

Preparing leaders for change





“
One thing I found really powerful about Accelerate is that it's a 'don't guess' approach: you can have a hypothesis, but you test it.
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George Roscoe
Deputy Director of Assurance, Strategy and
Improvement, Islington Council
Accelerate Alumni 2025

ADASS is committed to supporting our members with their professional development. Delivered in partnership with Newton, we are pleased to be launching the tenth year of our Accelerate programme.

We have been delighted with the feedback we have received from the last nine cohorts; Accelerate continues to be seen as an essential change leadership development programme for those leaders who are overseeing or managing complex transformation programmes.

We are always seeking to evolve the Accelerate offer. We continue to refine the content and this year will take into account topics such as adult social care reform, prevention, partnership working, devolution, place leadership, and improvement and transformation for financial resilience and sustainability. We also want to ensure we are reacting to the changing world around us – so we are looking at how we can bring through innovations in artificial intelligence, digital and technology and consider the impact this can have on adult social care.

More broadly, by exploring the application of evidence-based methodologies, Accelerate will continue to support senior leaders (working as a Director or with a direct report to a Director) to develop the change leadership capabilities required to oversee, or manage teams to deliver complex transformation. We'll be looking at the end-to-end approach from a range of perspectives; strategic, operational, behavioural, and political, while addressing the role of transformation in building efficient and effective services.

About Accelerate

The 9-month long programme will support the delivery of ADASS priorities through:



Personal Development

Tailored modules will equip participants with the methodologies, tools, and approach to lead effective change to support successful delivery of end-to-end programmes:

- Understanding the opportunity for improvement.
- Knowing what to measure, and how.
- Building the capacity and capability required to deliver change.
- Change management.
- Creating the environment and culture for successful change including working with partner organisations (i.e., health, provider and voluntary).



Skills to Drive Performance

Delegates will gain practical experience, enhancing and building new skills to deliver effective changes to leadership, strategy, operational performance, behaviour, and finance. Consideration will also be given to some of the key challenges leaders in adult social care are facing – how to make the best use of existing resources, the opportunities and risks of integration, the political environment, and managing key stakeholders through change.



External Insight

In addition to the support from a Newton programme partner throughout the programme, previous bespoke modules have included input from experts such as:

- Senior executives from across health and social care – sharing how they are tackling some of the toughest issues, including integrated health and care, effective use of resources or working in a political environment.
- Speakers from beyond the world of health and care e.g. – running workshops on personal and leadership resilience.



Strengthening the Network

Previous Accelerate delegates have valued the opportunity to spend time out of the office throughout the year with their peers, sharing experiences in a non-pressured environment. There is also an opportunity to develop a long-term network within and outside of social care, including with other Accelerate alumni through specific events.



Culture for Change

Developing the culture and appetite for change in a rapidly evolving environment.



Criteria



The programme is open to all senior leaders (working as a Director or with a direct report to a Director) who are also ADASS Members, and who are accountable for delivering or leading teams to deliver large-scale, high priority change programmes. We are proud that we have a track record of attracting applications from all backgrounds and are always seeking to improve this.

We have an open and transparent process whereby applicants will be scored and selected based on several consistent criteria including seniority, programme scale and complexity, programme timescale, energy and enthusiasm, capability, and attitude to development. ADASS is committed to social justice and to its work on equality, diversity and inclusion – we wish to encourage and support applicants from underrepresented groups.

We are very keen that our 2027 delegate group reflects the diversity we want to see at the highest level of leadership in the sector.

So ADASS can monitor its progress all Accelerate applicants are required to submit a completed EDI Form alongside their completed Accelerate application form.

Please confirm that you have completed and submitted an EDI form alongside your Accelerate application.

Each participant will need to be able to bring the detail of one or multiple programmes to apply throughout the course. Change programmes should therefore be aligned with national and local priorities, and of **sufficient scale, political profile and complexity whilst also necessitating cultural change.**



Examples

You could be a Director who is responsible for a number of programmes being delivered by members of your senior team or be a Transformation Director accountable for a single major programme. Programmes might include – implementing a new Intermediate care and Discharge to Assess model, delivering a new Operating Model for the Working Age Adults Cohort, or delivering major savings whilst improving outcomes.

Overall Commitment

The programme will include both residential and onsite learning. You should aim to allow 1 day per month, for 9 months. Typically, this might comprise a residential module, a site visit and 2–3 mentoring calls per quarter. Participants will need to be able to commit to attending all four modules and have support from their council.

Costs

To recognise our commitment to professional development the course is fully subsidised by ADASS and Newton – to include all accommodation for the residential modules. Please note that travel costs are not typically included. However, if you feel the travel costs would be prohibitive please reach out to cat.alabaster@adass.org.uk in the first instance.

How to apply

The application process will be open on the ADASS website now until the 18th December 2026 at 5pm. There will be an online interviews on the 20th and 21st January 2027.

Module Dates:

Module 1 – 17th – 19th March

Module 2 – 9th – 10th June

Module 3 – 15th – 16th September

Module 4 – 17th – 18th November

Further information

Join an Accelerate drop-in session before applications close to find out more about the programme and ask any questions you may have.

Drop-in sessions:

27th October 2026 – 13:00 – 13:30

3rd Decembr 2026 – 16:30 – 17:00

Register on our website [Accelerate programme – ADASS](#) to join us.

Alternatively contact:

Cat Alabaster – Cat.Alabaster@adass.org.uk

