



Advocates in Action RI's Leadership Graduate Academy MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

ABOUT THIS APPLICATION AND JOINING THE GRADUATE ACADEMY

This is an application to become a member of Advocates in Action's new Leadership Graduate Academy ("theAcademy"). We created the Academy for graduates of our Leadership Series. Those who graduated from Partners-RI, which AinA offered from 1995-2001, are also welcome to apply!

There are 17 questions in this form that we designed to help us learn how to best support you and make your experience in the Academy a success. You only have to complete this application once. Once you've joined theAcademy, you won't need to do it again every time we offer a new course!

Questions that are required will be highlighted in RED like this.

You need to answer a required question before you can continue to the next one. If you don't, a message will appear asking you to do so.

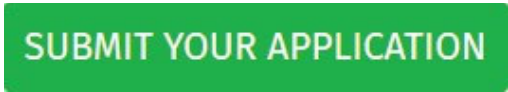
If you're not sure how to answer a question, that's ok! Use the email address below to contact us, and someone from our Leadership team will be in touch to help. You can also write that you don't understand the question on the form itself. Doing so will allow you to continue and let us know that we need to follow up and help you answer it.

We placed each of the questions in this application on a separate page. Here's how to navigate between the different questions:



- ◆ LEFT CLICK the BACK ARROW to return to the previous question.
- ◆ LEFT CLICK the word NEXT to go forward.
- ◆ LEFT CLICK on "Save & Continue Later" if you'd like to take a break and return later to finish completing this form.

Once you've completed this application, click the green button, like the one you see below, to send us your application.



Check your email after you submit your application! We'll send you a confirmation message, and a copy of the answers you shared on this form, along with additional information about our winter course schedule.

[CLICK HERE](#) or on the icon below to contact us if you have any questions or need assistance completing this form.



If you haven't graduated from either of these classes, we encourage you to join us for the next Leadership Series for the Class of 2022, which will begin in January.

[CLICK HERE](#) or on the icon below to visit our website at for more information:



Graduate Academy Eligibility Requirements



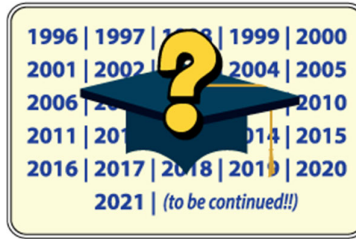
Before you begin, we need to know if you graduated from either Partners-RI of the Leadership Series

*** This question is required.**

We designed the Graduate Academy to build on the foundations of Self-Awareness, Self-Determination, and Self-Advocacy that students learned about during Partners-RI (1995-2001) and the Leadership Series (2002-present).

You must be a graduate of one of these classes to join the Academy. Check the appropriate box below to confirm that you meet this eligibility requirement.

- Option 1:** YES
- Option 2:** NO

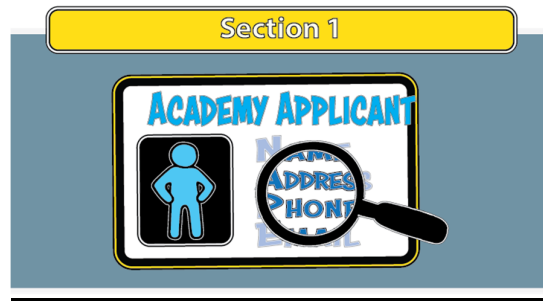


Question 1: When did you graduate from Partners-RI or the Leadership Series?

*** This question is required.**

Write your graduation year in the space below. If you can't remember or you're not sure, give it your best guess. We'll check our records and send you the details.

Reference Only



SECTION 1: APPLICATION CONTACT INFORMATION

We designed this first Section so we'll have each member's direct contact information. By *direct*, we mean that the following information should be for the applicant as much as possible. *For example, if you receive services from a provider agency, we prefer to have your address rather than your agency's office address.*

We realize that some people prefer to have help with things like talking on the phone or reading their mail. You'll be able to clarify who the information you enter belongs to in the questions below.

You also have the option to add a contact person in Section 2. If you decide to add a contact person, we'll still direct our communication to you using the information you provide in questions 1-6, but we'll also send a copy to them.



QUESTION 2: What is your full name?

*** This question is required.**

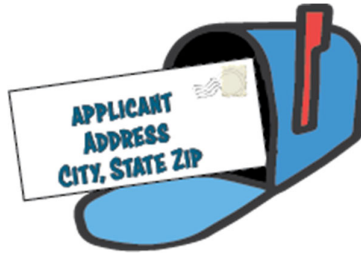
We'll send you a Certificate of Completion every time you finish a course in the Academy and need to know how you'd like your name to appear on this document.

For example, if your nickname is "Don", but your full name is "Donald", let us know which name to put on your certificate.

Write your FIRST and LAST name as you wish it to appear on your Certificate of Completion in the space below:

Line 1. First Name:

Line 2. First Name:



QUESTION 3: What is your mailing address?

This question is required.

We need your mailing address so we can send your Certificate of Completion. Depending on the course you're taking, we may also send other items that you'll need for class by "snail mail" (the post office), such as hard copies(printed pages), DVDs, pens, notebooks, etc.

As mentioned above, whenever possible, please enter your home/personal mailing address so we can contact you directly. If you need to use a different address, make sure that you'll be able to check the mail there often and are able to receive packages at this location.

Enter your FULL MAILING ADDRESS in the space below:

Line 1. Address:

Lines 2. City:

Line 3. State:

Line 4. Zip Code:



QUESTION 4: What email address will you be using for the Leadership Academy?

*** This question is required.**

As an Academy member, you'll need a way to send and receive emails. We'll use the address you enter below to send updates about the Academy, including the upcoming schedule, courses we're offering, and other opportunities to get involved. Once you've enrolled in a course, our Leadership Team will also use your address to stay connected between classes.

We require all Academy members to have email access. This means you need a way to send and receive messages to join. It does NOT mean you're required to do it alone!

If you don't use email, you're welcome to ask a family member, friend, or one of your paid support staff to use theirs.

Remember, if you're using someone else's address, you'll be responsible for contacting that person on a regular basis to check for messages from our Leadership Team.

Write the email address you'll be using for the Academy in the space below.

Make sure you enter the full address in the correct format. For example, write "[name@address.com](#)" instead of "name@address" or "name.address". It's important to do this correctly, or we won't be able to contact you!

Note: If you're planning to use someone else's email address, you'll be able to enter their name and how they're related to you in the next question.



QUESTION 5: Who does the email address you'll be using for the Academy belong to?

*** This question is required.**

You must be able to send and receive emails on a regular basis to join the Academy, but you don't need to own the address you'll be using.

Select the answer that describes who this email address belongs to from the 2 options listed below.

If you select the 2nd choice, a dialogue box will open so you can add the name of the person who owns this email address and you're related.

- Option 1:** This is my email address.
- Option 2:** This email address belongs to someone else.

Write the name of the person this address belongs to and how are they related to you in the space below:
For example, Are they a family member, friend, or paid support person?



QUESTION 6: What is the best phone number to reach you?

*** This question is required.**

Although we'll be using email as the primary way to connect with Academy members, we also need a way to reach you by phone. We'll use this number to contact you if we have questions or information to share that's better suited for a phone conversation than an email message.

We prefer calling members directly, but if talking on the phone isn't your thing, you're welcome to use a number that belongs to another person.

If the number you're using belongs to someone else, remember that you'll need to check with them for messages from our Leadership Team.

Write the best phone number to reach you, beginning with the area code, in the space below:



QUESTION 7: Who does the phone number you're using for the Academy belong to?

*** This question is required.**

We need a phone number where we can reach you to share updates and other information, but you're welcome to use someone else's number if necessary.

Select the answer that describes who the phone number you're using for class belongs to from the 2 options listed below:

- Option 1:** This is my phone number.
- Option 2:** This phone number belongs to someone else.

Write the name of the person this phone number belongs to and how are they related to you in the space below: *For example, Are they a family member, friend, or paid support person?*



SECTION 2: CONTACT PERSON INFORMATION

At Advocates in Action, we believe in "nothing about us without us." For our Leadership Team, this means contacting YOU, the Academy member, directly.

We'll email information about the Academy and the courses you enroll in, along with PDF files of any materials you may need. You're welcome to make copies and share them with others. In addition, we'd be happy to carbon copy ("CC") those messages to someone for you.

Note: If you add a contact person, or decide not to do so at this time, your answer isn't permanent. You can always change your mind about this later on! Complete Question 8 if you'd like us to do that, and let us know who your contact person will be.



QUESTION 8: Do you want to add a contact person to our mailing list?

*** This question is required.**

Select your answer from the 2 options below.

Note: If you select the 1st option, the application will automatically skip question 9. If you select the 2nd option, the application will take you to number 9 so you can enter this person's contact information.

- YES.** I'd like to add a contact person.
- NO.** I don't need you to send the information about the Academy to anyone else.



QUESTION 8, Continued: Who is your contact person?

The decision about whether or not to add a contact person is up to you. If you decide to add someone, please be sure and check with them first so they know that we've added them and will keep a lookout for messages from our Leadership team. If you change your mind, you can update this information at any time.

Fill in your contact person's information in the space below.

** Please be sure and check with this person first so they know that we've added them and will keep a lookout for messages from our Leadership team.

Line 1. Contact's First Name:

Line 2. Contact's Last Name:

Line 3. Contact's Email Address:

Line 4. Contact's Phone Number:

Line 5. Describe how this person is related to you, the applicant, in the space below. *For example, are they a family member, friend, or paid support person?*



SECTION 3: CONNECTION FOR CLASS

The next section is about the type of equipment you'll be using in the Academy.

Classes will meet virtually using the Zoom video app. Depending on the course you're taking, you may also need away to access the internet homework outside of class to complete homework assignments and other activities.

If you're not familiar with Zoom or how to navigate the internet, NO WORRIES! Those are some of the courses we'll be offering in the Academy. One of our Peer Mentors will also be available to meet 1:1 and help you get started.



QUESTION 9: How much experience do you have using Zoom?

*** This question is required.**

You don't need to have any experience using Zoom to join the Academy! We can show you how, but first, we need to know how comfortable you are using the app. Your answer will help us make recommendations about the courses, resources, and extra-curricular activities you may be interested in to help you learn more about using the app.

Select an answer from the 3 options listed below that best describes your experience level using the Zoom video app.

Once you make a selection, a dialogue box will open so you can add any additional comments or details. If you don't have anything else to share, write "none".

- Option 1:** Beginner Level
Comments:
- Option 2:** Some Experience
Comments:
- Option 3:** Power User
Comments:



QUESTION 10: What type of equipment will you use to participate in the Academy?

*** This question is required.**

Academy members must have both equipment and a way to connect to the internet.

We encourage members to use headphones for class. Ideally, you should select a private location with few distractions or background noise to join us on Zoom. Choosing the right setting is essential because it allows you to listen and share with fellow Academy members while respecting everyone's confidentiality. It's hard to have a private conversation when other people are talking or listening in the same room.

In terms of Zoom, although we've included Smartphones as one of the device options on our list, we also recommend that members use a computer, Chromebook, or Tablet when they come to class.

Smartphones, such as iPhones and Androids, are excellent tools for so many different activities. Unfortunately, they aren't the best choice when you're Zooming with more than a few people, or you need to view someone's shared screen during a meeting.

With that in mind, you're welcome to use a smartphone if that's your only option or the type of device you prefer.

However you decide to connect, the information you share below will help us improve the overall experience for everyone when we meet.

If you plan to use more than one device, select all the ones that apply. If your device isn't listed, you're not sure what type you'll be using yet, or you'd like to add any comments about how you plan to connect for class, select "**Option 5: OTHER**" and enter that information in the dialogue box when it opens.

ZOOM DESKTOP



Option 1: Computer

TABLET




Option 2: Tablet

SMARTPHONE




Option 3: Smartphone

CHROMEBOOK



Option 4: Chromebook

OTHER



Option 5: Other/Comments

Comments/ Additional Information:



QUESTION 11: As a member of the Graduate Academy, do you agree to the following requirements and expectations?

*** This question is required.**

Membership in the Academy is free and previous graduates of the Leadership Series and Partner-RI are welcome.

While there's no charge to join, members must agree to the following requirements and expectations in order to participate.

There are 7 items on this list. The first 6 are the Academy requirements. The last box is for adding any comments, questions, or concerns you have about them. Be sure and check all 7 boxes, or you won't be able to submit your application.

Review the 6 requirements listed below and LEFT CLICK in the matching checkbox to let us know you agree:

- Requirement 1:** I understand that most courses include a limited number of classes that will meet using the Zoom video app over a short period of time. Once I enroll in a course, I agree to attend all of the classes. I understand that failure to do so means I won't receive my certificate for that course.
- Requirement 2:** If I'm unable to attend a class, or I can't find the information I need to join by Zoom, I agree to call or email the AinA Leadership Team and let them know as soon as possible before class begins.
- Requirement 3:** I understand that I will need to have an excused absence if need to miss a class. Failure to do so means I may be put on a waiting list before I can enroll in future courses.

An excused absence means not being able to attend due to circumstances beyond your control. For example, your absence would be excused if you're sick, have trouble connecting, or experience other technical difficulties that prevent you from joining us on Zoom. Simply deciding not to attend class because you feel like doing something else that day is NOT an excused absence.
- Requirement 4:** I agree to complete the homework assignments and come to class ready to share my work. I also agree to contact the Leadership Team if I need some help with any of this.
- Requirement 5:** I understand that some courses will include extra activities, such as virtual field trips, public forums, webinars, and other team-building activities. Although most of these will be optional, I agree to attend whenever possible.

- Requirement 6:** I understand that any personal information other Academy members share is private and agree to respect their confidentiality. This means that I won't repeat what others share during class or any related coursework activities. I also agree not to share any of my fellow members' contact information without their consent.
- Comments, Questions, or Concerns:** When you check this option a dialogue box will open so you can add your comments, questions, or concerns about the requirements listed above. If you don't have anything to add, write "none".

Add your comments, questions, or concerns in the space below. If you have nothing to add, write "none":

Reference Only



SECTION 5: ACCOMMODATIONS AND ACCESSIBILITY

This section is about accommodations you may need to participate in the Academy. As Leadership Series and Partners-RI graduates may recall, you don't need to read or write to join us.

We provide our materials in multiple formats, such as pictures, videos, voice-over, music, and games, to make the information accessible, inclusive, and easy to understand. We also provide free text to speech technology so our members can listen to and translate these resources.

We'll do everything we can to help make your Academy experience a success! But first, we need to hear from you about your preferred learning style and how comfortable you are with different types of communication. Use the next set of questions to let us know where you're at, what kind of accommodations you may need, and what our Leadership team can do to help support you.



QUESTION 12: Are you comfortable READING?

***This question is required.**

This question isn't a test, and there are no wrong answers. It's totally fine if you don't read at all! Many of our previous graduates weren't big readers, and it was never a big deal.

We'll use the information you provide to help us customize the Academy course for all of our members.

Select the answer that best describes how comfortable you are with reading from the 3 options listed below.

When you select your answer, a box will open so you can add any comments you'd like to share about your choice. You need to type something in this box to complete the application, so if you don't have anything to add, write "none" instead.

If you have a different answer than what you see listed, select option #4, "other", and write it in a different answer.



Option 1: NO

Reading isn't really my thing



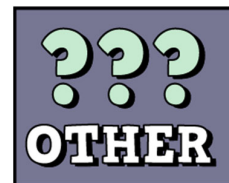
Option 2: YES and NO

It depends on what I'm reading



Option 3: YES

I'm usually comfortable reading



Option 4: OTHER

Enter a different answer below:



QUESTION 13: Are you comfortable WRITING?

*** This question is required.**

Similar to the previous question, you also don't need to be able to write to join the Academy. While you'll need away to record your answers when we have homework, there are lots of different ways you can do that. For example, instead of writing, you might try clipping pictures from magazines, printing images from websites, painting, drawing, Claymation, or composing new lyrics about the topic, sung to the tune of a familiar song.

We encourage Academy members to be as creative as possible in the way they deal with each assignment. After all, being creative is an important leadership quality. When it comes to homework there's no wrong way to record your answers. You're welcome to do things in a way that works for you!

We'll use the information you provide about how comfortable you are with writing to help us customize the Academy course for all of our members.

Select the answer that best describes how comfortable you are with writing from the 3 options listed below.

When you select your answer, a box will open so you can add any comments you'd like to share about your choice. You need to type something in this box to complete the application, so if you don't have anything to add, write "none". If you have a different answer than what you see listed, select option #4, "other", and enter that instead.



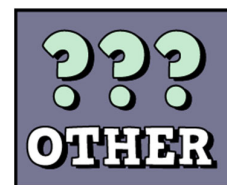
Option 1: NO
Writing isn't really my thing



Option 2: YES and NO
It depends on what I'm writing



Option 3: YES
I'm usually comfortable writing



Option 4: OTHER
Enter a different answer below:



QUESTION 14: Will anyone be with you during class to provide support?

*** This question is required.**

Our Leadership team will be available to support you during class. If you think you'll need some additional assistance, you're also welcome to have a family member, support staff, or friend join you.

Depending on when classes meet, we understand if you need to bring a different person when you enroll in additional courses. For consistency's sake, we ask that you bring the same person to all of the classes in any given course.

In addition, we require everyone who attends a class to participate fully, which means your support person will need to complete the homework assignments and come to class prepared to share, just like everyone else.

Let us know if you plan to bring a support person with you by selecting from one of the 3 choices listed below.

If you don't know whether or not you'll need a support person, select choice #3, "NOT SURE". Someone from our Leadership team will be in touch to discuss your options.

- **Option 1:** YES, I need to bring a support person.

Write the name of the person who will be supporting you and describe how they're related to you. For example, are they a family member, friend, or paid support person. If you're not sure who this person will be yet, write that instead, and let us know who it is at your interview.

- **Option 2:** NO. I won't be bringing a support person to class.
- **Option 3:** NOT SURE. I need help deciding.



QUESTION 15: Do you need any other accommodations to participate in the Academy?

*** This question is required.**

At Advocates in Action RI, we create materials in multiple formats to make them both accessible and user-friendly. We also realize that everyone has their own style of processing information and communicating. Some Academy members may need other accommodations to participate fully. We're looking forward to seeing you succeed and will provide whatever support we can to make that happen. Let us know how we can help!

Select your answer from the 2 options listed below. If you choose the 2nd option, a dialogue box will open so you can add your accommodation requests.

- **Option 1:** I don't have any other accommodation requests at this time.
- **Option 2:** I need the following accommodations:

Describe your accommodation requests in the space below:

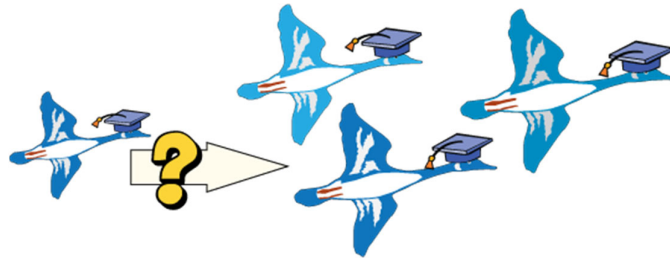
SECTION 6: ABOUT JOINING THE ACADEMY



We created the Leadership Series to empower Rhode Island residents, age 18 and older, who have an Intellectual/ Developmental Disability, to speak up for themselves and others. The Academy is designed to continue that learning experience.

Some things may not have changed much for our more recent graduates, while others may be in a totally new place compared to when they were in the Leadership Series or Partners-RI.

In this section, we've included a few questions to help us get to know more about you and your current situation.



Question 16: Why do you want to join the Graduate Academy?

***This question is required.**

In this question, we'd like to know what, or who motivated you to apply for the Academy. We've included a few ideas to help get you started.

These are just ideas! You don't need to use them if you have something else you want to say.

Idea 1: Do you have a specific experience or memory from your time in class with us that makes you want to continue your education in the Academy?

Idea 2: Did someone encourage you to apply?

Idea 3: Some of the courses we're offering can lead to a career path working with Advocates in Action as a Peer Mentor, Co-Facilitator, Resource Consultant, and more. Are you joining the Academy because you're interested in one of these positions?

Idea 4: Are you joining the Academy to learn more about certain topics? If yes, share those topics in your answer!

Explain why you're applying for the Graduate Academy in the space below.

Remember, there are no wrong answers! Share whatever comes to mind!

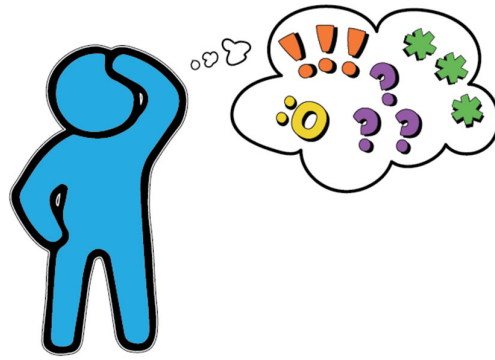
SECTION 7: FINAL THOUGHTS?



You've reached the end of the application! If you still have any questions, comments, or concerns about joining our new Leadership Graduate Academy, this is the place to share them!

The Academy will be a new experience for all of us. The individual courses are much shorter than either Partners-RI or the Leadership Series, and there will be fewer students in each of them. We'll also be teaching all of the courses online. While we expect a few speed bumps along the way as we get started, we're excited about the possibilities that a virtual platform has to offer! (*And we don't just mean needing to cancel a class for a few inches of snow or seeing one of our members drop out because they don't have transportation*).

Remote teaching and learning can open up a whole new world of opportunities and connections that are just a few mouse clicks away!



QUESTION 17: Is there anything else you'd like to share?

This is the last question, and it's optional.

You've reached the end of the application! If you still have any questions, comments, or concerns about joining the Graduate Academy, this is the place to share them!

The Academy is a new learning opportunity for Leadership Series and Partners-RI graduates to continue their learning with us, and we're looking forward to the community we'll be building together!

The questions, comments, and concerns you share will help us improve the experience for everyone. We'd never be able to do it alone, but together we can create something extraordinary!

And speaking of extraordinary, we encourage you to share suggestions for other topics you're interested in learning about.

What kind of things would you like to see, do, and learn in the Academy? Do you have experience/expertise about a topic that you'd like to share with others?

Being a leader means different things for different people. Do you have any ideas about how you can exercise your leadership skills as an Academy member?

We'll use the information you provide in your answer to help build our future course catalog.

Use the space below to share what's on your mind.

Remember, this question is optional, but if you have anything else to add, we'd love to hear from you!

Thanks for applying to be a member of the Leadership Graduate Academy!

Membership in the Academy is open to all of our Partners-RI and Leadership Series graduates, but the class size for each of the courses we're offering will be limited. A smaller class size means you'll have more opportunities to participate and interact with other members.

While we plan to offer most courses more than once, the sooner you complete this application, the more likely you'll be able to enroll the first time it's available.

Check your email after you submit this application. We'll send you a confirmation message with information about our winter course catalog.



The first courses will begin meeting in January 2022.

We hope to Zee you there!