



Executive Program *in Design Leadership*

2024

contents

3 PROGRAM OVERVIEW

4 *Who is the Executive Program in Design Leadership (XDL) for?*

6 *Program Goals*

11 *Program Schedule*

12 *Program Detail*

15 COURSES

16 WHY XDL?

21 *A Program Like No Other*

23 *Core Faculty*

21 ADMISSIONS + NEXT STEPS

26 *Key Dates*

29 *FAQs*

Transform your career by becoming a more intentional and effective design leader.

Whether you're looking to move your organization in a new direction, increase your ability to tackle pressing design challenges, or simply become a better leader, the Executive Program in Design Leadership will provide you with tools you can use right away to overcome obstacles and pave the way for your next career breakthrough.

This unique 6-month executive program offered by the **University of Pennsylvania Stuart Weitzman School of Design** is created specifically for design professionals who are seeking to learn new leadership skills, build their networks, and grow their careers.

Taught by leading design educators, practitioners, and experts in leadership development, the *Weitzman Executive Program in Design Leadership* (XDL) focuses on transformational leadership, inclusion in the workplace, design thinking techniques, facilitating stakeholder engagement, and negotiation skills.

Specifically designed to fit into your busy schedule, this program features self-paced online learning with a community of curious and motivated design professionals, one-on-one coaching and mentoring sessions from design leaders, and opportunities to interact with your peers and faculty at informal “Jam-out sessions” and at the live, on-line Summit.

Who is this program for?



Experienced and emerging design leaders who want to maximize their leadership potential.

Professionals who do not have design backgrounds but are leading design projects from the client or organizational side.

XDL is for those seeking to learn with a diverse group of successful professionals who are committed to becoming effective leaders by becoming more intentional and self-aware.





“The Executive Design Leadership Program helped shape who I am as a leader and who I will be as a leader. It helped me discover my unique approach to leadership by reflecting on who I am and what my strengths and growing edges are. I look forward to thinking about and implementing the ideas we’ve discussed over the next 10-20 years of practice in design.”

Addie Smith, Senior Lighting Designer , AE Design, Inc.
2023 XDL Graduate, Transformational Leadership

program goals

› **Explore** and test our newfound leadership techniques and receive feedback in real-time from fellow design professionals.

› **Connect** with a diverse community of design professionals from across the globe.

› **Discover** new frameworks for tackling leadership challenges in design settings.

› **Strengthen** your leadership skills through the use of new tools and by incorporating feedback from individualized coaching sessions.

At the end of this program, you will be able to:

› **Build** more equitable and better collaborative work cultures by advancing inclusive leadership skills

› **Create** cohesive organizational systems by fostering high-quality workplace relationships

› **Transform** organizations by becoming a more self-aware leader

› **Solve** critical challenges by using the design thinking process

› **Empower** diverse stakeholders by facilitating co-creative processes focused on real-world projects



**“Transformational leadership is different. It requires
a deep understanding of our own individual voice
in order to understand and overcome resistance to
change.”**

Lucinda Sanders, CEO & Partner , OLIN
Instructor, Transformational Leadership



The XDL Program is for those seeking to learn with a motivated group of professionals who are looking to take the next step in their career by becoming transformational leaders.

This is the place for emerging and established design leaders to take the next big step in their career by practicing the use of empathy, intentionality, and self-awareness in everything they do.



“The XDL program empowered me to refine my creative vision while honing my ability to lead and drive impactful change within dynamic and diverse teams. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to Rob Fleming for his unwavering support and for fostering an intellectually stimulating environment. Your guidance has been instrumental in shaping my approach to design thinking and leadership, which I am eager to apply in real-world scenarios.

Thank you!”

Stan Rapp, Head of Design, Asana Inc.
2023 XDL Graduate, Transformational Leadership

coaching & mentoring

As part of the XDL program, you will:

- › **Receive** coaching and mentoring from expert instructors and design industry leaders.
⋮
- › **Identify** allies and mentors in your professional circles and learn how to get the most out of those relationships.
⋮
- › **Interact** with your colleagues on a regular basis to receive and give strategic advice aimed at solving particular challenges in your work life.
⋮
- › **Apply** the lessons learned from mentoring and coaching sessions to a specific leadership challenge of your choosing during the program.
⋮

program schedule

Feb. 24	Orientation — (ONLINE EVENT)
Mar. 2 - Mar. 23	Enlivening Quality Relationships — (3-WEEK ONLINE FOUNDATION COURSE)
Mar. 30 - Apr. 20	Inclusive Leadership — (3-WEEK ONLINE FOUNDATION COURSE)
Apr. 27 - May. 25	Transformational Leadership Pt. 1 — (4-WEEKS)
Jun. 1	XDL Summit — (LIVE ONLINE EVENT) › Online Independent Project starts (7-WEEK ONLINE COURSE)
Jun. 1 - Jun. 29	Transformational Leadership Pt. 2 — (4-WEEKS)
Jun. 29 - Jul. 20	Facilitating Co-creative Stakeholder Engagements — (3-WEEK ONLINE CORE COURSE)
Jul. 27	Design Leadership Day and Graduation — (REQUIRED ONLINE EVENT)

program details

COURSES + CONVENINGS

To successfully complete the XDL Program, students must complete the following:

4 REQUIRED COURSES

- › **Enlivening Quality Relationships**
- › **Inclusive Leadership**
- › **Transformational Leadership**
- › **Facilitating Co-creative Stakeholder Engagements**

1 REQUIRED IN-PERSON LEARNING EXPERIENCE

- › **Leadership Summit** (*June 1 – see page 11 for a detailed schedule*).
This required summit will meet series of sessions and activities.

ONGOING INDEPENDENT PROJECT

In addition to the coursework, students will complete an Independent Leadership Project. **They will need to identify a leadership challenge they are currently facing in their work environment and develop a finalized plan on how to address the challenges using techniques learned in the program. Sample Leadership Projects will be made available for students who do not have a specific challenge.**

This component is the final certificate requirement.

FEES AND ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

FEES

Participants will pay a fee of \$5,750 for the certificate program. There are no application fees. A \$500 dollar discount is available for early registration.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

Technical requirements for participation include the internet bandwidth to stream video, download large PDF files, and create and upload assignments in PDF form. Optional connections with peers and Teaching Fellows will take place over the video conferencing platform Zoom. All educational materials will be located on the University of Pennsylvania Canvas learning management system.

TIME ZONES

The XDL program has numerous live interactions. Learners who attend the live events will gain the best experience. Learners may opt out of the live events –except the Summit, with the agreement that they will not obtain the complete experience of the XDL Program.



The program features a Summit event that connects the group and provides the foundation for the Independent Leadership Project.

This is a required event that takes place in June Live ONLINE via Zoom. In this dynamic event you will form closer connections with your colleagues, participate in thought provoking discussions with your instructors, and hear from prominent design leaders on the future of design leadership.



“I have three degrees, three professional certifications, and am a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons. I completed 10 years of post-graduate training before getting my first “real” job. So, I didn’t think I would be so proud of having completed this six-month journey in professional education.

But having found my true passion in healthcare design, I am beyond proud to have this leadership certification with distinction from a design school taught by architecture faculty as an exclamation point on my education and training in support of a career focused on advancing healthcare delivery in ever more innovative, collaborative, and equitable ways. Thanks to Rob Fleming and Lucinda Sanders for your patience, grace, and generosity of time. Thanks to the cohort of incredibly talented design professionals

Heena Santry, Owner, RealityCraft LLC.
2023 XDL Graduate, Transformational Leadership

Enlivening Quality Relationships

A. MECQUEL

Quality relationships are the lifeblood of any organization and at the center of leadership. Human connection is not conceptual. Like connective tissue, it is formed, sustained, and evolves in the lived sensory experience. This course will investigate relationships from the embodied perspective, increasing our ability to create cohesion within ourselves, with others, and our organizations.

3-WEEK ONLINE FOUNDATION COURSE

Inclusive Leadership

DR. CARLA THOMAS

In this three-week course, students learn about how to mitigate the negative effects of implicit bias as they develop and apply self-awareness techniques through empathy, group dynamics, compassion, and cultural competencies. As people leaders in co-creative design processes, individuals can gain insights into what drives their actions and their ability to impact overall organizational success.

3-WEEK ONLINE FOUNDATION COURSE

Transformational Leadership

LUCINDA SANDERS, CEO
& PARTNER OLIN

This course is a platform for addressing obstacles to transformation at any scale—obstacles that result in disorienting dilemmas. By understanding your personal theory of being and your relationship to ego and ethics, together we will explore and uncover your blind spot of leadership. Authenticity emerges as this spot is revealed allowing for a more effective path forward to be able to step through challenging moments in leadership and effectively shape the social field in which you desire to be working. By gaining a better understanding of your personal values, sources of motivation and obstacles to progress, this course will help you to identify and overcome your “blind spots” as a leader. Overcoming these blindspots will help you to tackle future obstacles more effectively and to navigate uncertainty with more confidence and intuitionality.

6-WEEK ONLINE CORE COURSE

Facilitating Co-creative Stakeholder Engagements

ROB FLEMING, AIA, LEED
AP, NOMA

In this course, students will learn how to develop and deliver a co-creative stakeholder driven design process that features authentic stakeholder engagement for the design projects, products and processes. Special emphasis will be placed on the important role of cultural humility, meaningful relationships, principles of transformation and design thinking techniques.

3-WEEK ONLINE CORE COURSE

Independent Leadership Project

TBA + ROB FLEMING

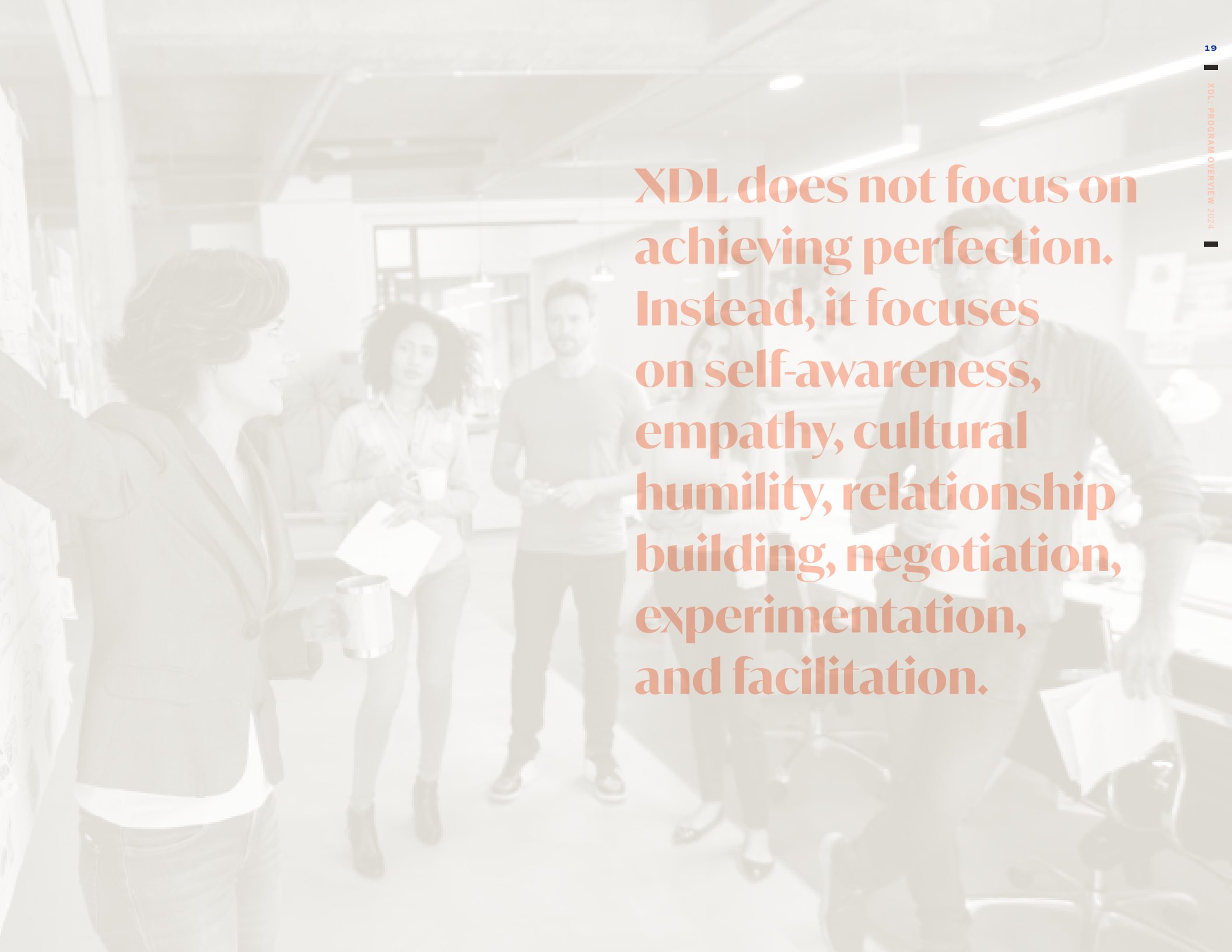
In addition to the coursework, students will complete an independent leadership project in which they will identify a leadership challenge they are currently facing in their work environment and will present a plan to address the challenge using techniques learned in the program. This project will include interactions with faculty from the XDL Program and Teaching Fellows to offer guidance throughout the process. Students will present their project to their peers at the end of the program.

7-WEEK ONLINE FOUNDATION COURSE



“Cultural humility is a key component of inclusive leadership. This requires a deeply introspective look at your own biases and the discipline of using self-awareness in real time to see how those biases play out in real situations with real people. That is what makes an effective design leader.”

Dr. Carla Thomas
Instructor, Inclusive Leadership



XDL does not focus on achieving perfection. Instead, it focuses on self-awareness, empathy, cultural humility, relationship building, negotiation, experimentation, and facilitation.

XDL offers:

A more affordable program than many other executive education programs

One-on-one coaching from leading design professionals.

A unique leadership program tailored to the perspective of designers

Online courses with weekly content plus live events and discussions to connect with others

Ability to connect and network with a diverse community of design professionals facing similar challenges

Certificate of completion from the University of Pennsylvania Weitzman School of Design

Courses taught by renowned experts and design practitioners

New tools and frameworks that will help you make concrete changes in your organization and your career

Hands-on experiences to test what you are learning in real time

a program like no other



“I completed my certification last week, and I learned so much and gained greater clarity about my creative vision and the impact I hope to have in the media and design space. Design and media have so much power and impact on our lives, communities, and world. I look forward to continuing to build on how I can show up as a transformative leader and create in more inclusive, collaborative, and humanistic ways.”

Denae Patterson, Consultant, Untamed Media Inc.
2023 XDL Graduate, Transformational Leadership

core faculty



Dr. Carla Thomas
Founding Instructor

Having worked with clients ranging from higher education to global fortune 500 organizations in sectors that include: Higher Education, Technology, Life Sciences, Financial Services, Retail, and Consumer Goods, Dr. Thomas currently holds a faculty position within Villanova University's Human Resources Graduate Program as well as various programs within The University of Pennsylvania.

She sits on the advisory boards of Saint Joseph's University's Organizational & Leadership Development graduate program and the University of Pennsylvania's Chief Learning Officer (PrnnCLO) Doctorate Program. She is an active member of the NTL Institute for Applied Behavioral Sciences, Philadelphia Society of People and Strategy, the Society for Human Resource Management, the Organizational Development Network, and the Inclusion Allies Coalition.



A. Mecquel
Founding Instuctor

Mecquel investigates the intersections of psychology, cognition, embodiment, movement, and its applications within performance, design, education, and leadership. Her curricula include embodied experiences to cultivate creativity, collaboration, empathy, and problem-solving. She also leads teams in effective communication, developing emotional and social intelligence, and relationship building at Princeton University, the University of Pennsylvania, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Informed by psychology, contemplative practice, and somatic education, Mecquel bridges kinesthetic experience and practical application for a dynamic integration that repatterns the body, mind, and relationships. She is currently a Ph.D. candidate in Clinical Research at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in NY.

core faculty



Lucinda R. Sanders, CEO, OLIN
Founding Instructor

Lucinda Sanders is the President/CEO of OLIN and an Adjunct Professor of Landscape Architecture at the University of Pennsylvania's Weitzman School of Design. She has a core belief that transforming thinking transforms place, and she is eager to bring this idea to the design table wherever she works. Lucinda is responsible for continually shaping OLIN as a leader in design excellence, both in her role as CEO and as a Design Partner in the firm. She has led the design of many of OLIN's signature award-winning projects and is the co-founder of OLIN LABS, the studio's in-house research practice. Outside of OLIN, she is involved on boards and with academia dedicated to the advancement of the field of landscape architecture, urban design, and planning, with notable accomplishments including the co-creation and facilitation of the Landscape Architecture Foundation's Fellowship for Innovation and Leadership. Lucinda holds a Master of Landscape Architecture from the University of Pennsylvania and a Doctor of Education in Transformational Leadership from Insight University.



Rob Fleming, AIA, LEED AP, NOMA, LFA
Founding Program Director

Rob Fleming is an award-winning educator, author, keynote speaker, sustainability advocate, and architect. Rob is the Director of Online Innovation at the University of Pennsylvania's Weitzman School of Design, and he is the Faculty Director of the Design Leadership Program. From 1996 to 2021, Rob served as the Founding Director and Professor for the award-winning Master of Science in Sustainable Design Program at Thomas Jefferson University, where he taught hundreds of emerging sustainability professionals who have made important contributions in the world. Rob works with clients and design firms around the country to facilitate integrative design charrettes using co-creative, stakeholder driven design processes. In this way, built environment projects reach higher levels of sustainability and the design teams themselves develop stronger bonds through a shared sense of purpose. Rob holds a Master's in Architecture from Virginia Tech and a Bachelor of Architecture from Temple University. Rob is also the 2022 Philadelphia AIA President Elect.



“I had the pleasure of working with Rob Fleming through this program offered at Penn. As a non-designer working closely with designers every day, I gained basic knowledge in how design thinking and process work and how design leadership could lead to a better project outcome. Some things are best learned through reading; others, you need the right guidance and exposure. The XDL program provided opportunities to learn from field experts through experience.”

Seyeon Park, Urban Planner, aecom, Inc.
2023 XDL Graduate, Transformational Leadership

key dates

2024 APPLICATION & PAYMENTS DETAILS

APPLICATION DUE DATES

Applications open	Dec. 2
Early application deadline	Jan. 6
Early enrollment deposit deadline	Feb. 3
Regular application deadline	Feb. 17
Regular enrollment deposit deadline	Feb. 24
Final payment deadline	Feb. 24

COSTS & PAYMENT SCHEDULE

No application fee

Non-refundable enrollment deposit is required to confirm your spot	\$950
Early enrollment, full program fee	\$5,250
Regular enrollment, full program fee	\$5,750

The Program Schedule on page 11 contains all the important dates including the start of the program and the date of the required Summit.

Deposits and fees are payable by credit card only; all balances are due by the dates listed in the Application Date chart above. Participants are responsible for home computing needs. This fee does NOT include the cost of travel and accommodation costs for on-campus convenings.

Limited payment plan options are available. After submitting the deposit, balances may be split into two staggered payments. Contact xdl@design.upenn.edu to learn more about this option.



“Facilitating successful co-creative design processes requires a leadership model based on cultural humility, enlivened relationships, and listening to your non-egoist voice. In this way space is created for stakeholders to gain authentic agency in the collaborative process.”

Rob Fleming, AIA, LEED AP, NOMA
Instructor, Facilitating Co-creative

FAQs

How will my application be evaluated?

We want to hear your story, your hopes and dreams and what you want to accomplish in your career. We are looking to learn about you, what you're passionate about, what you want to learn and why. Whether you're looking to grow your current organization, want to transition into a new role, or you're trying to have the time and space to reboot and consider what's next, be honest about where you are in your journey. We hope that the application process might serve as a reflective practice for you to step back and articulate what you're hoping to accomplish. If you have questions about admissions, please don't hesitate to reach out to xdl@design.upenn.edu so we can discuss.

Are there any prerequisites to apply?

No, there are no educational prerequisites to apply for this program—we are looking for leaders across all industries with a variety of perspectives.

If you have questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to xdl@design.upenn.edu so we can discuss your questions.

What are the faculty members looking for in my application?

There are no application fees and the application itself should not take you longer than 30 minutes to complete. The application requests some basic background information about yourself, a resume upload, and responses to three very short (<250 words each) essay questions. Just be yourself as you compose your application. Our faculty are looking forward to reading your story.

What is the summit event?

Our program features an event that is critical to our educational model. During the Summit, you will begin your Independent Leadership Project (dates provided on the Program Schedule, see page 11). During this time, you will complete critical coursework related to your Independent Leadership Project.

You will also solidify relationships with other members of the community to share ideas and build connections that facilitate learning throughout the program. **The Summit is a required component of the certificate.**

Our optional Design Leadership Celebration occurs at the end of the program and features opportunities to practice and demonstrate the skills you have learned in the program in a safe, supportive space. There will also be a closing ceremony and reception to celebrate the hard work of the students and faculty.

Are financial aid or scholarships available?

Our program is designed to have the lowest tuition possible without losing the integrity of the educational experience. We're proud to say it's one of the most affordable executive programs available today. Since the program tuition is already being offered at a discounted rate relative to other similar programs, we're unfortunately unable to offer any scholarships. Previous students have gotten partial or full tuition covered from their employers as well, and we also encourage students to crowdfund if possible. If you have questions about finances, please don't hesitate to reach out to xdl@design.upenn.edu so we can discuss. Weitzman alumni qualify for an additional \$500 discount. This is a one time offer and will not be offered again for this program after the 22-23 session.

Is there a payment plan option?

Limited payment plan options are available. After submitting the deposit, the remaining balance may be split into two staggered automated payments. Contact us at xdl@design.upenn.edu for further details.

FAQs

How much time will the work take?

We anticipate that most students will spend about 8 hours per week on the program, but this may vary. The program is a part-time program that is designed to be taken alongside, and complimentary to, your existing professional responsibilities.

What type of projects will we do?

The Weitzman team uses the latest approaches to engaging students in the online space with a variety of types of assignments including readings, discussion boards, reflective writing, simulations, experimentations in the real world and more. All the learning acquired in the program will be applied to the Independent Leadership Project where students will work with Teaching Fellows and the faculty to identify, define a leadership challenge from their workplace. Then students will move on to ideate and prototype possible solutions with a final plan leadership to be completed and finally tested, if possible, in the workplace.

How often are online course materials released?

We release materials on a weekly basis. Once released, the materials will remain available for the duration of the program. All assignment submission due dates are in eastern time zone. We also host live weekly discussion groups for students.

Do I need to know my exact Independent Leadership project idea before I begin?

The Teaching Fellows and faculty will work with you at the beginning of the 9-week project to identify and define a suitable leadership challenge.

What is the refund policy for the XDL Program?

The tuition deposit is not refundable. Weitzman online will receive request for refunds to non-credit programs in writing only to the appropriate program leadership.

The Weitzman School of Design reserves the right to cancel any program due to low enrollment or other extenuating circumstances at any time, before the start of the program. If a program is canceled, all participants will receive a full refund.

Official communications may be sent to xdl@design.upenn.edu

Can I receive AIA or ASLA Learning Units?

The Weitzman School of Design at the University of Pennsylvania is a registered provider of AIA-approved continuing education under Provider Number 10009226. All registered AIA CES Providers must comply with the AIA Standards for Continuing Education Programs. Any questions or concerns about this provider or this learning program may be sent to AIA CES (cessupport@aia.org or 800-AIA- 3837, Option 3).

All XDL courses have been submitted for AIA CES approval. Please email xdl@design.upenn.edu for updates. If/when final approval is received, the website will be updated.

The Weitzman School of Design has submitted an application to become an ASLA CES Provider. Details will be posted as they become available.

Have more questions? [Check out our FAQ page](#)

Can I receive AIA or ASLA Learning Units?

The Weitzman School of Design at the University of Pennsylvania is a registered provider of AIA-approved continuing education under Provider Number 10009226. All registered AIA CES Providers must comply with the AIA Standards for Continuing Education Programs. Any questions or concerns about this provider or this learning program may be sent to AIA CES (cessupport@aia.org or 800-AIA- 3837, Option 3).

All XDL courses have been submitted for AIA CES approval. Please email xdl@design.upenn.edu for updates. If/when final approval is received, the website will be updated.

The Weitzman School of Design has submitted an application to become an ASLA CES Provider. Details will be posted as they become available.

transform your career.

Become a more intentional and effective design leader.

Start an XDL application

Meet with the XDL Director

