



VV ENGAGE - ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The VV Engage (Public Leadership) Pillar equips women leaders in politics, policy, and governance with the skills, networks, and strategies needed to strengthen their leadership, advance equity, and drive systemic change. This pillar supports women at all levels of public leadership, from grassroots activism to government roles, in shaping policies that foster more inclusive and equitable societies.

Fellows will participate in expert-led training on strategic communications, political strategy, and governance while connecting with a global network of political leaders, including current and former heads of state, through the Council of Women World Leaders.

What Fellows Will Gain:

- Develop leadership skills to strengthen decision-making, governance, and effectiveness in public leadership roles.
- Strengthen strategic communication skills to craft compelling narratives that influence policy, mobilize communities, and advocate for SDG-aligned solutions.
- Gain expertise in political strategy to navigate legislative processes, drive policy initiatives, engage key stakeholders for systemic change, and advance equity in governance.

Eligibility Criteria:

- Must be one of the following:
 - Elected or appointed official, political party leader, or functionary.
 - Political activist advancing policy change and advocacy.
 - Community leader working on policy-related issues.
 - Media professional covering politics, gender issues, or SDG-related policy work.
 - Civil society leaders running a policy-focused nonprofit or advancing legislation/governance reforms.
- At least three years of experience in elected office, appointed leadership, policymaking, political activism, or civil society leadership.
- Demonstrated commitment to good governance, transparency, and democratic principles.
- Have an understanding of policy-making processes within their community or sector.



Additional criteria based on sector:

Elected/appointed official or political party leader:

- If the applicant is a member of a political party, the party must be established, registered and committed to good governance and democratic principles
- Both the applicant and the applicant's party must not have had any convictions of corruption or abuse of power
- Commitment to working with other sectors on common goals

Appointed official:

- Previous history of public engagement and expertise on the issue(s) under the mandate of her organization
- In a leadership position within her organization

Political Activist

- Demonstrated history of political activism and leadership advancing the sustainable development goals
- Commitment to working across sectors on common goals

Community leader:

- In a leadership position in an excluded community that remains on the periphery of political activity in their countries OR
- In a leadership position in a society without a traditional government structure

Media professional

- Covers stories related to politics, issues impacted women and girls or the SDGs

Civil society leader:

- Organization must be a civil society organization – 'associations independent of the public and for-profit sectors and designed to advance collaboration interests'*
- Organization's mission must be in line with the values of democracy, transparency, and good governance, if applicable
- Organization's primary function should involve working directly with the government, advancing legislative changes, advancing the SDGs, or working to get more women in politics/public life
- Organization must have been registered for at least three years
- Organization must be non-partisan

Accepted fellows must commit to full participation in the entire program and are expected to be prepared and engaged with staff, trainers and fellows before, during and after the program.

*UNICEF, "Civil Society Partnerships," https://www.unicef.org/about/index_3374.html



Frequently Asked Questions

Can I apply if I have less than three years of experience in elected office, appointed leadership, policymaking, political activism, or civil society leadership?

The Vital Voices Global Fellowship Public Leadership Pillar is looking for applicants with three or more years of experience to join the fellowship to continue to further advance their skillsets.

Do I have to be a fluent English speaker to participate?

All content covered throughout the VV Venture Fellowship is delivered in English. English language proficiency is a requirement to participate in the program.

What are my responsibilities as a fellow?

- Attend all virtual trainings from June 2025 to March 2026 and complete all required program components.
- Virtual sessions are typically 60-90 minutes each, held between 8:00 AM - 11:00 AM US EST, with 2-3 virtual sessions per month.
- Engage in additional community gathering, peer exchanges, and program staff check-ins as required.
- Dedicate an average of 4-6 hours per month to program participation.
- Attend the in-person convening in the third quarter of 2025 (exact location and dates TBC).
- Complete mid and post-program impact surveys up to three years after the fellowship.

Are there costs to participate in the fellowship?

No, all costs associated with the program are fully covered by Vital Voices, including travel, lodging, and meals for the in-person convening.

Will I receive a certificate of completion?

Upon successful completion of the fellowship, all fellows will receive a certificate of completion, certifying they have met all requirements of the program.

I am a policy maker and a social entrepreneur; can I apply to both the Public Leadership pillar and Social Entrepreneurship pillar of the Vital Voices Global Fellowship?

Yes, if you meet the individual criteria for both pillars, you are welcome to apply to both the Public Leadership pillar and Social Entrepreneurship pillar of the Vital Voices Global Fellowship.



How can I apply?

You can fill out an application for the program here:

<https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/8172372/Vital-Voices-Global-Fellowship-2025-Application>

If I am an alum of other Vital Voices programs, am I still eligible to apply?

Yes, we encourage alum of other Vital Voices programs to apply for the Vital Voices Global Fellowship. However, if you have previously completed the VV Engage Fellowship or VV Venture you are not eligible to apply.

How long will the application take?

This application should take approximately 45 minutes to complete. You will be able to save your answers and return to the application at any time. To do this, click the “Save and Continue Later” box that appears at the top right corner of the application in each section and provide your email address. You will then receive an email with a personal link that you should use to return to your application.

When is the application due?

Applications will be considered until April 15. However, we encourage you to apply early as applications will be considered on a rolling basis.

Who can I contact if I have any questions about the application?

If you encounter questions or problems with the application, please send an email to VVGlobalFellowship@vitalvoices.org with the subject line: 2025 Vital Voices Global Fellowship Public Leadership Application.

What happens after I apply?

All applicants will be notified about final decisions by the second week in May. Early applications are strongly encouraged as applications are reviewed on a rolling basis.