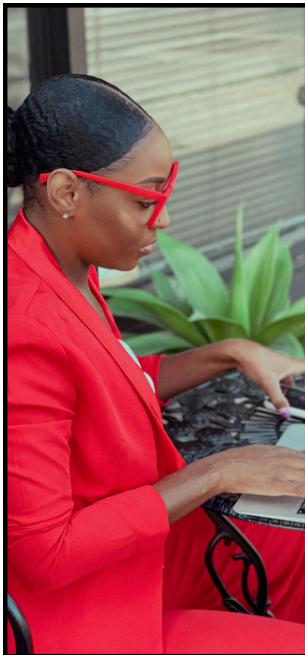


LIFTING AS YOU LEAD

MENTORING CIRCLES PROGRAM

CONNECT • ELEVATE • INSPIRE



Cohort 4 Final Report

September 2024 - December 2024

Diversity and Inclusion Office
Materiel Group
National Defence





Executive Summary

Lifting as you Lead Mentoring Circles (LLMC) Program Cohort 4

The Lifting as you Lead Mentoring Circles (LLMC) program is a powerful, people-powered movement that is reshaping leadership development and fostering inclusive excellence across the Federal Public Service and Defence Team. As the largest group mentoring initiative for members of Materiel Group, the Defence Team, and Government of Canada, LLMC plays a vital role in creating inclusive leaders who advocate for change, champion diversity, and foster psychologically safe and innovative workplaces.

LLMC is not just a program; it's a success story of collaboration and leadership in action. From its humble beginnings in 2020, it has evolved into an empowering journey that invests in each participant by providing an integrative learning experience rooted in science-backed practices. These practices ensure that leadership development isn't just theoretical; it's immediately applicable in real-world scenarios.

By creating small group mentoring Circles, hosting Masterclass sessions, and providing ongoing Q&A opportunities through weekly open hour Lounges, online community practice spaces on LinkedIn, and MS Teams discussion groups, LLMC empowers participants to acquire real-time leadership skills that they can implement in their organizations and team structures.

The program thrives because of its grassroots, streamlined, people-powered model. LLMC's strength lies in the diversity of its participants, who bring different perspectives, experiences, and insights to each Circle. This peer-based learning creates opportunities for collaboration and connection that transcend traditional team and departmental boundaries, fostering a culture of shared learning and leadership across Materiel Group, the Defence Team, and Public Service.



In Cohort 4, which ran from September to December 2024, LLMC celebrated its ability to foster a safe and brave space for inclusive leaders to begin or further their leadership journeys. Through candid conversations and shared experiences, participants not only learned but also inspired one another, creating a lasting ripple effect of leadership development throughout their teams and organizations. As the program continues, its impact will expand, empowering leaders to enact lasting change and build stronger, more resilient organizations.

Looking ahead to Cohort 5, the focus will be on increasing participation from Materiel Group members and engaging Culture Ambassadors to build deeper connections at all levels of Mat Group, ensuring that the program objectives—Connect, Elevate, and Inspire—remain at the heart of leadership development initiatives with Materiel Group.

In conclusion, the LLMC program will continue to build on its wins, reinforcing its role as a trailblazer in developing the inclusive leaders of today and tomorrow. It is a living, breathing testament to the power of collaboration, innovation, and people-driven leadership. As LLMC evolves and grows, its success will be measured by the continued development of leaders who will shape Materiel Group, the Defence Team, and the Public Service into more inclusive, adaptive, and resilient institutions.

To Learn More:

- GC Wiki: https://wiki.gccollab.ca/Diversity_and_Inclusion_Office
- Email: liftingasyoulead-dirigerenelevantlesautres@forces.gc.ca
- Intranet: <http://materiel.mil.ca/en/corporate-services-people/diversity-inclusion-office.page>



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Land Acknowledgment

Situated in the Diversity and Inclusion Office (DIO) at Materiel Group, National Defence, the LLMC team respectfully recognize and acknowledge that our offices located in Ottawa, are on the unceded, unsurrendered Territory of the Anishinaabe Algonquin Nation whose presence here reaches back to time immemorial.

The Algonquins are the customary keepers and defenders of the Ottawa River Watershed and its tributaries. We honour their long history of welcoming many Nations to this beautiful territory and uphold and uplift the voices and values of our Host Nation.

We respect and affirm the inherent and Treaty Rights of all Indigenous Peoples across this land. We recognize the historical oppression of original lands, cultures, and peoples in what we now know as Canada and strongly believe that the arts contribute to the journey of healing and decolonization that we all share together.

This acknowledgment only becomes meaningful when combined with accountable relationships and informed actions. This acts only as a first step in honouring the unsurrendered land we operate on. We continue to honour the people, elders, and Indigenous ancestors of this land.



Message from the ADM & Founder

Message from our Assistant Deputy Minister, Nancy Tremblay and Section Head on Diversity and Inclusion, Samantha Moonsammy, Materiel Group, National Defence

The Diversity and Inclusion Office proudly presents the Lifting as you Lead Mentoring Circles (LLMC) Cohort 4 Report summarizing the 2024 program achievements, highlighting the program's growing impact on Mat Group and beyond. LLMC is not just a leadership development initiative—it's a strategic investment in building a stronger, more connected, and inclusive workforce. With each cohort, we expand networks, cultivate talent, and strengthen leadership pipelines that directly contribute to business success.

The 2024 Cohort 4 LLMC reached new heights, doubling participation from the previous year and forging thousands of meaningful connections across departments and organizations. By expanding the program to include participants from outside Materiel Group to include members from across the Defence Team and other government departments, LLMC is breaking down silos and fostering collaboration across Defence Team and the public sector. This strategic growth strengthens our leadership ecosystem, brings fresh perspectives into decision-making, and drives innovation at all levels.

The program's success and deliberate cross-government inclusive approach has been recognized at the highest levels, with the Clerk of the Privy Council, Mr. John Hannaford, who delivered Opening Remarks at the Cohort 4 Opening Ceremonies and Graduation. More than a learning opportunity, LLMC is a platform that builds influential networks, accelerates careers, and empowers leaders to make a lasting impact by connecting participants to peers across government departments and at all levels from students to executives.



The benefits extend far beyond individual leadership development. LLMC helps to enhance employee retention, increases engagement, and reinforces a culture of inclusive leadership—key drivers of business performance. When leaders at all levels feel supported and connected, they make stronger, more informed decisions and remain dedicated to their roles that creates lasting organizational success.

We aim for this LLMC Cohort 4 Report to inspire you to invest in the people, networks, and leadership that drive long-term success. The future of our organization depends on bold, inclusive leadership—leaders who are well-connected, well-equipped, and ready to navigate complexity with confidence. LLMC is more than a program; it is a catalyst for change, a bridge between potential and opportunity, and a driving force behind a more agile, innovative, and high-performing workforce.

If you're thinking about mentoring, if you're considering sponsoring emerging leaders, taking part in LLMC should be your first step. This program is shaping the future of leadership, and we invite you to be a part of it.

Whether you're looking to mentor, sponsor emerging talent, or develop your own leadership journey, LLMC is your first step toward building a stronger, more connected future. Join us in shaping the next generation of leaders.



Nancy Tremblay

Assistant Deputy Minister
Materiel Group
Department of National Defence



Samantha Moonsammy

Section Head, Diversity and Inclusion Office
Materiel Group
Department of National Defence



Our Vision

A Passionate Commitment to Change

The Lifting as you Lead Mentoring Circles program was created in 2021 through consultations with Materiel Group members, who expressed a desire for a space for mentoring, networking, and information sharing. The achievements of the program's cutting-edge approach to the people-side of business meets policy and reporting requirements in the Clerk's Call to Action, the 2020/2021 Deputy Minister Commitments on Diversity and Inclusion, the HR-Civ Employment, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, and the Chief Professional Conduct and Culture (CPCC) Culture Evolution Strategy. These consultations allowed LLMC to effectively bridge policy and practice, taking critical diversity and inclusion principles and translating them into actionable, real-world leadership skills.

Given the responsibility be forward looking to future needs of the Defence Team, Materiel Group has a unique responsibility and opportunity to shape the future of the Canadian Armed Forces. Mat Group is a trailblazer in the effort to transform the Defence Team into a diverse, adaptable, and inclusive force. This aligns seamlessly with the mission to build the Defence Team of the future, where leadership, innovation, and inclusivity are paramount.

The LLMC program plays a pivotal role in bringing this vision to life, serving as a key initiative in Mat Group's broader strategic objective to build the future of the Defence Team. In a rapidly evolving world, innovation often emerges from the edges, not from the centre. LLMC represents that innovation by engaging participants in a grassroots, people-powered movement where the content and experiences are brought to life through the people themselves.

Mat Group's support for LLMC exemplifies its forward-thinking, innovative approach to leadership development. By sharing this program beyond Mat Group to the broader Defence Team and public service community, Mat Group is extending its impact, setting a precedent for how inclusive leadership can be cultivated at every level of government and defense. Furthermore, by pushing the boundaries of traditional learning models and tapping into the collective power of individuals, LLMC fosters a dynamic, organic learning environment that evolves with its participants. It is, in essence, a living organism—shaped



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This people-driven approach allows LLMC to effectively bridge policy and practice, taking critical diversity and inclusion principles and translating them into actionable, real-world leadership skills. Mat Group's leadership ensures that this program not only supports the development of leaders at all levels but also helps cultivate the next generation of leaders who will shape and guide the forces of the future.

LLMC is both agile and cost-effective, with its core cost of \$15K allocated primarily to Masterclass teachers. The program is managed by three full-time employees in the Diversity and Inclusion Office, with this being only 25% of their overall workload. The only additional costs are for interpretation services during the Masterclasses and the opening and closing ceremonies. This efficient structure allows LLMC to deliver meaningful impact while minimizing expenses.

LLMC's three core objectives—**Connect**, **Elevate**, and **Inspire**—serve as the pillars supporting this innovative, people-powered initiative. These objectives provide the structure for developing leaders who embody the values of inclusivity, adaptability, and resilience, driving the transformation of Mat Grp., the Defence Team and the broader public service sector.



- **Connect:** The Connect objective builds a strong, interconnected community among participants from diverse backgrounds, creating an inclusive space for collaboration. Through peer mentoring Circles and group discussions, participants form meaningful relationships that break down isolation and empower each other. These connections are foundational to Mat Group's commitment to fostering an inclusive culture, where diverse voices are heard and valued, and where leadership thrives at all levels.
- **Elevate:** With the Elevate objective, LLMC focuses on enhancing the leadership potential of participants by providing access to essential resources, training, and career advancement opportunities. This empowers underrepresented groups to rise within the organization, addressing systemic barriers and ensuring that diverse leaders are equipped to succeed. This objective aligns with Mat Group's mission to cultivate a leadership pipeline capable of shaping the future of Mat Grp, the Defence Team and broader public service, enabling personnel to navigate new challenges with confidence and competence.
- **Inspire:** Through the Inspire objective, LLMC encourages participants to share their stories, fostering a culture of motivation and resilience. As participants learn from the successes and challenges of their peers, they become inspired to pursue their own career goals and act as advocates for change. The program's emphasis on inclusive leadership provides the foundation for participants to become role models who can inspire positive change within their teams and organizations. Mat Group's support ensures that this inspiring leadership culture extends beyond LLMC, creating a ripple effect throughout the Defence Team and beyond.

Mat Group's role in the LLMC program is a clear demonstration of its leadership in paving the way for an inclusive, innovative, and future-ready Defence Team. Through grassroots, people-powered initiatives like LLMC, Mat Group is championing the transformation of the forces, ensuring that future leaders are equipped with the tools, mindset, and skills needed to lead inclusively and effectively. LLMC, as a living organism that continues to grow, adapt, and innovate, mirroring the evolving nature of the organization itself.

In fostering LLMC, Mat Group is not only building the future of the Defence Team but also demonstrating how innovation, inclusivity, and leadership are critical to the next chapter of Canada's defense and public service.



LLMC Program Design

Thinking Differently About Mentoring

The Lifting as you Lead Mentoring Circles (LLMC) program is designed to offer an innovative approach to mentoring, blending traditional learning with contemporary, collaborative, and scalable methods. The LLMC program stands apart through its hybrid model, which integrates in-person events, virtual learning, peer-led Circles, and expert-led masterclasses. The result is a dynamic, inclusive, and accessible experience tailored to leaders at all levels within Materiel Group, the Defence Team, and the Canadian public service.

Program Objectives

LLMC aims to foster a vibrant and diverse community of learners who can connect across departments, organizations, and regions to share experiences, gain new insights, and drive collective growth.

The program is committed to cultivating leadership development at all levels through a comprehensive curriculum, peer-to-peer mentorship, and ongoing professional connections. Participants will enhance their leadership skills, increase their capacity for collaboration, and gain practical tools for driving change within their workplaces.

Program Components

The LLMC program is built around several key components that contribute to a well-rounded learning experience:

- **Program Launch & Registration Process:** The program begins with a smooth registration process and an introductory *Summer Information Session*, where potential participants can learn more about the program, its objectives, and how it aligns with their professional development goals.
- **Meet Your Circle Session:** Once registered, participants are introduced to their peer mentorship Circles. These Circles form the heart of the program, providing opportunities for deep conversations and collaboration throughout the 10-week curriculum.



- **Opening Ceremony:** The program officially kicks off with an Opening Ceremony, where participants are welcomed, and the structure and expectations for the upcoming sessions are outlined.
- **10-Week Curriculum:** The curriculum is organized into five distinct themes, each focused on developing different aspects of leadership and personal growth. These themes are delivered through a blend of live and self-guided formats, ensuring flexibility and engagement.
 - **Curriculum Delivery:** The 10-week curriculum is delivered using Discussion Guides that form the foundation for mentoring Circle discussions, alongside expert-led *Masterclasses* on critical leadership topics.
- **Peer-to-Peer Learning and Lounges:** Participants will engage in optional weekly Lounges, informal virtual gatherings that provide space for reflection, peer sharing, and deepening connections across the program. These lounges enhance the learning experience and create opportunities for ongoing dialogue and support.
- **In-Person Events:** Several key cities across Canada hosted in-person events, providing an opportunity to connect face-to-face, participate in localized discussions, and learn from regional perspectives.
- **Digital Spaces:** A range of digital tools were used to support communication and collaboration throughout the program. These include dedicated spaces on LinkedIn, MS Teams chat, and the GCWiki, where participants can continue conversations, share resources, and network during and after the main LLMC program.

Through this hybrid, integrated approach, LLMC offers a comprehensive and adaptable learning environment that aligns with the diverse needs of participants, regardless of their geographical location or level within their organization. The unique combination of in-person and virtual engagement, along with the focus on mentorship and peer-to-peer learning, positions LLMC as an innovative and impactful program for leadership development.



Streamlined & Scalable Program Design

The LLMC program was intentionally designed with scalability in mind, allowing it to support thousands of participants while requiring only minimal program support. With only two full-time employees on the Materiel Group Diversity and Inclusion Office team, supplemented by volunteer micro-assignment members, the program can operate efficiently. A key feature of this design is the self-led Circles, which allow participants to engage in meaningful discussions without the need for facilitators. Additionally, external masterclass instructors are brought in to teach essential skills, reducing the need for in-house teaching staff.

Administration also remains streamlined even as the program grows, only one administrative staff member is required to manage registrations, assign participants to Circles and provide administrative support throughout the program. A volunteer data expert from within Mat Grp also assists for 1-2 days, help assign participants to create diverse circle groups. This efficient structure ensures that the program can reach a large audience while keeping operational costs low while maintaining high-quality learning experiences.

Masterclasses: Expert-Led Insights to Ignite Conversations and Build Leadership Capacity

A key feature of the LLMC program is the Masterclass series, designed to provide participants with expert-led insights on critical leadership topics. These sessions, facilitated by industry experts and thought leaders, dive into a wide range of themes that align with the circle topics of the program. Each Masterclass serves as both a foundational learning opportunity and a catalyst for meaningful conversations within the program.

The Masterclasses are strategically scheduled to introduce and set the stage for each theme in the curriculum. Participants have the chance to learn directly from top-tier professionals with extensive experience in their fields. These sessions offer valuable knowledge and actionable strategies that participants can immediately apply to their leadership journeys. The Masterclasses not only provide specialized content but also spark deeper exploration and exchange among participants.



To ensure continuous learning, the Masterclass experts return for the LLMC Lounges, where they engage in more informal, interactive conversations with participants. This dynamic format allows for follow-up questions, discussion, and deeper dives into the masterclass topics, offering participants a chance to gain additional insights and build personal connections with the experts.

The Masterclass series from Cohort 4 included the following sessions:

- **Masterclass 1: The Power of Sponsorship: Navigating for Career Advancement**
 - This session explored the critical role of sponsorship in career development, teaching participants how to secure advocates who will champion their growth and help navigate leadership opportunities within the public sector.
- **Masterclass 2: Inclusive Leadership: Building Cultures of Belonging**
 - This Masterclass equipped leaders with strategies to build inclusive teams, fostering a culture where all employees feel valued, supported, and empowered to contribute their best work.
- **Masterclass 3: Say Less, Get More: Mastering Effective Negotiation**
 - Participants learned the art of negotiation, focusing on the power of strategic communication and listening to achieve more successful outcomes in professional settings.
- **Masterclass 4: The Values and Ethics of Human Rights Work in the Federal Public Service**
 - This session explored the ethical considerations of human rights work, empowering participants to navigate complex issues while staying aligned with core values and ethical standards within the public service.
- **Masterclass 5: Self-Compassion and Neuroplasticity**
 - This Masterclass took a deep dive into the science of neuroplasticity and self-compassion, offering practical tools to enhance resilience, emotional intelligence, and personal growth.

These Masterclasses complement the five mentoring Circle themes, creating a holistic learning experience that ties together expert-led insights and peer discussions. By integrating these masterclasses into the broader LLMC program, participants gain both deep knowledge and a robust network of colleagues, empowering them to drive their personal and professional growth forward.



Circle Sessions

Fostering Collaborative Learning and Diverse Perspectives

A key component of the LLMC program is the mentoring Circle experience, providing participants with a platform to engage in meaningful discussions, ask questions, and share insights. These dynamic forums allow participants to not only voice their thoughts but also receive valuable perspectives from individuals in influential roles across various organizations. By encouraging open, courageous, and solution-focused conversations, the Circles create an environment where critical workplace issues can be addressed while actively promoting diversity and inclusion.

The LLMC program takes a unique approach to learning through its peer-to-peer model, moving away from traditional mentorship where knowledge flows in one direction. Instead, learning is a collaborative process. Participants contribute their expertise, exchange personal experiences, and grow through mutual sharing. This fosters a rich learning environment where all voices are valued.

The collaborative structure of the Circles also facilitates connections across all levels of government and departments. Participants interact with peers from diverse roles, career stages, and sectors, broadening their perspectives on challenges and solutions. This cross-departmental learning strengthens mutual empathy and understanding, creating opportunities for participants to engage with colleagues who offer new insights and approaches.

These connections not only expand participants' worldviews but also help to cultivate a sense of solidarity, empowering individuals to share ideas, learn from one another, and support one another's growth. This network of diverse perspectives enriches the leadership experience and promotes personal and professional development, offering continuous value throughout their careers.

By bringing together individuals from varied backgrounds and experiences, the Circle sessions provide a safe, inclusive space for discussing challenges and opportunities in the workplace. Participants build relationships that serve as ongoing support for their leadership journey, long after the Circles have ended. These sessions strengthen networks that are vital for career advancement, helping participants unlock new opportunities for success.



This holistic model of collaborative learning and mentorship ensures that every participant has the resources and support to thrive, contributing to the success of both the individual and the organization.



Discussion Guides

Structured Learning for Meaningful Conversations

The LLMC Discussion Guides were designed to provide structured, accessible, and engaging materials that supported participants in navigating key leadership topics throughout the program. These guides served as a foundation for learning, reflection, and discussion, ensuring that all participants—regardless of their learning style or accessibility needs—could engage fully with the curriculum.

The Discussion Guides are comprehensive learning tools that help facilitate peer discussions, leadership Circles, and self-reflection. Each guide was carefully crafted to align with the LLMC curriculum, offering insights, key questions, and practical exercises to deepen understanding and application of leadership concepts.

The Discussion Guides were more than just reading materials—they were a key element in fostering engaging, reflective, and inclusive learning experiences. Whether used in structured leadership Circles, peer discussions, or personal development, these guides played a critical role in:

- **Encouraging Deep Reflection** – Thought-provoking questions and case studies helped participants apply leadership concepts to real-world scenarios.
- **Supporting Facilitators** – Circle Leaders and moderators were provided with clear and structured materials to ensure effective and inclusive discussions.
- **Promoting Cross-Sector Collaboration** – Guides were designed to encourage dialogue across government departments, breaking down silos and fostering shared learning.
- **Creating a Lasting Learning Resource** – With a growing Learning Library, participants could continue their leadership journey beyond the program, accessing materials whenever needed.



To ensure equitable access for as many participants as possible, the Discussion Guides were developed in multiple formats:

- **Accessible PDFs** – Designed to be compatible with screen readers and adaptive technologies, ensuring participants of all abilities could engage fully.
- **PowerPoint Presentations** – Created to support Circle Leaders in guiding discussions, offering a visual and structured way to present key concepts.
- **Digital Learning Library** – A dedicated online resource where participants could access past and current guides, enabling **on-demand learning and continued leadership development**.

With each LLMC cohort, the Discussion Guides continue to evolve based on participant feedback, accessibility advancements, and leadership trends. By expanding formats, refining content, and integrating best practices, LLMC remains committed to providing high-quality, inclusive, and impactful learning tools that empower leaders at all levels.



LLMC Lounges

A Space for Connection, Reflection, and Growth

The LLMC Lounges were designed as an interactive, welcoming space where participants could gather on a voluntary basis for one hour each week. These informal sessions provided a key opportunity for attendees to connect, reflect, and engage with peers outside of the structured curriculum, reinforcing the hybrid approach of LLMC 4.

Unlike traditional learning sessions, the lounges were participant-driven, creating a relaxed yet purposeful environment for discussions. Whether participants wanted to deepen their understanding of course materials, seek guidance from their peers, or explore leadership challenges in real-time, the lounges offered a unique space to do so.

What Made the Lounges Unique?

- **Regular & Flexible Engagement** – Hosted weekly, the lounges allowed participants to drop in and participate in the discussions or just watch and learn from others as they shared their stories, asked questions, and discussed key topics or themes coming up from the Circle.
- **Guided Discussions & Open Dialogue** – While discussions often revolved around key takeaways from masterclasses and curriculum themes, they also provided an open forum for real-world leadership challenges and knowledge-sharing.
- **Return of Masterclass Speakers** – A highlight of the lounges was the return of Masterclass speakers, offering participants a rare opportunity to engage with experts in an informal setting, ask follow-up questions, and gain deeper insights into leadership concepts.
- **Networking & Cross-Government Collaboration** – Lounges became a critical space for relationship-building across departments, organizations, and levels of leadership. Participants were able to form professional connections, exchange ideas, and establish long-term networks that extended beyond the program itself.
- **Peer Learning & Support** – By sharing experiences, challenges, and solutions, participants were able to gain diverse perspectives while reinforcing their own leadership growth.



The LLMC Lounges were not simply an extension of the curriculum; they were a key pillar of the program's success. They fostered a sense of belonging, community, and collaboration, allowing participants to not only learn from each other but also support one another in their leadership journeys.

By providing a consistent, engaging, and participant-led environment, the lounges helped shape a more dynamic, interactive, and impactful program experience—one that encouraged leaders to continue their growth long after LLMC 4 concluded.



Networking Opportunities in LLMC Cohort 4

A key pillar of the LLMC program is its ability to foster meaningful connections across departments, organizations, and leadership levels through multiple ways to network within the LLMC community, program, and add-on events. Cohort 4 continued to expand networking opportunities, ensuring that participants could build relationships, exchange ideas, and grow their professional networks in both virtual and in-person settings.

Key networking opportunities included:

- **In-Person Events:** LLMC Cohort 4 featured in-person gatherings providing participants with the opportunity to engage face-to-face, strengthen relationships, and expand their professional Circles within and beyond Mat Group. These events created space for organic conversations, mentorship connections, and peer-to-peer learning. An in-person Networking Day and Strategic Planning Day were hosted in Ottawa and additional sessions were hosted by some local LLMC members at multiple cities across Canada.
- **Virtual Lounges & Mini-Masterclasses:** To maintain connections beyond scheduled sessions, participants and alumni have access to virtual lounges and mini-masterclasses that continue after the main LLMC program is complete. These interactive spaces facilitated ongoing discussions, knowledge sharing, and deeper engagement on key leadership topics.
- **Cross-Government Collaboration:** By expanding participation to include members from across the Defence Team and other government departments, participants have access to a broad network of professionals, breaking down silos and fostering collaboration across the public sector.
- **LinkedIn Group:** For Cohort 4, an LLMC LinkedIn group was created, providing a dedicated space for continued networking, resource sharing, and career growth during and beyond the program. This platform allowed alumni to stay connected, support each other's leadership journeys, and engage with future cohorts.



- **Mentorship & Peer Connections:** LLMC's structured learning Circles and mentor conversations ensured that participants could form lasting professional relationships, benefiting from diverse perspectives and shared experiences.
- **Participant-Led Networks:** Some of the LLMC participants created their own networks to support and connect including a neuro-diverse network of LLMC participants and a career mentoring group, allowing for peer-to-peer support beyond the LLMC program.

By offering a blend of structured and informal networking opportunities, LLMC Cohort 4 enabled participants to build strong, lasting connections that extend beyond the program. These networks not only support individual career growth but also contribute to a more collaborative, engaged, and innovative leadership community across government.



Hybrid Programming

Connecting Leaders Coast-to-Coast-to-Coast

LLMC 4 was built on a hybrid model, seamlessly blending in-person events with flexible virtual programming. This approach ensured nationwide accessibility, allowing participants from across Canada to engage meaningfully, regardless of geographical constraints. By integrating both formats, LLMC 4 expanded its reach, strengthened its impact, and fostered a truly national leadership dialogue that reflects the diversity of Canada's workforce.

Our intersectional approach recognized that leadership development must address overlapping social, cultural, and economic factors. By grounding programming in the unique experiences of different regions, LLMC Cohort 4 fostered discussions that will shape the evolution of LLMC Cohort 5. The perspectives shared across locations informed key program enhancements, ensuring LLMC remains responsive to emerging leadership challenges and opportunities.

In-Person Events: Regional Impact & Key Learnings

To maximize engagement and regional representation, LLMC 4 hosted in-person events in key cities across Canada. Each location was selected not only for its accessibility but also for the unique perspectives it brought to the leadership conversation:

- **Vancouver:** As a hub for innovation and public sector transformation, Vancouver sessions emphasized adaptive leadership and cross-sector collaboration. Discussions in this region will be used to inform LLMC Cohort 5's approach to integrating leadership agility into future programming.
- **Toronto:** Canada's largest city brought together diverse voices from various sectors, reinforcing the importance of networking, sponsorship, and executive mentorship. Insights from Toronto encouraged creating expanded networking opportunities for future cohorts.
- **Montreal:** With its bilingual workforce and distinct cultural dynamics, Montreal events strengthened LLMC's commitment to official languages accessibility and inclusive leadership. Feedback from this region directly encouraged additional improvements in bilingual program delivery.



- **Halifax:** As a strategic public service hub on the East Coast, Halifax highlighted the role of regional leadership in national decision-making. Key takeaways from this region informed LLMC's efforts to ensure leadership pipelines reflect Canada's full geographic diversity.

A Model for the Future

By hosting in-person events while maintaining robust virtual programming, LLMC 4 created cross-regional connections that extended far beyond individual sessions. The conversations, insights, and collaborations generated in each city were woven into digital programming, ensuring that all participants—regardless of location—could benefit from a full spectrum of discussions.

This coast-to-coast-to-coast approach laid the foundation for LLMC 5, ensuring that the next iteration of the program continues to be national in scope, intersectional in approach, and inclusive in execution. The hybrid model remains a cornerstone of LLMC's commitment to shaping the future of leadership across Canada.



Advancing Accessibility and Official Languages in LLMC Cohort 4

LLMC Cohort 4 took significant steps to enhance accessibility and inclusivity, ensuring that all participants—regardless of language preference, neurodivergence, or other accessibility needs—could fully engage in the program. These improvements reinforce LLMC's commitment to equitable access and meaningful participation for all.

Key enhancements included:

- **Strengthening Bilingual Access:** All program materials, including discussion guides and PowerPoint slides for Circle leaders, were made fully accessible in both official languages. By ensuring equal access to resources, LLMC upheld the principles of the Official Languages Act, fostering an environment where participants could engage in their preferred language without barriers.
- **Transcription Services for Lounges and Mentor Conversations (MCs):** Providing written transcripts improved accessibility for participants who are Deaf or hard of hearing, those who process information more effectively through text, and those who benefit from reviewing content at their own pace.
- **Interpretation Services for Masterclasses:** Live interpretation services in French/English and American Sign Language (ASL) and LSQ ensured that all participants, regardless of their primary language or accessibility needs, could fully engage in discussions, reinforcing LLMC's commitment to bilingualism and accessibility.
- **Neurodivergent-Friendly Materials:** The structured, easy-to-follow PowerPoint slides for Circle leaders provided additional clarity and reduced cognitive load, benefiting neurodivergent participants who thrive with more structured and visually supportive content.
- **Accessible Discussion Guides:** Accessible versions of the Discussion guides were created so that all participants, including those with disabilities, had equal access to discussions and learning experiences, fostering a more inclusive and supportive environment.



By embedding accessibility and official language considerations into the program's design, LLMC continues to remove barriers, enhance engagement, and create an inclusive leadership development experience. These improvements not only align with federal accessibility and language policies but also set a standard for fostering a diverse and equitable workforce where all voices are heard and valued.



Collaborative Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus) Approach

The Lifting as you Lead Mentoring Circles (LLMC) program deliberately adopts a collaborative, intersectional, and inclusive approach in both the design and review of its content. By incorporating diverse perspectives at every stage of development, the program ensures that its materials and activities reflect the varied lived experiences of all participants.

This inclusive design process enables the program to address the unique challenges faced by individuals from different backgrounds, fostering an environment where everyone can learn, grow, and contribute to the program's success. The involvement of diverse voices ensures that no one is left out of the conversation, making the LLMC program a dynamic space for both learning and leadership development.

This approach aligns with Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus) requirements by embedding an intersectional lens into the program's structure. GBA Plus, which considers multiple identity factors such as gender, race, disability, age, and more, is at the core of LLMC's content development. The program's collaborative framework ensures that the materials and sessions are designed to be inclusive and responsive to the diverse needs of all participants, rather than adopting a one-size-fits-all model.

By actively considering how different factors of identity impact leadership experiences, LLMC fosters an environment where inclusion is prioritized, and each participant can engage in ways that are meaningful and relevant to them. This not only aligns with GBA Plus but actively promotes it, creating a leadership development experience that is truly representative and equitable.



The LLMC program intentionally incorporates broad collaboration at multiple key points throughout its timeline, ensuring that participant feedback is consistently used to refine and enhance the program. Starting with the Circle Feedback forms collected every two weeks during the program, participants can share their thoughts and suggestions for improvement in real-time. This continuous feedback loop allows for an ongoing evaluation of the program's effectiveness and provides valuable insights into what is working well and what may need to be adjusted.

The final feedback collected at the end of the program is then reviewed by a dedicated core group of volunteer graduates who convene at an in-person or virtual strategy day. During this day, they identify key areas for improvement and work collaboratively to adjust the program for the following cohort, ensuring that it remains relevant and impactful.

As part of the program's evolution, the Discussion Guides were fully reviewed and updated in 2024 through review by both the Diversity and Inclusion Office team and LLMC graduates who are intimately familiar with the program. This annual review focused on adding new exercises to engage participants in deeper conversations, expanding the learning library with additional resources, and refining the overall language used throughout the materials to ensure inclusivity.

Notably, for Cohort 4, significant changes were made to enhance accessibility and ensure compliance with Treasury Board Accessibility Guidelines. The updated materials included the creation of accessible discussion guides for Circle groups, ensuring that all participants, regardless of their abilities, could engage fully in the learning experience. In addition, PowerPoint slides were designed for Circle leaders to use during the sessions, providing them with clear and accessible resources to guide conversations. These updates reflect the program's commitment to creating an inclusive environment where all participants feel valued and supported, and where continuous improvement is built into the program's design.



LLMC Cohort 4

Participant Demographics & Experience

As a part of a commitment to inclusion and diversity, as well as the core objectives Connect, Elevate, and Inspire, the LLMC team collected feedback and data from program participants throughout its 10-week run. This data was used to produce demographic information and offer insights into LLMC's participants, with the goal of providing a clear picture of the wide variety of groups the program is serving and discover areas for new growth. This information also helps highlight any patterns or trends that may influence the outcomes and effectiveness of LLMC's peer mentoring experience. Through this analysis, we aim to identify factors that contribute to the success of the program and areas for potential improvement. Through this analysis, we aim to identify factors that contribute to the success of the program and areas for potential improvement.

Data Sources

- Quantitative data in this report was gathered in the LLMC Application Form (produced in Microsoft Forms), fortnightly "Written Component" feedback forms (week 1 produced in Microsoft Forms, weeks 2-5 produced in GC Forms), and an End of Program Written Component survey (produced in Microsoft Forms). Demographic data from the LLMC Application Form was validated against the final list of participants to ensure its accuracy.
- Qualitative data in this report was gathered in the same manner as above, with the addition of weekly LLMC Lounge sessions offered to participants throughout the entirety of the program.
- 422 participants submitted their feedback on the End of Program Written Component (40.0% of total participants).



Overall Experience - Cohort 4

- Overall, participants found that the LLMC program gave them the opportunity to network with supportive people from within and beyond their departments, build new skills, and better understand their colleagues.
- Participants were especially enthusiastic about connecting with others across the Federal Public Service and Defence Team, noting that these connections helped increase efficiency in their teams through collective problem-solving and idea-sharing across silos.
- Many participants stated that LLMC brought them newfound confidence in their leadership skills and their ability to contribute to their teams.

Overall Participation

- Number of participants: **1054**
 - English: **880**
 - French: **174**
- Departments represented: **62**
- Circles: **157**

Language

- Participants were able to request an English or a French Circle
 - **83.5%** requested an English Circle
 - **16.5%** requested a French Circle

Location

- LLMC Cohort 4 participants were located across the country and abroad, with the largest groups in:
 - National Capital Region (NCR): **41.7%**
 - Central (Quebec and Ontario): **27.2%**
 - West Coast: **11.2%**
 - Prairies: **10.9%**
 - Atlantic: **8.3%**



Employment Equity Groups

- Many LLMC Cohort 4 participants identified as members of Employment Equity (EE) groups. Of the 963 respondents to this question (91% of participants):
 - **76%** of participants were women
 - **43%** belonged to a racialized community
 - **20.4%** identified as persons who have a disability
 - **10.4%** were members of the 2SLGBTQ+ community
 - **6.2%** were Indigenous
- **7.3%** of participants did not self-identify with any Employment Equity group

Experience and Levels in Government

- Participant years in the Federal Public Service and the Defence Team
 - Combined: **~1553 years**
 - Average: **8.98 years**
- LLMC Cohort 4 participants work across a variety of classifications, with the largest groups being:
 - AS – Administrative Services: **22%**
 - PM – Programme Administration: **18.3%**
 - EC – Economic and Social Sciences Services: **16.3%**

Defence Team Representation

- **20.4%** of LLMC participants this year were Defence Team Members (DND/CAF)
- Of that **20.4%**, about just over a quarter of participants (**26.6%**) were military members; the rest were civilians
- Of the military officers that participated,
 - **18.5%** were Senior Officers
 - **23.1%** were Junior Officers
 - **30.8%** were Warrant Officers, Petty Officers or Senior Non-Commissioned Officers
 - **27.7%** were Junior Non-Commissioned Members



Favourite Topic

The topics in order of ranked preference were as follows:

1. Sponsorship and Career Building
2. Inclusive Leadership
3. Mastering the Art of Negotiation
4. Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility: A Non-Performative Approach
5. Neuroplasticity and Self-Compassion

Better Understanding of Topics

Across the program, participants indicated that the program content significantly increased their understanding of program topics. Here's what they had to say:

- I have a better understanding of the role of sponsorship in career advancement: **75.1%**
- I have expanded my knowledge of inclusive leadership: **81.5%**
- I have a better understanding of how to participate in a win-win negotiation: **74.4%**
- I have a better understanding of how a diverse and inclusive organisation benefits everyone: **82.7%**
- I have a better understanding of self-compassion and neuroplasticity: **67.1%**



Application of Program Knowledge

At the end of the program, we asked participants to share how they applied or intended to apply the skills they gained in LLMC. Here's how they responded:

- **49%** said they expanded (or intended to expand) their professional networks
- **88%** said they more are willing to be a leader and take intentional action to create a more diverse and equitable workplace
- **66%** said they felt more confident that they can advocate for themselves in the negotiation process
- **85%** said that they are actively seeking to learn about others who different from them
- **82%** said that they are more prepared to use change as an opportunity to innovate and share their knowledge and skills

Perception of LLMC Program Elements

Circles

At the end of the program, participants found the Circles to be:

- Credible: **81%**
- Practical: **75%**
- Relevant: **77%**
- Useful to my job: **70%**

Masterclasses

At the end of the program, participants found the Masterclasses to be:

- Credible: **86%**
- Practical: **75%**
- Relevant: **83%**
- Useful to my job: **73%**



Lounges

At the end of the program, participants found the Lounges to be:

- Credible: **56%**
- Practical: **50%**
- Relevant: **52%**
- Useful to my job: **45%**

Program-Wide Networking

At the end of the program, participants found that the opportunities LLMC provided to network were:

- Credible: **63%**
- Practical: **58%**
- Relevant: **61%**
- Useful to my job: **56%**



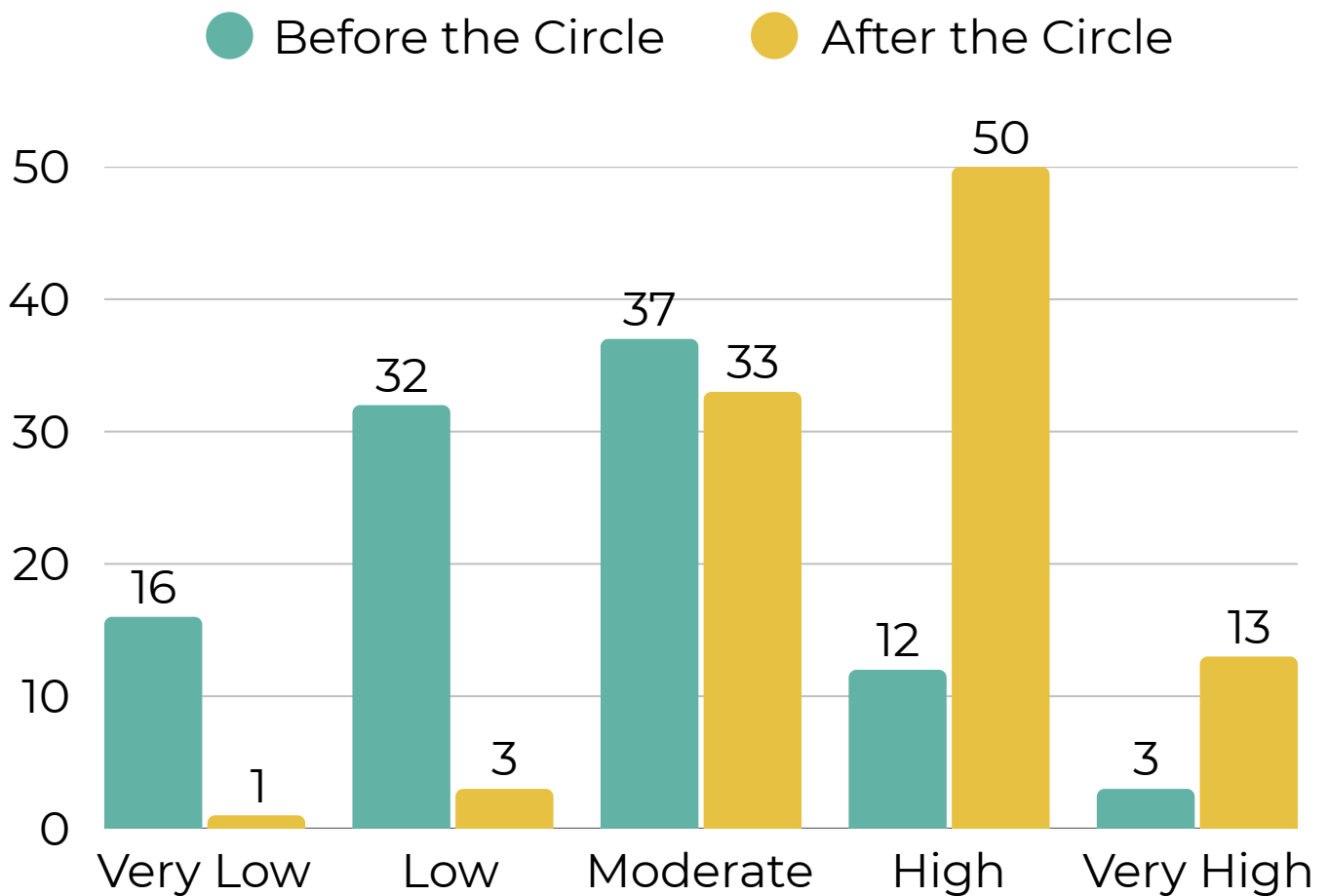
Circles

Circle #1: Sponsorship and Career Building

Sponsorship is a tool that goes beyond traditional mentorship in that a sponsor actively leverages their influence to advocate for someone's career advancement. This approach not only helps individuals progress in their careers but also plays a crucial role in supporting the advancement of underrepresented groups. Sponsorship and career building work hand-in-hand, creating opportunities for growth while fostering a more inclusive and equitable workplace.

Before and After

Participants' understanding of Sponsorship and Career Building was:



*Numbers represent percentages



Potential to Apply Knowledge

We asked our participants for their feedback on the potential to apply the knowledge they gained in this Circle. Here's what they had to say:

- I am confident in my ability to effectively apply the new knowledge or skills gained through this Circle in my job: **47%**
- I am personally motivated to apply this learning to my job: **68%**
- I have developed ideas or plans for when, where or how I intend to apply my learning from this Circle in my job: **48%**

Circle Content

Overall, participants found this Circle's content to be:

- Credible: **78%**
- Practical: **65%**
- Relevant: **74%**
- Useful to my job: **63%**

Discussion Guides

We asked our participants for their feedback on the Discussion Guides. Here's what they had to say:

- I clearly understood key concepts: **75%**
- The Circle activities were engaging and sustained my attention: **71%**
- I was able to relate the new learning to the knowledge I had gained through prior experiences: **68%**
- I had opportunities to collaborate and discuss ideas with others in LLMC: **72%**

Observations

- Based on End of Program feedback, Sponsorship and Career Building was participants' favourite Circle topic this year, with **30%** of respondents indicating that it was their favourite.
- Participants very much appreciated learning about sponsorship, and found gaining knowledge on the topic empowering.
- Participants expressed a desire for more practical tools they could use to put the theory of sponsorship into action in their own careers and workplaces.



Circle #2: Inclusive Leadership

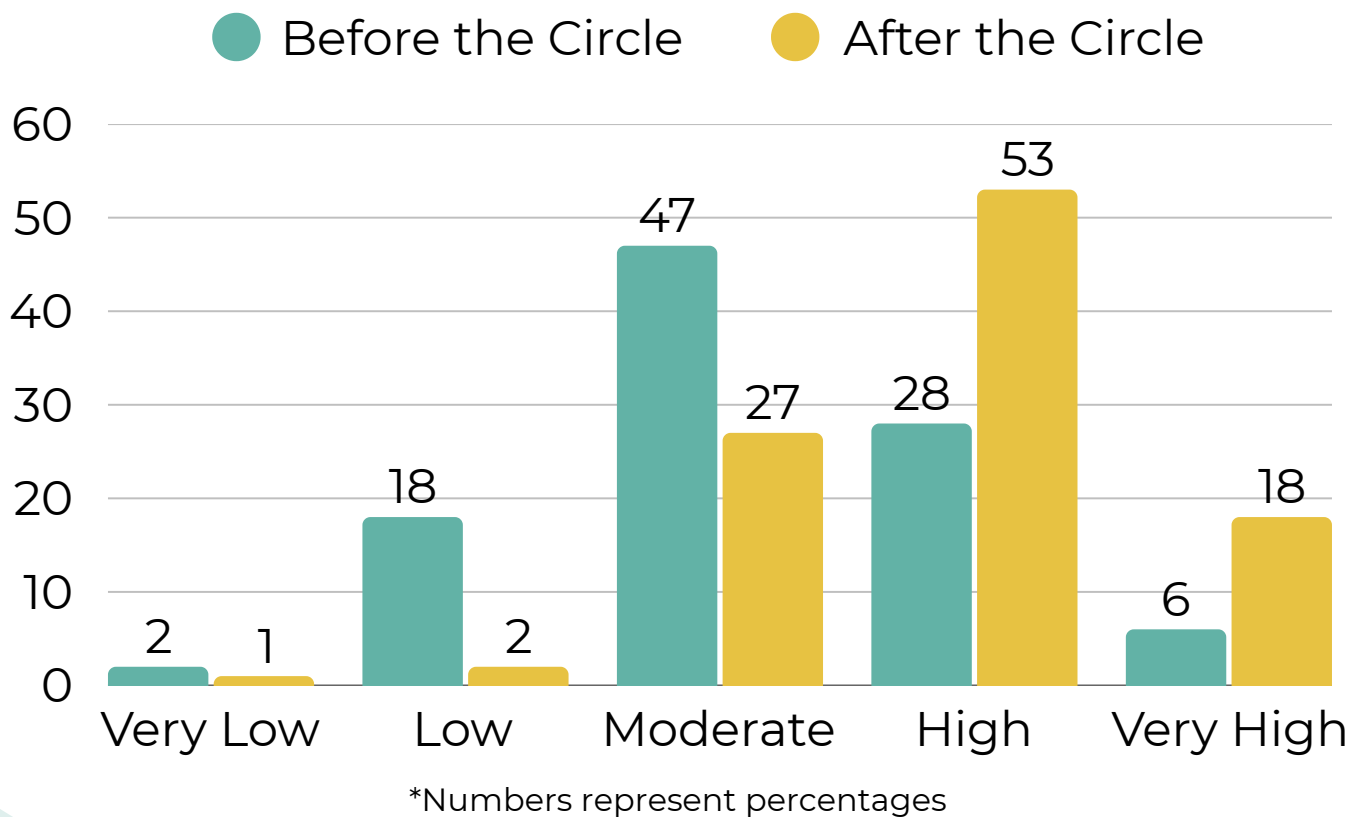
Inclusive leadership is the practice of fostering a workplace culture where every individual feels valued, respected, and empowered to contribute their best work. Inclusive leaders exist at all levels of an organization and actively create environments of belonging and psychological safety, where diverse perspectives are not only welcomed but embraced.

Beyond focusing solely on outcomes, inclusive leaders prioritize how results are achieved, ensuring that decision-making processes are fair, transparent, and collaborative. They recognize that diverse teams drive innovation, strengthen problem-solving, and enhance overall organizational performance.

Inclusive leadership is not just an ethical responsibility—it is a business imperative. When employees feel seen, heard, and supported, they are more engaged, productive, and committed to their work. By championing inclusivity, organizations foster stronger teams, improve retention, and create workplaces where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

Before and After

Participants' understanding of Inclusive Leadership was:





Potential to Apply Knowledge

We asked our participants for their feedback on the potential to apply the knowledge they gained in this Circle. Here's what they had to say:

- I am confident in my ability to effectively apply the new knowledge or skills gained through this Circle in my job: **57%**
- I am personally motivated to apply this learning to my job: **78%**
- I have developed ideas or plans for when, where or how I intend to apply my learning from this Circle in my job: **40%**

Circle Content

Overall, participants found this Circle's content to be:

- Credible: **72%**
- Practical: **64%**
- Relevant: **76%**
- Useful to my job: **64%**

Discussion Guides

We asked our participants for their feedback on the Discussion Guides. Here's what they had to say:

- I clearly understood key concepts: **79%**
- The Circle activities were engaging and sustained my attention: **70%**
- I was able to relate the new learning to the knowledge I had gained through prior experiences: **67%**
- I had opportunities to collaborate and discuss ideas with others in LLMC: **64%**

Observations

- Based on End of Program feedback, Inclusive Leadership was participants' second favourite topic this year, with **24%** of respondents ranking it as one of their top two favourite topics and only **9%** rating it as their least favourite topic (the lowest for this cohort).
- Participants found that they learned a lot from this topic, noting that it challenged them to take control over the things they can change in their teams and workplaces, rather than focusing on what they can't change.
- While participants found the Masterclass especially strong, they noted that there was not enough time to get through all the content in their Circles.



Circle #3: Mastering the Art of Negotiation

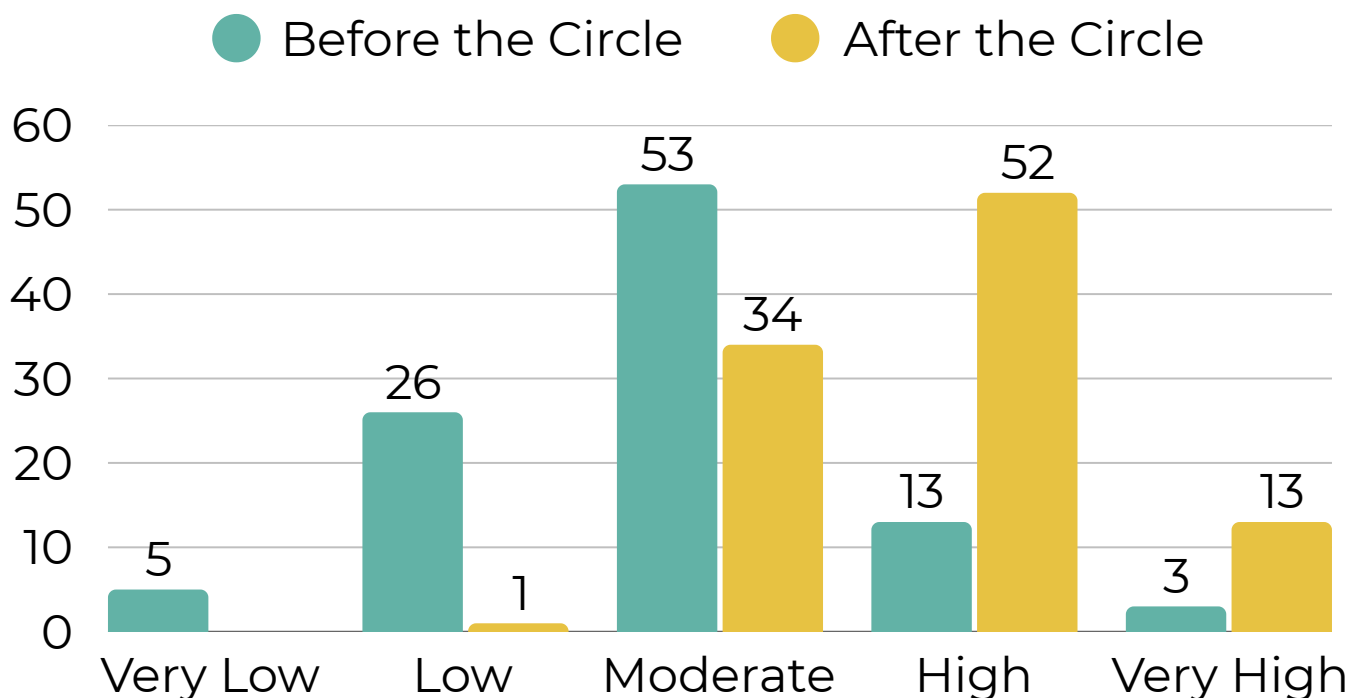
Negotiation is a fundamental skill used in countless aspects of both personal and professional life. In the workplace, negotiations can take many forms, such as requesting time off, securing second-language training, advocating for a promotion, or seeking an assignment in another department. Effective negotiation is not about winning or losing—it's about finding mutually beneficial solutions that create value for all parties involved.

Negotiation plays a critical role in fostering equitable workplaces. Inclusive leaders use negotiation not only to advocate for themselves but also to ensure fair opportunities for others. They approach discussions with empathy, use active listening, and are committed to understanding different perspectives. By framing negotiations as collaborative problem-solving rather than conflict, they help build trust, strengthen workplace relationships, and contribute to a culture of transparency and fairness.

Mastering the art of negotiation empowers individuals to confidently express their needs, navigate workplace dynamics, and create positive, lasting impacts within their teams and organizations.

Before and After

Participants' understanding of negotiation was:



*Numbers represent percentages



Potential to Apply Knowledge

We asked our participants for their feedback on the potential to apply the knowledge they gained in this Circle. Here's what they had to say:

- I am confident in my ability to effectively apply the new knowledge or skills gained through this Circle in my job: **54%**
- I am personally motivated to apply this learning to my job: **76%**
- I have developed ideas or plans for when, where or how I intend to apply my learning from this Circle in my job: **46%**

Circle Content

Overall, participants found this Circle's content to be:

- Credible: **80%**
- Practical: **74%**
- Relevant: **76%**
- Useful to my job: **66%**

Discussion Guides

We asked our participants for their feedback on the Discussion Guides. Here's what they had to say:

- I clearly understood key concepts: **81%**
- The Circle activities were engaging and sustained my attention: **69%**
- I was able to relate the new learning to the knowledge I had gained through prior experiences: **68%**
- I had opportunities to collaborate and discuss ideas with others in LLMC: **67%**

Observations

- Based on End of Program feedback, Mastering the Art of Negotiation was participant's third favourite topic this year, with **24%** of respondents ranking it as one of their favourite topics (just behind Inclusive leadership's **25%**).
- Participants found that this topic did an excellent job of equipping them with practical tools to apply in the workplace. They offered particular praise to the Masterclass speaker and expressed a desire to have had more time with her.
- Participants expressed that they would have liked to see more overlap between the Circle content and the Masterclass.



Circle #4: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility: A Non-Performative Approach

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) is more than just a framework or a program—it is a shared value that must be integrated into the very fabric of an organization’s culture and operations. DEIA represents a deep commitment to creating workplaces where all individuals, regardless of their backgrounds or experiences, are valued, supported, and empowered to succeed.

- **Diversity** refers to the presence of individuals from various demographic, cultural, and experiential backgrounds, ensuring a rich tapestry of perspectives in the workplace.
- **Equity** goes beyond equality by recognizing and addressing systemic barriers so that all employees have fair access to opportunities, resources, and career advancement.
- **Inclusion** ensures that every individual feels welcomed, respected, and able to contribute fully, fostering a sense of belonging within the organization.
- **Accessibility** is the practice of making information, activities, and environments usable for as many people as possible in ways that are meaningful and empowering.

For DEIA to be effective, it must be more than a set of policies or surface-level initiatives—it requires a non-performative approach. This means that organizations and leaders must go beyond symbolic gestures and take meaningful action to dismantle biases, implement inclusive policies, and cultivate a culture of continuous learning and accountability. DEIA must be seen not as a program with a start and end date, but as a fundamental, shared value that is woven into every aspect of the workplace.

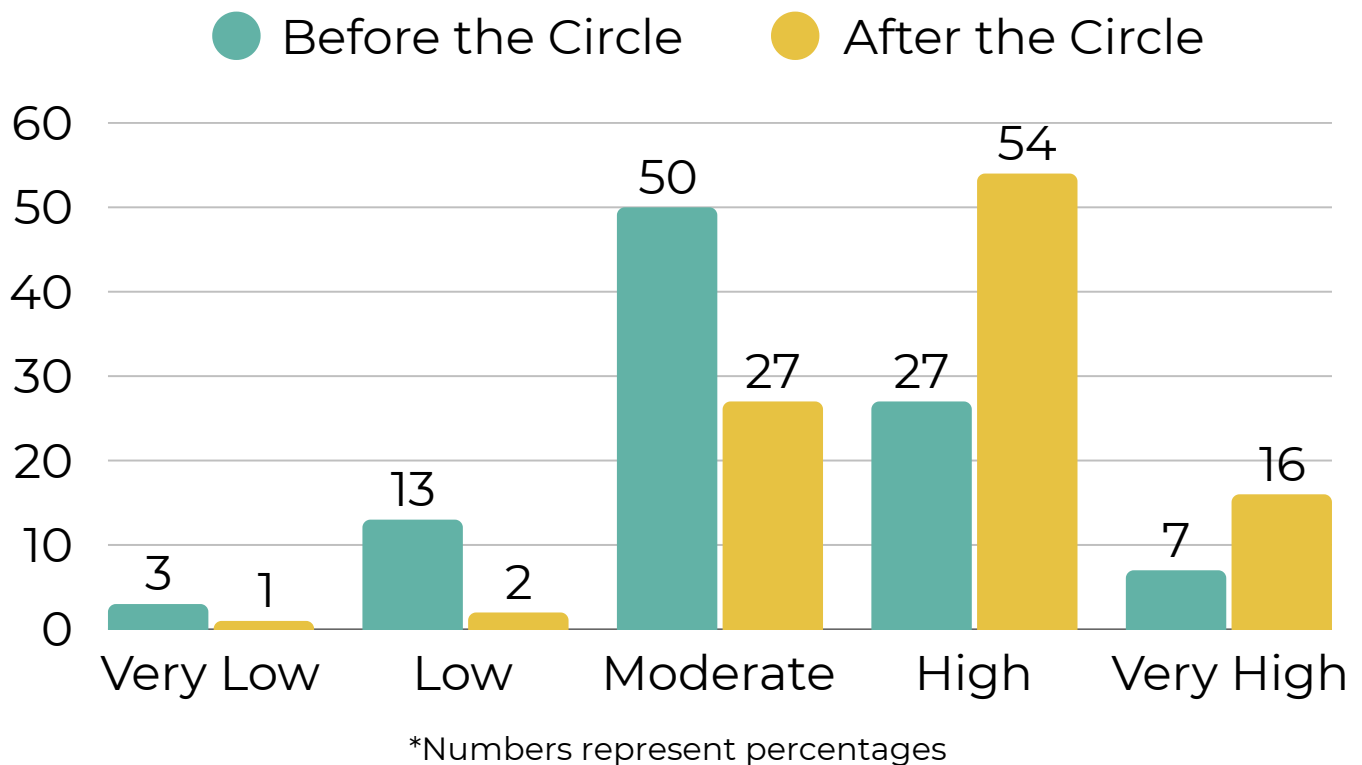
Inclusive leaders play a crucial role in this process by actively advocating for equitable workplace practices, addressing unconscious biases, and ensuring that diverse voices are not only heard but valued in decision-making. They champion DEIA as an ongoing, collective responsibility—one that requires commitment from all levels of the organization.

A truly inclusive workplace is one where DEIA is not an isolated initiative but a core part of how the organization operates, making it a dynamic and evolving value that drives innovation, strengthens teams, and creates a more engaged, empowered workforce.



Before and After

Participants' understanding of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) was:



Potential to Apply Knowledge

We asked our participants for their feedback on the potential to apply the knowledge they gained in this Circle. Here's what they had to say:

- I am confident in my ability to effectively apply the new knowledge or skills gained through this Circle in my job: **54%**
- I am personally motivated to apply this learning to my job: **87%**
- I have developed ideas or plans for when, where or how I intend to apply my learning from this Circle in my job: **43%**

Circle Content

Overall, participants found this Circle's content to be:

- Credible: **75%**
- Practical: **65%**
- Relevant: **75%**
- Useful to my job: **64%**



Discussion Guides

We asked our participants for their feedback on the Discussion Guides. Here's what they had to say:

- I clearly understood key concepts: **78%**
- The Circle activities were engaging and sustained my attention: **67%**
- I was able to relate the new learning to the knowledge I had gained through prior experiences: **65%**
- I had opportunities to collaborate and discuss ideas with others in LLMC: **67%**

Observations

- Based on End of Program feedback, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility: A Non-Performative Approach was rated fourth out of the five topics this year, with only **13%** of respondents ranking it first and 18% ranking it last.
- Participants found this topic led to the most in-depth discussions with their Circle groups and that they gained a better understanding of the experiences of their colleagues across the Defence Team and Federal Public Service.



Circle #5: Neuroplasticity and Self-Compassion

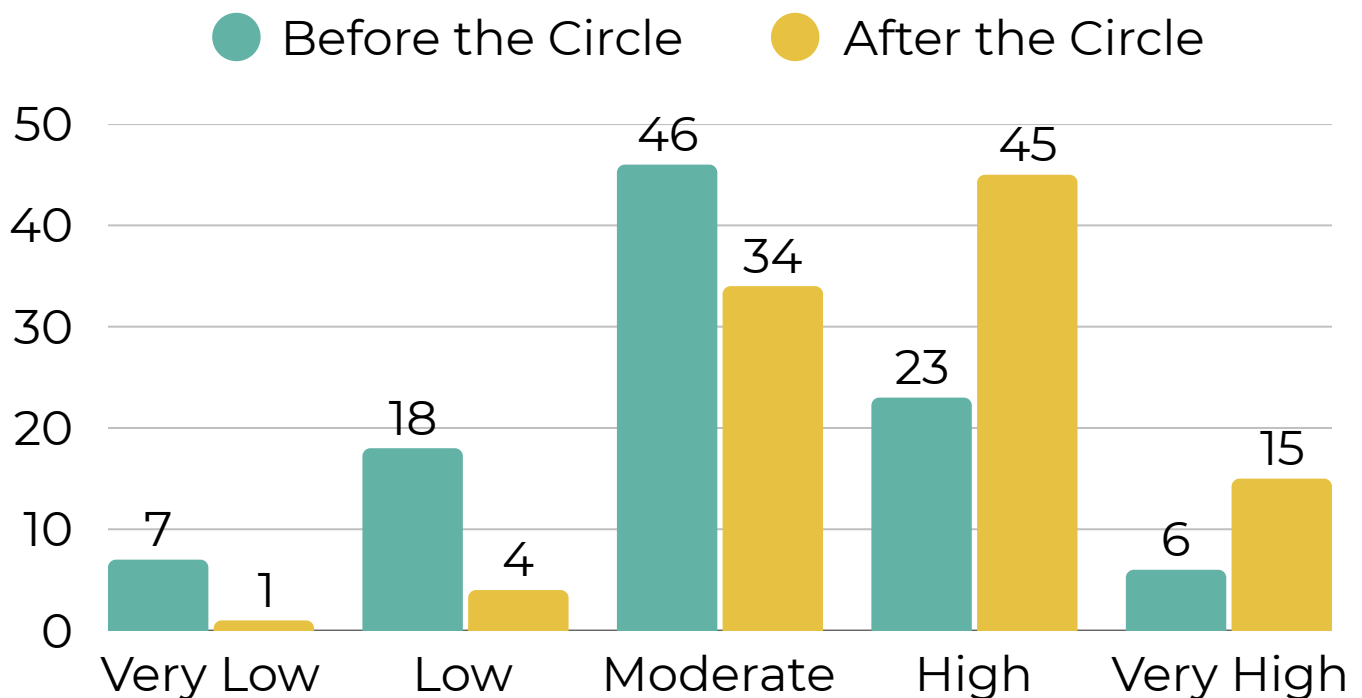
Change is inevitable in life and the workplace. Whether adapting to remote work, shifting to a hybrid model, or returning to the office, these transitions can challenge the balance between personal and professional life. Inclusive leadership plays a critical role in managing these changes effectively.

Neuroplasticity refers to the brain's lifelong ability to change and adapt. Through the power of neuroplasticity, we can practice being more compassionate towards ourselves. Self-compassion is a key quality for inclusive leaders, because leaders who lack self-compassion are less open and less flexible. Leaders with a lot of compassion for themselves are better equipped to guide their teams through change and encourage team members to see change as an opportunity for growth.

Thanks to the power of neuroplasticity, everyone can learn to become self-compassionate, inclusive leaders and foster cultures of flexibility, psychological safety, and resilience in their workplaces.

Before and After

Participants' understanding of how to navigate their careers through change was:



*Numbers represent percentages



Potential to Apply Knowledge

We asked our participants for their feedback on the potential to apply the knowledge they gained in this Circle. Here's what they had to say:

- I am confident in my ability to effectively apply the new knowledge or skills gained through this Circle in my job: **51%**
- I am personally motivated to apply this learning to my job: **61%**
- I have developed ideas or plans for when, where or how I intend to apply my learning from this Circle in my job: **37%**

Circle Content

Overall, participants found this Circle's content to be:

- Credible: **66%**
- Practical: **59%**
- Relevant: **66%**
- Useful to my job: **57%**

Discussion Guides

We asked our participants for their feedback on the Discussion Guides. Here's what they had to say:

- I clearly understood key concepts: **68%**
- The Circle activities were engaging and sustained my attention: **59%**
- I was able to relate the new learning to the knowledge I had gained through prior experiences: **62%**
- I had opportunities to collaborate and discuss ideas with others in LLMC program: **67%**

Observations

- Based on End of Program feedback, Neuroplasticity and Self-Compassion was participants' least favourite topic this year, with **43%** of respondents ranking it last and only **9%** ranking it first.
- Participants found the material from this topic valuable and would have liked to see more tools to put self-compassion into practice.
- Participants indicated a lot of appreciation for the end of program components of this topic's Discussion Guide and would have liked to spend more time synthesizing their learnings from the program overall.



Recommendations for 2025 - LLMC Cohort 5

Strengthening LLMC's Impact and Expanding Materiel Group Engagement

The Lifting as you Lead Mentoring Circles (LLMC) program has proven to be a resounding success in fostering inclusive leadership within the Defence Team and Government of Canada. As we move forward into Cohort 5, we are committed to building on these achievements and expanding the program's reach, particularly within Materiel Group. Based on feedback from participants and key learnings from past cohorts, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance the LLMC experience, increase Mat Group participation, and address key operational challenges.

1- Support for More Local In-Person Events

Benefits

Local in-person events will allow for richer, more dynamic interactions, providing participants an opportunity to engage more deeply with each other and the program's themes. They also enable participants to apply program learnings in real-time and engage with senior leaders in their local context, increasing the impact of the program.

How We Will Build It

Strategic in-person events will be scheduled during the LLMC program cycle, focusing on key cities with high representation, including Ottawa, Toronto, Vancouver, Montreal, Halifax, and Edmonton. These events will provide additional networking opportunities, professional development sessions, and business planning discussions, reinforcing the program's inclusive leadership focus.



2- Build a Structure to Support a Community of Practice

Benefits

A Community of Practice (CoP) allows members to build a self-sustaining network of inclusive leaders by connecting based on their interests, hobbies, or professional experience. Led by volunteer LLMC members, the CoP fosters peer-to-peer learning, coaching, and knowledge sharing. This structure empowers participants to expand their networks, support one another, and continue growing long after the program ends.

Here are some examples of Communities of Practice (CoPs) that members could create:

1. **Black Employee** – A space for Black professionals to discuss career growth, workplace experiences, and advocacy.
2. **Parents** – A network for working parents to share strategies for work-life balance and family-friendly policies.
3. **Neurodivergent Professionals** – A supportive group for neurodivergent employees to exchange insights, workplace accommodations, and career tips.
4. **Women in Leadership** – A community for aspiring and current women leaders to mentor, share experiences, and develop leadership skills.
5. **Early Career Professionals** – A group for newcomers to the workforce to navigate career development, networking, and mentorship.
6. **2SLGBTQIA+ Employees** – A safe space for 2SLGBTQIA+ professionals to support one another and discuss workplace inclusion.
7. **Mental Health & Well-being** – A group focused on workplace mental health, resilience strategies, and self-care practices.
8. **Indigenous Employees** – A space for Indigenous professionals to connect, share experiences, and promote cultural awareness.

How We Will Build It

We will formalize a CoP community building on the existing programming and community by continuing to bring experts and share resources at our Office Hours that are open to all LLMC participants, past and present. We will also encourage the creation of LLMC CoPs created by participants on specialized topics such as neurodivergence, career progression and other topics to be led by LLMC graduates. Our digital spaces (e.g., GC Wiki and LinkedIn) will promote the communities of practice.



3- Grow the LinkedIn Community

Benefits

Growing the LLMC LinkedIn community will provide Cohort 5 participants, alumni, and other stakeholders with a platform to stay connected, share valuable insights, and amplify the impact of the LLMC program. As the community continues to grow, it will become an essential space for fostering engagement across Mat Group and the broader Defence Team and public service, promoting inclusive leadership and supporting ongoing learning.

How We Will Build It

The existing LLMC LinkedIn group, which has already grown to over 500 members, will continue to evolve and expand in Cohort 5. We will actively manage and nurture this space by encouraging ongoing participation from current and past cohort members. This group will be a place for sharing leadership content, success stories, and actionable strategies that participants can implement in their organizations.

To grow the community, Mat Group members will be encouraged to share their personal LLMC experiences, insights, and leadership milestones, thus extending the program's reach and deepening its influence across various departments. We will also leverage LinkedIn's features such as live events, polls, and discussions to engage members and invite new participants into the conversation.

4- Enhance Communications on Canada.ca

Benefits

Continuing to communicate LLMC's success stories, insights, and resources on Canada.ca will expand the program's visibility within the Defence Team and beyond, fostering a greater understanding of the benefits of inclusive leadership.

How We Will Build It

We will continue to collaborate with government communications teams to feature LLMC updates, testimonials, and relevant content on the Canada.ca platform. This will allow us to promote Mat Group participation, share the program's impact, and encourage wider participation from across the Defence Team and public sector.



5- LLMC Success Video: Showcasing Impact and Expanding Engagement

Benefits

Creating and sharing an LLMC success video will highlight the program's achievements, insights, and resources, increasing visibility within the Defence Team and beyond. By featuring Materiel Group civilian and military members, the video will showcase the real-world benefits of inclusive leadership and encourage broader participation.

How We Will Build It

We will collaborate with government communications teams to produce and promote the video on Canada.ca and other official platforms. By incorporating testimonials, success stories, and program highlights, we will demonstrate LLMC's impact, promote Materiel Group engagement, and inspire more Defence Team members and public sector employees to get involved.

6- Recruit a New Francophone Champion

Benefits

A new Francophone champion will ensure that the LLMC program is accessible to all members, promoting bilingual engagement and inclusivity. This will also provide leadership for French-language events, ensuring that participants in French-speaking regions have a supportive, tailored experience.

How We Will Build It

We will identify a new Francophone leader from within Ex-minus 1 level or higher to lead French-language lounges, co-host events, and promote the program in Francophone communities. This champion will also support the creation of French-language resources and ensure seamless bilingual delivery of program content.



7- Increase Materiel Group Participation

Benefits

Increasing participation from Mat Group will ensure that the program benefits from the diversity, expertise, and leadership potential within this key sector of the Defence Team. More involvement will also build a stronger culture of inclusive leadership within **the Mat Group**, aligning with its goals of creating a future-ready workforce.

How We Will Build It

We will collaborate with the DMGMC Training Team to integrate LLMC into the Executive Development Program and explore adding it to the Project Management Learning Path as required training. Additionally, Culture Ambassadors within Mat Group will play a critical role in promoting LLMC across all levels of the organization. These ambassadors will help drive engagement, encourage sign-ups, and foster an environment that values leadership development.

8- Deliberate Materiel Group Representation in Promotional Materials

Benefits

Ensuring Mat Group is prominently featured in LLMC promotional materials will increase visibility and encourage more members to participate. It will also demonstrate Mat Group's commitment to leadership development and inclusivity.

How We Will Build It

We will work to highlight Mat Group representation in all promotional and marketing materials, ensuring both civilian and military members are highlighted. We will also compile a list of Mat Group personnel who have previously participated in LLMC, reaching out to them for testimonials and to help further promote the program internally.



9- Materiel Group Communication Plan for Increased Awareness and Engagement

Benefits

A comprehensive internal communication strategy will ensure that all Mat Group members are aware of LLMC and understand the program's value. Clear, consistent communication will drive engagement, increase participation, and build organizational commitment to the program.

How We Will Build It

We will develop a targeted communication plan leveraging internal newsletters, emails, and intranet platforms. This plan will emphasize the benefits of LLMC for individuals and organizations, encourage participation, and highlight Mat Group's leadership in building the future workforce. Through internal campaigns and coordination with Culture Ambassadors, we will enhance program visibility and increase engagement from all levels within Mat Group.

10- Alternate Circle Group Hour Option for Shift Workers/Reservists

Benefits

Providing an alternate Circle group hour for participants who work shifts or who are reservists will ensure that LLMC is inclusive and accessible to all personnel, regardless of their work schedule. This will help broaden the pool of participants and ensure that leadership development opportunities are available to everyone interested in the program.

How We Will Build It

We will explore options for hosting additional Circle group sessions outside regular business hours, potentially during evenings or weekends, to accommodate shift workers and reservists. This flexibility will ensure that LLMC remains inclusive, allowing all interested individuals to participate and gain leadership skills.



Conclusion

The implementation of these recommendations will ensure that the LLMC program continues to evolve, grow, and thrive as a leading initiative for inclusive leadership development within Mat Group, the broader Defence Team and public service. By addressing feedback, expanding outreach, and introducing innovative ways to increase participation, we will further empower the leaders of tomorrow.

Together, these steps will ensure that LLMC remains a powerful force in building the workforce of the future — a workforce that is diverse, inclusive, and ready to meet the challenges of the evolving landscape at Materiel Group, the Defence Team and broader Public Service, through building our future leaders to support the ongoing success of Canada.



About the Diversity and Inclusion Office

The Diversity and Inclusion Office (DIO), Materiel Group, National Defence is the founder and host of the LLMC program. The DIO is dedicated to advancing organizational culture change and promoting psychologically safer workplaces across Materiel Group and beyond.

In addition to LLMC, the DIO has several core initiatives that aim to advance diversity and inclusion across organizations, including the Ask Me Anything (AMA) series, Jam Sessions, Culture Cascades, and Book Clubs. The DIO also created Materiel Group's Culture Mandate Letter, which represents a commitment within Materiel Group to fostering an inclusive, psychologically safer workplace culture through real, actionable steps.

You can learn more about the Diversity and Inclusion Office, the LLMC program, and our other initiatives on our [GC Wiki](#).

Acknowledgements

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- Marika Brown
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- Jean Gaultier
- Lyrique Richards
- Julie Sculland
- Allison Somenzi

Learn More:

- **GC Wiki:** https://wiki.gccollab.ca/Diversity_and_Inclusion_Office
- **Email:** liftingasyoulead-dirigerenelevantlesautres@forces.gc.ca
- **Intranet:** <http://materiel.mil.ca/en/corporate-services-people/diversity-inclusion-office.page>