Leadership Academy FAQs (as of September 2025)

It is the mission of the ACC NCR Leadership Academy to equip in-house lawyers with leadership skills necessary to best serve their organizations and the community by providing world-class training and fostering connection, development, and belonging in the legal community.

What is the ACC NCR Leadership Academy?

The Leadership Academy is a robust, cohort-based leadership development program geared specifically to in-house counsel. The Academy consists of half-day orientation and "intro" sessions, and eight faculty-led Modules. The entire Academy program takes place over a 12-month period.
The Academy curriculum was developed *by in-house counsel for in-house counsel* to provide the skills necessary to become a trusted advisor and leader and to navigate the partner/guardian balance inherent in the in-house counsel role.

The Academy is designed to improve every in-house counsel's ability to "lead from any seat." Strong candidates for the Academy have a real desire to develop their leadership potential and apply those skills to their roles in their departments, in a working group, or on a cross-disciplinary team. While the Academy teaches skills that would benefit attorneys who aspire to higher-level positions, including the General Counsel role, it is *not* only for GCs-in-waiting. Team members who go through the Academy program will give depth to the organization's leadership bench, and be well positioned to "pay it forward" by applying their learnings directly to their day-to-day roles.

To learn more, read the Program Overview.

What will I learn as an Academy Fellow?

Fellows will develop core self-management, relationship management, and leadership skills through the Academy's sessions on:

- Developing a personal leadership brand
- Being authentic, inclusive and connected -- leadership fundamentals
- Emotional intelligence and interpersonal communications
- Building and leading high performing teams
- Creating organizational vision and inspiring stakeholders
- Leading and managing change
- Managing difficult conversations and influencing stakeholders
- Problem-solving and strategic decision-making
- Executive presentation skills
- Task management and delegating

How are classes structured?

There will be a class of approximately 30 participants – known as Fellows – selected from a variety of industries and organizations from across the National Capital Region. Each Fellow will also collaborate with a smaller working group (their "cohort") to optimize learning and support one another's professional growth and development.

Each session will be highly interactive, teaching skills through a variety of approaches including: simulation; role-play and modeling; collaboration and exchange of best practices; dialogue with experts from an array of fields; case studies; and other cohort and personal exercises.

In-depth class discussions will be led by Faculty chosen for their expertise in leadership and their ability to translate concepts into practical takeaways. Members of the Academy Board of Advisors - senior lawyers, general counsel, and chief legal officers from a broad array of companies and organizations across the National Capital Region - contribute to the sessions by providing insights, perspectives, examples, and pointers that connect the learnings to the reality of the in-house environment.

Between sessions, Fellows will be expected to read, engage in personal reflection and complete specific exercises on their own and with their cohort.

How will the program benefit me?

As a good lawyer, you are a subject-matter expert. But to be a good leader, you need to be people expert. Through the ACC National Capital Region Leadership Academy, you will develop your ability to lead through a best-in-class program geared specifically to in-house counsel that guides you on:

- Setting, benchmarking, and working toward your personal growth and leadership objectives.
- Developing the skills and tools to succeed at the highest levels of your organization, including:
    - Honing your ability to communicate across teams and with members of the C-suite.
    - Contributing to, developing, and leading high-performing teams.
    - Creating organizational vision and inspiring stakeholders.
    - Leading and managing change.
    - Applying best practices for problem-solving and decision-making.
    - Becoming a trusted advisor, able to navigate the partner/guardian balance inherent in the in-house role.
- Building strong professional relationships and expand your network across an array of industries and organizations here in the National Capital Region.

How will my participation in the Academy benefit my organization?

You are a successful lawyer with innate intelligence, a strong knowledge base and skills you have developed through your professional experiences. But that's not enough to make you the trusted advisor that the business units, senior leadership team, and the board of directors need. Many very talented lawyers have never received training to develop the skills necessary to be impactful business partners within their organizations. The Leadership Academy curriculum teaches those skills, growing your ability to

communicate at an executive level, lead and contribute to high-performing teams, execute on the department's and organization's vision, manage change, solve problems, and support effective decision-making.

Need to explain the value of the Academy to your organization? We've created a customizable letter and "Make the Case" document to help you get its support.

How will sponsoring a team member benefit our organization?

As a general counsel, chief legal officer, senior manager or senior colleague, you want to provide talented members of your team -- or encourage them to pursue -- opportunities to develop professional skills that will bring them career satisfaction and enhance their value to your organization. Sending a team member through the Leadership Academy will:

- Build your leadership bench and improve performance of your team with proven leadership training.
- Deliver meaningful professional development that will enhance your team's overall performance and enable the lawyers to "lead from any seat."
- Help that team member boost their engagement and set personal growth objectives.
- Invest in those who have a proven ability and a desire to excel.

The ACC NCR Leadership Academy is:

- Specifically tailored to provide the next generation of in-house counsel leaders the skills to enhance their value to your organization.
- Developed by in-house counsel for in-house counsel, with engagement and input from our distinguished Board of Advisors, to ensure focus on the challenges and opportunities unique to in-house practice.
- Taught locally by nationally recognized faculty, affording the highest caliber development opportunity without added travel time or expense.
- Designed to provide in-depth development and learning, with minimal disruption to your organization. The Academy takes place over a 12-month period and consists of two half-days (Orientation and Intro Module) and nine full program days.
- Focused on developing concrete and practical skills. The program will include personal bench-marking and goal-setting, a leadership assessment, and two personal coaching sessions aimed at setting clear growth objectives.
- Provided in a format that includes cohort engagement outside of the classroom to optimize and reinforce the key takeaways from the instructor-led sessions.

When and where will the program be?

The Academy takes place over a 12-month period and consists of two half-days (Orientation and Intro Module) and nine full program days. All sessions are held in-person in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area, and in-person attendance is expected. There also is work between sessions that Fellows will do individually and/or with their cohorts.
Barring severe weather or other emergency situation on the day of a module, there will not be a synchronous

virtual option for participation. We will record plenary portions of each module using Zoom, and make the recording available within a week of the session.

A 360 assessment process, debrief of the results, and a coaching session will be completed over the summer preceding the start of each class's sessions.

The module schedule for the Class of 2026 is:

- Orientation – Thursday, October 16, 2025, 11:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Introductory Module – Wednesday, November 19, 2025, 11:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Module 1, Authentic, Inclusive and Connected: Fundamentals of Being a Leader – Two days:
- Wednesday, January 14, 2026, start at 11 a.m., and there is a reception at the end of the day;
- Thursday, January 15, 2026, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- Module 2, Emotional Intelligence and Interpersonal Communication – Thursday, February 12, 2026
- Module 3, Developing and Leading a High Performing Team – Thursday, March 19, 2026
- Module 4, Managing Difficult Conversations and Influencing Stakeholders – Thursday, April 16, 2026
- Module 5, Creating and Inspiring Vision; Leading and Managing Change – Tuesday, May 12, 2026
- Module 6, Problem Solving and Strategic Decision Making – Wednesday, June 17, 2026
- Module 7, Executive Presence and Presentation Skills – Wednesday, July 22, 2026
- Module 8 Capstone, My Leadership Journey and Closing Reception – Wednesday, September 16, 2026

Unless otherwise noted above, sessions run from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The sessions for the Class of 2027 will follow a similar cadence.

Who is eligible to apply?

To qualify for the Academy, you generally must have:

- Practiced law for a minimum of seven years, and
- Practiced in-house for a minimum of two years

as of September of the year prior to the start of the Academy year. If a candidate does not have the minimums noted above, equivalent experience may be considered in limited instances.

In-house counsel at various stages in their careers have found the Academy relevant and beneficial. The first eight Academy classes have contained a comparable number of Fellows with 7 to 15 years' of legal experience and 16-25 years of legal experience, and some who are already in the GC/CLO role. Click here to view an infographic that illustrates the reach of the program.

Candidates must also be ACC members or be eligible for ACC membership to participate in the Academy. Preference will be given to applicants who are ACC NCR chapter members. If you are not a member of ACC, you can join by clicking here. If you are a non-member at the time of selection, the cost of one year's membership in ACC and ACC NCR is added to the member tuition fee.

We seek Fellows from a broad range of industries and non-profit organizations, as well as a mix of large and small legal departments, to optimize the opportunity for you to learn from one another, both in the classroom and in smaller cohort settings.

Wondering if the Academy is right for you? Want to get a better idea of what the experience is really like? We can arrange for you to talk to an alum about the experience. Send an e-mail to Ilene Reid (Ilene.Reid-NCR@accglobal.com) and we will put you in contact with one.

We urge you to read the about the commitment Fellows agree to when they enroll, which helps ensure that cohorts and the class as a whole will benefit from consistent participation and engagement -- see the FAQ below.

How do I apply? When are applications due?

Applications for the Class of 2027 open on November 1.

A completed application requires:

- Your résumé.
- Answers to all required questions in the application form.
- Three personal statements pertaining to your experience and interest in the Leadership Academy. There is also one optional -- but encouraged -- short statement regarding diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.
- At least one (1) submitted Letter of Recommendation from one of the following individuals:
  -- Your current or a recent supervisor; or
  -- Your current or a recent internal business client, who works or worked in a supervisory role in your organization.
  You also have the option of requesting a second Letter of Recommendation to support your application.

Class size is limited, and we've typically had more applicants than spaces available in the program.

The deadline for priority consideration is January 31, 2026. Applications for the Class of 2027 close on March 15, 2026.

What does it cost?

Tuition for the Class of 2027 will be $6,250. (Candidates who are not ACC members will be required to join or will pay the cost of a one-year membership in addition to their tuition.)

In addition to the Academy program sessions, tuition includes two assessments – an individual "360" using the Leadership Circle Profile™ tool and a Behavioral Styles™ assessment, two coaching sessions, and a one-year subscription to the Harvard Business Review.

Candidates who are not planning to self-pay the full cost of the Academy are encouraged to seek financial support from their organizations before applying. For applicants who are self-paying at least a portion of the tuition and require assistance due to financial need, limited financial aid may be available to reduce the tuition and/or a payment plan may be arranged.

Need to justify the expense of the Academy to your organization? We've created a customizable letter and "Make the Case" document to help you get its support.

What is the commitment involved in participating in the Academy?

The ACC NCR Leadership Academy is a robust cohort-based leadership development program that will take place over a 12-month period. In addition to participating in dynamic sessions led by the Academy faculty, Fellows will engage in small group activities, both at the main sessions and in assigned "cohort" groups to prepare for sessions.

Cohort work is a critical component of the program and how much of the hands-on leadership development will be accomplished. The assigned cohorts are small, with 5-6 individuals in each, and the success of the program depends on Fellows fully participating in the cohort group meetings as well as the faculty-led sessions. **A Fellow's failure to meet their obligations has an impact on the experience and learning continuity of the class as a whole and of their learning cohort, as well as on the environment the Faculty member is creating for a session.**

The Academy team estimates that preparation for each session will take no more than 8-10 hours per month and believe that the course assignments will not present an undue burden for Fellows. Unless otherwise noted, Academy sessions run a full day and **require in-person attendance.**

Consequently, upon acceptance to the Academy, each Fellow will be asked to acknowledge and agree as follows:

1. I am committed to attending and fully participating in all Academy events, including meetings with my cohort group in between the formal Academy sessions. If a situation arises that prevents my attendance at any Academy meeting or activity, I will notify Ilene Reid and/or my cohort group (as applicable) as soon as I become aware of the situation.
2. Full participation may include some or all of the following requirements: independent reading and/or watching videos; additional casework; and in-person, teleconference or videoconference meetings with the cohort group between sessions.
3. I am committed to arriving at each Academy session and cohort meeting with an open and inquiring mind, a willingness to learn and a respectful attitude towards the opinions of the other Fellows and the faculty.
4. I am committed to completing all course assignments within the timeframe specified by the Academy schedule and my cohort, as appropriate, and to providing feedback on each Module and the overall program.
5. I am committed to securing the necessary time away from my place of employment and other work and personal obligations in order to attend all Academy sessions. I will arrive timely and be present for the full day of each session. I understand that this commitment will require: two (2) half-days for

the Academy Orientation and Introductory Module; nine (9) full-day sessions; and cohort meetings between sessions.

6. I am committed to full engagement at each session and cohort meeting, and will minimize interruptions and distractions, including limiting or avoiding checking e-mail, taking or making calls, etc., during the active part of each session and cohort meeting. I understand that there will be limited breaks to attend to time-urgent matters.
7. I have informed my professional manager and business clients (where appropriate) of these commitments.

Who do I contact if I have questions?

Send an email to info@accncrleadershipacademy.com

What is ACC NCR?

ACC National Capital Region (ACC NCR) is the regional bar association for in-house lawyers in Washington, D.C., DC-suburban Maryland, and throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. We are a chapter of the global Association of Corporate Counsel. We serve approximately 2,500 members at nearly 900 organizations throughout the region who have a diverse set of interests and needs. Thanks to the collaboration of staff, volunteer leaders, and sponsors, ACC NCR hosts more than 70 substantive legal education programs and numerous professional development, service, and networking events each year. More information about the organization can be found at www.acc.com/chapters/ncr/.