# Outdoor Action Program Leader Trainer Application

## Becoming a Leader Trainer

Leader trainers carry the tremendous responsibility of training Princeton students to lead groups in a wilderness setting. As a result, we take the qualities and qualifications of a leader trainer applicant very seriously. A leader trainer applicant should be entirely comfortable in a leadership role and ready to take on the next level of leadership: teaching others how to lead.

### Criteria for Selection

In addition to completing all of the standard leader training requirements, applicants must have at least **two primary multiday outdoor leadership experiences**, **at least one of which must be through OA.** Primary leadership experiences are those where you are solely responsible, or equally share of responsibility with co-leaders, for the emotional and physical safety of a group. In some cases, applicants may have outside wilderness trip-leading experience that may also qualify; any questions about the eligibility of wilderness experiences should be addressed to Caroline Stone. To provide a clear sense of the qualifications we are seeking in applicants, we have identified four major skill sets which a leader trainer should possess:

### Teaching Ability

Excellent teaching skills are necessary in order to reteach skills on the LTT. Leader Trainers are expected to take their teaching commitments seriously and should demonstrate the following qualities: proficiency in subject matter (knots, stoves, LNT, etc.), competence in assessing trainees' comprehension, the ability to recognize and capitalize upon teachable moments, creativity in teaching style, and patience.

### Ability to Evaluate

We expect leader trainers to have the capacity to evaluate and provide feedback to their trainees. To this end, applicants must be comfortable evaluating their peers, and possess excellent observational and debriefing skills. We expect Leader Trainers to identify strengths and weaknesses in their trainees, provide a tailored environment for trainees to work on these identified areas, and effectively communicate feedback to them. We also expect a willingness to work closely with co-leader trainers to accomplish these goals.

### Debriefing Skills

Debriefing is a primary tool that leader trainers employ to help trainees reflect and develop their own leadership styles, particularly on the LTT. Leader trainers are expected to have solid debriefing skills, among which are active listening, an ability to ask probing questions, moderating skills, thoughtfulness, and an ability to recognize teachable moments. A strong candidate possesses the necessary qualities to debrief well and an eagerness to consciously improve upon them.

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### Technical Skills

Technical wilderness skills are fundamental to all aspects of OA trips. Technical skills include tarping and bear bagging; stove use and repair; first aid; pack care, fitting and repair; etc. Because we expect all OA leaders to possess baseline technical competency, we expect leader trainers to display expertise in all OA related hard skills to the point that they can demonstrate these skills to trainees with comfort and ease, even in the worst wilderness conditions.

Applying to be an OA leader trainer is a multi-stage process designed to comprehensively evaluate leader training candidates. Please be aware that each step, including the written application, is a selective process. The first step, a written application, should be completed and emailed to [oa@princeton.edu](mailto:oa@princeton.edu) by **11:59 PM on Sunday, February 12.**

### Stage 1 - Written Application

The first step is a written application which consists of questions about outdoor experience and training, a self-evaluation portion, and an essay section. It can be found on the OA website. The application will be reviewed to determine whether an applicant has the requisite experience to become a leader trainer. If the application is accepted, leader trainer candidates will be invited to participate in the second step—an evaluation of teaching skills.

**What we expect:** We expect a thorough and thoughtful application that is both an assessment of your skills and which demonstrates your previous leadership experiences (both within and outside of OA) and expresses your leadership style. This is an opportunity for you to share with the committee important aspects of your experience and philosophy. Please provide specific examples drawn from your primary leadership experiences and use them to reflect on your leadership philosophy.

### Stage 2 - Teaching Lesson

During this portion of the process, a candidate will be asked to prepare and teach a lesson to a small group of leader trainers. This ten minute lesson should cover a subject that is well-known and comfortable to the applicant. The lesson does not have to be outdoor-related. After this, the candidate will be asked to teach how to light a stove light. Upon a satisfactory evaluation of requisite teaching skills, an applicant will be invited to the interview process.

**What we expect:** You should come prepared to teach an interactive class on a topic of your choice for approximately 10 minutes. You should assume that your 'trainees' have no previous experience in this activity so you should focus on solid teaching progression, good assessment of their learning and presenting the material in a way that encourages their involvement and learning. You will also be asked to teach how to light an MSR Whisperlite Stove. You should assume that the people you are teaching are leaders-in-training (not freshmen) so you should be thorough and complete on how the stove works, how to put it together properly, lighting, safety issues and stove protocols, etc. You should actively assess the understanding and skills of the people you are teaching.

### Stage 3 - Interview & Leader Trainer Committee Review

The leader trainer interview is a short but comprehensive interview designed to solicit more information about outdoor skills and experience, technical and interpersonal skills, debriefing and evaluating abilities, as well as other qualifications necessary in becoming a leader trainer.

**What we expect:** The interview is a chance to learn more about your specific leadership style, how you have handled different interpersonal situations and your debriefing skills. We will also ask some hypothetical questions relating to different scenarios that Leader Trainers might encounter. While there is no specific way to prepare, we expect that you will be thoughtful and reflective about your leadership.

### Stage 4 - OA Director Interview & Review

Candidates will have a final interview with OA Director Rick Curtis. After completion of the interview, Rick Curtis will review all of the information on each candidate and make selections.

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## Questions and Contact Information

If you have any questions concerning requisite criteria or qualifications, the application process, or any facet of being or becoming a leader trainer, please contact the Leader Trainer Committee Co-Chairs, Dora Chen ’17, Erika Davidoff ’17, and Ryan Miller ’17.

# Outdoor Action Program Leader Trainer Application

Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_

My Spring Break Plans are (optional) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

## PART I: Experience

**1. Outdoor Action Leader Training Requirements**

❑ **First Aid Certification** (indicate highest level)**:** Course\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Mo/Yr:\_\_\_\_\_\_

**❑ CPR** Expires:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**❑ Leadership 101 Workshop**

**❑ Leadership 102 Workshop**

**❑ Technical Skills Course**

**❑ LNT Awareness Workshop**

**❑ Managing Safety in the Backcountry Workshop**

**❑ Leader Training Trip** Your Leader Trainers: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**2. Outdoor Action Trips you have been on**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Dates** | **Location** | **Activities** | **Leader or Participant?** | **Comments** |
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**3. Do you have any other relevant multi-day Wilderness Experience? If so please list below.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Dates** | **Location** | **Activities** | **# of Days** | **Organization** (NOLS, OB, Overland) | **Leader** **Participant**  **Personal Trip** |
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**4. If you completed question 3, please explain how these experiences served as *leadership* experience.**

**PART II: Essay Questions**

### Please answer each of these questions. Most questions will be best answered in 150-350 words.

1. What does the outdoors mean to you?
2. Tell us about a successful **leadership** experience you have had. What did you do that made it successful?
3. Tell us about a challenging leadership experience you’ve had, or one that didn’t go as planned. What did you learn from this experience?
4. Describe any teaching experiences you have had (either through OA or other settings).
5. Discuss how non-OA experiences have shaped you as a leader.
6. We believe there is a difference between being an effective leader and an effective Leader Trainer. Please discuss this difference.
7. Why do you think you are ready to be a Leader Trainer?
8. What are you current leadership goals and areas that you are working to further develop?

**PART III: Technical Skills Assessment**

**Technical Skills Self-Evaluation:** These are some of the skills that are expected of OA Leaders. General competency (not perfection) in these skills is what we are looking for in LT candidates. Please know that your answers to these will NOT “make or break” your application. We hope you will use this section to reflect on your own skill ability.

Please rate your ability or knowledge in each area on the following scale:

1 = Comfortable w/ co-leader assistance

2 = Comfortable Solo

3 = Comfortable in Difficult Conditions/Bad Weather/Dark

4 = Comfortable Teaching to Others

**1. Leave No Trace**

General Wilderness Ethics \_\_\_\_\_

Travel & Camp on Durable Surfaces \_\_\_\_\_

Dispose of Waste properly \_\_\_\_\_

Leave What you Find \_\_\_\_\_

Be Considerate of Other Visitors \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Knots**

Bowline \_\_\_\_\_

Truckers Hitch \_\_\_\_\_

Taut-line Hitch \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Shelter**

Tents Construction \_\_\_\_\_

General Tarping \_\_\_\_\_

Grommets & Tension Pts. \_\_\_\_\_

Bad Weather Tarp Set Up \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Bear Bagging** \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Stoves**

Stove Use \_\_\_\_\_

Stove Repair \_\_\_\_\_

Pump Repair \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Water Management Techniques**

Aqua Mira \_\_\_\_\_

Filter \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Backpack**

Pack Fitting (Internal Frame) \_\_\_\_\_

Pack Repair\_\_\_\_\_

**8. Map Reading** \_\_\_\_\_

**9. Compass and Navigation** \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Basic First Aid**

Patient Assessment System \_\_\_\_\_

Blister Care \_\_\_\_\_

MOI: Trauma \_\_\_\_\_

MOI: Medical \_\_\_\_\_

MOI: Environmental \_\_\_\_\_

**11. Outdoor Hygiene** \_\_\_\_\_

**12. Risk Management** \_\_\_\_\_

**13. Cooking OA Meals** \_\_\_\_\_

**14. Grab Bag/Other (OPTIONAL):**On a scale of 1-4, please list An OA related skill that you would be a 0/4 on, and one that you would be a 5/4 on (Tazmanian Toe Tap, Hand-to-hand Bear Combat, etc.).

0/4: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

5/4: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_