

RURAL COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

The foundation to grow rural vitality

The purpose of the Rural Community Leadership (RCL) program is to train and connect a critical mass of emerging and existing local leaders within Pacific Northwest rural communities. We do so in ways that encourage involvement, collaboration, and collective action while building fundamental skills.

RDI's leadership program has created the largest known network of rural leaders in the country. Our Oregon efforts served 88 rural community hubs and resulted in 8,000 graduates. Since 2016, our efforts in Washington State include 29 classes in 6 regions, 14,000 volunteer hours, 700 graduates, 29 completed projects, and \$145,000 worth of grants to communities.

RCL program participants report:

- Their volunteerism increased nearly four-fold and sustained over 7 years
- 92% indicated working more effectively in teams
- 90% expanded their network and resources
- 89% increased their appreciation of community assets
- 85% reported classes helped them create a better future for their community
- Most described participation as "life changing"

"In this course I learned so much, I became convinced that a person can grow a concept into a team effort to help their community!"

~ Rural Community Leadership Program Participant

Each cohort consists of a diverse mix of existing and emerging leaders. An ideal candidate is someone who is looking to...

- **Make a Difference:** Those who have desire to serve their rural community
- **Expand Skills:** Those who are working toward cultivating and expanding their leadership skills to advance within their school or personal lives
- **Get Connected:** Those who would like to get connected to others outside of their present circles



"The moment you educate someone... a spark of understanding flashes in their eye. They become invested and responsible. They realize that they have the power to do something to help our community. And if we are lucky, that spark is just the beginning to bigger and greater things." ~ Rural Community Leadership Program Participant



Rural Community Leadership Training

RDI delivers a proven training to engage a new and diverse generation with the skills and confidence to work alongside others in their community. RCL invests in shaping leaders, increasing engagement, and creating local networks of positive and productive people.

Single Cohort Budget: \$60,000

Sustained Rural Community Leadership Program

RDI co-delivers the Rural Community Leadership Program alongside local leaders; aspiring to provide a deeply rooted, locally led, and lasting program for each community in which we work.

Below is a strategy and timeline to reach this sustainability goal:



3-Cohort Budget: Cohort 1: \$60,00 | Cohort 2: \$45,000 | Cohort 3: \$35,000

Past the initial 3-year approach RDI will stay connected to the community by providing licensed curriculum, trainer development and coaching, as well as communication to the network of leaders about opportunities. The estimated cost to deliver the leadership program on an ongoing basis is \$35,000.

While there is no participate fee in the program we do ask that participants commit time to all training sessions and collaborative teamwork.

Custom Leadership Program:

With community leaders, RDI co-creates custom programs to serve the unique needs of each community.

Custom Budget: Varies, starting at \$5,000



Sweet Home Community/Youth Leadership Program

RDI delivers a proven training to engage a new and diverse generation with the skills and confidence to work alongside others in their community for the community of Sweet Home, Oregon. Below is a proposed budget to reach sustained community leadership in 3 cohorts.

During the community development stage, RDI will build community resources, stakeholders, funders, and partners to ensure the sustainability of the program. Along with recruiting, training, and coaching a local trainer to be a Program Champion. Additionally, during the community development stage RDI will implement a recruitment strategy for the first community cohort for Fall of 2023.

	Community Dev.	Comm. Cohort	Youth Cohort	Comm. Cohort	Initial Program
	FY 2022/23	FY 2023/24	FY 2024/25	FY 2025/26	
	Winter 2022/23	Fall 2023	Spring 2024	Fall 2024	
Program Cost	\$20,000	\$45,000	\$30,000	\$35,000	\$95,000
Revenue					
City of Sweet Home	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$15,000	\$60,000
Philanthropic Partners	\$0	\$20,000	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$30,000
Local Sponsors & Match	\$0	\$5,000	\$10,000	\$15,000	\$15,000
Local Funding Partners	\$0	\$7,500	\$10,000	\$15,000	\$17,500
Participant Fundraising	\$0	\$2,500	\$0	\$2,500	\$2,500
	\$20,000	\$55,000	\$50,000	\$52,500	\$125,000
Community Leadership Fund	\$0	\$10,000	\$20,000	\$17,500	\$47,500

Sweet Home Combined Community Leadership Program

RDI has customized a combined program that delivers a Sweet Home Community and Youth program concurrently. The community development stage is vital to the success in creating a foundation for the community trainings. The concurrent Community and Youth Leadership trainings will be delivered in Fall of 2023.

	Community Dev.	Combined	Combined	Initial Program
	FY 2022/23	FY 2023/24	FY 2024/25	
	Winter 2022/23	Fall 2023	Fall 2024	
Program Cost	\$20,000	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$140,000
Revenue				\$0
City of Sweet Home	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$60,000
Philanthropic Partners	\$0	\$40,000	\$20,000	\$60,000
Local Sponsors & Match	\$0	\$10,000	\$20,000	\$30,000
Local Funding Partners	\$0	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$15,000
Participant Fundraising	\$0	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$5,000
	\$20,000	\$80,000	\$70,000	\$100,000
Community Leadership Fund	\$0	\$20,000	\$10,000	\$30,000



Community Outcomes and Roles:

The Rural Community Leadership Program focuses on four outcomes:

- Increased community engagement to benefit existing organizations and groups
- Increased collaboration, communication, and connection between leaders across the county
- Increased investment in local priorities and projects
- The development of a community leadership team to locally manage and direct the ongoing program

The community roles:

Program Champions ensure that the program is well connected to the community and help to recruit participants and other community roles throughout the program.

Local Sponsors and Funders: Sponsors/Match partners provide a cash match that ultimately will be returned to local businesses through catering, lodging, childcare, and other supply needs.

Leadership Program Coordinator(s): Serves as a community liaison to RDI; this may be an existing organization/group or a new group may form to fill this role.

Delivery Partners: Program partner organizations or volunteers who learn the curriculum, bring local perspective, and practice training and facilitation skills. Delivery Partners are vital to the long-term sustainability of the program.

Other Community Needs/Roles: Host venue, local caterers, childcare providers, language or cultural liaisons.

"I have been involved in a number of community initiatives led by RDI graduates. I am leading one now. I think we are on the brink of transformation." -RDI Program Participant

"Dare I say that if they were a rainbow, I'd be heading to one end with a bucket, that's how valuable their work is." -RDI Program Participant



About Rural Development Initiatives

Mission Statement

RDI strengthens rural people, places, and economies in the Pacific Northwest.

RDI provides on-the-ground leadership development and adaptive technical assistance as communities imagine new possibilities, face new challenges, and diversify their economies. RDI is a trusted rural resource and our broader mission compels us to effect systems-level change. This emerging work aims to increase rural influence on policy, and create value around the cultural and economic interdependence of rural and urban.

Who We Serve

RDI serves small towns and rural communities and their residents primarily in Oregon, Washington, California, and Idaho, with a special focus on community hubs where we have built capacity through our leadership programs.

A Taste of our Services



Regards to Rural Conference

The Regards to Rural conference brings together industry experts in leadership development, community building, economic development, and rural life along with the rural community members RDI works with every day.

Ready Set Grant: Grant Writing Workshop Series

During four intensive sessions, participants actively work on elements of grant proposals. Skills are further developed with homework assignments between sessions. Through the program, participants network with other local grant writers and build relationships for future work.

Pasos al Éxito (Steps to Success)

Pasos al Éxito is a two-year financial literacy and microenterprise development program delivered bilingually in English and Spanish. The program supports building the entrepreneurial capacity of rural Latino participants in three ways: training in personal and business finance, instruction in starting a small business, and access to support and resources as participants take their first steps toward success.



And more!

