



Professional Pilot Leadership Initiative

The Ninety-Nines, Inc. International Organization of Women Pilots

Fact Sheet

INTRODUCTION

The Ninety-Nines Professional Pilot Leadership Initiative (PPLI) aims to accelerate the advancement of women in all pilot professions, facilitate mentoring, and enhance our leadership role in the aviation community. The program provides highly motivated Ninety-Nines with tools to develop their careers and leadership abilities. Through guided activities and formal mentoring partnerships, it strengthens and expands our network of women pilots.

The cornerstones of The Ninety-Nines Professional Pilot Leadership Initiative are:

- Structured one-on-one mentoring partnerships, where women pilots help each other to achieve career aspirations.
- Guided activities that afford opportunities for participants to learn practical leadership skills, share experiences, and develop goal-oriented career aspirations. If you are a Ninety-Nines member pursuing a professional pilot career and are willing to make the commitment, you are encouraged to apply.

NOTE: This is not a job placement program.

CAPTAIN PHASE

The captain is the pilot-in-command of her aircraft and crew. She is ultimately responsible for the successful outcome of a flight. Likewise, you are in command of your career. Others will assist you, but you are responsible for your progress and success. In the first five-month session, you are the **Captain** setting your own course. You will create a formal **Flight Plan**. This is your plan for achieving short-term career goals and developing leadership and career skills. Guidance from a more experienced woman (your mentor or **Navigator**), is a part of this process. Your Navigator is assigned to you based on your particular needs and goals. She will share her own knowledge and insights, as well as provide guidance as you learn and grow.

Through the Captain Phase mentoring, you will have an opportunity to:

- Learn how to establish and maintain professional mentoring partnerships.
- Explore career options and possible paths toward achieving your career aspirations.
- Set goals and develop a plan to take the next steps in your advancement.
- Receive useful guidance and honest feedback from an advisor who has "been there, done that."
- Make a networking connection with someone farther along on their pilot career path.
- Learn practical skills that can be put to use right away to advance your career.

THE CAPTAINS' CIRCLE

After completing your session as Captain, your program progress and career status are evaluated. A typical progression is to move to the **Captains' Circle**. The Captains' Circle is a very productive way to meet, network, and learn from your professional pilot peers, while continuing to work on career goals and leadership skills in the PPLI. Some women are in the Captains' Circle for more than one session, as they continue to make progress toward their career and leadership goals.

The Captains' Circle provides peer mentoring in an online forum. You participate by generating and discussing topics, such as how to handle difficult crew members, balancing home and career, handling career hurdles, and résumé critiques. You also continue making progress on your Flight Plan and your **Leadership Activities** while in the Captains' Circle.

NAVIGATOR PHASE

Historically, Navigators tracked a flight's position and progress on long overwater journeys, providing important information to help the Captain keep the flight on course. Similarly, you can help steer another woman pilot along her path. While you assist her, she remains responsible for her career progression. When reaching the Navigator phase, it is a preference that participants would be working as a pilot by this point; however this is not a requirement.

To advance to the **Navigator** phase, it is expected that you will be working as a pilot. You will be matched with a Captain for whom your experience is most beneficial. You will give guidance, support, and encouragement as your Captain develops a plan to pursue her goals. You will also continue progressing on your Flight Plan and complete your Leadership Activities in this last session of the PPLI.

By mentoring another woman pilot as a Navigator, you will have an opportunity to:

- Pass along the mentoring and support you received, or become the mentor you wish you had.
- Share enthusiasm for your pilot career, and experience enthusiasm from another.
- Gain perspective on how far you have progressed, and reinforce your competency and expertise.
- Develop as a leader and learn by teaching others, much as flight instructors do.
- Help another woman pilot avoid mistakes, persevere through difficulties, and reach important goals.
- Build a mutually beneficial relationship with someone who may be able to help you in the future.
- Enjoy the success of others, knowing you contributed to making it happen.

LEADERSHIP

Every crew member contributes to the success of a flight. She needs to be committed to the mission, support the captain, contribute to decision-making, and coordinate her efforts with others. The pilot-in-command is the leader of her crew. She needs to motivate team members, communicate effectively, and supervise group efforts. When you are adept at teamwork in both support and leadership roles, you will more easily advance to better jobs and into instructor, check pilot, flight department manager, and executive positions.

During your time in the PPLI, you work on developing your leadership, teamwork, and organizational skills through *volunteering* in the aviation community. The program requires each participant to earn **ten (10) Leadership Activity points**.

- **"Co-Pilot" Leadership Activities** (*worth one (1) point each*): you help a group, serve on a committee, or work on your own, contributing to the completion of a

- project or organization of an event.
- **"Captain" Leadership Activities** (*worth eight (8) points*): you coordinate, organize, or lead one or more people, while taking responsibility for a group, completion of a project, or an event.

We strongly prefer you devote your leadership efforts to The Ninety-Nines. In fact, **one** of your activities must be related to the 99s. Next to your activity for the 99s, you may choose to take on comparable *volunteer* roles in other aviation organizations, such as your pilot union, Civil Air Patrol, airport community advisory board, etc. Choose activities of interest to you.

- Leadership development is an integral component of the Ninety-Nines Professional Pilot **LEADERSHIP** Initiative and is **required** for graduation.

By improving your skills as a team player and leader, you will:

- Enjoy fun activities and share your enthusiasm for aviation with others.
- Learn to effectively contribute to the success of a team.
- Learn to lead, motivate and organize individuals and teams.
- Develop career skills in event planning, public speaking, and written presentations.
- Gain self-confidence as a leader in aviation.
- Build and strengthen your professional network.
- Contribute to increasing the presence of women pilots in the aviation community.

SENIOR NAVIGATORS

If you are a professional woman pilot who has achieved your career goals and are in a good position to mentor another woman, you are encouraged to participate as a **Senior Navigator** volunteer for one or more half-year sessions.

The PPLI offers you an opportunity to share your expertise and enthusiasm with a woman pilot who can benefit from your broad experience. The goals of the participants are wide-ranging, and we welcome Senior Navigators from all aspects of the industry. Here is a chance to share how you found success as a pilot.

As a Senior Navigator, you are expected to read the program **Dispatches** and be familiar with the requirements to effectively mentor within the constructs of the PPLI. You should also be available to communicate with your assigned Captain at least twice a month.

NOTE: Senior Navigators do not pay the participation fee and are not expected to complete Leadership Activities. Membership of The Ninety-Nines is required.

OFFICIAL PROGRAM GUIDANCE

Guidance for this formal mentoring program comes from messages known as **Dispatches**. There are ten Dispatches for the program. You are prompted via email to read them at approximately two-week intervals. Dispatches can be several pages long and are important for understanding program requirements as well as mentoring/leadership concepts.

PROGRAM OUTLINE & TIMETABLE

You may apply to begin the program prior to either of the two Mentoring Sessions per year:

Apply by January 15 — begin with Mentoring Session A (March 1 – July 31)

Apply by July 15 — begin with Mentoring Session B (September 1 – January 31)

APPLICATION & PARTICIPATION CRITERIA

Much like a pilot career, participation in the Ninety-Nines Professional Pilot Leadership Initiative demands a considerable, sustained commitment. You must meet these criteria and agree to the following:

- **Ninety-Nines Membership:** You must maintain membership to The Ninety-Nines throughout participation in the program, and have started or be planning on a professional pilot career. If you are not currently a Ninety-Nines member, please join right away. Call 1-800-994-1929 or go to www.ninety-nines.org/join.html.
- **Commercial Pilot Certificate:** Participants need to have their commercial pilot's license (and be actively flying) before they will be accepted into the program.
- **Participation Fee:** New participants accepted into the program pay a program fee of US\$45 (Senior Navigators exempt). This can be paid all at once or \$15 over the three sessions you are in the program (payable by Square Inc. for US participants; international participants will be personally informed about payment details).
- **Email Access:** You will need regular (at least once per week) email access to communicate with the PPLI Coordination Team and your mentoring partners.
- **Internet Access:** You will need regular internet access to view or print the program materials.
- **Commitment to Mentoring, Career Development, and Leadership Activities:** It takes time and effort to build mentoring partnerships, in addition to learning new skills. We require a minimum of three voice communications per month with your mentoring partner. In the case that your mentoring partner is in a different country, internet voice communications (e.g., Skype, Google Hangouts, Facetime, etc.) are highly encouraged.
- **Dispatches:** To guide your progression through the program, you will be asked to read the Dispatches and complete the assignments on schedule. Plan to spend approximately ten hours per month on these activities (which include communication with your mentoring partner).
- **Communication with PPLI Coordination Team:** All PPLI participants are required to *initiate* voice communication, at least once per month, with a designated member of the PPLI Coordination Team, known as a **Mentoring Coordinator**.
- **Confidentiality:** All parties are asked to respect sensitive personal information shared by mentoring partners.
- **Commitment to the entire program:** It will take you at least 18 months to complete the PPLI program and graduate. You are expected to commit to continuing through the entire program without taking any breaks.

PPLI FAQs

How far along in my career do I need to be to participate?

This program is for any woman who has not yet achieved her professional pilot career goal and would benefit from mentoring and leadership development. Applicants are encouraged to wait until they have completed their commercial training before applying to the PPLI. Keep in mind that the expectation is for you to be working as a pilot by the time you advance to the Navigator phase.

I really need some mentoring right now. Can I just complete the Captain Phase?

No. This program aims to help individuals and build our community of women pilots. To achieve those ends, we only consider applicants willing to give and receive mentoring guidance, as well as develop as leaders. These goals, therefore, require a commitment to complete the entire PPLI program.

I want to commit to the whole program, but I'm really busy. What can I do?

You will get many benefits through participation in this program. Only you can weigh those benefits against the time, effort, and cost to participate. Think of it as a training investment that will pay you large future dividends.

What if I have a major scheduling issue, such as a lengthy flight training course or a new baby?

If you anticipate undertaking a major commitment (such as a lengthy flight training course or an addition to your family), please delay your application until the next session. Unexpected scheduling conflicts will be handled on a case-by-case basis by the PPLI Coordination Team.

Will my mentor help me get a job?

This is not a job placement program. Your mentor is a guide, not your "in" at a particular company. You are expected to learn how to help yourself and acquire the skills and knowledge to advance on your own.

Is the relationship with my mentoring partner open-ended?

The structured mentoring session ends after five months. At that time, you may continue your mentoring relationship by voluntary mutual agreement. However, an extension is not required of either of you.

I am financially strapped. How can I afford to participate?

We offer a limited number of PPLI participation fee waivers each session. Request a fee waiver on the Application form.

At this stage in my life, I'm ready to help others. Can I simply be a mentor to another woman pilot?

Yes! We sincerely appreciate your willingness to mentor other women pilots. Please complete the Senior Navigator Application. You may volunteer for one or multiple sessions.

APPLY

If you are a Ninety-Nines member pursuing any professional pilot career and meet the requirements outlined in this Fact Sheet, you are encouraged to apply to the Ninety-Nines Professional Pilot Leadership Initiative.

You can find the application form on the Ninety-Nines Website, Advancing Women Pilots, Professional Pilot Leadership Initiative (PPLI) or [PPLI Application Form](#). You can only apply by submitting the application form electronically. For Senior Navigator applicants: [PPLI Contact Information](#). If you have difficulty with the application, please send an email to Mentoring@ninety-nines.org.

Application deadlines: July 15th and January 15th

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

To reach the PPLI Team Leaders, write to: mentoring@ninety-nines.org

PPLI Application: [PPLI Application Form](#)

PPLI Senior Navigator Application: [PPLI Contact Information](#)