

Aktive

WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

PROGRAMME 2025



WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

In 2025 the Active Women's Leadership Development Programme (WLDP) will bring together a fourth cohort of diverse women leaders to take part in an eight month programme. It will provide a unique opportunity and environment for learning that will support these women to further develop their confidence and leadership competences to step up and make an impact in the sport and physical activity sector. The WLDP is available to anyone who identifies as a woman.



PARTICIPANT

TESTIMONIALS



“Mā te huruhuru ka rere te manu” (Adorn the bird with feathers so it may soar). The more feathers you provide the higher the bird will fly no matter how old you are. The Aktive Women’s Leadership Development Programme has provided me an environment of meaningful learning, professionalism, networking and sisterhood. I am definitely a more confident leader as a result.”

Maraea Howe, Cohort 2 participant



“The WLDP has afforded me an incredible opportunity. The length of the programme and depth of the content has ensured I’ve been able to build meaningful connections across not only Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland, but Aotearoa New Zealand. I believe that it has already positively impacted my leadership capability, and I’m looking forward to the remainder of the programme to see where it takes us.”

Hollie Ellis, Cohort 2 participant



“I’ve loved being on the Aktive WLDP, learning alongside like-minded, passionate, powerful women. This programme and mentorship have helped build confidence, develop knowledge and leadership skills. I now have an invaluable network to call upon in the women’s sport sector.”

Sarah McIlroy, Cohort 1 participant



“Thanks for an awesome day today team! My cup is full once again...and I walk away inspired and empowered, with some new ideas and skills to

add to my kete.” **Tarsh Poching-Ieremia, Cohort 2 participant**



“We have collectively created a safe space to grow, bounce ideas around, and share our challenges and successes. The programme has challenged me to think outside of traditional “boxes” of female leadership and provided me with valuable tools, such as those associated with having challenging conversations. I definitely feel that my confidence in myself and my ability to lead has grown as a result of being a part of the programme.”

Roxanna Holdsworth, Cohort 2 participant



“The WLDP has introduced me to some tools and approaches which have enabled me to be a more engaged leader within my role working with coaches, referees and other volunteers. Overall, the programme has pushed me to challenge my thinking and be open to new opportunities and experiences knowing there is a network of women leaders willing to support each other.”

Nicola Post, Cohort 1 participant



“Through a variety of different workshops and projects, I have added to my own repertoire of presentation styles and expanded my delivery toolkit. The women I have met on the programme continue to inspire me and I’m grateful these wāhine toa are part of my network. Thanks to Aktive for bringing us together!”

Gayle Vaughan, Cohort 1 participant



PROGRAMME

OBJECTIVES

There are two key objectives for the programme:

LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

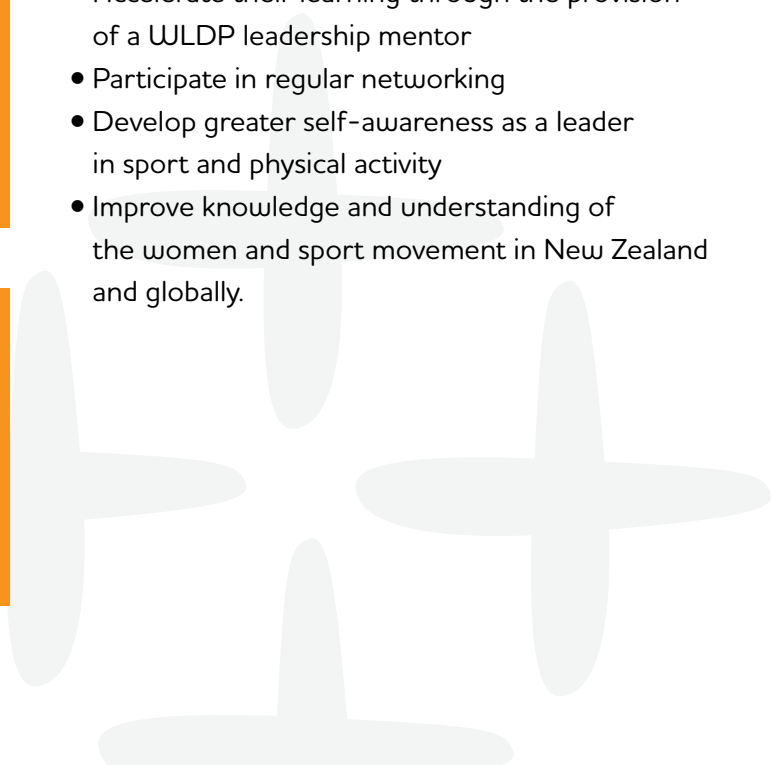
Supporting women to further develop their leadership competencies or behaviours, consolidate their own leadership style, empower them to be who they want to be and navigate the challenges that are part of leadership.

CONFIDENCE

Encouraging women to identify their strengths, pursue goals, take opportunities, and progress their career path. They will be confident to champion themselves and others going forward.

Specifically, the WLDP will support women to:

- Further develop confidence and competence in a range of leadership behaviours
- Produce a Personal Development Plan with clear goals that support career strategies
- Accelerate their learning through the provision of a WLDP leadership mentor
- Participate in regular networking
- Develop greater self-awareness as a leader in sport and physical activity
- Improve knowledge and understanding of the women and sport movement in New Zealand and globally.



TIMETABLE AND

COMMITMENT

The WLDP is an eight month programme, starting April 2025, comprising:

- Personal development in leadership environments
- WLDP leadership mentoring
- One residential workshop
- Two one-day workshops (in person)
- Two online workshops (up to two-hours)
- Opportunities to attend networking and other leadership events.

10 March - 28 March 2025 - Applications Open

April - May 2025 - Pre Programme Tasks

June 2025 - Two Day Residential Workshop Location: Bruce Pulman Lodge

July 2025 - Online Workshop

August 2025 - One Day Workshop Location: AUT Millennium

September 2025 - Online Workshop

October 2025 - One Day Workshop and Graduation Location: Remuera Golf Club

November 2025 - Online Workshop

December 2025 - Programme Ends



PROGRAMME

STRUCTURE

The WLDP consists of several mandatory elements; all of which are essential for the critical learning and development that will take place.

Workshops

Sessions will be delivered in workshop style and are an integral part of the learning process. All workshops will have clear learning outcomes and are tailored to maximise learning; they will be challenging, constructive and highly interactive.

Each participant will produce a Personal Development Plan setting goals on developing their leadership behaviours, career strategies and future opportunities, as well as to consolidate learning.

Building social capital

Building social capital is an important element in career advancement and appears to be an area where women lag behind men due to a lack of career enhancing networks and high-status mentors.^[1] We also know from research that

women get less of the support that advances careers^[2]. Women are less likely to receive advice from managers and senior leaders on how to advance, and employees who do are more likely to say they've been promoted in the last two years. Similarly, women are less likely to interact regularly with senior leaders, yet employees who do are more likely to aspire to progress their careers.

This programme will focus on building social capital by:

- Providing each participant with a leadership mentor
- Identifying and tapping into networks (national, regional, and local)
- Developing the participants themselves into a regional network
- Connecting the participants into the wider Women in Sport Aotearoa network
- Inviting participants to take part in Alumni networking and professional development opportunities.

^[1] (Marilyn Clarke, (2011) Advancing women's careers through leadership development programs

^[2] Lean In and McKinsey 2017



LEADERSHIP

MENTORS

Each participant will be allocated a WLDP leadership mentor to support them on their WLDP journey. Leadership mentors will be allocated after the women have indicated their top choices. The plan is to have four to six sessions depending on need and these are up to two hour face to face/phone/zoom calls between July 2025 and December 2025.

Mentors will feedback anonymously on training needs to help inform the Programme Leaders of issues/challenges, as well as progress. Other feedback will be used to inform the content of the workshops.

The role of the mentors is to support the participant with the implementation of their personal development plans by acting as a sounding board, supporting the woman to work out the answers for themselves, as well as being able to offer tailored support from their knowledge and experience where appropriate.

NETWORKS

We will develop the women leaders into a regional network, and will set up social media groups using technology such as WhatsApp to facilitate this. Our aim is also to identify and tap into existing networks (national, regional, and local) and will work with other networks on this.

ALUMNI

PROGRAMME

We will actively engage past alumni of the WLDP on a regular basis and utilise their knowledge and experience to support the current cohort of women leaders. There will be regular engagement opportunities for both the current cohort and Alumni group to support each other's growth through social events that strengthen the networks of women leaders in our sector.



PROGRAMME

CONTENT

WLDP – Leadership Competency Framework

We have drawn from a variety of competencies or behaviours to help shape the competency framework for WLDP. This comprises three main areas that are critical to be a great leader in the sport and physical activity sector. For each competency area we have listed some examples of the types of positive behaviour that leaders might demonstrate.

DRIVES SELF

DEVELOPS EXCELLENCE

EXECUTES EFFECTIVELY

Drives Self

Self-awareness:

1. Is aware of the impact of own behaviour on others
2. Demonstrates effective reflective practice on a regular basis to review and enhance own performance
3. Is aware of own needs to operate at one's best (wellbeing)

Passion for learning and improvement:

4. Seeks and acts on both positive and challenging feedback
5. Is relentlessly curious and seeks learning opportunities
6. Embraces unfamiliar or uncomfortable situations to learn and develop

Personal drive and ambition:

7. Displays future-orientated aspirations with long-term goals that fulfil own needs and personal desires
8. Uses a variety of strategies to overcome and quickly recover from difficulties (resilience)
9. Has a strong network that supports own well-being

Develops Excellence

Philosophy:

10. Can articulate own leadership philosophy and approach based on ethics, integrity, personal values, knowledge and experience.
11. Consistently demonstrates behaviour that is in alignment with own leadership philosophy and approach
12. Applies the principles of coaching to facilitate other's development

Leadership:

13. Translates the strategic direction, including vision, mission, and values into effective plans
14. Makes tough decisions in high-pressure situation
15. Positively embraces creativity, change and innovation to improve performance in the organisation

Performance culture:

16. Invests time to involve teams in determining a high-performing culture
17. Creates an environment where two-way positive and challenging feedback is the norm
18. Creates a culture that supports taking responsible risks and one where change is expected and supported

Executes Effectively

Develops systems:

19. Creates an inclusive environment, one from which people can grow and benefit
20. Works with people to set challenging and achievable goals with clear accountability for results
21. Recognises, rewards and celebrates team and organisational achievements

Builds networks:

22. Builds strategic relationships with key decision-makers and influencers to ensure delivery of vision
23. Connects with networks to support professional growth and development
24. Brings people with complementary skills, interests and viewpoints together ensuring the organisation benefits from diverse input

Communicates with impact:

25. Consults and communicates clearly and credibly with widely varied audiences and stakeholders
26. Expresses thoughts, feelings, and ideas in a clear, succinct, and compelling manner
27. Leads meaningful communication of shared vision to inspire and influence others.

Pre WLDP

To ensure that the content of WLDP is as relevant as possible to the differing circumstances of each participant, we ask for some tasks to be completed prior to the first workshop.

Detailed instructions and templates will be provided for all the steps as soon as the individual is accepted onto the programme in April 2025.

These include:

- Submit a brief leadership profile and image
- Undertake a self-assessment against WLDP competencies (see above) to help the participant develop a plan to address development needs
- From the self-assessment determine a small number of strengths and areas to develop and collect 360 feedback from colleagues and peers against these
- Analyse the 360 feedback to determine initial key areas of focus to develop through the WLDP programme
- Submit an image that represents leadership and one sentence describing own leadership philosophy.

We will spend some time at the residential session considering the 360-leadership feedback and helping the individual to develop short and medium-term goals to develop these behaviours. The WLDP will also invite the employer/line manager to share with us any areas of focus the participant should consider for their development.

During WLDP

We know that investing in people is of the utmost importance and that time and money spent in learning and development must pay off. We fully recognise that changes in behaviour must be embedded and sustained over time and ensuring that people take responsibility for their own self-sustained learning is at the heart of everything we do.

The following principles guide all WLDP activities:

- The WLDP programme will be facilitative rather than prescriptive allowing participants to focus on self-sustained learning
- Participants will be supported to take ownership of, and responsibility for, their own learning
- We will create a safe working environment and nurture a sense of collegiality and trust for all participants We will set scaled challenges that take people out of their comfort zone and into the stretch zone, so learning is maximised
- We allow time to practise new techniques successfully and support the participants to apply the learning to their current or future situation
- We actively encourage participants to give and receive feedback that builds their confidence.
- We will develop a set of shared values to encourage reciprocity, mutuality and respect of differences and diversity
- We believe that a flexible approach to meet the diverse needs of specific groups, individuals, and cultures is essential
- We draw on a variety of theories, ideas, opinions and approaches to develop learning that 'sticks', and we are innovative and creative in our approach.

Post WLDP

After the final workshop, we will continue to support the women to:

- Achieve their goals by staying connected through Aktive's WLDP Alumni Programme
- Undertake monitoring and evaluation after the programme finishes, then after six months and one year and this includes feedback from the employer/line manager.
- Be part of a network of women leaders
- Review their Personal Development Plan and set goals for year two.

LOGISTICS

AND COSTS

Once a participant is accepted onto the programme, we will send out all the details needed to accept the place and formally register for the residential session in June 2025.

Aktive funding will cover:

- All tuition and WLDP programme materials
- Breakfast, lunch, evening meals and other refreshments
- One night's accommodation for the two-day residential
- All programme components including WLDP leadership mentors.

Any costs associated with the Participant travelling to the WLDP locations needs to be covered by the participant.

The Participant Fee for the WLDP is \$600. This must be paid within 30 days of being accepted into the Programme cohort.



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