



Frequently Asked Questions

The annual Leo Panitch Leadership Programme aims to create a new generation of socialist leaders and organisers, and support them to take on impactful work within the movement.

Leo Panitch's emphasis on political education and developing the organising capacities of our movement lies at the heart of the Leo Panitch Leadership Programme, which will support participants to develop their political education, strategic understanding and organisational skills.

- [Programme Overview](#)
- [Who Runs the Leo Panitch Leadership Programme?](#)
- [Why are we running the Leo Panitch Leadership Programme?](#)
- [Who is the Programme for?](#)
- [Do I have to be a Momentum member to attend?](#)
- [How much activist experience is necessary to apply?](#)
- [What are the time requirements for the Programme and when would I need to be available?](#)
- [How many people will be offered places on the programme?](#)
- [What age do I have to be?](#)
- [What is the cost of taking part?](#)
- [What costs can be covered?](#)
- [What happens after the Programme is completed?](#)
- [Why don't we run the Programme with all Momentum members?](#)

Programme Overview

Political: Over multiple sessions we develop participant understandings of core concepts central to socialist thinking, including class politics, imperialism and anti-racism. We cover issues such as:

- ★ Unequal power relations in the economy
- ★ The centrality of working class organisation as a driver of change
- ★ The structural nature of modern racism and its relationship to imperialism

The aim of these sessions will be to strengthen participants' theoretical understandings and their ability to communicate socialist ideas, as well as providing a solid foundation for further political education. We invite leading activists and thinkers to help build understanding in these areas. In recent years contributors have included Asad Rehman, David Wearing, and Suresh Grover.

Organising: these sessions equip participants with a range of skills to level up their organising, by making it more effective and sustainable. Sessions focus on:

- ★ How to pick winnable campaigns and develop tactics
- ★ How to build effective teams
- ★ How to embed collective care at the heart of your organising
- ★ How to identify and support organic leaders
- ★ How to persuade and speak with confidence

The aim of these sessions is to help participants develop as organisers so they can go back to their communities and help build working-class power, organise winning campaigns and mobilise people around socialist ideas.

Strategic: effective socialist organisers need to think strategically as well as possess the skills and confidence to achieve change. These sessions will enable participants to draw on their own experiences and understanding to think through key strategic dilemmas. We'll focus on:

- ★ Analysing the power structures of the labour movement to identify points of leverage and influence
- ★ Developing an understanding of socialist strategy more broadly, and the relationship between the labour movement and the state

The aim of these sessions is to develop the strategic capacity of participants, allowing them to better identify past failures and plan for future victories, thinking through where power lies, how we build alliances and how we win.

Learning By Doing: Hands on experience delivering exciting programmes of work

The Leo Panitch Leadership Programme will be an interactive programme, in which participants collectively and individually 'learn by doing'. A key part of this will be ensuring that after the Programme participants are given opportunities to play leading roles in big political projects, including national campaigns, interventions in local government and developing activist resources and training materials. Expert organisers will continue to work with participants after the Programme ends to support them in their development.

Programme Timetable

The Programme begins in August over a period of two weekends, There will be a further in-person day in Spring the following year which will be partially curated by participants to reflect their interests.

All sessions take place at Pelican House, Bethnal Green in London.

Who Runs the Leo Panitch Leadership Programme?

Momentum in collaboration with experts from across the movement have come together to develop a syllabus of educational materials that draw from the experience and knowledge of a wide variety of thinkers, including academics, trade unionists and community organisers, from across the left both within the UK and internationally.

For the past 4 years the Programme has welcomed facilitators such as Professor David Wearing who leads the Programme's exploration of Imperialism and UK foreign policy, Steve North an experienced stage and TV performer and public speaking coach, and Councillor Santiago Bell-Bradford who developed the Programme's material on class politics with comrades from Socialist Youth Austria. In 2024, with thanks to the Barry Amiel and Norman Melburn Trust, the Programme expanded to include sessions on State Violence and Racism,

facilitated by Suresh Grover (founder of The Monitoring Group) and Climate Justice, facilitated by Asad Rehman (head of War on Want).

Why are we running the Leo Panitch Leadership Programme?

Organisers are the linchpins of the movement. The future success of the left depends on creating leaders capable of organising in their communities, workplaces, trade unions and in the Labour Party, politically educating, running campaigns and building power.

The Leo Panitch Leadership Programme is designed to skill up a new layer of leaders by helping participants develop the confidence, skills and relationships they need to organise effectively and create change.

Who is the Programme for?

This Programme is for committed activists that want to step up and take on more responsibility in the movement - whether in your local Momentum Group, CLP, trade union, workplace or community.

A key part of what we do is to organise to increase the number of socialists holding elected office, and we welcome people with an interest in standing for election, but the Leo Panitch Leadership Programme is not focused on candidate development. If you're interested in becoming a candidate for local elections then check out Momentum's Future Councillors Programme.

If you have any questions then please get in touch with Sam at sam.green@peoplesmomentum.com

Do I have to be a Momentum member to attend?

You do not need to be a member of Momentum or the Labour Party to apply to the programme. Whilst we welcome activists with a background of organising within the Labour Party or labour movement, we also welcome applicants who come from different parts of the left.

How much activist experience is necessary to apply?

You don't have to be a highly experienced activist to apply. In fact, we welcome applications from less experienced activists with the right attitude and a commitment to socialist organising.

In your application we'd be interested to hear about any past organising experience, paid or unpaid, which could include working in your local Momentum group or CLP, with trade or tenants' unions or other types of organising and activism, such as environmental activism, through anti-racist groups, or the anti-war movement.

What are the time requirements for the Programme and when would I need to be available?

The Programme will begin with two in-person weekends in August which we ask all participants to be available for. There will be a further in-person day in March the following year, which will be agreed with the cohort.

How many people will be offered places on the programme?

Thanks to funding from the Barry Amiel and Norman Melburn Trust in 2024 we were able to increase the number of participants to 35

We want the cohort to represent the diversity of our movement so we will take this into account when selecting participants. We welcome applications from those who are underrepresented in leadership positions and we are particularly keen to receive applications from women, BAME applicants and those who are working class. We also aim to have a geographical spread of participants and can cover travel, and accommodation costs where necessary, for those travelling a distance to London.

What age do I have to be?

Unfortunately we cannot accept applicants under the age of 18 for the programme.

What is the cost of taking part?

The Programme doesn't require a fee, but participants are asked to become Momentum members or Movement Builders to attend.

What costs can be covered?

We aim to cover travel costs for those who need it to attend the in-person sessions, and the costs of accommodation, if no other accommodation is available.

What happens after the Programme is completed?

After the Programme all participants will be supported to use what they have learnt to build power and drive forward change with other activists. There will also be a cohort of other activists who have been on the Programme to share experiences with. Each participant who completes the full Programme will be presented with a certificate of completion, which is our way of marking the achievement.

In future, with funding, we also hope to hold an annual 'reunion' event, which may take the form of a day of political education and a 'summer party' social, open to all and led by Programme graduates. We have already had a positive response from facilitators including Dr. David Wearing, Asad Rehman and leading Trade Union figures about holding such an event.

Additionally, wherever geographically possible, we will aim to pair graduates with an experienced local key activist who can provide guidance as they put into practice the things they have learnt.

Why don't we run the Programme with all Momentum members?

We aim to run this Programme each year, which means that over time more and more activists will be able to participate. Additionally, we expect that every participant will share the skills and experiences that they learn through the Programme with as many other activists as possible, to achieve our strategic goals and organisational priorities in building the left project. We will also look to make available the content used in the Programme to all Momentum members,

so that local Momentum Groups and members can run their own scaled-down versions of the Programme.

Our approach will combine a mix of open access activity in which the wider activist base can participate, whatever their starting point, as well as more selective programmes that give activists the time to reflect and develop in a supportive environment, with added care and attention. We believe that for the left to succeed we need to do both.