



## APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

### 1. How do I apply?

Please review all components of the application and apply by 23 January 2026. In addition to basic personal information, you will be asked to submit your STEM and Public Health Leadership Project idea and responses to a set of Leadership Snapshot questions. You will also be asked to submit your resume and a letter of recommendation that speaks to your abilities and experience.

### 2. When will I find out if I've been accepted?

After a careful review from our Selection Committee, we will be reaching out to the selected applicants of their status by March 2026.

### 3. What are the key programme timelines?

Calls Open	18 December 2025
Closure of Submission	23 January 2026
Selection committee review and final selection	Feb & March 2026
Cohort Acceptances	March 2026
Cohort onboarding (virtual meeting)	April 2026
Immersion Event (In-person)	May 2026
Virtual Learning Touchpoints	June to Feb 2026
Lift Off Event (In-person)	March 2026

### 4. Will I be able to apply again if I previously applied and didn't get accepted?

Yes, but we recommend that you apply again only if you believe you have significantly added to and enriched your professional experience since your last application.

### 5. Is there a cost if I'm selected?

All the leadership resources provided during the year as well as travel, lodging and food expenses for the inperson engagements are covered. However, the year-long programme does not pay for your time. You will be expected to have access to a computer and internet to attend the virtual touchpoints. We also do not provide funding for your STEM and Public Health Leadership Project.

**6. Should I apply if I am borderline in terms of years of STEM experience?**

Our criteria states that you should be a mid- to senior-career professional with a minimum of 8 years of experience in STEM and/or Public Health fields. (Completed PhDs and advanced degrees such as post-docs will be counted as work experience). If your total STEM experience is borderline and close to the minimum of 8 years, there is a possibility that your application passes the screening and onto the review stage. However given our candidate pool over the past year, we have seen the more early-career candidates face much competition during the scoring stage. You may decide to wait until you have accrued more experience for a stronger application to increase your chances of being selected.

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**7. Should I apply if English is not my first language?**

Many of our current cohort members and alumnae do not speak English as their first language. However, ease in English is expected in order to participate in the Women's Leadership in STEM Entrepreneurship programme. All sessions will be conducted in the English language.

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**8. I have accessibility needs or a learning disability. Will special accommodations be provided during the journey?**

Yes, our team will work with you to understand your needs and how we can best create a supportive learning environment. If you have specific questions or concerns, please email us at [wlsjourney@womenlifthealth.org](mailto:wlsjourney@womenlifthealth.org)



## PROGRAMME QUESTIONS:

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### 1. What are the programme expectations and what does the time commitment look like?

If accepted, it will be mandatory for you to attend each virtual touchpoint (learning, mentoring and coaching touchpoints); the in-person learning experiences and to complete any intersession activities and the deliverables associated with the STEM and Public Health Leadership Project. Please ensure you will be available during the session dates as outlined in the calendar. The time commitment for the required Women's Leadership in STEM Entrepreneurship programme activities (all virtual touchpoints, intersession activities) ranges between 4-8 hours each month with the exception of the months of the in-person sessions. This estimate does not include the time required for the design, planning, and implementation phases of your STEM and Public Health Leadership Project, so please consider that in your decision to participate in the programme. You will also be asked to complete a "360-evaluation" and leadership style assessments, inform your understanding of your leadership strengths and growth areas. The 360-evaluation will involve soliciting feedback from your boss, peers, direct reports, and others. As our approach involves human-centered design, we will ask you to evaluate the experience and contribute ideas for how to enhance the programme for future cohorts.

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### 2. What are Learning, Mentoring, and Coaching Touchpoints?

- **Learning Touchpoints:** Learning Touchpoints are facilitated, virtual group sessions. Cohort members explore leadership frameworks, research, & tools in highly interactive learning touchpoints and workshop style sessions focused on dynamic practice. The touchpoints focus on personal & professional growth, current events in the STEM and public health ecosystem, as well as their STEM and Public Health Leadership Projects.
  - **Virtual Mentoring Touchpoints:** As part of the programme, senior level mentors are identified from different backgrounds, health sectors, STEM, policy, entrepreneurship and disciplines to serve as mentors to the cohort. Mentoring groups, comprised of several cohort members and one mentor, are grouped based on complementary backgrounds and professional trajectory. Cohort members will be able to rely on their mentor to serve as a technical and career resource during the Journey.
  - **Virtual Coaching Touchpoints:** Cohort members will be paired with a Coach who works one-on-one with them to build on their strengths and address areas for growth. Leadership style assessments, including a "360-degree evaluation," will inform these conversations and enhance each participant's understanding of their own leadership skills.
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### 3. What are the Leadership Immersion and Leadership Lift-Off events?

At the core of the programme are also two in-person sessions: the Leadership Immersion (May 2026) and the Lift-Off event (March 2027).

The 'Leadership Immersion' is an in-person convening that takes place a few months into the programme, where through dynamic discussions, presentations, and hands-on exercises, cohort members enhance their

skills, apply them to real-world examples, and reflect on lessons learned. A series of powerful conversations will complement the instruction, featuring eminent figures in Entrepreneurship and innovation who have led transformational change, and who are able to impart practical knowledge that can be immediately applied to varied career and life situations.

At the end of the year-long programme, there is a public and a private “Lift-Off” event. During the virtual, public liftoff event, cohort members reflect on their leadership evolution through the course of the year and present their STEM and Public Health Leadership Projects to their peers as well as other health audiences. The in-person, private LiftOff event includes final leadership curriculum sessions, and the celebration of the cohort’s growth as they ‘lift-off to a new phase of their leadership.

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#### 4. What is the **STEM and Public Health Leadership Project**?

The STEM and Public Health Leadership Project is a core component of the programme that empowers you to design and lead an initiative at the intersection of science, technology, and health. It enables you to channel your expertise, creativity, and networks toward addressing a real-world challenge through a systems-thinking approach. At WomenLift Health, we recognize that sustainable improvements in health outcomes rely on coordinated action across interconnected domains. Your project may therefore explore how innovations in **STEM fields—such as biotechnology, data science, climate technology, engineering, or digital health—can drive equitable and scalable public health solutions.**

We take an expansive view of “health,” encompassing not only healthcare systems but also the **social, environmental, and technological determinants of well-being**—including climate change, food systems, agriculture, water and sanitation, education, economic policy, gender equity, and technology access. Through this lens, participants are encouraged to identify leverage points where STEM innovation can advance public health impact and long-term systems change.

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#### 5. What are the **Guidelines for the STEM and Public Health Leadership Project**?

A STEM and Public Health Leadership Project could accomplish one or more of the following, but is not limited to:

- Develop new or improved technology solutions to support progress in STEM and public health
- Develop innovative methodologies for collection, analysis, or use of gender-disaggregated STEM and/or public health data
- Improve STEM and/or public health-related process/system in your organization
- Expand the power and influence of women to improve STEM and/or public health outcomes

There are only three rules for the STEM and Public Health Leadership Project:

- Focus on improving STEM and public health outcomes and integrate gender considerations into interventions, policies, and systems to address differences in burdens, risks, care, and outcomes.
- Apply and enhance your leadership skills. Strike a balance between exercising your control and influence, while stretching yourself and leveraging resources to build sustainable impact.
- Channel your passion into STEM and public health impact by addressing a STEM and/or public health issue through a systems lens, connecting to structures, policies, stakeholders, and root causes sustainable, scalable change.

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## 6. What kinds of ideas would be appropriate for a STEM and Public Health Leadership Project?

A leadership project can be something that the applicant is passionate about and focuses on improving STEM and Public Health outcomes by adopting a gender lens.

The most successful STEM and Public Health Leadership Project are targeted, specific, relevant, achievable, and measurable ones.

- Are fueled by passion and deep interests of the participants.
- Can realistically start being implemented within the duration of the programme.
- Can continue beyond the programme and do not have to be fully wrapped up by the end of the year.

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The STEM and Public Health Leadership Project may be designed under the following themes such as

- Centering Women and Girls in STEM Innovation, Policy, and Implementation
- Catalysing Institutional Transformation for Inclusive STEM and Public Health Systems
- Optimizing Pathways to STEM and Public Health Leadership
- Building Integrated, Resilient, and STEM-Enabled Health Systems
- Driving Impact Through Science, Technology, and Entrepreneurship for Better livelihood outcomes

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## 7. Will there be funding for STEM and Public Health Leadership Project ?

Unfortunately, we do not have the resources to fund the implementation of the Leadership Projects. However, we provide support by connecting you with highly experienced mentors, coaches, and experts within the WomenLiftHealth and BIRAC-GCI network. Your fellow cohort members can also be an excellent resource for enhancing your project.

We encourage you to align your Leadership Project with your current work and gain additional buy-in from institutional leaders. We have found that successful projects stretch beyond your day-to-day responsibilities.

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## 8. How can I balance this leadership opportunity with my already busy professional and personal life?

This programme has been designed for professional women leaders. We recognize the importance of work life harmony and know that this is often a challenge holding many women back from leadership roles. We do not want

to add further burden to your personal and professional life but require our cohort members to be fully present and engaged. We will work with you and take an integrative approach towards incorporating your personal needs into this programme.

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### **9. Why do I need to be based in India for at least 75% of the programme?**

We ask cohort members to attend all touchpoints (which would be scheduled during typical IST business hours) and we believe that becomes very challenging if they are in a different time zone. The programme is hybrid with both in-person and virtual events so there will be travel within India. We also want the cohort to fully engage, build community with us and their fellow peers outside of the touchpoint time – which we believe can be tricky with a geographic spread.

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### **10. How will this help me to connect with other women leaders in STEM Ecosystem?**

Throughout the programme, we will foster a vibrant community where cohort members can collaborate, learn from each other, and build lasting relationships. This sense of community will extend beyond the 12-month programme, as we are committed to keeping alumni, called Global Fellows, engaged and continuing to grow together long after the programme concludes. Our goal is to create a strong, interconnected network of Global Fellows at the global, regional, and local levels. This network will not only offer ongoing support but will also provide opportunities for you to mentor new cohort members and advocate for women's leadership on both local and global stages. To facilitate connections and amplify your voice, we will utilize our digital platforms—website, social media, and more—to enhance networking within the cohort and beyond. You will become a part of the Womenlift Health family, with access to our resources, and we will remain dedicated to nurturing this relationship well into the future.

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### **11 What is the primary difference between the India Leadership Journey and the Women's Leadership in STEM Entrepreneurship?**

The key distinction between the India Journey and the Women's Leadership in STEM Entrepreneurship programme lies in their respective target audiences. While both programmes recognize the importance of building networks among women leaders, the Women's Leadership in STEM Entrepreneurship programme specifically aims to bring together women leaders who are STEM-based entrepreneurs, innovators, or professionals working across a wide range of organizations.

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### **12 Am I allowed to use AI tools (like ChatGPT) when filling out the Women's Leadership in STEM Entrepreneurship programme application?**

We've noticed an increase in the use of AI tools in recent applications. We live in a world shaped by AI, and we welcome thoughtful, transparent use of these tools. However, submissions that rely heavily on generic AI-generated content often read similarly to others, lack depth, and are less competitive in our highly selective process. Your application should ultimately reflect your own thinking, experience, and goals. Strong responses are specific, contextualized, and grounded in your work and interests, with clear and realistic goals. Throughout the programme, we do not permit AI notetakers in our virtual touchpoints in order to maintain a psychologically safe and fully present space. We do, however, welcome other accessibility features and are glad to discuss the best options for your needs.

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