
ACCELERATOR SERIES

CSIS EXECUTIVE EDUCATION

CSIS | CENTER FOR STRATEGIC &
INTERNATIONAL STUDIES



ACCELERATOR SERIES OVERVIEW

The *CSIS Accelerator Series* is curated for rising professionals looking to deepen their understanding of **leadership, management, and communication skills** in a concentrated curriculum. The Accelerator Series leverages CSIS's in-house policy expertise and our network of top coaches to equip participants with essential tools and knowledge to thrive in a rapidly changing world while navigating the complexities of managing people and projects.

The Accelerator Series focuses on building strategic, ethical, and effective leaders through a blend of **leadership theory, practical management techniques, experiential learning opportunities, and policy seminars**. Participants will explore current policy challenges with CSIS experts within their selected policy track, gaining the analytical skills and background to unpack the impact of these policies on their work. Over the course of the program, participants will refine their professional skills, leadership style, and policy knowledge alongside peers from government, corporations, and nonprofits, building meaningful connections with fellow rising leaders in Washington, D.C.

Participants may be nominated by their supervisors or apply directly to the program. Applicants should meet the following criteria:

- Have 5-12 years of professional experience.
- Demonstrate the potential to thrive in managerial and leadership roles.
- Proficient in English.

Sessions will be offered mostly virtually, with occasional in-person and hybrid options. The program requirements can be satisfied entirely virtually, but we recommend participants have the ability to travel to Washington, D.C. on occasion for in-person sessions and cohort-building activities.

If you or someone you know would be a good fit for this program, visit our website for the nomination and application form: [cs.is/accelerator](https://www.csis.org/accelerator).

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SAMPLE AGENDA

VIRTUAL Half Day	WEEK 1	
	Orientation	2 hours
VIRTUAL Full Day	WEEK 2	
	Understanding Different Leadership Frameworks	3 hours
	<i>Break</i>	1.5 hours
	Leveraging Temperament and Motivation	3 hours
VIRTUAL Half Day	WEEK 3	
	Public Speaking Part 1	4 hours
WEEK 4 - BREAK		
IN-PERSON OR VIRTUAL Half Day	WEEK 5	
	Public Speaking Part 2A*	2 hours
	<i>Break</i>	1.5 hours
	Public Speaking Part 2B*	2 hours
<i>*Participants to attend one session within the day</i>		
VIRTUAL Full Day	WEEK 6	
	New Frontiers: Five Megatrends That Will Define Our Future	2 hours
	<i>Break</i>	1.5 hours
	Data as a tool for policy research	1.5 hours
	<i>Break</i>	0.5 hours
	Data visualization	2 hours
VIRTUAL Full Day	WEEK 7	
	Agile Leadership	3 hours
	<i>Break</i>	1.5 hours
	Conflict Management	3 hours
VIRTUAL Half Day	WEEK 8	
	How to Write a Policy Brief	4 hours
VIRTUAL Half Day	WEEK 9	
	Presenting Information as an Expert	2 hours
	<i>Break</i>	0.5 hours
	Strategic Thinking on the Global Stage	3 hours
WEEK 10 - BREAK		
IN-PERSON Full Day	WEEK 11	
	Tailored Policy Seminar #1**	1.25 hours
	<i>Break</i>	1 hour
	Negotiation Strategies Part 1	4 hours
<i>**Virtual attendance available</i>		

IN-PERSON Half Day	WEEK 12	
	Negotiation Strategies Part 2	4 hours
VIRTUAL Half Day	WEEK 13	
	Change Management	4 hours
WEEK 14 - BREAK		
IN-PERSON OR VIRTUAL Half Day	WEEK 15	
	Tailored Policy Seminar #2	1.25 hours
IN-PERSON Half Day	WEEK 16	
	On-Camera Media Training	4 hours
VIRTUAL Half Day	WEEK 17	
	Project Management	2 hours
VIRTUAL Half Day	WEEK 18	
	Moderating Panels Part 1	2 hours
IN-PERSON Half Day	WEEK 19	
	Moderating Panels Part 2	3 hours
WEEK 20		
IN-PERSON Half Day	WEEK 21	
	Design Thinking	4 hours
IN-PERSON Evening	WEEK 22	
	Group Reflections/Presentations	2 hours
	Cocktail Hour	1 hour
	Graduation Dinner	2 hours

SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

LEADERSHIP

Understanding Different Leadership Frameworks

Using self-assessment and case studies, this session focuses on how to become an emotionally intelligent manager and leader by developing interpersonal communication skills essential for mentoring, accountability, and managing conflict. Participants will develop an understanding of the psychological blocks to communicating across teams and techniques to overcome them (listening, advocacy and inquiry, reflective listening, and feedback/assertion).

OBJECTIVES

- *Adopt techniques for coaching team members—up, down, or across*
- *Learn how to leverage different working styles*
- *Deliver and receive constructive feedback*
- *Solve problems using different leadership frameworks and approaches*

Leveraging Temperament and Motivation

Participants will take the Keirsey Temperament Sorter, a personality assessment used widely by major organizations, to discover how their individual habits of behavior and communication affect their work within teams and their leadership style. This tool is critical for understanding personal strengths and identifying how to harness the greatest potential within others.

OBJECTIVES

- *Recognize a variety of personality types and learn strategies for managing differences*
- *Determine the strengths and challenges associated with one's personality type*
- *Understand how to best communicate with and motivate different personality types*

Agile Leadership

The Agile Leadership session defines the concept of social identity and explores the impact of social identities on an organization/team. Participants will explore techniques for inclusive leadership and allyship, including emotional intelligence and advocacy.

OBJECTIVES

- *Examine the impact of social identity in the workplace*
- *Explore techniques for agile leadership*
- *Understand how to utilize tools such as emotional intelligence to create an environment of psychological safety*

MANAGEMENT

Change Management

Modern businesses continuously face changes, which can be disruptive, inefficient, and unsuccessful if not managed well from the beginning. A successful change requires leaders to build flexible and adaptive work cultures. From managing expectations to ensuring transparent communication, participants will learn how to navigate personal and organizational changes by effectively guiding and transitioning individuals, groups, and organizations.

OBJECTIVES

- *Define what change means in a work environment and examine its impact on individuals, teams and the organization as a whole*
- *Understand how to manage organizational change from ideation through to implementation using various models*
- *Learn effective communication strategies for managing change*
- *Develop skills to build support for change by identifying and engaging influential stakeholders*

Project Management

Successful project managers can understand the essence of a project through the project life cycle: defining its scope, building a project team, and monitoring the progress of the project through the duration of its execution. Participants will gain tools to effectively manage workflows, anticipate problems, and oversee the completion of successful projects.

OBJECTIVES

- *Learn the fundamentals of project management*
- *Understand the definition of a project, including the need for defining its scope and allocating (or obtaining) resources*
- *Understand what tools are available to assist with project management and the advantages and disadvantages of each*
- *Know when to engage stakeholders and how to manage proposed changes*

Design Thinking

Leaders are responsible for overseeing change within their organization and identifying opportunities for growth and improvement. Design thinking is a human-centered methodology that frames challenges as a design problem to explore the many ways to develop creative and practical solutions to a question. This session will provide a comprehensive introduction to the design thinking process and engage

in a group activity to solve a complex problem by applying the principles of design thinking. Participants will walk away with the tools and framework for understanding how innovation can help tackle problems in their projects, teams, or personal entrepreneurial ventures.

OBJECTIVES

- *Understand the design thinking methodology and how to generate entrepreneurial ideas*
- *Practice solving complex problems through design thinking*
- *Learn how to facilitate a design thinking session to resolve a project or team challenge*

Conflict Management

Possessing the skills to successfully navigate conflict in the workplace is crucial for successful management. This session will feature a toolkit for navigating conflict based on case studies and reflection upon participants' own unique experiences. Participants will walk away with the ability to identify the source of conflict and address the issue from both a supervisory and employee position.

OBJECTIVES

- *Understand why conflict arises and what stressors may be present in the workplace*
- *Learn to identify the sources of conflict in the workplace and tools for arriving at a resolution*
- *Learn how to utilize skills such as active listening and communication to build organizational trust*

COMMUNICATION

Presenting Information as an Expert

Delivering concise, clear briefings is a critical skill for policy professionals. It is equally important to understand one's audience and know how to adjust talking points to brief a range of stakeholders effectively. In this session, participants will learn how to break down complex information into a succinct narrative, and how to convey that information with authority, confidence, and clarity while being cognizant of their audience.

OBJECTIVES

- *Learn policy briefing conventions and standards*
- *Prepare and deliver effective briefings and presentations*
- *Communicate complex, nuanced ideas clearly and quickly*
- *Understand best practices for PowerPoint presentations and other visual aids*

On-Camera Media Training

Participants will receive coaching in effective public speaking and practice personal presentations to increase confidence and become effective communicators, regardless of audience size. Participants will also have an opportunity to practice giving on-camera interviews and fielding questions from a reporter, an important skill that can be applied to job interviews, client and donor meetings, and networking events. They will leave with a nuanced understanding on how to turn complex, lengthy information into digestible soundbites, how to think on their feet, and how to control an interview or conversation.

OBJECTIVES

- *Develop and practice the physical skills required for effective oral presentations*
- *Mitigate nervousness by employing stress management tools*
- *Display confidence as a presenter in front of small and large audiences*
- *Successfully communicate your personal narrative at formal and informal events*
- *Learn how to take control of an interview or conversation*

Moderating Panels

This session will arm participants with the necessary skills to successfully moderate a panel. Participants will learn how to direct the flow of conversation and keep speakers on topic, how to field questions from an audience and guide the interaction between speakers, and how to summarize and wrap up important information that was exchanged during the panel.

OBJECTIVES

- *Learn preparation strategies for successful panel moderation*
- *Practice how to control the flow of conversation and keep panelists on topic and within their time allotment*
- *Understand how to pick up key takeaways from the conversation to summarize for the audience*

How to Write a Policy Brief

This course will prepare participants to draft high-quality policy briefs that are succinct and effective, enabling the reader to quickly identify key lessons and understand how and where these might be applied in practice. For any policy brief, there will be a tradeoff between providing depth of context and delivering something that is concise, targeted, and digestible. Learning to balance this trade-off is one of the key skills of writing for policy.

OBJECTIVES

- *Clearly outline research findings, policy recommendations, and action items*
- *Effectively communicate high-level information to senior decision-makers*
- *Understand how to discern and narrow important information from multiple sources*

Public Speaking and Presentation Development

This course will focus on the skills involved in selecting, researching, organizing, and writing persuasive messages. Participants will learn techniques for creating speeches that engage, persuade, and inspire an audience using image, metaphor, and story, while also getting key messages across. Finally, participants will learn to communicate their ideas effectively using verbal techniques in a small, supportive classroom environment.

OBJECTIVES

- *Understand how to craft a compelling presentation to engage an audience, make a case, and reinforce the bottom line*
- *Learn skills in public speaking, executive presence, and body language*
- *Practice delivering speeches in a small group setting*

Negotiation Strategies

Clear and effective communication is key to negotiating successful outcomes for personal objectives or business development. Leaders must actively and skillfully connect with all negotiating parties and work toward mutually agreeable solutions while still ensuring their primary objectives are met. This class will examine the principles of successful negotiation and allow participants to practice strategies that lead to favorable business outcomes.

OBJECTIVES

- *Plan and implement strategies for successful negotiation outcomes*
- *Learn tactics to advance business interests*
- *Understand how outcomes should be incorporated into agreements*
- *Practice negotiation skills with other colleagues*

POLICY AND GEOPOLITICAL ACUMEN

New Frontiers: Five Megatrends That Will Define Our Future

Strategic foresight requires identifying critical drivers of global change and their interactions. New Frontiers brings together CSIS's cross-cutting research on five key megatrends - global demographics, food and water

security, energy transition and climate change, tech disruption and economic competition, and geopolitics and world order - to find signals in the noise and help decision makers grapple with the tough questions they need to better sense, shape, and adapt to the fast-changing future.

OBJECTIVES

- *Identify key drivers of change that will shape policy and societal change over the new few decades.*
- *Understand the use of foresight and policy analysis in developing resilient strategies.*
- *Learn the key impacts of the five megatrends and how they may affect your organization.*

Data as a Tool for Policy Research

Developing effective policy recommendations requires attention to quantitative and qualitative data inputs. This session explores key techniques for gathering and analyzing data to present informed recommendations for internal strategy and external communications.

OBJECTIVES

- *Explore the role data plays in policy research.*
- *Develop strategies for utilizing data in a policy-oriented role.*
- *Learn best practices for data visualization.*

Strategic Thinking on the Global Stage

This session offers an overview of ongoing geopolitical shifts on the global stage and how to outline the strategic picture emerging from these shifts. Guided by one of CSIS's in-house experts, this workshop will draw out major emerging trends through case studies across a range of issue areas.

Tailored Policy Roundtables

The tailored policy roundtables provide a specialized track following the above foundational policy sessions. Participants will choose a focus area from CSIS's four departments: geopolitics and foreign policy; economic security and technology; defense and security; or human security and global development. Each track offers a deeper exploration of issues of relevance to participants through two seminars. They aim to sharpen geopolitical acumen and provide an opportunity to engage with CSIS scholars on issues that affect participants' field and work.

ABOUT EXECUTIVE EDUCATION

CSIS offers a wide range of customized executive education programs featuring world-class foreign policy and national security experts and multidisciplinary leadership development. Each program is tailored to fit individual audience needs and includes a combination of in-depth geopolitical seminars, professional skill-building workshops, interactive crisis simulations, and networking opportunities.

For more information about designing an executive education program for your organization, or to learn more about existing programs, please visit us at www.csis.org/executive-education or contact **Nina Tarr**, director of the Abshire-Inamori Leadership Academy, at ntarr@csis.org.

ABOUT CSIS

The Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) is a bipartisan, nonprofit policy research organization dedicated to advancing practical ideas to address the world's greatest challenges. Over the past 60 years, CSIS has continued to meet existing and future challenges to the global order through our core research pillars: geopolitics, economic security, technology, defense, and U.S. global engagement. Named the Defense and National Security Center of Excellence for 2016-2020 by the University of Pennsylvania's "Global Go To Think Tank Index," CSIS is one of the preeminent international policy institutions focused on defense and security, regional stability, and transnational challenges ranging from energy and climate to global development and economic integration.

