



Leadership Innovation for Faculty Transformation (LIFT):

A WeR1 Faculty Success Program Call for Applications
Calendar Year 2026



The Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR) and Academic Affairs have partnered to expand and further develop the WeR1 Leadership Innovation for Faculty Transformation (LIFT) program in 2026. Our new structure will maintain the cohort model and expand the opportunities for participants to explore more focused leadership goals and pathways in small groups within the cohort.

We invite tenured UNM faculty who seek to transform their leadership effectiveness to submit applications to the LIFT program for the 2026 calendar year. LIFT provides concrete support and mentoring to a small cohort of faculty to advance their research and/or administrative leadership knowledge and skills. As in previous years, one broad leadership pathway will focus on developing research leadership opportunities to enhance professional standing and the university's renown in research, scholarship and inclusive practice. The expanded program also invites Fellows interested in other forms of academic leadership at the department, college/school, university, or professional levels. Among numerous possibilities, faculty may explore interests in pursuing leadership positions (chair, director, associate dean and beyond); developing academic programs; expanding research teams; leading large, multi-level proposal efforts; assuming service roles within professional organizations; and generally expanding their success in serving and leading teams, organizations, or the broader community. Fellows will identify and pursue specific and ambitious goals to develop their leadership achievement along a chosen trajectory.

LIFT prepares faculty to navigate and identify opportunities to grow in their career, including:

- Paths towards and opportunities for leadership in a variety of contexts
- Organizational design and structure
- University leadership roles and responsibilities
- Articulating a career vision and the steps needed to realize the vision
- Identifying personal preferences and approaches ("styles") to university leadership
- Team management skills (e.g., conflict resolution, communication skills, personnel supervision)
- Personal productivity (e.g., time management, delegation, innovation)
- Navigating relevant university processes and mechanisms (how the university works)
- How to build relationships within and across university structures and with external partners

Eligibility

- UNM central campus tenured faculty eager to grow their research and/or administrative leadership skills and capacity by developing programs and initiatives that add value to the university's missions.
- Applicants must have held tenure for at least one year. Preference will be given to applicants with the rank of Professor or with at least 3 years at the Associate Professor level.
- Demonstrated willingness and availability to fully engage in the program and its activities, including providing feedback and support to other members of the LIFT cohort
- Applicants must have the support of their department chair and dean to participate in the LIFT program.

Selected fellows will:

- Devote ~10-12 hours/month to LIFT activities (i.e., cohort meetings and independent professional development activities) during the 2026 calendar year, including summer months.
- Create individual development plans (IDP) in which they identify personal professional goals as well as larger-scale plans/proposals/initiatives.
- Take an active role in cohort building and group discussions of assigned readings and other activities related to leadership development.
- Complete a final report describing outcomes from the year and presentation of outcomes to the LIFT cohort and campus leadership.
- Receive one course release in the fall 2026 semester; and
- Be eligible for OVPR travel support for professional development relevant to the fellow's individual development plan

Submit applications via InfoReady:

<https://unm.infoready4.com/#freeformCompetitionDetail/1992174> (responses limited to 150 words max each)

- Briefly describe your professional and leadership goals for the next five years. What would you like to focus on in 2026 and how will it contribute to your longer-term goals?
- Why do you want to participate in LIFT; what do you hope to achieve?
- How will you contribute to the LIFT program and to UNM? How will your experience and perspective benefit the cohort?
- Reflect on what it means to be part of a team or cohort? What does success look like?
- Attach a 2-page CV.
- Get approval of department chair and dean (routed in InfoReady)

Applications due: October 16, 2025; selections made: mid-November 2025