Global Leaders for Young Children

Launching the next generation of early childhood leaders in the world

Information Packet for Global Leader Applicants

The Global Leaders for Young Children program at the World Forum Foundation seeks to identify and develop the next generation of early childhood leaders throughout the world. Since its inception in 2004, over 300 emerging leaders from more than 70 countries have participated in the program, with many graduates currently playing major roles in shaping the early childhood policies and practices in their countries and regions.

Global Leaders engage in an 18-month program, during which time they develop and implement action-oriented projects in their own communities aimed at improving the lives of young children. A carefully designed curriculum helps participants develop leadership capacity and effective advocacy skills, and gain a deeper understanding of early childhood research, practice and global issues. Through participation in two international meetings as well as ongoing communication, Global Leaders develop a strong network of regional and international peers.

Key areas of focus for the next cohort of Global Leaders include the following:

- **National and Regional Focus.**
  Global Leaders will work together with other from their country to support their national early childhood networks. The Global Leaders program will connect these leaders to a broader community of support and strengthen their awareness of national and regional resources.

- **Robust Curriculum.**
  Curriculum is designed to strengthen leadership development, awareness of ECD issues, and the science of early childhood development.

- **Frequent Communication and Mentoring Support.**
  Guided small and large group online discussions and one-on-one guidance strengthen the sense of community among Global Leaders and provide ongoing support.



Sponsorships for 2026

Prospective Global Leaders are encouraged to seek sponsorship to support their participation in the program. The World Forum works to identify sponsoring organizations to fund a limited number of participants in the Global Leaders program. Sponsoring organizations may have preferences to fund Global Leaders from particular countries or areas of expertise. By submitting your application, you will be considered for funding through a World Forum identified sponsor if your location and professional background are a match for the sponsors priorities.

This year, sponsors of the Global Leaders program are targeting participants from the following countries: Brazil, Tanzania, Mozambique, Kenya, Bangladesh, Indonesia, and Sri Lanka.

Global Leaders Selection Criteria

Applicants for the Global Leaders for Young Children program must demonstrate the following:



- Experience working with young children and families
- Leadership potential in advocating for young children, particularly those at highest risk
- Knowledge of the policy context for young children in their own country and willingness to collaborate with others in their country to strengthen ECD at the national level
- Strong commitment to improving conditions for young children globally and understanding other cultures
- Commitment to co-develop and implement an action-oriented project in their own country to raise awareness about a key early childhood issue or to promote quality early childhood services.
- Commitment to remain in the program for the full 18 months
- Fluency in English to ensure strong exchange of ideas across regions

Curriculum

During the 18-month program, Global Leaders engage with a curriculum designed to build a strong foundation of essential knowledge and skills in the following areas:

Global Issues & Awareness. Global Leaders will gain a deeper understanding of current issues affecting early childhood development nationally and globally, which will strengthen their awareness of and connection to the broader early childhood community.

Leadership Development.
Participants will have opportunities to enhance their leadership and advocacy skills, and put new learnings into practice through implementation of their own action-oriented projects.

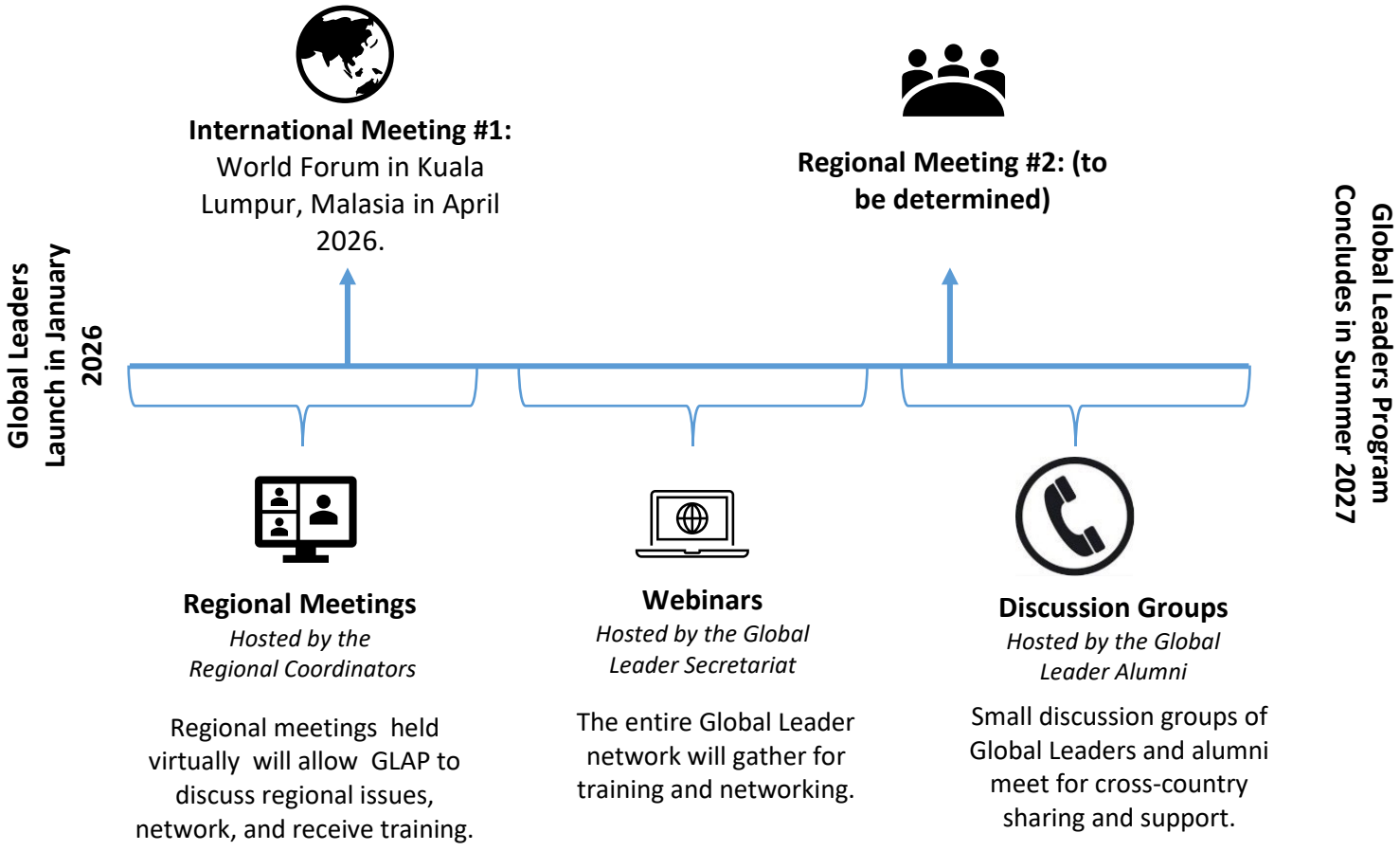
Science of Early Childhood Development (SECD).
Global Leaders will receive training and a license to access resources from the Science of ECD curriculum from the consortium in partnership with Red River College. Building understanding of research and best practice will strengthen Global Leader advocacy efforts. For more information on the coursework go to: https://www.scienceofecd.com/.



This curriculum will be delivered to participants through a variety of methods:

Training	Global Leaders in the Asia-Pacific region (GLAP) will receive training virtually and at in-person. For additional information on the World Forum go to https://worldforumfoundation.org/all-events/.
Monthly Calls/Webinars	Interactive monthly calls and webinars will allow all Global Leaders to engage more deeply with the core curriculum topics and network with their peers. Calls will rotate between the entire Global Leader network, the Asia Pacific Regional Group and alumni-led discussion groups.
Updates from the Field	Participants will receive regular email updates from the World Forum Foundation and ARNEC with current information and resources relevant to their work as Global Leaders.
ARNEC	Integrating Global Leaders into ARNEC's existing strategies, priorities and activities is a key component of the program.
Individual Support	Regional coordinators provide on-going mentoring and consultation to individual Global Leaders, particularly during project development, implementation and reporting.

Global Leaders Program Timeline



How to Apply

Emerging professionals in the ECD field with an interest in becoming a Global Leader in Asia and the Pacific region can apply directly to the program by visiting the World Forum website Global Leaders tab at https://worldforumfoundation.org/global-leaders/. Applicants must meet the Global Leader selection criteria and priority consideration will be given for applications completed by October 28, 2025.

Applicants will be considered from the following categories:

- Those who fully meet the criteria listed above; these (to a maximum of 10) will be funded by a donor to the Global Leaders Program.
- Applicants with a sponsoring organization committed to covering program costs.
- Applicants who have their own resources to fund their participation in the program.

A letter of commitment from the sponsoring organization should be included with the application.

Global Leaders Program Costs

Below is a breakdown of estimated costs for the 18-month program, based on the average cost per Global Leader. We encourage individuals to identify sponsors to support their participation.

$1,000	**Advocacy Grant**	*"Seed money" given to Global Leaders to support implementation of an advocacy project conducted in their country or region.*
$6,000	**Tuition**	*Includes leadership training, a curriculum to deepen understanding of early childhood research and practice, mentoring from Global Leader alumni, and Regional Coordinator support.*
$5,000	**Travel***	*Participation in a 2 face-to-face meeting, as well as attendance at the World Forum meetings (airfare, hotel and conference registration).*
$12,000	**TOTAL COST PER GLOBAL LEADER**	

***Estimated travel costs may vary** depending on where the Global Leader is based and the location of meetings.*

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