



LIFTING AS YOU LEAD

MENTORING CIRCLES PROGRAM

CONNECT • ELEVATE • INSPIRE

Meet Your Circle



Brought to you by
the Diversity and Inclusion Office,
Materiel Group,
National Defence



LIFTING AS YOU LEAD

MENTORING CIRCLES PROGRAM

CONNECT • ELEVATE • INSPIRE

2025 Masterclass Teachers



Dr. Jody Carrington

**Inclusive Leadership:
Psychological Safety and
Belonging as the
Future of Work**

September 22, 2025
1:00 pm - 2:30 pm ET



Fotini Iconomopoulos

**Say Less, Get More:
Mastering Effective
Negotiation**

October 6, 2025
1:00 pm - 2:30 pm ET



Jenny Chen

**The Power of Sponsorship:
Turning Connection into
Career Momentum**

October 20, 2025
1:00 pm - 2:30 pm ET



Richard Sharpe

**Innies and Outies:
Maintaining our Humanity
During the Age of AI**

November 3, 2025
1:00 pm - 2:30 pm ET



Charles Achampong

**Confidence:
Strengthen Your Mindset for
Career and Leadership Success**

November 17, 2025
1:00 pm - 2:30 pm ET

LIFTING AS YOU LEAD

MENTORING CIRCLES PROGRAM

CONNECT • ELEVATE • INSPIRE



DIRIGER EN ÉLEVANT LES AUTRES

PROGRAMME DES CERCLES DE MENTORAT

CONNECTER • ÉLEVER • INSPIRER

2025 Schedule

September

September 9 – Official Program Launch

September 16 – Tuesday Circles Introduction:
Meet Your Circle

September 17 – Wednesday Circles
Introduction: Meet Your Circle

September 22 – Masterclass #1 Inclusive
Leadership: Psychological Safety and Belonging
as the Future of Work

September 25 – Optional Bilingual Lounge

September 30 – Tuesday Circles #1: Inclusive
Leadership

October

October 1 – Wednesday Circles #1: Inclusive
Leadership

October 2 – Optional Bilingual Lounge

October 3 – Optional French Lounge

October 6 – Masterclass #2 Say Less, Get
More: Mastering Effective Negotiation

October 9 – Optional Bilingual Lounge

October 14 – Tuesday Circles #2: Mastering
the Art of Negotiation

October 15 – Wednesday Circles #2:
Mastering the Art of Negotiation

October 16 – Optional Bilingual Lounge

October 17 – Optional French Lounge

October 20 – Masterclass #3 The Power of
Sponsorship: Turning Connection into Career
Momentum

October 23 – Optional Bilingual Lounge

October 28 – Tuesday Circles #3: Sponsorship
and Career Building

October 29 – Wednesday Circles #3:
Sponsorship and Career Building

October 30 – Optional Bilingual Lounge

October 31 – Optional French Lounge

November

November 3 – Masterclass #4 Innies and Outies:
Maintaining our Humanity During the Age of AI

November 6 – Optional Bilingual Lounge

November 11 – Tuesday Circles #4 DEIA:
A Non-Performative Approach

November 12 – Wednesday Circles #4 DEIA:
A Non-Performative Approach

November 13 – Optional Bilingual Lounge

November 14 – Optional French Lounge

November 17 – Masterclass #5 Confidence: Strengthen
Your Mindset for Career and Leadership Success

November 11 – Tuesday Circles #5 Confidence: Strengthen
Your Mindset for Career and Leadership Success

November 12 – Wednesday Circles #5 Confidence:
Strengthen Your Mindset for Career and Leadership
Success

November 27 – Optional Bilingual Lounge

November 28 – Optional French Lounge



Founders' Message to LLMC Participants



Judith Benett
Associate Assistant
Deputy Minister,
Materiel,
National Defence

“Thank you” doesn’t feel like enough to describe how happy we are, for you to have made the commitment to join the Lifting as you Lead Mentoring Circles program 5th Cohort, organized by the Diversity and Inclusion Office, Materiel Group, National Defence. Open to all Federal Public Service and military members. You're now part of a diverse network of 1500+ inclusive-minded leaders from over 60 Government of Canada departments, Crown corporations and agencies learning together to apply inclusive leadership skills in real time.

What began as a simple idea from our consultations has matured into a thriving network, addressing the desire for meaningful connection and professional growth.

There’s Power in People Coming Together

You have been assigned to a group Mentoring Circle: a small, trusted group for goal achievement in a safe space. By actively engaging with your Circle over the course of the 10-week program, sharing experiences, and fostering connections, you'll unlock personal and professional growth opportunities. This Circle will facilitate learning from others' experiences and diverse perspectives, expanding your knowledge and tactical skills.

LLMC offers a unique opportunity for everyone to feel valued and respected for their contributions. The relationships you build will accelerate progress and drive accountability.



Samantha Moonsammy
LLMC Founder,
Materiel,
National Defence



Founders' Message to LLMC Participants

The Time to Act is Now!

Thank you for answering the call to action, and committing to creating a psychologically safer workplaces for all, especially those from equity-deserving groups. This takes personal accountability for what we do. It is about initiative - and taking that extra step that no one may have asked you to take, but that is often needed to make something a success.

We hope you will feel a real and fundamental shift throughout the program. And together we will celebrate all the hard work you put into this experience. Thank you for showing up for yourself, your family, your organization and the communities you're called to serve.

Going forward, take advantage of all the networking that will take place, meet new LLMC members in MS Teams and on LinkedIn. Lean into the Masterclasses. Choose to stay consistent with that next level version of you. We are rooting for you.

Be proud. Proud of the work you do. Proud of serving Canada and Canadians.

In collaboration,

Judith Bennett
Associate Assistant Deputy
Minister, Materiel,
National Defence

Samantha Moonsammy
LLMC Founder,
Materiel, National Defence



Program Description

The LLMC program is an initiative grounded in the **2020/2021 Deputy Minister Commitments on Diversity and Inclusion** and strives to build on the Clerk's Call to Action to better support leadership development towards addressing anti-racism, equity, and inclusion in the federal public service. Through this lens, the LLMC program provides you with an innovative space and opportunity to actively partake in making your workplace inclusive.



This ten-week program, consisting of five Circle sessions and five Masterclasses, provides a platform for members to network with colleagues and leadership across the federal public service while developing interpersonal skills, learning about key leadership and cultural competencies, and finding career building opportunities.

By actively engaging with your Circle members, sharing your story, knowledge, and questions, and fostering connections within the broader LLMC network, you will unlock opportunities for personal and professional growth. The knowledge you acquire through these interactions will empower you to advance in your career.

LLMC is a call to action for you to become a change-maker through sharing what you learned with those in your organisation and by integrating it into your daily actions. By participating in this program, you are committing to use what you learn to create a psychologically safer workplace for everyone, especially those from deserving equity groups.



LIFTING AS YOU LEAD

MENTORING CIRCLES PROGRAM

CONNECT • ELEVATE • INSPIRE

2025 Masterclass Teachers



Dr. Jody Carrington

**Inclusive Leadership:
Psychological Safety and
Belonging as the
Future of Work**

September 22, 2025
1:00 pm - 2:30 pm ET



Fotini Iconomopoulos

**Say Less, Get More:
Mastering Effective
Negotiation**

October 6, 2025
1:00 pm - 2:30 pm ET



Jenny Chen

**The Power of Sponsorship:
Turning Connection into
Career Momentum**

October 20, 2025
1:00 pm - 2:30 pm ET



Richard Sharpe

**Innies and Outies:
Maintaining our Humanity
During the Age of AI**

November 3, 2025
1:00 pm - 2:30 pm ET



Charles Achampong

**Confidence:
Strengthen Your Mindset for
Career and Leadership Success**

November 17, 2025
1:00 pm - 2:30 pm ET



Mentoring Circle Key Dates

- **Circle #1 – Inclusive Leadership**
 - September 30 or October 1
- **Circle #2 – Mastering the Art of Negotiation**
 - October 14 or 15
- **Circle #3 – Sponsorship and Career Building**
 - October 28 or 29
- **Circles #4 – Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility: A Non-Performative Approach**
 - November 11 or 12
- **Circle #5 – Confidence: Strengthen Your Mindset for Career and Leadership Success**
 - November 25 or 26



Benefits & Toolkit

- Masterclasses with Subject Matter Experts
- Discussion Guides
- Networking Best Practices
- Weekly LLMC Lounge
- Written Components
- Emails
- Online Engagements (i.e., LinkedIn, MS Teams)
- Local in-person events (optional; hosted by LLMC member volunteers across Canada)

Logistics

- 90 minutes and 120 minutes for Circle #5
- For maximum collaboration and clear expectations
- Optimal Circle number is 6-8 members



Circle Ground Rules & Values

- **Equality:** Everyone is an equal member
- **Substance:** Share what's important
- **Openness:** Listen and avoid judgements
- **Respect:** Treat others as they would like to be treated

Participant Ground Rules & Values

- Confidentiality - trust is critical
- Bring your full self and beginner's mindset to each session
- Come nourished and stay hydrated
- Keep your camera on so everyone feels safe and connected
- Be candid and honest - listen with empathy
- Be ready to engage with your peers
- Remove outside distractions
- Keep your audio off, except when asking questions and contributing to the discussion
- Be fully present and attend all five weeks - no multitasking

Zero Tolerance Criteria

We value and champion equality, substance, openness and respect. Discriminatory feedback, consistent negative energy and insulting comments could result in blocked access to the rest of the meetings and other program sessions in the future.



How will we hold each other accountable?

Together, let's commit to these ground rules:

- Everyone has an equal voice
- Everyone is respectful of other's opinions, perspectives and ideas
- Everyone is free to ask for what they need
- No one is wrong
- We will approach our circles from a place of curiosity, without judgment or bias
- We will hold the confidentiality of everyone and everything shared in our Circle



Throughout LLMC let's ask:

- How can we best support each other on this journey?
- What do you need to succeed on this journey?
- What are our expectations of each other around Circle preparation, attendance, and participation?
- How do we hold each other accountable to be prepared and participate in our Circle?
- What is the expectation if someone must miss a Circle or will be late? (i.e. how much advance notice? Option to reschedule? etc.)
- How do we speak hard truths to each other?
- What do you hope to achieve with this Circle?

Practice some self reflection:

- Who do I want to be when participating in our Circle?
- What will be the role of my inner critic?
- What do I want to create/change in this area of my life?
- Am I open to having my assumptions challenged?

**Remember: Do what you can in the Circles, you don't need to get through it all.
Use your best judgment!**



Program Requirements

- Actively Participate in all 5 Circle Sessions **(scheduled by your Circle Group)**
- Attend Masterclasses to enrich your experience and learning **(invites in your calendars)**
- Complete the 6 bi-weekly Written Components **(reminders in your calendars)**

Optional LLMC Perks

- Weekly LLMC Lounge **(invites in your calendars)**
- Local events **(hosted/organized by LLMC member volunteers across Canada)**
- Online engagements **(LinkedIn, MS Teams)**



Discussion Guide

Meet Your Circle Members

*Message from the Lifting as you Lead Mentoring Circles program team:
The following pages represent how all Discussion Guides going forward look.*

1. Welcome (1 minute) 🕒

Welcome to the Lifting as you Lead Mentoring Circles (LLMC) program! This guide is meant to provide guidance on the first steps you will take as a Circle. The Diversity and Inclusion Office, Materiel Group is hoping that this session gives everyone an opportunity to introduce themselves, determine the time for your Circle sessions, and volunteer to be a Circle Leader or Assistant Circle Leader for any of the five Circle sessions.



2. Icebreaker - Sharing Your Layers (10 minutes) 🕒

Instructions: Each member is asked to share one “layer” or “square” from the table on the next page within your time. Use this creative activity to share your unique story. (1 minute per member)

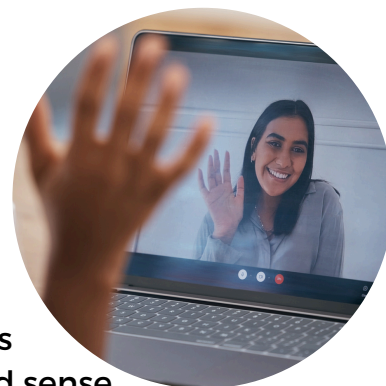


I am over 49 years of age	I do volunteer work	I belong to an Employment Equity group	I speak a language other than English or French	I am under 30 years of age
I have military experience	I am the first generation of a family who immigrated to Canada	I live/have lived on an island	I attended post-secondary education	I am left handed
I have grey hair	I have lived in another country	Free Space: choose your own layer to share	I immigrated to Canada	I am an Indigenous person in Canada
I live/have lived in a Territory	I have a daily ritual in my life	I am a manager	I have difficulty hearing	I did not attend post-secondary education
I am religious or spiritual	I know American Sign Language (ASL)	I wear glasses or contact lenses	I identify as part of the 2SLGBTQIA+ communities	I am a single parent



3. Sharing Your “Why” (10 minutes) 🕒

Reflecting upon our motivations for partaking in these activities is an important step for cultivating connectivity within our designated circles. In the spirit of fostering dialogue, we are encouraged to share our WHY with this Circle and to explore our aspirations regarding the invaluable insights these guides offer. This next activity aims to foster understanding, connection, and a shared sense of purpose as we explore the significance of our individual and collective endeavours within the LLMC community.



Instructions: Each Circle member will take 1 minute to share their response to either one of the following questions:

- Why have you joined LLMC?
- How do you hope LLMC will add to your knowledge and expand your leadership toolkit?

4. Circle Preparation (10 minutes) 🕒

Each Circle is responsible for:

- Choosing Circle Leaders and Assistant Circle Leaders
- Scheduling all 5 Circle sessions
- Active engagement in all Circle activities
- Reviewing each Discussion Guide and video (when applicable) ahead of the Circle session
- Completion of all after Circle activities including bi-weekly Written Components

4.1 Circle Leader and Assistant Circle Leader Selection (5 minutes)

An integral part of our upcoming circle sessions are the circle leaders and assistant circle leaders. Volunteering for these responsibilities goes beyond participation; it's a commitment to shaping the journey and cultivating leadership. Each circle session calls for different members to undertake the responsibilities of leadership. For this next stage of this Meet Your Circle Members session, we ask you to step into a leadership role by volunteering to be a circle leader or assistant circle leader for one of the five circle sessions.

To help you choose a role, here are the responsibilities for the positions of circle leader and assistant circle leader during the program.

Circle Leader

- Bring positive energy
- Reinforce rules and expectations
- Be aware of your speed of speech
- Build rapport within the Circle
- Handle logistics of the session
- Touch point with Circle members

Assistant Circle Leader

- Keep track of time
- Provide technical support
- Attend pre-session meetings

4.2 Schedule Your Circle Sessions (5 minutes)

Each Circle has been formed based upon several factors including the preferred session time block indicated on our application forms. This is the time to choose a 90-minute period (120 minutes for Circle #5) within that time block that works for this Circle group.

Instructions: Confirm that all Circle members are available for the time block indicated in the email sent by the LLMC Program team and work together to determine the best time for all members.

Ask a member of the Circle to schedule all 5 Circle sessions for the chosen 90-minute Circle (120 minutes for Circle #5) session time and send the invitations out to the other Circle members on the list (including those not present at the session).



5. Wrap-up: What's next and a few final words (4 minutes) 🕒

Thank you everyone for your active participation in this Meet Your Circle Members session. Having shared some of our layers and our “why” for joining the program, the hope is that we all feel ready to learn and grow as we begin our LLMC journey.



- **Launch:** The 2025 LLMC program will officially begin with the program launch taking place on Tuesday, September 9th at 1:00 pm! Check your email or calendar for more information about this session.
- **Masterclass:** Our first Masterclass takes place on Monday, September 22, 2025, at 1:00 pm Eastern Time. This 90-minute Masterclass is a hands-on coaching class on Inclusive Leadership: Psychological Safety and Belonging as the Future of Work. Invitations to all 5 Masterclasses have been sent to you prior to the start of this LLMC cohort. Please see your calendar for details.
- **Next Circle:** The next Circle session will be focused on Inclusive Leadership. We will learn about the characteristics of inclusive leaders and how we can apply this knowledge in the workplace. Please review Discussion Guide #1 and watch Simon Sinek’s TedTalk, “[Why Good Leaders Make You Feel Safe](#)” prior to the second Circle session.

Thank you, everyone! Be well, take care and see you at the program launch on Tuesday, September 9th, 1:00-2:30pm.



To Do Checklist: Next Week at a Glance

- ☐ Consult the [LLMC Program Overview Wiki page](#) for all checklist links
- ☐ Review Discussion Guide #1 on Inclusive Leadership
- ☐ Attend the Masterclass on September 22 at 1:00pm Eastern
- ☐ Attend the LLMC Lounge (optional)
- ☐ Join the [LLMC LinkedIn group](#)
- ☐ Check out the [LLMC Learning Library](#)





List of Circle Members

#	Name	Department/Position	I remember this member because of... (list 3 characteristics)
1	Circle Leader		
2	Assistant Circle Leader		
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			

Important Links



Contact us on the [LLMC Support Form](#)



Visit the LLMC [Learning Library](#)



Join the LLMC [LinkedIn Group](#)



Support

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

EAP provides free short-term counselling for personal or work-related problems as well as crisis counselling.

Toll-free: 1-800-268-7708

TTY (for people with hearing impairments): 1-800-567-5803

<https://www.canada.ca/en/government/publicservice/wellness-inclusion-diversity-public-service/employee-assistance-program.html#E>



Hope for Wellness Helpline

24/7 access to Indigenous Counsellors

Available in French and English and, upon request, Ojibway, Cree and Inuktituk.

1-855-242-3310

Chat line via: <https://www.hopeforwellness.ca/>

Member and Family Assistance services (Canadian Armed Forces)

The Member and Family Assistance services is a 24 hour, 7 days a week bilingual telephone and face to face counselling service that is voluntary, confidential, and available to Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) members and their families who have personal concerns that affect their well-being and/or work performance.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/benefits-military/health-support/member-family-assistance-services.html>

Sexual Misconduct Support and Resource Centre (National Defence)

The Sexual Misconduct Support and Resource Centre (SMSRC) was created by the Department of National Defence but is independent from the CAF chain of command and is not required to report incidents of sexual misconduct to the CAF. Support services for CAF members, National Defence public service employees, Cadets and Junior Canadian Rangers affected by sexual misconduct and their families, aged 16 and older. Guidance and support for leaders and management on addressing sexual misconduct.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/benefits-military/health-support/sexual-misconduct-response.html>



Support

The Canada Suicide Prevention Service

Talk Suicide Canada provides nationwide, 24-hour, bilingual support to anyone who is facing suicide.

Toll-free: 1-833-456-4566.

<https://www.crisisservicescanada.ca/en/>



Wellness Together Canada

Mental Health and Substance Abuse Support.

Toll free 1-866-585-0445

<https://wellnesstogether.ca>

The Lifting as you Lead Mentoring Circles Discussion Guide was created by the Diversity and Inclusion Office, Materiel Group, National Defence.



liftingasyoulead-dirigerenelevantlesautres@forces.gc.ca



https://wiki.gccollab.ca/Diversity_and_Inclusion_Office