



INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE NSL APPLICATION FORM 2016

Be sure to read all these instructions before you fill in the application form.

WHAT DOES NSL LOOK FOR IN A CANDIDATE?

You are applying to join a team, a team whose mission will be to lead and to serve the future of the region. You are also applying to join a network of young professionals who share a commitment to excellence. **We are looking for people who will give back, for people who want to join together to shape the future**, not just be shaped by it.

What makes a great team? It is not the individuals alone who win games but the mix that one gets from the range of skills and talents of all the players. We are trying to select as diverse a team as possible. How can you make a significant contribution to this team?

We want to know about anything that makes you unique or different from other applicants. **How can anyone make a difference by being the same?** Ideally, our team will include a balance of young men and women, introverts and extroverts, town and country, gay and straight, working class and middle class, the much traveled and the less traveled, experienced and inexperienced. We are searching for the stars that show outstanding talent, but we are also looking for people with quieter potential. We are building a star team, rather than a team of stars. Hence, do not think that you are too inexperienced to apply. Some people have mistakenly thought this program was only for final years or only for budding politicians. It is not!

We seek to create a group as diverse as possible, from as many disciplines that we can possibly attract in addition to law or politics. If you are studying business, engineering, arts, agriculture, or medicine, for example, NSL wants you too! And if you are concerned about financial resources, you need not be. NSL strives to be accessible to everyone - lack of means should never mean lack of opportunity. Some scholarships may be available for those who qualify.

Lastly, remember our first chance to meet you is reading your application. That means we want you to take time to express yourself in a compelling way. No need to oversell or undersell yourself. Just be honest. What will catch our attention is your own authentic voice, one that tells us the story “unique” to you, and what you are about. We appreciate it when applicants display clear signs of research, present their ideas in an organized and succinct way and display a passionate engagement in their world.

Please note: previous candidates have indicated that the application can take three to six hours to complete. Hence, doing it at the last minute may prove difficult. If leadership is about preparation, communication and persuasion, then welcome to your first big test.

Good luck and thanks for all your time and effort. We wish you all the best with your studies.



APPLICATION FORM – SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS AND QUESTIONS

Below are the questions we ask in the online application. **Be aware: the application must be filled out in one sitting as you cannot save and return to it later. Your application will not be submitted until you click “submit” online and receive the confirmation page.** Thus, we have included the questions for the 2016 application below so you may prepare your answers in advance. **THIS DOCUMENT IS NOT TO BE USED AS A FINAL APPLICATION FORM – ONLY THE ONLINE APPLICATION WILL BE ACCEPTED.**

As you access the form from our web site, you will notice that it is extensive. We are asking for:

- Typical information about you (i.e. your background)
- Specific questions that help us understand how you would fit into the program
- Questions about your choices for professional exposure and your plan for community service
- Personal questions that aim to give us a sense of your individuality and motivation

For each question, we give you a maximum character count and an allotted space to fill in. We know many of you have much to say, but we encourage you to be succinct. Leave us wanting to know more. **Be aware: Questions have a maximum CHARACTER count, not word count. This includes letters, spaces, all punctuation and paragraph breaks.**

Once you have completed the online application form, please email your resume to applications@newstoryleadership.org with the subject line “NSL 2016 application_Surname_Name”. We ask for you to email us by the application deadline: January 22, 2016.

SECTION ONE- PERSONAL INFORMATION

This section deals with pertinent personal information. We ask the following questions:

- **Your full name, as well as your nickname or preferred name, and date of birth**
- **Gender**
- **Home (permanent) and campus (current) contact information**
- **Your ability to speak English**
- **Email address and telephone**
Please provide your current email address and mobile number so we can contact you about interviews. *Failure to provide the correct information may result in your loss of program participation.*
- **Visas to USA and expiry dates**
- **Passport information**
 - US Immigration is a stickler for having your correct passport number, your full name, identity number and all other details exactly as they are written in your travel document. Failure to write this information properly here could result in visa processing delays.
 - **If you do not yet have a passport:** please attach the receipt from the Interior Ministry as evidence that you have applied for one. Your application will not be considered unless you either have a passport number or receipt of application. If you have any concerns about obtaining a passport, please contact us immediately as we are happy to discuss your



options individually, as needed. However, we can only assist you if you notify us well in advance of the application closing date.

- We want to know your **nationality**, the **language** spoken in your home, and the **faith** you were brought up in or identify with. Questions such as these are simply ways we can ensure we have as diverse a pool of applicants as possible.
- We ask you to provide a list of religious holidays you celebrate for the duration of the program.
- **Secondary School Attended and Current University**
- **Course and length of study**
Please be sure to make it clear what your course is, your current year of study, and how many years you have to complete the course.
- **Emergency Contact Information**
Please note your contact's name, surname, contact number, contact email, and his/her relationship to you.

SECTION TWO- PERSONAL ESSAYS

- **What have been the most life-shaping influences on who you are today? (2500 characters, approx. 300 words)**
This essay will allow us to get to know you. So be personal.
- **What are the issues you care most deeply about, explain why and how you have acted on these concerns. (2500 characters, approx. 300 words)**
This essay reveals what you are passionate about.
- **Imagine as an NSL team member, you are selected to speak before members of Congress. What story would you share, and what message would you wish to convey? (2500 characters, approx. 300 words)**
Remember: Congress hears speeches every other day on this topic. So how are you going to get their attention?
- **Tell us about your home community. What's special about it? What do you think we need to know? (1500 characters, approx. 250 words)**
We are looking for the flavor of your local community. Tell us about your story, where you fit in, and what insights you have about where you live; whether you are from a big city, or a small country town, or a rural community. It all gives us a better context of who you are.
- **What draws you to NSL? And feel free to add anything else that might strengthen your case without repeating yourself. (850 characters, approx. 100 words)**

SECTION THREE- PROJECT FOR CHANGE

NSL recruits young people motivated to act on issues they care about, and who believe they are responsible and capable of enacting positive change. The following questions will ask you for details concerning your Project for Change.

- **What is the need or opportunity? (400 characters, approx. 50 words)**
- **How will you meet the need? (400 characters, approx. 50 words)**
- **Why are you qualified? (400 characters, approx. 50 words)**
- **How long will it take and how much will it cost? (400 characters, approx. 50 words)**
- **How will you measure success? (400 characters, approx. 50 words)**
- **What is your theory of change/ what will success look like? (400 characters, approx. 50 words)**
- **Who will you partner with? (400 characters, approx. 50 words)**
- **Share any additional details you find important to your Project for Change. (400 characters, approx. 50 words)**

SECTION FOUR- WASHINGTON D.C

Professional work exposure in Washington, DC is just one part of the whole program. This is also an opportunity to try something outside of your comfort zone.

Since the work exposure can vary from year to year, we ask you here for your general preferences and an open mind. Specific experiences are not guaranteed, and students' experiences differ each year, so what you may have heard from alumni may not actually pertain to you.

Please do not list specific institutions/organizations. If you are selected, NSL staff will have a further conversation with you about your possible placement opportunities.

- **In terms of work exposure, name the main professional areas of career interest that we should consider in determining your placement. (850 characters, approx. 100 words)**
- **Write a short letter of personal introduction that we can share with your potential host family. (2500 characters, approx. 300 words)**
Families have requested that you share information about your family/background and what makes you tick. They're just as excited to get to know you!



SECTION FIVE – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- **You will be asked to provide the name, address, telephone, and email of both an academic AND a personal referee. They must know we may contact them to ask about your personal and profession qualities.**
- **Have you participated in any other program similar to NSL? (e.g. Seeds of Peace)**
If yes, please give details. What do you think NSL can add to what you have already gained?
- **What do you hope to gain from NSL? Without repeating yourself, feel free to add anything else that might strengthen your case. (850 character limit, approx. 100 words)**
- **Have you ever been to the USA before? If so, please tell us where you went, describe the trip, your impressions, and what you learned from your experience. Also please include when, how long, and on what visa? (400 characters, approx. 50 words)**
- **Have you ever been denied entry to the US? If so, please explain.**
- **Do you have a criminal record? If so, please explain.**
- **Do you have a public presence on the web, a story featuring you, your own website, blog, or on any other sites?**
If yes, we will ask you to provide links.
- **We also ask you provide links to your Facebook profile, Twitter handle, YouTube channel, and LinkedIn profile, if you have them.**

SECTION SIX – MEDICAL INFORMATION

- **Are you physically/emotionally/mentally fit to participate in an intense, rigorous and challenging program?**
- **Do you have any medical conditions, allergies or special needs that we should be aware of?**
(Failure to disclose health conditions makes you liable and disqualifies your insurance)
- **Do you smoke?** There is no penalty for smoking, but we need to know because some host families are not tobacco tolerant.
- **Do you drink alcohol?** There is no penalty for drinking, but we need to know because some host families are not alcohol tolerant.
- **Do you have any dietary restrictions? (e.g. Vegetarian)**
- **Do you have anything else to add regarding health issues? If yes, please explain.**

SECTION SEVEN – DOCUMENTATION

Once you have completed this application, please send the following to applications@NSL.org with "NSL 2016 application_Surname_Name" in the subject line by the application closing date 22nd of January 2016:

- A photo of you
- A copy of your short resume. Your resume may not exceed 2 pages.
- A short, professional biography telling us of your professional experience (for an example, please go to: www.NSL.org/alumni/alumni/2013-alumni). Your professional biography may not exceed 200 words.
- A copy of the face page of your passport. If you do not yet have a passport, please include proof of purchase.

Please note, incomplete applications will not be considered and all materials must be completed and received in full by 22 January 2016

SECTION EIGHT - PLEDGE OF VERIFICATION

We want you to assure us that all this information is correct and can be corroborated. As this is an online application, simply tick the box under the pledge, type your name and the current date on the form before hitting submit.

SECTION NINE - CONFIRMATION

Once you have completed the pledge of verification and clicked "submit," you will be directed to a confirmation page stating:

"Thank You. Your application has been recorded."

Be Aware: If you DO NOT see this message, your application has not been submitted.

.....

Instructions for when you have finished filling in the application

THE APPLICATION PROCESS IS AN EXERCISE IN SELF-LEARNING

When you have completed the application, we hope that you have not just completed a task for NSL. We hope we have been a positive reason for you to ask yourself some key questions about your future, about what you believe in, and what contribution you want to make to your world. If young people are to shape the future, we believe that these are questions you will need to grapple with. As Gandhi urged, "You must be the change you want to see in the world."

IF YOU ARE NOT SELECTED

In previous years, people who have not received an interview are disappointed. Most of the time it was because they misunderstood what we were asking, or they did not take sufficient time to care about how they sounded on the page. Others failed to convince us that they were ready for the program right now. To be successful, you will need to take particular time and care.



Those of you who make it through to the interview stage and do not receive a placement might wonder whether it was all worth it. We hope it was. Every year the competition for NSL becomes more and more competitive, so to get an interview is a major achievement. We want people to feel a sense of pride to have made it that far. Some candidates have gone on to fulfill public service commitments in other ways. We invite you to contact us after the selection process if you are still interested in finding ways to become involved.

APPLY NEXT YEAR

If you are still a full time student in 2017, all may not be lost. In fact, over the years, candidates who have tried a second time often present a much more compelling case. There is never any guarantee, of course. However, people who miss out one year and take that as the program's challenge to prove their skills and ability next time around are the people we are eager to see again.

All applicants can participate from a distance and visit NSL's website, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube pages to read, watch, and comment.

Good luck from the NSL Team!

Paul Costello, President
paul@newstoryleadership.org

Andrew Doll, Program Manager
andrew@newstoryleadership.org