



White House Leadership Development Program

Program Manual
2018



White House Leadership Development Program

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White House Leadership Development Program

Introduction

The White House Leadership Development (WHLD) Program aims to strengthen enterprise leadership across the government by providing senior level federal employees with expanded perspective and skillsets to address challenges facing the country. These increasingly complex challenges span agencies and jurisdictions, requiring senior leaders to work across agencies and organizational boundaries while leveraging networks on a greater scale than in the past to ensure the government continues to effectively deliver services to the American people.

The program is primarily focused on:

- **Developing Talent:** Building the next generation of career senior executives with an enterprise perspective through a rotation focused on the complex, cross-agency challenges that increasingly confront the Federal government and strengthening enterprise leadership skills through targeted development sessions.
- **Delivering Results:** Harnessing top talent from across the government to support implementation of key priorities and address mission-critical challenges.

The goal of the program is to build a cadre of government leaders with strong inter-agency experience and exposure to a broad cross-section of government. Fellows work on challenging, cross-agency initiatives to develop the skillsets and networks that enterprise leaders need: a whole-of-government perspective, stakeholder collaboration and engagement, working across boundaries without formal authority, and working outside traditional agency structures.

The WHLD Program requires Fellows to leverage their skills to drive progress on mission-critical programs (such as the Cross-Agency Priority Goals) and deliver long-term strategic results. The WHLD Program works closely with cross-government performance teams to allow Fellows to develop a deeper understanding of the importance of organizational performance, measuring impact and delivering results, identifying new ways of doing business and embracing innovation, and focusing on outcomes and effective service delivery.



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Program Overview

The WHLD Program is sponsored by the Executive Office of the President (EOP) and the President's Management Council (PMC) and supported by the Performance Improvement Council (PIC). It is a 1-year rotation with weekly development programming. WHLD Fellows will each be placed in a rotation assignment that is largely outside the Fellow's subject matter expertise.

The WHLD Program provides an opportunity for a diverse cohort of high-potential career employees to develop enterprise leadership skills as they seek to become future Senior Executives. Fellows spend approximately 80 percent of their time in a rotational assignment gaining on-the-job experience. Fellows spend approximately 20 percent of their time in leadership development programming built around the stakeholders, networks, and skillsets that senior leaders need in an enterprise environment.

This manual provides more information on the program's nomination and selection process, development component, rotational assignments, and post-program activities. Appendix A contains answers to Frequently Asked Questions.

Program Objectives

- Provide Fellows a broad federal perspective on high-priority challenges and access to senior decision-makers with exposure to a wide cross-section of government;
- Develop a cadre of leaders with the skillsets and networks to address challenges through a cross-agency lens and implement solutions across organizational boundaries;
- Strengthen on-going implementation efforts on specific cross-agency initiatives (including CAP Goals) that require broad coordination and long-term strategic planning to ensure delivery of tangible results.



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Program Parameters

- This program is open only to career GS-15 and equivalent civil service employees.
- Agencies may nominate up to four candidates to the WHLD Program to be considered for inclusion in the program (admission is competitive and nominees are not guaranteed to be selected).
- Program duration is one year, starting at the beginning of each fiscal year (October 1);
- The rotation is full-time (outside of home agency) and will include weekly leadership development programming.
- The rotation is non-reimbursable. The Fellow's home agency is responsible for his or her salary and continued employment and benefits support.
- A Memorandum of Understanding will be developed between home agency and gaining agency or agencies.
- There is no guarantee for placement into a Senior Executive Service (SES) position as a result of participation in this program, but participation does, however, provide experience that may be used in developing Executive Core Qualifications.

Program Benefits

- Increased exposure to a variety of agencies – including cultures, missions, functional areas, senior leaders and new ways of doing business;
- Improved ability to address complex problems that cut across organizational and jurisdictional boundaries, and to build and leverage relationships to have an impact beyond their formal authority;
- Heightened government-wide perspective on problem solving, best practices, and real solutions that can be applied to related challenges within the home agency;
- Experience relying on collaborative leadership skills, rather than technical expertise, to meet mission goals;
- Firsthand experience integrating into a new culture and fast-paced, ambiguous environment with an emphasis on flexibility and entrepreneurial skills;
- Increased ability to leverage newly expanded professional networks to identify innovative and collaborative ways of tackling challenges to address organizational challenges in future positions;
- Firsthand experience developing strategic performance frameworks and tools to drive progress on initiatives.



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Program Schedule

- October 2018** – Fellows begin onboarding program
- October 2018** – Fellows begin rotations
- November 2018** – First day of developmental programming
- September 2019** – Last day; Fellows return to home agency

Nominations and Selection Process Timeline

The following are target dates and are subject to revision as needed.

- May 15, 2018** – Nominations Due to WHLD Program
- June 1, 2018** – WHLD Program selection process begins/ Round 1 phone Interviews
- July 16, 2018** – Round 2: In-Person Interviews
- July 30, 2018** – Round 3: Rotation Interviews
- August 6, 2018** – Candidate Notification of status of program and onboarding process of finalist begins
- October 2, 2018** – Formal onboarding begins

Agency Nominations

Interested agencies may nominate two to four candidates. Agencies will determine their own internal processes to select nominees as long as such processes are competitive and follow applicable laws and regulations.

The Deputy Secretary of the agency or equivalent will formally nominate candidates to the program. The agency should provide the nominees and completed nomination form directly to the WHLD Program. Agencies should ensure that the nominees' direct supervisors are notified of their subordinates' nominations. For more information on the nomination process, selection criteria, and forms, see the separate WHLD Program Nomination Guide.

A diverse group of individuals will be selected to participate in the program from the pool of nominees.

Selection Process

After reviewing formal nominations from agencies, the WHLD Program implements a rigorous selection process to determine program finalists. The WHLD Program will extend acceptance invitations to between 10 and 20 finalists. All candidates will be notified of their status via e-mail at the conclusion of the selection process. Agencies will also be formally notified of their candidates' status.



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Rotations

In order to be accepted to the program, candidates will interview with rotation supervisors. Those that match with a rotation assignment will be accepted to the program. Assignments are high-visibility initiatives that touch multiple agencies and stakeholders with the Fellows driving cross-agency coordination, innovation, implementation, and performance management. Specific projects vary depending on the rotational assignment.

Fellows are matched to a rotation assignment that leverages broad skillsets outside of the Fellows' areas of subject matter expertise. Rotations are not meant to increase technical expertise but rather to provide an opportunity to use leadership and collaboration skills.

Past rotations include: *(Note: these are not guaranteed to be the same assignments for next cohort)*

Cross-Agency Priority Goals

- Lab to Market
- STEM
- Infrastructure Permitting Modernization
- Insider Threat & Security Clearance Reform
- Veterans' Mental Health
- Customer Service
- Federal Sustainability
- People & Culture
- Shared Services
- FOIA CAP Goal/Developing new CAP Goals

Other Cross-cutting Initiatives

- Enterprise Risk Management/Strategic Planning
- The Data Cabinet
- State and Local Coordination Team
- International Women's and Girls' Issues
- FirstNet



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The Fellow Experience

WHLD Program rotations are challenging assignments that expose Fellows to new cultures, new approaches, a whole-of-government perspective, and an enterprise leadership toolkit. Fellows are placed on cross-agency initiatives with no formal authority and a variety of stakeholders and competing priorities to manage. Fellows may experience:

Flat Structures – Most rotations are situated in small offices with flat organizational structures (not typical chain of command), flexible roles, and a fast pace. Fellows will work on multiple levels (doing whatever work needs to be done – no task is too small) to achieve results.

Leading Among Peers – Due to flat organizational structures and cross-agency stakeholder management, Fellows will coordinate and collaborate among peers and senior level officials. These are often non-traditional leadership roles that require flexibility, entrepreneurship, and vision.

Stakeholder Management – Fellows will often not have formal authority nor will they be in rotations where they can fall back on their subject matter expertise. In order to achieve results, Fellows will have to identify stakeholders, build relationships/trust and understand competing priorities and timelines, and work through formal and informal chains of communication to drive collaboration toward a shared goal/outcome.

New Cultures – Fellows will be asked to represent their cross-agency initiative and become comfortable with new cultures and ways of doing business.

Cross-functional – Fellows will be placed in rotations outside of their subject matter areas of expertise in order to encourage the development and use of leadership skills and tools. This includes taking on new functional roles and leveraging subject matter experts in a variety of fields.

Rotation Competencies – Fellows must rely on a variety of competencies including emotional intelligence, adaptability, resiliency, agility, political savvy, conceptual/strategic thinking and collaboration.



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Development Program

Fellows participate in a variety of developmental activities, typically spending up to eight hours per week as a cohort.

Development Objective:

Provide exposure to the business practices, functional areas, networks, skills and stakeholders that enterprise leaders need to leverage in order to deal with a rapidly changing environment and increasingly cross-agency, cross-jurisdictional challenges. Development focuses on what good leaders do to effectively carry out their jobs and agency mission.

Development Program Outline:

- 2-week on-boarding
- One day per week or every other week spent in developmental programming
- Visits to agencies to review innovative practices and speak to senior leaders
- SES executive core qualification, resume, and interviewing advice
- Opportunity to network with public and private sector organizations to facilitate and create a broad network of contacts across government and functional areas
- Self-development including Strengths Finder, coaching, and mentoring



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Stakeholders

Site visits built around stakeholders with whom enterprise leaders are expected to work, including:

- Fellow Home Agency
- Government Accountability Office (GAO)
- Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity & Efficiency (CIGIE)
- Congress
- OMB Budget Offices/OMB Management Offices
- Executive Office of the President (EOP) Offices & Policy Councils
- Media
- State & Local Entities
- Private Sector

Lines of Business

Exposure to the different functions and lines of business senior leaders need to leverage to meet an agency's mission, including:

- Human Capital - Chief Human Capital Officers (CHCO) Council
- Finance/Budget - Chief Financial Officers (CFO) Council
- Information/IT - Chief Information Officers (CIO) Council
- Acquisition - Chief Acquisition Officers (CAO) Council
- Agency Operations - President's Management Council (PMC)
- Organizational Performance - Performance Improvement Council (PIC)



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Promising Business Practices

Specific skills and knowledge for an enterprise leadership toolkit aimed at making government more effective and results-oriented, including:

- Organizational Performance & Government Performance and Results Act
- Metrics, Assessing & Measuring Success, Data Analytics, and Benchmarking
- Storytelling and Briefing Skills
- Strategic Thinking
- Design Thinking and Innovation Sprints
- User-Centered Design
- Emotional Intelligence
- Peer to Peer Coaching
- Leadership Best Practices

Topical Areas for Senior Leaders

Topical areas around emerging and innovative practices to which senior leaders should have exposure, including:

- Enterprise Risk Management
- Evidence Based Decision-making
- Optics/Strategic Communications
- Agile Management Concepts
- Leadership Accountability
- Meta-Leadership
- Lean/Continuous Process Improvement
- 21st Century Leadership Models

WHLD Program Roles & Responsibilities

The following roles and responsibilities are provided as a guide for nominating agencies, candidates, and rotation assignments. Further information on roles & responsibilities will be provided to those candidates who ultimately enter the program.



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Participant/Fellow

The WHLD Program expects that candidates accepted into the Program will rotate out of their position of record for the duration of the fiscal year. During that time, the WHLD Program participants will be expected to work on their rotational assignment full-time, except for the time devoted to developmental programming. To obtain maximum benefit from the program, the expectations are:

Fellow

- Transition workload to designated staff and ensure continuity in the home agency;
- Prepare for the program by researching the host agency and rotational assignment, once assigned;
- Participate and engage in all aspects of the program;
- Attend all scheduled development sessions in their entirety;
- Craft an Individual Development Plan at the start of the program;
- Make time for reflective thinking on personal and professional experiences throughout the year to unveil new discoveries, understandings, and insight into their leadership style and goals;
- Expand networks and build new relationships;
- Maintain an open mind to diverse perspectives and new areas of learning;
- Provide ongoing formal and informal constructive feedback to the program;
- Participate in leadership assessments (StrengthsFinder, EP10, and others as available);
- Schedule regular check in meetings with his/her home agency supervisor to provide progress updates and ensure home agency timekeeper is aware of time and attendance;
- Following program completion, join and participate in the WHLD Program Alumni Network;
- Serve as a mentor to future cohorts of WHLD Fellows



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Nominating Agency

- Manage internal agency selection process and nominate two to four diverse, high-quality candidates for consideration to the program;
- Obtain Deputy Secretary approval for each candidate;
- Allow candidates opportunity to participate in WHLD Program selection process and interviews;
- By nominating a candidate, the agency consents to allowing the individual to participate in the program if selected and to return to the home agency once the program is complete;
- Continue to pay salary and benefits of any agency candidate selected into the program;
- Ensure there is a point of contact for the WHLD Program to provide programmatic information and other communications to the home agency;
- Allow time for transitioning Fellow workload to another employee;
- Invite Fellow to infrequent team building activities, such as team social events, to ensure the participant remains connected with his or her team during the year;
- Facilitate meeting between Fellow and agency Deputy Secretary or other senior leaders as appropriate to discuss the rotation assignment and benefits of the experience to the home agency;
- With input from appropriate agency points of contact, work with the Fellow to craft a re-entry plan 2 months prior to completion of WHLD Program rotation and support the Fellow's transition back to the home agency upon completion of the rotation. See Appendix B for Re-Entry Best Practices.
- Along with the re-entry interview, home agencies are encouraged to find other opportunities within the agency for the Fellow to leverage his or her experience gained as a WHLD Fellow to best support agency mission. See Appendix B for Re-Entry Best Practices;
- Following completion of the WHLD Program, participants will become part of the alumni network. The alumni network will hold events and continuing development activities from time to time and home agencies are encouraged to allow employees time to participate in WHLD Program mentoring and alumni network programming.



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Rotation Assignment / Host Agency

- Craft a position description for the rotation assignment that lays out broad duties and projects, including areas where the Fellow can take a leadership role on key projects;
- Identify one or two senior team members to participate in the selection process;
- Notify WHLD Program of any security requirements/clearance, procedures, conflicts of interest, confidentiality issues, and the like;
- Provide a workspace, laptop, mobile phone, building access, or any necessary tools to perform the assignment;
- Determine mutually agreeable work schedule and flexibilities (e.g., AWS, telework);
- Provide a useful onboarding experience to support the success of the Fellow; Introduce the Fellow to cross-agency project team;
- Provide background materials regarding project assignment to Fellow before rotation begins;
- Establish concrete objectives for the Fellow and work with WHLD Program and Fellow to complete project scoping document;
- Allow the Fellow to attend weekly development sessions;
- Provide work to the Fellow that is at a minimum GS-15 level or higher and identify stretch opportunities to provide experience and exposure for the Fellow;
- As needed, provide feedback to WHLD Program and the Fellow's home agency;



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Appendix A: Frequently Asked Questions

What are the CAP Goals?

Cross-Agency Priority Goals have been established to drive implementation of the President's Management Agenda and tackle these government-wide challenges. In March, the Administration will announce specific efforts to advance these three drivers of reform, including senior accountable officials, concrete goals, and trackable metrics to ensure public accountability. This agenda will address critical challenges where government as a whole still operates in the past. It will name senior accountable officials, concrete goals, and trackable metrics to ensure public accountability.

Management Outcomes Driven by the President's Management Council

- Modernizing IT to Increase Productivity and Security
- Improving Efficiency and Effectiveness of Administrative Services across Government
- Developing a Workforce for 21st Century
- Shifting from Low-Value to High-Value Work
- Improving the Customer Experience with Federal Services

CAP goals will also strengthen Federal Government management in other priority areas, such as improving management of major acquisitions, reducing improper payments, increasing transparency of IT costs, enhancing accountability for grant spending, and purchasing across Government as an enterprise. CAP goal teams will lead the execution of related Administration priorities, such as implementing the recommendations of the Report to the President on Federal IT Modernization focused on Network Modernization, Cybersecurity and Shared Services.



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How is this program different from other leadership programs?

There are a wide variety of strong rotation programs across the government that aspiring leaders can select. However, these programs generally focus on work in one agency, rather than providing experience implementing high-visibility programs across government agencies. The WHLD Program focuses exclusively on high-potential GS-15s and equivalents (including those who are in SES candidate development programs or graduates of these programs) who are interested in gaining a unique perspective of how high-priority policies are implemented across agencies and how to solve problems through collaborative efforts. Fellows will also receive hands-on experience with cross-agency management, learn how the Executive Office of the President (including the Office of Management and Budget) functions, and build a network across agencies and functions.

Through this program, Fellows participate in rotational assignments to gain valuable experience by working on the Federal government's highest priority, highest impact challenges that require the coordination of multiple federal agencies and stakeholders to succeed. Experiential and developmental opportunities will enhance critical skill sets such as leading change, building coalitions, working across government to solve problems, and performance management. This program is aimed at those ready to enter the ranks of senior leadership, as well as developing the pipeline of future career Senior Executives.

Increasingly, the most pressing challenges facing the Federal government cut across organizational boundaries, requiring a workforce that works across agencies to develop solutions that address these challenges and deliver lasting results.

Upon completing the program, participants will take their valuable experience back to their agencies, creating a cadre of enterprise-wide leaders across government.



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What happens to the Fellows after the program?

Participants may return to their prior position within their home agencies or another placement they seek out. Agencies are also encouraged to find other opportunities within the agency for the Fellow--including a new position, project, or other opportunities--leverage his or her experience as a WHLD Fellow to applicable agency goals.

Following the end of the program and return to their home agencies, Fellows can choose to stay connected to the WHLD Program network through:

- Alumni activities – From mentoring the next cohort of Fellows to alumni events and trainings, Fellows can maintain and expand their network of leaders across government and development activities.
- Database of participants – The WHLD Program will create and maintain a database of alumni to facilitate post-program networking and future alumni events.

Does nomination by an agency guarantee placement in the WHLD Program?

No. This is a competitive program, and agency nominations typically exceed the number of slots in the program. Candidates will be selected through an assessment of qualifications and a structured interview process.

Who will pay the Fellow's salary?

This is a non-reimbursable rotation. Therefore, the Fellow's home agency will pay his or her salary.

Where will the Fellow be located?

The Fellow will be co-located with the EOP Lead, CAP Goal Leader, or the Goal Team to maximize the experiential learning opportunity. This may be at an EOP office or agency, depending on the goal and the specific work the Fellow will be doing. Additionally, participants will meet for development sessions in the New Executive Office Building, the Eisenhower Executive Office Building, or the General Services Administration, depending on the agenda.

Will the Fellow have to/get to travel?

Generally, no. There may be some travel within Washington, DC. If the host agency would like the participant to travel as part of the rotational assignment, the host agency must fund the travel.

Does the Fellow have to be located in Washington, DC?

The rotational work assignment will be located in Washington, DC. In the second year of the program, three Fellows came to the program from out of the area. Should an agency nominate candidates from outside of the Washington, DC area, the agency will fund associated travel/relocation expenses if the candidate is selected for the program.



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Is this a Candidate Development Program?

No – this is a developmental rotation and may qualify as the developmental assignment requirement of a CDP. However, the program is also open to qualified candidates who are not in a CDP.

Does the rotation qualify as a CDP developmental assignment?

The rotational assignment is non-supervisory. As long as the Fellow has a strong supervisory background, the rotation should satisfy CDP requirements. Candidates should check with their agency CDP coordinator to ensure it meets all applicable requirements.

Will the Fellow's position be executive level?

WHLD Program rotations are meant to build a foundation for enterprise leadership – giving a Fellow experience working on cross-agency initiatives at a larger scale and outside of their agency perspective. The Fellow is often one of the only full-time people to work on the cross-agency initiative and is not in a traditional leadership role with clear authority. Additionally, many of the positions are housed in small teams that do not have support staff. Fellows work all aspects of the program to drive the mission and are not set up to be in a traditional chain of command leadership position.

If a Fellow is using the WHLD Program as his/her rotation for a CDP, the Fellow's position must be executive level. Typically, positions are at least at the GS-15 level. However, each rotation provides significant exposure to senior leaders, the ability to learn and apply new organizational performance tools, and the opportunity to engage in high-level work on a large cross-agency scale. Fellows have the ability to help craft their positions and identify ways to add vision, value, and leadership to complex, cross-agency challenges, and the experience and type of work is largely Fellow-driven.

Will Fellows be promoted as a result of or at completion of this program?

This program does not guarantee promotion or entry into the SES or any other position. However, it provides development and experience that may help the Fellow obtain such a position in the future.

What will happen to the Fellow's home position while on rotation?

The WHLD Program is a non-reimbursable developmental rotation. As such, the Fellow will retain his or her position at his or her home agency and will be allowed to return to that position at the conclusion of the rotation. However, nothing prevents the Fellow from assuming a different position following the WHLD Program rotation should the Fellow seek out such an opportunity or the agency engage in a structured talent development plan with the Fellow.

Is a security clearance required?

No. Fellows do not need to possess a certain clearance level for this program. Should a clearance become necessary, agencies will be alerted to this change before formal nominations are due.



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Who will conduct the Fellow's performance review?

The Fellow's home agency supervisor will conduct formal performance reviews, but the rotational assignment supervisor will provide feedback to the Fellow's home agency supervisor and will work with the Fellow to create a performance plan based off the rotational assignment. The rotational assignment supervisor will also provide feedback to inform the final performance review at the end of the 1-year rotation.

How will the performance of the WHLD Program be assessed?

The WHLD Program will have several levels of evaluation built in during the 1-year development rotation. To assess the development of the Fellows, individual Fellows will receive a self-assessment at the beginning of the program and a follow-up assessment at the conclusion of the rotation. For organizational performance, Fellows will be given five to seven CAP Goal or other project objectives for the duration of their rotation that will be used to assess individual and organizational progress and outcomes on CAP Goals or projects. These measures combined will be used to determine overall programmatic performance.

What happens if the rotational assignment is not a good fit with the Fellow or the Fellow cannot complete the program for personal/work reasons?

The WHLD Program Director will meet regularly with Fellows to check in on their progress and fit with the developmental and rotational pieces of the program. The Director will also receive feedback from rotational assignment supervisors. Should the rotational assignment not be a good fit with the Fellow, the WHLD Program Director will work with the Fellow to identify a new rotational assignment.

Should the Fellow be unable to complete the program for personal or professional reasons, the Fellow must notify the WHLD Program Director as soon as possible. The WHLD Program Director will work with the Fellow and host supervisor to ensure that any work with which the Fellow was involved is transitioned and that necessary stakeholders are briefed on status of the project. The Fellow's slot will not be refilled mid-program.



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Appendix B: Post Detail Re-Entry to Home Agency Best Practices

Background

Rotations are recognized as a way to build executives' skills, improve flexibility, and create new ideas. The following are best practices of how agencies and Fellows can champion on this experience.

- Both Agencies and Fellows, stay engaged throughout the year. Quarterly check-ins with supervisors on how the program is going is a great start.
- Opportunities and encouragement from leadership, for fellows to utilize the tools and new found knowledge at their home agency.

Promising Practices

As the WHLD Program partners with agencies, several promising practices have come to light. These are shared as options that agencies nominating candidates to the WHLD Program may consider in developing re-entry plans.

- Identify a career sponsor for the Fellow – this should be a senior executive from the Fellow's home agency (not necessarily a mentor) who can help facilitate introductions to other agency executives, engage senior leadership, and help ensure the Fellow has a touch point and stays visible at the home agency.
- Create a link between home agency executive sponsor and Fellowship executive supervisor so the latter has a good idea of the executive level work that the Fellow did while on rotation.
- Assign a mentor or executive coach (outside of supervisory chain) to the Fellow at the home agency and consider inviting the Fellow to CDP or other developmental sessions as appropriate.
- Create a utilization agreement to be completed by home agency and Fellow post-acceptance into the program. The agreement should lay out who from the agency will reach out to the Fellow to stay connected, what that frequency will be, what the Fellow can do to stay connected, and how the agency will utilize the Fellow's experience post-rotation.
- Set up briefings with senior executives in the home agency that have interest in or are stakeholders in the rotation issue area.
- Set up a briefing with the home agency Deputy Secretary or other senior officials as appropriate.
- Create a tie for the Fellow to the Executive Resources office.
- Have a re-entry plan in place two months before the Fellow's rotation ends.
- To the extent practicable, place Fellow on a central billet at the home agency for the duration of the Fellowship to allow for ease of transition to a new position post-detail.

