheme for two years and will benefit from a range of development opportunities undertaken alongside their current role. Participation in the different elements will be discussed and agreed with them

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depending on their interests, aspirations and prior experience. A 'development scheme work plan' will be agreed between each participant and SOLACE Wales and reviewed every six months.

SOLACE development and networking events

- Attendance at SOLACE Wales events including the annual conference, quarterly dinners and meetings, regional events, seminars, workshops, etc;
- Attendance at SOLACE UK events such as the annual conference, top managers seminars and masterclasses.

Other events/courses

- Participation in PSMW training and events including Summer School;
- Support for other relevant training and development or attendance at conferences and events.

Learning and development

- Shadowing opportunities with a chief executive or other senior leaders in Wales;
- Mentoring with a SOLACE member from another authority;
- Participation in a facilitated peer review group with other Aspiring Leaders.

Project work

- Undertaking and contributing to policy development work, projects, events and other SOLACE Wales activity. A time commitment of approximately 10 days per year is required for this;
- The work undertaken will be negotiated with the participant depending on their other work commitments and on current priorities for SOLACE Wales. Examples of work could include; coordinating a policy project/supporting a policy task and finish group; preparing briefings/research reports; coordinating and planning the programme for an event.

3. What are the benefits?

For participants

- Development of skills and knowledge that will help further your career in the local government sector;
- Benefits of access to the SOLACE network of senior local government and wider public sector managers in Wales and the rest of the UK;
- Opportunity to gain experience of policy formation and development at a national level.

For local authorities

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- Ability to nominate talented individuals who you would like to see ‘progress to the next level’;
- Valuable learning and development tailored to individuals at minimal cost to the authority;
- Participants will be required to show how they will bring the learning back into their organisation.

For SOLACE

- Increased capacity to achieve the objectives in the SOLACE Wales development plan, especially in the areas of influencing and developing policy and providing a high quality programme of events;
- Improved offer to graduate and middle manager members, enhanced profile for SOLACE amongst this group and promotion of the benefits of membership;
- Enhanced succession planning and future sustainability of SOLACE Wales.

4. What are the expectations?

Of participants

- Remain in regular contact with the SOLACE Wales Executive Officer and work with them to produce a ‘development scheme work plan’ of how the elements of the scheme will be tailored to them;
- Commitment to participate in all the agreed elements in the work plan and to meet agreed deadlines for the two year duration;
- Support for the promotion of SOLACE Wales and the coordination of activities amongst peers.

Of local authorities

- Willingness to release participants to spend part of their time on SOLACE Wales work and to attend events, training and development;
- Payment of SOLACE membership (this is likely to be at the SOLACE Management Network Level of £122 per annum) and travel and subsistence costs associated with participation in the Scheme.

Of SOLACE

- Provide the coordination and management of the Scheme as well as resources for specified elements of the Scheme;
- Identify appropriate work for participants and provide the direction and support for them to carry it out;
- Senior SOLACE members to support the scheme throughout the process. For example, through promotion and nominating individuals; participating in mentoring

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and/or shadowing; and through working with participants on relevant policy work they are involved in.

5. Who should apply

The Aspiring Leader Development Scheme is aimed at talented individuals with the potential to progress to leadership roles within the local government sector. To be eligible for the scheme you must be:

- Currently working within a Welsh local authority below Head of Service level
- Able to commit your time and effort to the Scheme for the two year period
- Have your application endorsed by your chief executive (or a senior manager member of SOLACE), and the agreement of your line manager to participate

We are looking for the candidates who will benefit the most from participation and who will also be able to benefit SOLACE Wales. There are no formal selection criteria, however we will be looking for the following qualities during the selection process:

- Commitment to the learning and development of self and others
- Self awareness
- The ability to promote, encourage and support sustainable improvement in public services
- The ability to build a professional network and influence and negotiate effectively to achieve outcomes

6. Cost

The Aspiring Leader Development Scheme is delivered at minimal cost to the participants' local authority. The local authority is asked to cover the cost of SOLACE membership for participants (this is likely to be at the SOLACE Management Network Level of £122 per annum) and travel and subsistence costs associated with participation in the Scheme.

7. How to apply

- Complete the application form and send together with a current CV to lizzie.swaffield@solace.org.uk by 5pm Monday 10th October 2011.
- Your application must include a Statement of Endorsement from your chief executive (or a senior manager who is a member of SOLACE) and must also be signed by your line manager.
- Shortlisted applicants will be invited to an informal interview.

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