



The Ninety-Nines International Organization of Women Pilots
Professional Pilot Leadership Initiative

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 99s 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 99s Professional Pilot Leadership Initiative are:

- Women pilots helping each other through structured one-on-one mentoring so we can all succeed.
- An opportunity for participants to learn and share through guided activities which develop practical, goal-oriented career and leadership skills.

If you are a 99s 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, and 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 mentoring, you will have an opportunity to:

- Learn how to establish and maintain professional mentoring partnerships.
- Explore career options and possible paths toward your career goals.
- 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 in advancing your career.

THE CAPTAINS' CIRCLE

After completing your session as Captain, your progress in the program and career status is evaluated. A typical progression is to move to the **Captains' Circle** and later advance to Navigator. Highly motivated participants may become Navigators their second session while being members of the Captains' Circle.

The Captains' Circle provides peer mentoring in an email-based discussion group. You participate by generating and discussing topics such as building cross-country time, balancing home and career, handling career hurdles, and resume critiques. You also continue making progress on your Flight Plan and your **Leadership Activities** (more details under LEADERSHIP) while in 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.

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.

In order 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, 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 catch 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 crewmember 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 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

Leadership Activity points.

- In your “Co-Pilot” Leadership Activities, 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. These activities are worth one point each.
- In your “Captain” Leadership Activities, you coordinate, organize, or lead one or more people while taking responsibility for a group, completion of a project, or an event. These are worth eight points.
- We strongly prefer you devote your leadership efforts to The Ninety-Nines. However, 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.
- Credit is given for Leadership Activities completed up to 12 months prior to entering the PPLI.
- Leadership development is an integral component of the 99s Professional Pilot **LEADERSHIP** Initiative and is required for graduation. *NOTE: Senior Navigators (only) are exempt.*

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** 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 in order to effectively provide guidance within the constructs of the PPLI.

NOTE: Senior Navigators do not pay the participation fee, and are not expected to complete Leadership Activities. Membership in 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 31 — begin with Mentoring Session A

Apply by July 31 — begin with Mentoring Session B

Mentoring Session A: March 1 – July 31

Mentoring Session B: September 1 – January 31

APPLICATION & PARTICIPATION CRITERIA

Much like a pilot career, participation in the 99s Professional Pilot Leadership Initiative demands a considerable, sustained commitment. You must meet these criteria and agree to the following:

- **99s 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 99s member, please join right away. Call 1-800-994-1929 or go to the [Ninety-Nines website](#).
- **Participation Fee:** New participants accepted into the program pay a one-time participation fee of US\$20 (Senior Navigators excepted).
- **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 interact with the PPLI website. You may need to view or print the program materials in Adobe Acrobat PDF format.
- **Telephone Calls:** At least monthly, you must communicate with your mentoring partner by telephone, which will likely incur long distance phone charges. These charges will be shared between mentoring partners by mutual agreement. (An exception is made when your mentoring partner is not in your country.) Many of our participants use Skype for calls.
- **Commitment to Mentoring, Career Development, and Leadership Activities:** It takes time and effort to build mentoring partnerships and learn new skills. During the two five-month Mentoring Sessions of your Captain and Navigator Phases, we require a minimum of three communications per month, via email or telephone, with your mentoring partner. At least one of these must be a 20-30 minute telephone call (except when your mentoring partner is not in your country). In addition, 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.
- **Communication with PPLI Coordination Team:** All PPLI participants are required to check in via email 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 18-24 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 in order 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. You could be a student pilot who intends to pursue a professional pilot career or a high-level professional pilot seeking to advance into management, or anything in between. 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. This requires 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 mutual agreement, but this is not required of either of you.

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

Here are some cost-saving ideas:

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

- You will be provided with a Google Email account exclusively for the interaction with the PPLI. Additionally, your public library may have free or low-cost computer usage that provides web/email access.
- If you have a cell phone with low-cost evening/weekend minutes, you can plan to make your telephone calls during these times.
- Ask your 99s Chapter if they can support your participation with a scholarship.

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 contact the PPLI Coordination Team Leader via email: mentoring@ninety-nines.org. You may participate for one session or repeated times.

APPLY

If you are a 99s member pursuing any professional pilot career and meet the requirements outlined in this Fact Sheet, you are encouraged to apply to the 99s Professional Pilot Leadership Initiative.

The link to the application form is on the [99s Website | Resource Center | Pilot Careers Center](#). The preferred application method is by electronic submission. (Senior Navigator applicants: please send an email to mentoring@ninety-nines.org.)

If you have difficulty with the application, please send an email to mentoring@ninety-nines.org.

Application deadlines: July 31st and January 31st

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

To reach the PPLI Team Leader, write to mentoring@ninety-nines.org. This PPLI Fact Sheet and a link to the PPLI Applications are on the [99s Website | Resource Center | Pilot Careers Center](#).

The 99s PPLI is a project of The 99s International Careers Committee: Careers@Ninety-Nines.org.