

Grow your career.
Level up for the future.

Professional Certificate in Parks and Recreation Leadership

Spring 2026



About the Program

This 3-day leadership program is a custom Schulich ExecEd Certificate Program is designed for mid-to-senior level leaders (Directors or Senior Managers) in Parks and Recreation. It focuses on three core areas for successful leadership in public sector administration: *Advanced Leadership, Collaborative Relationship Building and Networking, and Strategic Management.*

Led by the Program Director of the Schulich Centre of Excellence in Creativity and Innovation, the program is capped by an Action Learning Project designed to strategically apply these skills toward solving a critical challenge in your sector.

You will leave the program feeling ready and inspired to:

- Deepen and leverage your leadership strengths to lead transformative initiatives for your organization and sector
- Influence collaboration and excellence internally within your teams and externally across your networks of municipal stakeholders, from customers to elected officials
- Deliver impact and strategic outcomes at both agency and community levels
- Apply newly acquired leadership skills and connections to creatively address challenges in your municipalities and across the sector



3 days. 3 modules.



Delivered online & in-person.



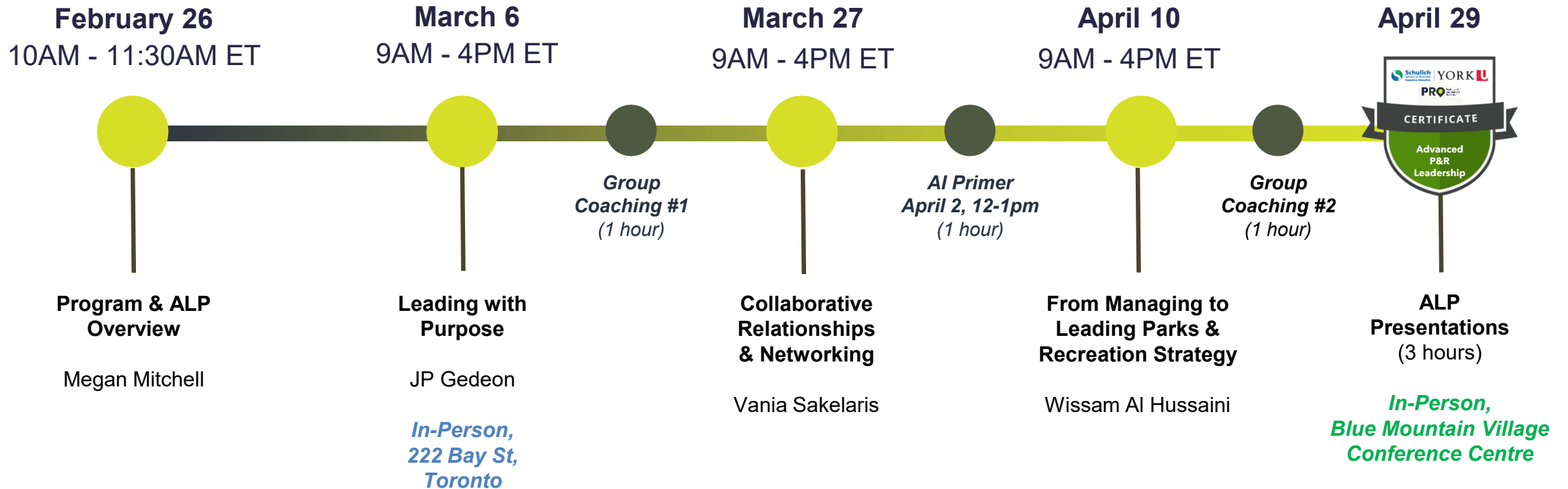
Capstone Action Learning Project.



Program At A Glance



Action Learning Project (~15 Hours of Applied Innovation & Creative Problem-Solving in Teams, including 2 Group Coaching Sessions)



Program Architecture

Module 1

Leading with Purpose

In a time of accelerating change and complexity, municipal and recreation leaders are being called to lead with more than just management skill — they must lead with purpose. The Art of Transformative Leadership equips public sector professionals with the insight and tools needed to meet the demands of a rapidly evolving environment. Led by a renowned authority on leadership psychology, this course delivers a deep, research-based exploration into what it takes to foster innovation, trust, and resilience within organizations. Participants will gain practical strategies to lead with clarity, authenticity, and courage—key attributes for building high-performing teams and thriving communities in uncertain times.

Introduce Teams & Capstone Projects

Module 2

Collaborative Relationships & Networking

In today's fast-paced and interconnected municipal and recreation landscape, the ability to foster meaningful relationships and build effective networks is not just an advantage—it's essential. Module 2: Collaborative Relationships & Networking empowers leaders to strengthen team dynamics, influence cross-sectoral initiatives, and elevate organizational performance through purposeful collaboration. Led by an experienced executive and facilitator, this interactive session bridges research and real-world application to help participants strategically engage stakeholders, master the art of storytelling, negotiation, and influence to build trust and alignment across diverse audiences, and ultimately build resilient, high-performing teams and networks.

Group Coaching #1

Module 3

From Managing to Leading Parks & Recreation Strategy

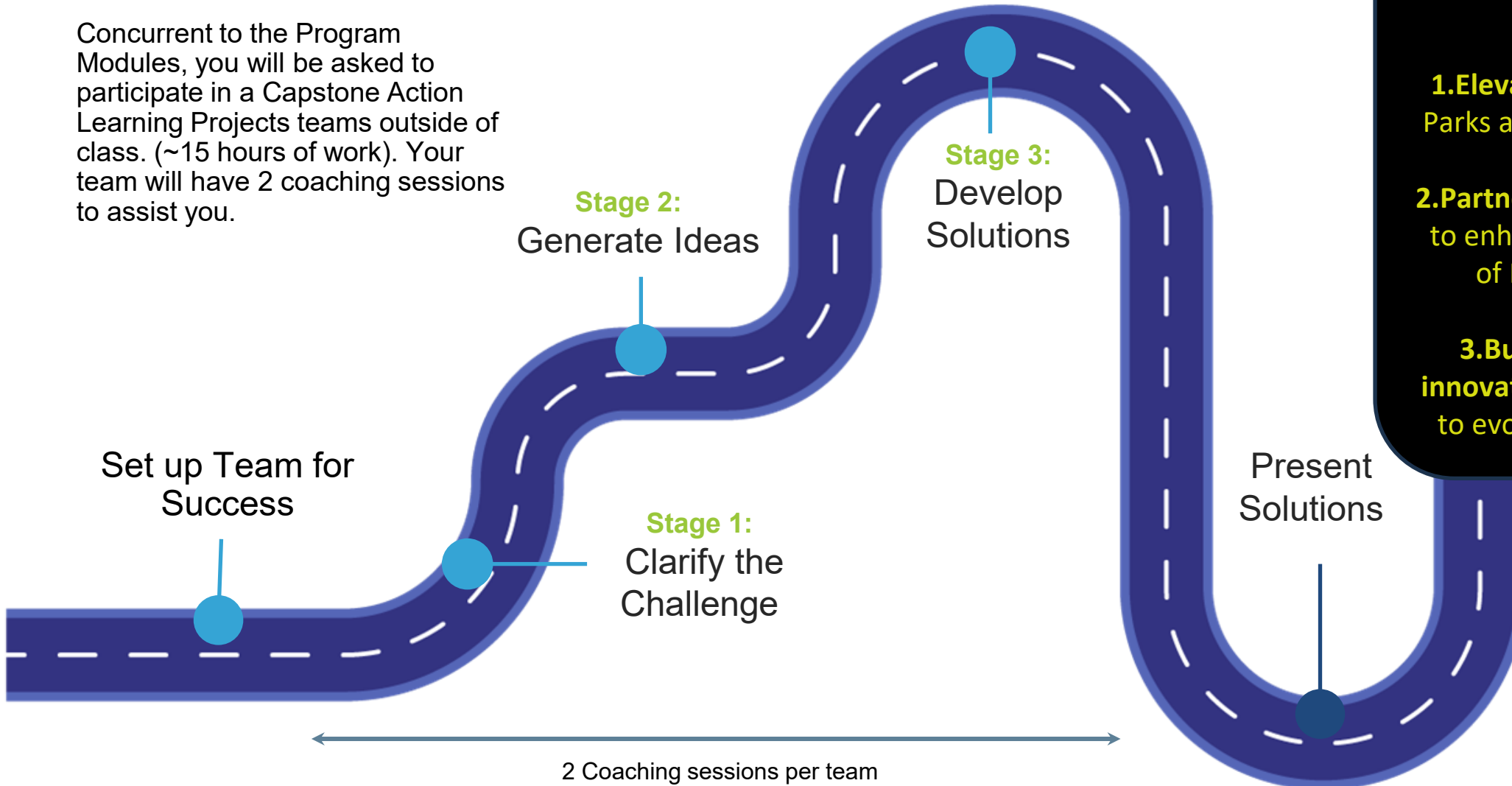
As the communities we serve evolve, so too must the strategies that guide our parks, recreation services, and well-being initiatives. From Managing to Leading Parks & Recreation Strategy introduces a powerful mindset of strategic foresight—helping leaders anticipate and shape the future in a world of complex, interconnected challenges. Facilitated by Wissam Al Hussaini, PhD, this workshop empowers leaders in the parks and recreation sector to embrace emerging trends, navigate external and internal forces, and develop forward-thinking strategies. Learn new insights and tools to equip you as you navigate uncertainties, leverage strategic foresight and capitalize on emerging trends, futureproofing your organization and sector.

Group Coaching #2

Action Learning Project

The Action Learning Project

Concurrent to the Program Modules, you will be asked to participate in a Capstone Action Learning Projects teams outside of class. (~15 hours of work). Your team will have 2 coaching sessions to assist you.



Sample Topics for the Capstone Action Learning Project:

- 1. Elevating the image of the Parks and Recreation Industry**
- 2. Partnering with government to enhance the strategic role of Parks & Recreation**
- 3. Building strategic and innovative programs to adapt to evolving customer needs**

Program Faculty



JP Gedeon

Dr. Gedeon is one of North America's leading experts in the psychology of leadership, corporate transformation, leadership transformation, culture-change, transformative strategy, leadership function, and workforce mobilization. Dr. Gedeon bases all his work in scientifically-validated psychological principles of human interaction in combination with proven and advanced business strategy and operations principles that have evidenced results in raising workplace output across sectors. Dr. Gedeon delivers award-winning, multi-level leadership training and workshops in the principles, practices, and designs of innovative business function, strategy, implementation, transformation and culture.



Vania Sakelarlis

Vania Sakelarlis is a corporate educator specializing in public policy, a seasoned executive and the founder of VAS & Associates Inc. a management consulting firm that provides customized advisory, coaching and training services to corporate executives, their boards and their teams building on her 25+ year career. Vania's portfolio includes a decade as CEO of large healthcare organizations in the for-profit and not-for-profit sectors, followed by a decade of executive leadership within a \$5B provincial crown agency. Vania holds an MBA from the Ivey Business School and is a Certified Executive and Business Coach.



Wissam Al Hussaini

Wissam is an award-winning professor at the Schulich School of Business, York University. Over the years, Wissam has designed and delivered numerous training programs for major companies all over the world, including the United Nations, Koodo-Mastercom, Chevron-Philips, and MasterCard, among others. In 2016 he received the prestigious "Excellence in Teaching" award at the American University of Beirut for his impact and inspiration on the executive, graduate and undergraduate students. Wissam is a founding member and vice-president of strategy for the Canadian Business Strategy Association (CSBA) which aims to provide a knowledge portal for Canadian business strategists.



Zac Spicer

Zachary Spicer is an Associate Professor in the School of Public Policy and Administration at York University in Toronto, Canada. At York University he also serves as the Head of New College, as a fellow at McLaughlin College and a Faculty Affiliate with both the CITY Institute and the Robarts Centre for Canadian Studies. Beyond York, he is a member of the Digital Mobilities Lab, an Associate at the University of Toronto's Innovation Policy Lab.

Schulich ExecEd has assembled a team of world-class leadership and management faculty who inspire participants to develop into top leaders in their organization.

The Program Team

Here to support you



Megan Mitchell

Program Lead

mmitchell@schulich.yorku.ca

Program Leadership & Curriculum Oversight



Rosa Na

Program Manager

rosana13@schulich.yorku.ca

***Client Relationship Management
& End-to-End Program Management***



Summer Wang

Program Coordinator

swang22@schulich.yorku.ca

***Participant Communications,
Registration & Moodle Administration***

Acceptance Criteria

Who is this program designed for?

This 3-day advanced leadership certificate program is for mid-to-senior level leaders (Directors or Senior Managers) in the Parks and Recreation sector. The ideal candidate is a people manager, or a manager of people managers, who is recommended by a senior leader, or, can be identified in their organization's succession planning process.

Is this program for leaders of large or smaller organizations?

Leaders from municipalities of all sizes and complexities are welcome. During the Action Learning Project capstone, participants will be placed into project teams with colleagues working in similar organizations to ensure maximum relevance and impact for their application challenges.

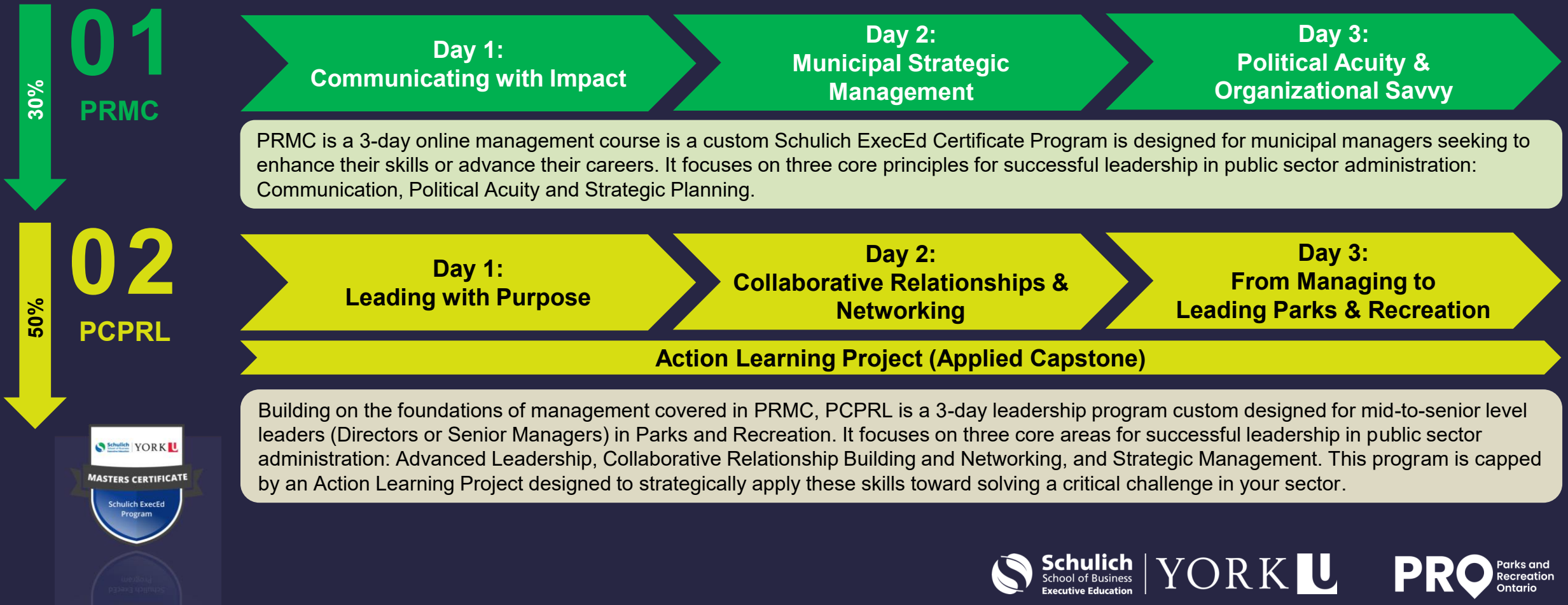
Do I have to hold the Certificate in Parks & Management to enroll in this program?

The Schulich Parks & Recreation Management Certificate is an asset, but not a mandatory prerequisite for the program.



Unique Opportunity to Stack Your Credentials

PCPRL is designed to build upon and elevate the foundational skills covered in PRMC. Take the programs separately to suit your current needs or complete both streams. Both credentials can be stacked to contribute toward the **Schulich Masters Certificate in Public Sector Leadership**.

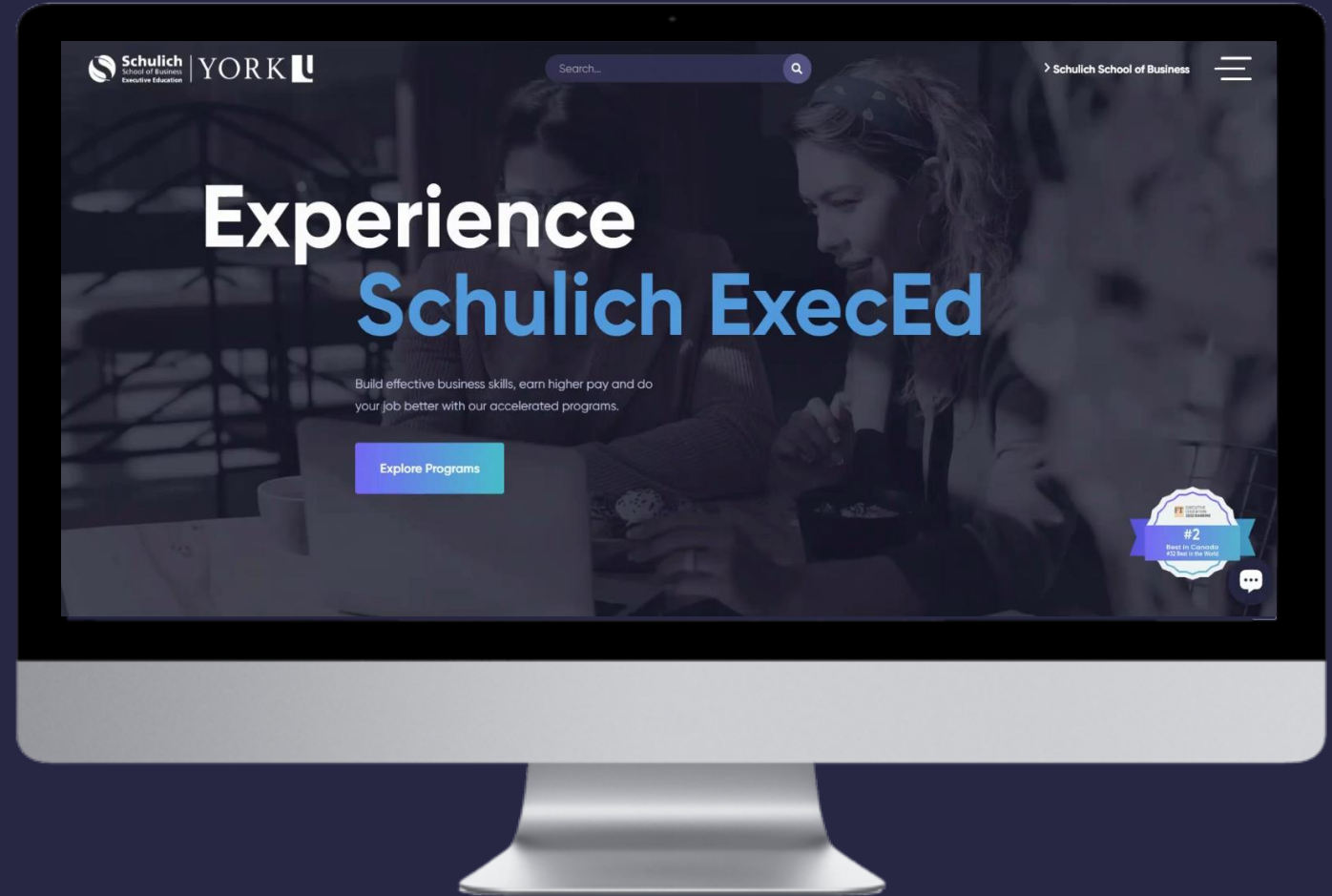


About Us

As an extension of **Canada's #1 Business School**, Schulich School of Business, Schulich ExecEd is a team of highly skilled and experienced learning professionals who continue to demonstrate their expertise in leadership and professional development.

The Schulich ExecEd team has designed and delivered highly successful short and long-running programs for both the private and public sectors across the globe. It currently offers 12 Masters Certificate programs, 30+ skill building short programs and Canada's leading Mini-MBAs. Schulich ExecEd programs specialize in business management, leadership and business operations.

The Schulich ExecEd faculty is comprised of over 400 professors, instructors, researchers and speakers who use Schulich ExecEd's learning approach to enrich the learning experience.



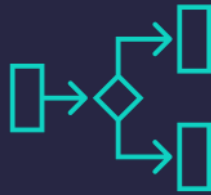


Who We Are

We are an extension of **Canada's #1 business school**



Teach **business, management & leadership skills** to working professionals, aspiring leaders, managers and senior leaders



Offer **accelerated** skill building programs to individuals and organizations
– **upskilling, reskilling** the workforce to ensure employability



Provide **tailored courses** and talent development plans for organizations



Experts at understanding skill requirements at each stage of one's career – early in career to C-suite.

Schulich ExecEd

BY THE NUMBERS

Schulich ExecEd educates over 5,000 participants from 200 different organizations a year.



82%

**Reported improved
business results**



87%

**Reported improved
job performance**



96%

**used knowledge or
skills from the
program on the job.**

Top Brands

Schulich ExecEd partners with top international brands. We deliver over 200 programs a year to leading organizations.

TD



newgold

Sysco

Walmart *

FedEx



VersaCold
LOGISTICS SERVICES



THE HOME DEPOT

AMERICAN EXPRESS

BAUSCH + LOMB

SAMSUNG

HUSKY

Bell

Purolator



Schulich ExecEd Schulich School of Business At York University

500-222 Bay Street, Toronto, Ontario M5K 1K2

1 800.667.9380

execedinfo@schulich.yorku.ca

execed.schulich.yorku.ca

Rosa Na, Program Manager: rosana13@schulich.yorku.ca

Megan Mitchell, Program Lead: mmitchell@schulich.yorku.ca



SchulichExecEd



SchulichExecEd



@SchulichExecEd

