

# Shaping the Future of Leadership in Albania



**CLIENT** Albanian-American Development Foundation (AADF)

**LOCATION** Tirana, Albania

**SIZE** 60 employees

**INDUSTRY** Foundations

## CLIENT PROFILE AND CHALLENGE

The Albanian-American Development Foundation (AADF) is a nonprofit institution established as a partnership between the United States and Albania. Its mission is to facilitate the development of a sustainable private sector economy and a democratic society in Albania. AADF seeks to introduce new narratives across various sectors, including cities, schools, communities, and beyond by leveraging the best international models and practices and tailoring them to align with the needs of the Albanian environment. This approach allows AADF to introduce innovative solutions that are both globally inspired and locally relevant.

Over the past 15 years, AADF has significantly impacted the Albanian ecosphere, investing over \$121 million in 78 different projects. This commitment has been further bolstered by partners who have contributed another \$146 million to various programs leading to a cumulative impact exceeding \$380 million. This substantial growth and influence had its roots in a seed fund of \$30 million from the United States in 1995.

AADF has an extensive reach in the education sector, impacting every elementary, middle, and high school in the region. Through the Center for School Leadership, the foundation has successfully trained all school principals, enhancing the quality of education leadership. Their projects

have benefited over 500,000 students from 1st grade onwards and entrepreneurship programs have aided over 1,000 businesses, promoting development and innovation.

“As an American foundation, AADF takes care to collaborate with partners who seek to apply their expertise in an international environment with dedication, integrity, and professionalism. Our partners share our values and commitment to project execution, ensuring successful delivery,” said Aleksandër Sarapuli, Co-CEO, AADF.

To further their mission, AADF wanted to create a leadership program that would offer participants firsthand experience in the governance process of Albania through their work as advisors to the executive institutions. In addition, the foundation would incorporate professional development elements into the program and chose the Center for Creative Leadership and Harvard University as partners.

“Partnering with CCL has been instrumental in achieving our mission to promote leadership and entrepreneurship in Albania. Their global expertise in leadership development has added tremendous value to our programs,” said Martin Mata, co-CEO, AADF.

## SOLUTION AND RESULTS

Since 2013, CCL has collaborated with AADF on the LEAD program. This partnership aims to enhance the Fellows' leadership skills and widen their perspectives. The LEAD program, inspired by the prestigious White House Fellows Program in the United States, selects individuals annually for a high-level fellowship within the Albanian government. The Fellows spend a year in key government institutions, including the Office of the President, the Office of the Prime Minister, the Tirana Municipality, and the new Justice System institutions. This experience provides them with invaluable insights and practical experience in leadership.

CCL designed the LEAD program as a year-long, multi-module program to help leaders address key leadership challenges. It provides a range of development opportunities in multiple formats both domestically and internationally. The program addresses real-world issues like Albania's challenges as a European Union candidate, reforming Albania's primary education curriculum, and balancing increased tourism with environmental protection.

"The partnership between CCL and AADF has been a groundbreaking experience, merging our strengths in leadership development and community empowerment to drive impactful change in Albania," said Alda Shabani, Senior Project Coordinator, LEAD Albania Program.

The objective of the LEAD journey is to provide Fellows with:

- Firsthand experience in the process of governing Albania
- Opportunities to contribute to the productivity, efficiency, and innovation efforts of host institutions

The journey includes both face-to-face and online modules including:

- Group coaching, mentoring, and real-play improvisation
- Addressing a key leadership challenge
- Developing self-awareness through the use of assessments
- Managing conflict responses
- Communication and influence skills
- Strategic thinking, influencing, and acting skills
- Resilience practices

## PARTICIPANTS SAY

“The program was great and very much needed! I know now that I can rely on learning that will guide me during my path!”

“It was a great training program. It was helpful to discuss openly challenges that we have faced in our experiences.”

“The program insights and expertise provided me with valuable tools and strategies that I am eager to implement in my professional journey.”

“The CCL Program is an important step that can make a difference in your life.”

## BY THE NUMBERS

2013 to 2024

**1110** Applicants annually and 10 selected Fellows each year

**117** Fellows building a network of alumni and connectors across civil society

**65%** Fellows currently hold leadership positions

**70%** Fellows are employed in Albanian Public Service

**90%** Overall session satisfaction

**87%** Likelihood to recommend

**86%** Satisfaction rate with CCL learning components

