sameskies

Programme description

Transformative Leadership in Action

Executive summary

Leadership grows when we learn beyond our own worlds.

How do we lead across differences? How do we work with uncertainty, question our assumptions and collaborate with people whose experiences differ from our own?

Transformative Leadership in Action is a five-month learning programme that brings together people from the private sector, academia, non-profit organisations, public institutions and civil society to learn across sectors and lived experiences.

Through training, coaching, reflection and hands-on collaboration, participants develop practical skills to lead, communicate and work across differences. Together with leaders of refugee-led organisations, they work on a real-world project shaped by the priorities of the organisation, applying their learning while contributing their own knowledge, skills and perspectives. No previous experience in the refugee or humanitarian sector is needed to take part. This programme is reinforced by great participant diversity.

More than a training course, Transformative Leadership in Action offers the time, support and collaborative space to put new approaches into practice, learn from others, and reflect on your practice with a personal coach - helping you transfer your learning into your professional context.

From leadership learning to refugee-led organisations

Transformative Leadership in Action's impact extends beyond the learning experience. The programme has helped create the conditions for refugee-led initiatives to take shape, bringing people together to turn shared learning and collaboration into action.

Two refugee-led organisations were founded through the past editions of this programme: **Refugee Network Center** and **Jakarta Bersatu Project**. Their origins demonstrate how a collaborative learning process can contribute to the creation of lasting, refugee-led initiatives. These examples reflect the programme's core approach: bringing people with different experiences and expertise together, strengthening leadership and collaboration, and supporting initiatives shaped by refugee-led priorities.

About Same Skies

Same Skies brings together expertise in leadership development and Refugee-Led Action. We have extensive experience in leadership training, coaching and capacity strengthening, alongside long-standing collaboration with refugee-led organisations and leaders across Southeast Asia. Our work focuses on inclusive leadership, cross-cultural collaboration and navigating complexity, connecting people and perspectives to turn learning into meaningful action.

Why this programme?

Transformative Leadership in Action is built around three interconnected ideas that have shaped Same Skies' work over the past decade:

Working across differences
Global challenges increasingly require us to work across borders, cultures and sectors. The programme helps you develop the curiosity, adaptability and listening skills needed to do this well.

Lived-experience leadership
People affected by displacement have knowledge and expertise that are essential to shaping solutions that affect their lives. You will learn alongside refugee leaders and other peers from diverse backgrounds, and build relationships grounded in mutual respect and shared learning.

Collective action
Meaningful change depends on people connecting their knowledge, skills and perspectives. The programme creates space to build trust, collaborate across sectors and turn shared learning into action.

What makes this programme different?

Learn beyond your usual networks

By working with people whose perspectives differ from your own, you can challenge assumptions, broaden your thinking and explore new ways of leading and collaborating.

Practise and grow over time

Rather than a one-off training, this is an extended learning journey. Coaching, peer exchange, reflection and practical experience give you time to test new approaches, learn from feedback and connect your learning to your own professional context.

Mutual benefits model

Leaders of refugee-led organisations bring their knowledge, lived experience and understanding of their communities. Other participants contribute their professional experience, skills, ideas and time.
Together, they identify priorities, explore opportunities and co-create a project that builds on existing strengths and responds to the organisation's needs. The refugee-led organisation retains ownership of the project and decides how to take it forward beyond the programme.
Same Skies continues to support the organisation beyond the programme through training and mentoring.

Who is this programme for?

For individuals

Transformative Leadership in Action is for people who want to strengthen their leadership, collaborate across differences and put their learning into practice. No previous experience in the refugee or humanitarian sector is needed. We actively seek participants from diverse professional and personal backgrounds, including the private sector, academia, non-profit organisations, public institutions and civil society. The exchange of different perspectives, experiences and expertise is central to the programme.
The programme is particularly suited to people who are curious, reflective, open to feedback and keen to contribute actively to a diverse learning community.

Applicants should also:

- **Have a strong command of English**, sufficient to participate actively in discussions, group work and written activities.
- **Commit to the full programme**, including taking ownership of a collaborative project developed during the learning journey.
- **Have basic digital skills and regular access to a computer and a stable internet connection.**

For organisations and companies

Transformative Leadership in Action offers organisations an opportunity to:

- Invest in their employees' leadership, collaboration and project management skills.
- Give staff the opportunity to learn across sectors and engage with people whose experiences and perspectives differ from their own.
- Support professional growth through practical, collaborative and experiential learning.
- Strengthen their teams' ability to navigate diversity, work across cultures and build effective relationships.

How does it work?

Action learning

Action learning is a hands-on approach in which a group works on a real challenge, tests different approaches, reflects on the experience and adapts along the way. Learning takes place at individual, team and organisational levels.
Throughout the programme, you will apply this approach to a project developed alongside a refugee-led organisation. You will strengthen practical skills in cross-cultural communication and leadership, remote management, adaptability and creative problem-solving.
Alongside the collective work, coaching and peer exchange will help you examine your own leadership practice and explore how you respond to complexity, change, power and uncertainty.

Your leadership journey

Collective learning

1. Build the team and create the conditions for learning together

You will build trust, explore different perspectives and ways of working, and develop the foundations for collaboration across differences. You will meet leaders of a refugee-led organisation, join their team and begin the learning journey together.

2. Develop your leadership and project management skills

As you work together on a real-world project, you will explore how you lead, communicate, make decisions and navigate different perspectives. Through dedicated learning activities, reflection and feedback, you will deepen your self-awareness and develop practical ways to lead and collaborate across differences. Alongside this, you will work through the project cycle management process.

3. Reflect and adapt

Throughout the journey, you will reflect on your experience, your development as a leader and how your team works together. You will use these insights to adjust your approach and apply what you learn. Action, reflection and adaptation run throughout the entire learning journey.

Individual learning

Alongside the collective journey, you will shape your own development path around your needs, aspirations and leadership goals. With support from coaches, facilitators and peers, you will:

1. Set your objectives and develop a personal action plan.
2. Put your plan into practice in your own context.
3. Reflect on what you learn about yourself as a leader, team member and person, and adapt your approach.
4. Select additional elective courses relevant to your goals and interests.

Individual coaching and peer learning provide opportunities to exchange experiences, test ideas and connect the programme's learning to your own professional practice.

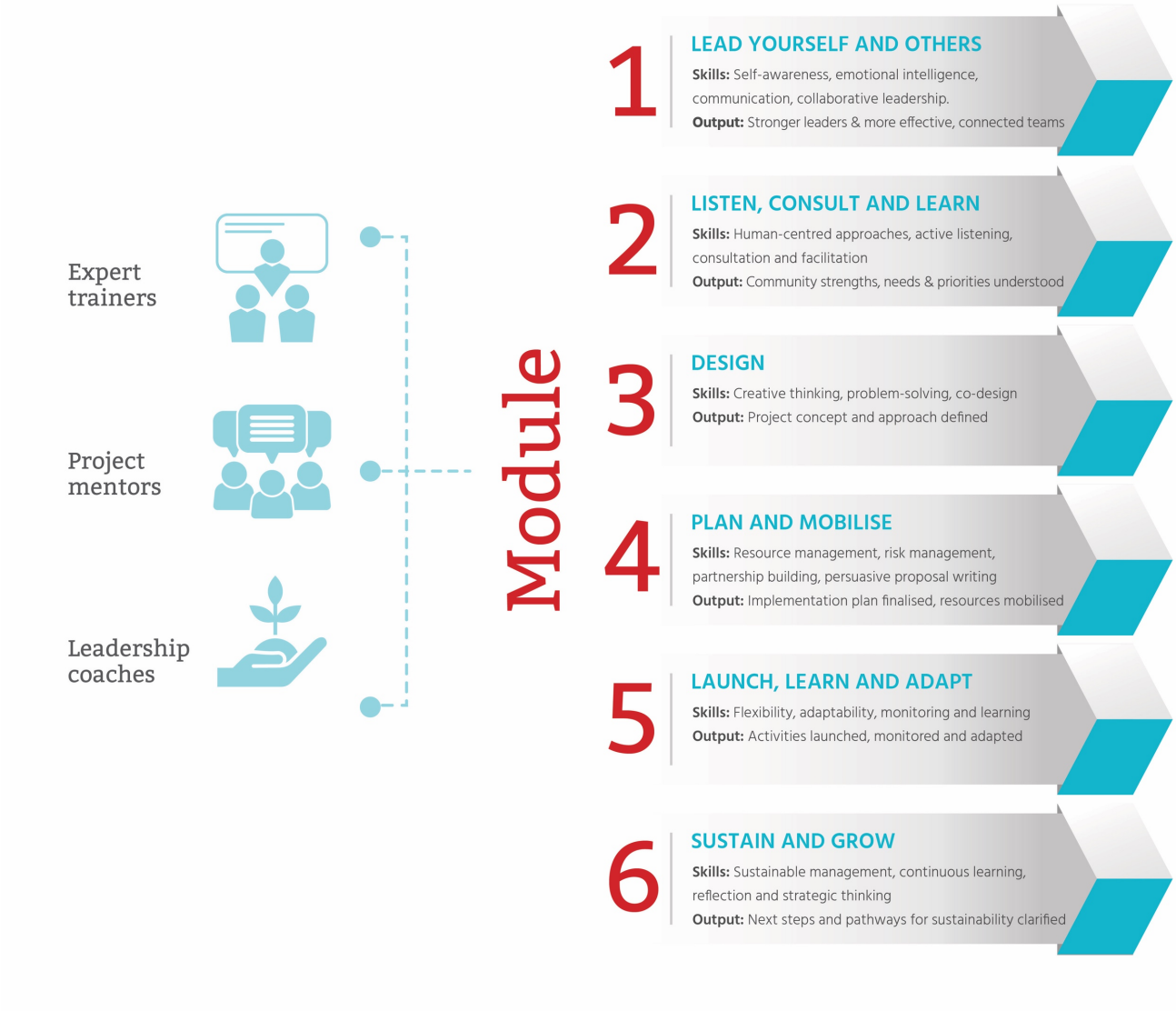
Programme at a glance

Objective

By the end of the programme, you will be able to apply inclusive leadership and project management skills to work effectively with people across cultures, backgrounds and lived experiences. You will be able to build meaningful partnerships and co-design projects that reflect community-defined priorities and a shared vision.

Structure

The learning journey is structured around six modules which are supported by Same Skies trainers, mentors and coaches.



Content

The following topics will be covered:

- Cultural competency
- Critical thinking & creativity
- Innovation & human-centred design
- Leadership models & approaches
- Happiness & resilience
- Diversity
- Human resources & people management
- Communication & negotiation
- Ethics & professional standards
- Professional boundaries
- The principle of do-no-harm
- Project cycle management
    - Assessment
    - Design
    - Planning
    - Implementation
    - Monitoring & evaluation
- Finance & resource planning & management
- Social entrepreneurship, durability & sustainability

Elective courses

You will also be able to choose from optional courses to explore topics of particular interest in areas such as:

- Humanitarian essentials
- Management essentials
- Programmatic support
- Safety and security
- Etc.

Organisational aspects

Dates: 24 January – 27 June 2027

Format

Blended learning, combining online and face-to-face learning activities:

- **Self-paced activities**: videos, podcast, exercises, forum discussion, readings, personal action plan
- **Online group work**: asynchronous and synchronous assignments
- **Online sessions**: live courses, workshops and individual coaching (on Zoom)
- **Residential session**: a two-week immersive learning experience in Malaysia

Workload

You should expect an average commitment of approximately 12 hours per week during the remote learning periods, and approximately 40 hours per week during the residential session.
A typical remote learning week will include:

- **Self-paced activities**: 3 hours/week
- **Online group work**: 5 hours/week
- **Online sessions**:
    - **Group sessions**: 3 hours/week on Sundays
    - **Individual coaching:** upon request

Residential session

You will participate in a two-week residential session in **Malaysia** from 4-18 April 2027.

Fees and participation costs

The programme fee depends on your circumstances and the resources of the organisation you represent:

- **Individual/ self-funded**: USD 3,000
- **NGO / non-profit sponsored**: USD 4,500
- **Corporate / private sector sponsored**: USD 6,000

We recognise that individuals and organisations have different financial capacities. **Reduced fees and scholarships are available** for participants from grassroots organisations, small organisations and other contexts where the standard fee would be a barrier to participation. Support is assessed individually as part of the application process.

Organisations enrolling three or more participants may also benefit from group discounts. Please contact us to discuss group participation.

A cross-subsidy model

Our pricing follows a **cross-subsidy model**: participants and organisations with greater financial capacity contribute more, helping us make the programme accessible to people who would otherwise not be able to participate.
Your participation contributes twice: **it invests in your own leadership development while helping create resources and opportunities for refugee-led organisations**.
A proportion of programme fees will be reinvested directly into the projects and organisational development of the refugee-led organisations participating in the programme. In this way, the programme connects individual leadership development with collective action and contributes to strengthening locally led solutions.

What is included?

The programme fee includes:

- All online learning activities, materials and resources
- Facilitation, mentoring and coaching throughout the programme
- Lunches on workshop days
- The opportunity to work and develop a meaningful project alongside leaders of refugee-led organisations and a diverse peer group
- A valuable international experience

What is not included?

The programme fee does **not** include:

- International travel to and from the residential location
- Accommodation during the residential session
- Breakfast, dinner and other personal expenses during the residential session
- Visa, vaccination or other travel-related costs that may apply

Limited financial support for travel and/or residential costs may be available, depending on individual circumstances and available funding. Further information will be provided during the application process.