



LIVED EXPERIENCE, SHARED SOLUTIONS, THRIVING COMMUNITIES

The Community Leaders Fellowship

We're living longer, healthier lives than ever before. And as demographics shift, there's a new urgency and opportunity to build vibrant communities where everyone thrives across the lifespan.

Sound challenging? It can be. Especially when it comes to fostering robust community engagement—a task that requires both time and expertise.

The Community Leaders Fellowship bridges the gap between municipal leaders who envision inclusive communities and residents with the lived experience to guide them.



The Community Leaders Fellowship offers a powerful tool for municipalities.

It combines a citizen committee's strength in fostering community engagement with the focused action of a task force—driving tangible results.

The program is free to municipalities.



COMMITMENT

Local government decides to bring the Fellowship to their town. Working with the Connecticut Age Well Collaborative, the municipality identifies a project that will increase inclusion and benefit from lived experience of ageism and ableism.



RECRUITMENT (4 MONTHS)

Together, we recruit community members with lived experience who have previously been excluded from decision making—older adults, people with disabilities, people with dementia, and care partners. Up to ten Fellows are selected to participate.



LEARNING (4 DAYS)

The Fellows attend a multi-day workshop to build community, deepen their existing strengths, and learn new skills to undertake their project. Municipal leaders attend a portion of the workshop to learn with and from the Fellows.



IMPLEMENTATION (3 MONTHS)

Fellows collaborate with municipal leadership on the project, supported by coaching from the Collaborative. Fellows are compensated \$25/hour for their work, funded by the Collaborative.



ACHIEVEMENT

By working together, the municipality and the Fellows achieve tangible, co-created progress toward a more age- and disability-inclusive community. Changes are grounded in community authority and lived experience.

TAILORED PROJECTS, REAL RESULTS

The Fellowship can tackle your municipality's unique needs and priorities. Here are some examples:

- **Accessibility Audits**
Fellows collaborate to assess local businesses and public spaces, ensuring solutions meet both ADA guidelines and real-world needs.
- **Community Voices Campaign**
Fellows lead the creation of a poster series featuring residents' stories and faces—fostering empathy, dismantling stereotypes, and enriching the community.
- **Revamp Programs and Resources**
Fellows leverage lived experience to identify gaps in municipal programs, then co-create a new (or improved) version, grounded in community authority.

FINDING FELLOWS

After intentional recruitment and a short application process, we'll work together to select Fellows. Ideal candidates have a blend of qualities:

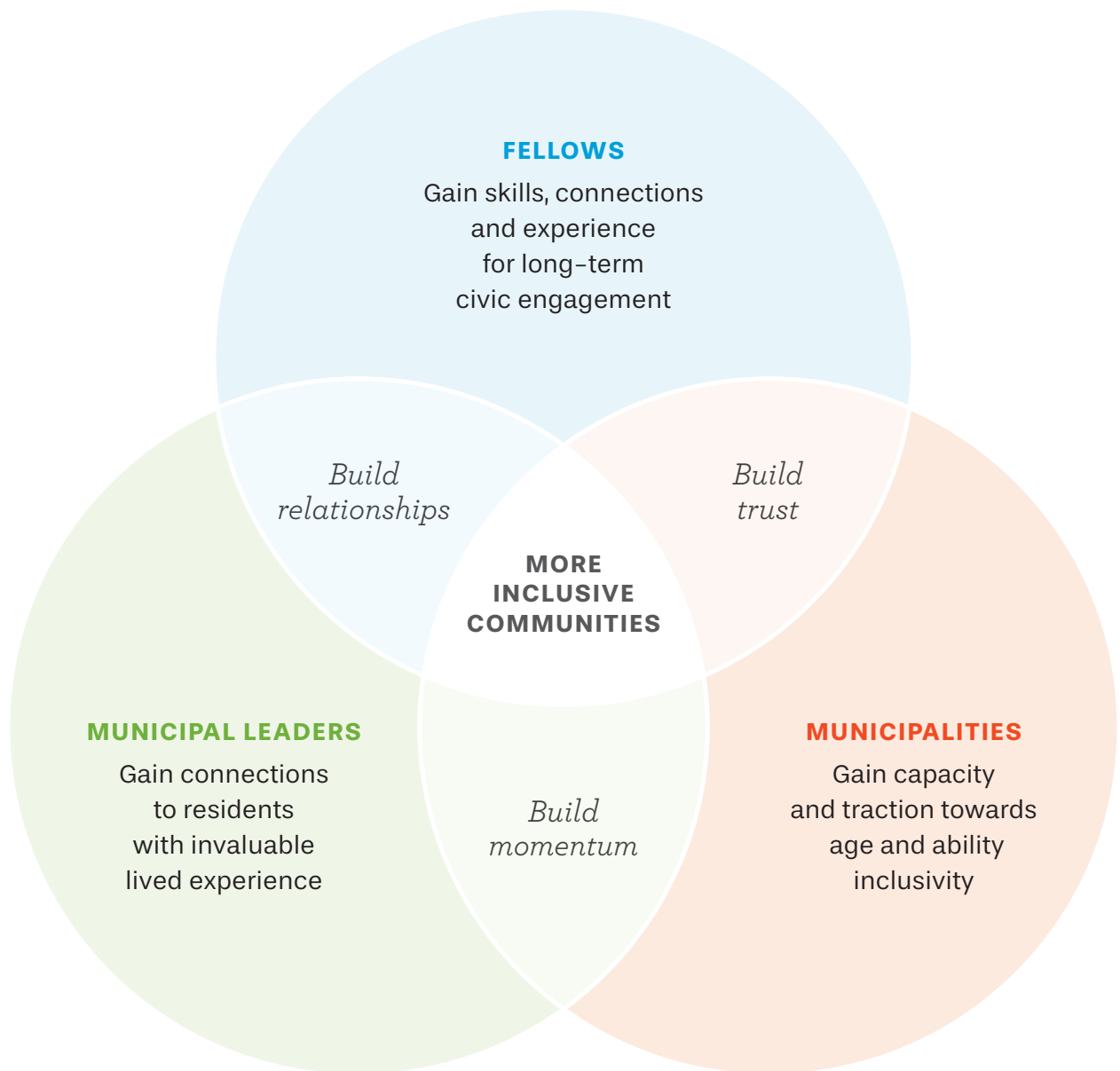
- **Lived Experience**
Firsthand knowledge being an older adult, person living with a disability, person with dementia, and/or a care partner
- **Locally Connected**
Residents in your community
- **Team Players**
Collaborative mindset with differing perspectives
- **Lifelong Learners**
Open to continuous growth and unlearning biases
- **Community-Minded**
See system-wide challenges and prioritize community needs
- **Developing Leadership**
Historically underrepresented in local government and ready to bring their expertise and energy to the table



Together, we can weave lived experience into the fabric of local government.

Fellows become active partners, and their insights lead to effective and authentic solutions—fostering trust and ownership in local government and building community authority for a truly livable future.





The Community Leaders Fellowship is your launchpad for creating inclusive spaces where everyone flourishes.

Let's unlock the power of lived experience.

READY TO GET STARTED?

Applications are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Selection is based on readiness, with priority given to municipalities that have the capacity to implement meaningful change.

Apply today at bit.ly/MunicipalApplication

Questions? Contact Christina Gray at Christina.Gray@ctcommunitycare.org

