Windsor Leadership Trust Working Groups

We know Alumni value many things about our programmes, but one of the most important is the opportunity to share challenges with, and learn from, leaders working in completely different walks of life. The connections made on a programme are often long-lasting and rooted in a shared experience and style of learning. Many Alumni have asked the Trust to provide ways of continuing such conversations, underpinned by the ethos of trust, honesty and openness experienced on the programmes.

To this end the Trust has launched a series of Working Groups aimed at building on our programme experience, and in the same spirit, sustaining the richness of learning and networking that Alumni value.

"The diversity of the people one has the privilege of spending time with and the opportunity to explore both your own and their lives and aspirations, is invaluable."

The principles of the Working Groups

The Trust Working Groups consist of carefully assembled groups of Alumni who meet quarterly. In the spirit of the syndicate sessions on a programme, the purpose of these meetings is to allow the group members to give and receive intensely practical input and advice from one other on the ongoing leadership challenges they face day-to-day, quarter-to-quarter, year-on-year.

Each Group is chaired by a Trust Chair, whose prime responsibility is to ensure and enhance the dynamism and quality of input and output, and the high level of leadership demand and performance that members should expect from one other. Because time is at a premium, the Chair's role makes sure the Group's work is highly disciplined and structured whilst focusing on absolute truth and reality. The Chair maintains an overview of the group: they take responsibility for the performance of the Group as a whole, and for the contribution by each member.

The aim of the Group is to ensure the conversations within it are of a quality and kind that members cannot, or do not, have from any other source: in short, of the quality experienced within Programme syndicates. As always, there are no 'political' agendas within the Group, and they are held under the Chatham House Rule.

In addition to the Group meetings, the Chair conducts a 1-1 with each member between each meeting. These sessions enable the Chair to identify and prepare issues for group input at the next meeting, ensuring the forward-looking nature of the discussions.

"I valued learning from the experiences of leaders from all walks of life, and exploring the similarities and differences of attitudes and motivations from across the sectors."

How the Working Groups are assembled

The Trust will invite you to express an interest in joining a Working Group, either individually or as a syndicate. A Group Chair will then contact you to establish whether a Group meets your particular needs, and advise on which Group, if appropriate, will best serve your interests.

The key to the success of each Group is the nature of the relationships between members, and the extent to which their character, personality, attributes, skills and experience complement one another. The Chair is skilled at making these assessments to ensure everyone can make a positive contribution to the dynamic atmosphere of the Group as a whole.

The Working Groups are assembled on the basis of the interplay of the individual characters as well as their breadth of leadership experience, and less on current roles or positions. Therefore the initial conversation with the Chair, who knows his/her own Group intimately, will ensure the most appropriate 'fit' of member to Group.

The mechanics of the Working Group

Each Group meets quarterly, and dates and location are established a year in advance to maximise attendance. Whilst members are encouraged, and become motivated, to attend all Group meetings, unavoidable long-term and short-term commitments will always be accommodated. Potential members should not consider themselves disenfranchised if they can only attend a limited number of meetings. The Chair will book the preliminary 1-1 meeting dates separately with each member, at a venue most convenient to the member.

Our commitment to our Alumni

As Alumni, all Working Group members will also be invited to attend our higher-level core programmes when they reach the relevant stage of their leadership journey. They will receive four editions of the Newsletter per year packed with news from the Trust including programme updates, articles from our academic fellows, and news from Alumni such as reunions organised and movers and shakers.

All members of Trust Working Groups will automatically be registered as Friends of the Trust and will receive all associated benefits, including a complimentary invitation to our Annual Lecture, and invitations to the series of Breakfast Briefings.

How to become a Working Group member

If you express an interest, following an invitation to consider becoming a member of a Working Group, either at a Programme Part II or directly, a Trust Chair will arrange to meet you. This is a chance for you to explore the concept further. Should, after this meeting, you go on to participate in your first Working Group, members will then be asked to commit to a group for a minimum of a year. Only at this point will the Trust send the relevant registration paperwork.

A contribution of £3,000 per annum, or £750 per quarter, is required at registration towards the running costs of the Working Group. A limited number of bursary places are available for not-for-profit organisations.

If you would like to find out more about becoming a member of a Working Group, please contact Dr James McCalman who would be delighted to hear from you on: 01753 272054, or e mail: james.mccalman@windsorleadershiptrust.org.uk