

NATIONAL JUVENILE JUSTICE NETWORK

Youth Justice Leadership Institute *Building a Movement*

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) 2017

1. What is the [Youth Justice Leadership Institute](#)?

The Institute is a project of the National Juvenile Justice Network (NJJN). It's a year-long leadership development program for juvenile justice reform advocates. Institute fellows participate in distance learning activities from their home locations, attend two in-person training sessions (approximately three-and-a-half days during the work week in both September and March or April), and complete an advocacy or organizing project.

2. Who is eligible to participate?

Each participant will be an advocate of color, 18 years of age or older, residing in the continental United States, who has demonstrated a commitment to the youth and families involved in the juvenile justice system. Participants may also be family members of system-involved youth and/or someone who has had first-hand experience with the juvenile justice system.

3. What mentoring will I receive during the Institute?

NJJN will recruit and match you with a primary mentor. You will need to secure at least one auxiliary mentor.

Mentors will provide context and support for learning activities; offer strategic advice related to your advocacy project; connect you to current leaders in the field; help relate your work and goals to your specific community and state systems; and give general guidance.

4. What is required of successful applicants?

The successful applicant in 2017 must:

- be an advocate of color who may also be a family member, or an adult who has survived the juvenile justice system
- be affiliated with an organization serving or advocating for those directly affected by the juvenile justice system or in a related field;

- be able to demonstrate involvement in reform activities;
- have a desire to lead efforts to reform/transform the juvenile justice system;
- have access to basic technology;
- have demonstrated leadership abilities;
- reside in the continental United States;
- be willing and able to commit to the full year of the Institute and all related activities;
- be able to devote time to an advocacy project during the course of the Institute year.

5. **Applicants must be “affiliated” with an organization. What does that mean?**

This means that you are connected with an organization serving or advocating for those directly affected by the juvenile justice system, or in a related field. This organization will serve as your “home” during the year, providing in-kind support for your involvement. Although it’s often easiest if the organization is also your employer, it does not have to be.

Examples of in-kind support may include work space, access to technology and office equipment, access to staff or volunteer development resources, and provision of information on reform efforts.

To complete your application, you will need to ask a representative of the affiliating organization to fill out and submit the Organizational Affiliation Form, which is part of the application packet, and can be downloaded from www.njjn.org/our-work/become-a-fellow. The signer of the form will be required to speak with Institute staff before a final invitation to be a fellow is extended to an applicant. *This form must be signed by the organization’s Executive Director or CEO.*

6. **What is required for the advocacy project?**

The advocacy project provides an opportunity for each fellow to utilize the knowledge and skills they attain through the Institute in on-the-ground action. The actual project can take many forms. It can be one in which you are currently engaged or be newly-developed; it can be on a large or small scale, oriented around process (i.e. forming a coalition) or outcome (i.e. passage of legislation), etc. Within the context of the Institute, advocacy is distinct from service provision and program offerings for individual youth or families. **The Institute’s emphasis is on efforts that will bring positive systemic changes.** All projects, however, must be finished by the close of the Institute’s year-long program. Please keep this in mind as you craft your proposal. You will be supported by staff and mentors to ensure your project is completed.

7. **What does my advocacy project proposal have to include?**

Your proposal should include the project title, intended goal or outcome, discussion of a media strategy, preliminary identification of allies and adversaries, discussion of community engagement, how the work of the project carries forward after the Institute year, and resources needed.

8. What does the Institute cost?

The tuition for the 12-month program is based on a sliding scale. The Institute has a scholarship fund so that lack of funds will never prevent an accepted fellow from participating. Use the following annual salary guide to determine your tuition amount:

| Annual Income | Tuition |
|----------------------|----------------|
| \$0 - \$30k | \$100 |
| \$31k - \$40k | \$150 |
| \$41k - \$50k | \$225 |
| \$51k + | \$330 |

There is no application fee. Travel costs are covered by the Institute.

9. Can I get a scholarship to help pay the tuition?

The Youth Justice Leadership Institute has a generous scholarship policy, and will find funds to cover all accepted applicants who need support.

10. How do I apply?

The application process involves three steps:

- Review the **application instructions** and fill out an **application form**. Your responses should be entered directly into the downloaded document, saved and submitted via email to diana@njjn.org.
- Find two individuals who can speak to your commitment to juvenile justice reform and your leadership qualities. Ask them to fill out a **nomination form** and e-mail it to diana@njjn.org.
- Identify the organization with which you will be affiliated, then ask your contact or supervisor to fill out the **organizational affiliation form**, have the executive director or CEO sign, and e-mail it to diana@njjn.org. If your organizational affiliation is not your employer, you will also need to submit an **employer affirmation form**. The signers of these forms will be required to have a brief conversation with Institute staff before a final invitation to be a fellow is extended to an applicant.

All of the [application-related forms can be downloaded here](#).

11. Do I have to work for a member of the National Juvenile Justice Network to apply?

No.

12. Can I self-nominate?

No. You must be nominated by two members of your community who are familiar with your leadership potential, commitment to juvenile justice system transformation, and ability to successfully complete the program year.

13. When are applications accepted?

Application materials are made available in February, with a deadline in April.

14. Who will be chosen?

The top 10 applicants will be selected to be Institute fellows.

15. How will the fellows be chosen?

An applicant selection committee, drawn from NJJN members, the Institute’s planning committee, and NJJN staff, will evaluate all applications that pass an initial screening. They will consider applicants’ prior experience, commitment to juvenile justice reform, ability to meet the requirements of the Institute curriculum, and potential for long-term success in the movement and success in the Institute. Finalists will also participate in a 30-minute phone or Skype interview.

16. Do I have to commit to the entire program year?

Yes.

17. Will I be paid for my participation in the Institute?

No. We do not provide direct financial support or payment to fellows.

18. Will I have to travel?

You will be expected to participate in the two in-person sessions scheduled during the project year. This will entail some travel. The Institute will cover your travel expenses.

19. How are travel arrangements made for the in-person sessions?

Travel arrangements are made by Institute staff, based on your preferences. You must provide your preferences in a timely way, so that airfare can be booked no later than 30 days in advance of the trip. If you do not share your travel preferences within this timeframe, your travel will only be partially subsidized.

20. When does the Institute start?

Activities begin upon acceptance in early June.

21. What is required of the fellows?

If selected, you will be required to undertake the following:

- complete all tasks assigned prior to the first in-person gathering;
- carry out your advocacy project;
- identify at least one auxiliary mentor for your mentor team, and fully engage in these mentoring relationships;
- attend both in-person sessions;
- engage actively with and be responsive to Institute staff;

- participate in or complete approximately 80% of all distance learning activities (i.e. teleconferences, webinars, and group check-in calls); and
- participate in all evaluation activities.

22. How long do I have to find my mentor?

Ideally, you should have your auxiliary mentor in place by September 1, 2017, or no later than by the time of the first in-person session.

23. Will I have to take time off from my job?

You will have to arrange to be absent from work in order to attend both of the in-person sessions, a total of approximately eight-and-a-half work days. Depending on the project, your advocacy project might also entail some days out of work. You will likely have to coordinate between your schedule and monthly Institute activities.

24. When do I need to attend in-person sessions? What other dates should I keep in mind?

| Important Dates | |
|--|--|
| April 18, 2017 | Application deadline (must include application form, two nomination forms, and organizational affiliation form) |
| June 12, 2017 | Final acceptance decisions; offers extended to prospective fellows |
| June 14, 2017 | Deadline for acceptance of offers by prospective fellows |
| Mid-September, 2017 | First in-person Institute session |
| March or April 2018 (Dates TBD) | Second in-person Institute session |
| Monthly from Aug. 2017-June 2018 | Contact between Institute fellows and mentors |
| Monthly from Sept. 2017-June 2018 | Group check-in calls |
| Monthly from Oct. 2017-June 2018 | Distance learning activities |
| July 2018 (Dates TBD) | Alumni participation at NJJN’s annual forum |

25. How can I get more information?

The NJJN website has lots of information at www.njjn.org/our-work/youth-justice-leadership-institute-building-a-movement. Also, you can sign up for one of two informational webinars scheduled for March 23rd and March 28th, 2017. Webinar registration details will be posted on the website by February 27, 2017.

26. After visiting the website, who may I speak with if I have more questions?

The Institute Coordinator, Diana Onley-Campbell, is happy to answer your questions. Contact her via email at diana@njjn.org.

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