

LEED: LAAO

Leadership Exchange to promote Equity and Diversity: Left Atrial Appendage Occlusion

SCAI's LEED: LAAO program is a micro-fellowship that pairs experienced LAAO operators with DEI champions in a novel bi-directional exchange of expertise to address unmet needs in interventional cardiology:

- Increase the numbers of LAAO operators who are passionate about and experienced in addressing diversity and health inequities.
- Increase the participation of Underrepresented in Medicine (URiM) physicians in structural heart interventions such as LAAO.
- Establish opportunities for exchanges and visiting professorships to advance the careers of URiM physicians and physicians who are dedicated to addressing healthcare disparities.

Program Overview

The inaugural LEED: LAAO cohort will consist of four LAAO Leaders and eight DEI Leaders.

Each LAAO Leader selected for this program will host two DEI Leaders at their institution, approximately five to six months apart. This will provide consistency in LAAO training and exposure to different DEI perspectives.

- LAAO Leaders will be established implanters of the WATCHMAN™ Left Atrial Appendage Closure Device, interested in teaching, mentoring, expanding their DEI toolkit and enhancing the DEI skills of their team to address health inequities in their local communities.
- DEI Leaders will be experienced interventional cardiologists, experts in championing DEI-related initiatives that address healthcare disparities and interested in expanding their structural heart intervention skillsets to include LAAO procedures*.

During each micro-fellowship, the LAAO Leader will host their DEI Leader partner at their institution for a two-day exchange that includes:

- Live teaching* and best practices through two consecutive WATCHMAN LAAC lab days by the LAAO Leader (goal of eight implants over two days).
- A Grand Rounds presentation by the DEI Leader
- Host institution dinner honoring the visiting DEI Leader and showcasing their expertise
- A breakfast education session for fellows on the topic of diversity or health equity led by the DEI Leader.

See sample exchange itinerary below.

DEI Leaders will receive a stipend for their lost work hours. DEI Leaders' travel expenses, the Leaders' planning dinner, the DEI leadership dinner, and fellows' education breakfast will be supported by the LEED: LAAO program, as outlined in the Stipend and Reimbursement Policy section below.

*Note, this program complements but does not replace training provided by Boston Scientific. All DEI Leaders are expected to have completed their industry-required WATCHMAN LAAC training by the time of their fellowship exchange.

Program Requirements

- Attend the LEED: LAAO Fellowship kick-off call, which will take place in early February 2025
- Complete unconscious (or implicit) bias training - recommended for all participants who have not completed training within the past two years.
- LAAO Leaders' institution - host a two-day exchange for each DEI Leader. The first exchange should occur by May 31, 2025, and the second exchange five-six months later. Each exchange should include:
 - Observership of two consecutive in-person lab days with the LAAO Leader for DEI Leader, with three to five WATCHMAN LAAC implants scheduled per day (goal eight cases over two days) with simultaneous training to include pre-clinical evaluation; imaging assessment; procedural planning; device selection; atypical anatomy; training of clinical staff; procedure steps; inpatient care; medical therapy; post- implant imaging and follow up.
 - A planning dinner attended by the DEI and LAAO Leaders to discuss scheduled WATCHMAN LAAC cases and the LAAO Leader's health disparities project proposal.
 - Medical Grand Rounds (or equivalent) presentation by the DEI Leader
 - Leadership dinner for DEI Leader, LAAO Leader, and host DEI (e.g., chief diversity officer or population health leader), hospital (e.g., CMO, CEO), and SHD leaders (e.g., cath lab director, chief of cardiology). Up to eight people.
 - Breakfast educational event led by the DEI leader with invited fellows, cath lab staff and/or research staff. Up to 15 people.
- Creation of DEI resources/outputs:
 - Grand Rounds presentation on a DEI or health equity-related topic by the DEI Leader that can be recorded and shared as a DEI resource on SCAI's website.
 - LAAO Leader to identify and complete a project or activity that addresses health inequities/disparities with an observable, pre-defined output that can be shared on SCAI's website within nine to twelve months of fellowship initiation.
- LAAO Leader to complete a virtual review of DEI Leader's planned initial cases in the 30 days following the exchange.
- Complete program evaluations via a baseline, 30-day and six-month questionnaire, and a qualitative interview with program participants.

Who Can Apply

All applicants must be US-based board-certified interventional cardiologists who have completed their interventional cardiology fellowship and are current SCAI members and meet the LAAO or DEI Leader eligibility criteria listed below.

LAAO Leader Eligibility Criteria

- Have performed at least 100 lifetime WATCHMAN LAAC implants.
- Have a high monthly case volume that can support program's educational components i.e., able to schedule at least eight WATCHMAN LAAC implants over two consecutive lab days.
- Be working under a hospital program that currently participates in the NCDR LAAO Registry.

DEI Leader Eligibility Criteria

- Have completed at least 15 of the required 25 transseptal punctures through an intact septum at the time of application submission. Boston Scientific's Access Solutions team can work with applicants to identify training opportunities to complete the minimum 25 transseptal punctures required to be a primary implanter by the time of the exchange.
- Have confirmed with Boston Scientific that they are eligible for the WATCHMAN LAAC training program and be willing to complete all Boston Scientific training program requirements in 12 weeks if selected for LEED: LAAO program.
- Meet program requirements in the [National Coverage Determination for LAAO](#)
- Be able to maintain skills by performing ≥ 25 TSPs and > 12 LAAOs over each two-year period as per the [SCAI/HRS Expert Consensus Statement on Transcatheter LAAO](#).

Application Process

Applications should be emailed to [Justine Mascarenhas](#) no later than November 26, 2024 and meet the following requirements.

DEI Leader Application Requirements

Please include the following in your application. Applications will be evaluated using these [criteria](#).

- [DEI Leader Application Form](#)
- Statement of Intent:
 - Describe your work as a DEI champion and prior work in DEI (include projects, committees, unique focus of previous work or research, past accomplishments or awards, and future goals in DEI leadership).
 - Data establishing your community's needs and describing your interest in addressing disparities using LAAO (include examples of personal skillsets or experiences that can address the need established for your community).
 - Describe how you intend to expand LAAO access to underserved communities using LAAO skills (include whether this will lead to greater access, and how).
 - Explain how your personal or professional background or experience makes you ideally suited to this role, or how this program would personally benefit your career (you may include details of upbringing or personal barriers to advancement; past training or research experiences; location and focus of current hospital).
 - Detail the leadership roles you have obtained and ongoing or completed projects in these roles in community organizations, local institutions, industry, and/or professional societies.
 - Describe key features of the quality improvement program at your institution.
- At least two letters of support, at least one of which must demonstrate support for new or additional LAAO programs and expanding access to underserved communities.

LAAO Leader Application Requirements

Please include the following in your application. Applications will be evaluated using these [criteria](#).

- [LAAO Leader Application Form](#)
- Statement of commitment from your hospital for visiting physicians/external observers.
- Statement of support from the DEI leadership at your hospital (e.g., chief diversity officer, director of health equity/population health/community outreach) to partnering in the LEED: LAAO program and committing their support to educational activities that share and showcase the DEI Leader's knowledge and expertise at your institution during two separate DEI Leaders' visits.
- Statement of Intent including:
 - A description of your personal LAAO experience and related skillsets, educator and/or thought leadership activities, and key features of the quality improvement programs at your institution.
 - A demonstration of your early efforts to gain greater awareness of unmet needs in your local community (including early pre-engagement meetings with local DEI leadership, training, reviews of guidelines or participation in educational seminars, or support for others at DEI events).
- Letter of recommendation from a peer or learner regarding your teaching skill sets and demonstrating how your activities support inclusion and belonging in the workplace. *(Optional)*

Evaluation

Applications will be reviewed and selected by the LEED: LAAO leadership team using [DEI Leader and LAAO Leader scoring matrices](#).

Four LAAO Leaders and eight DEI Leaders will be selected for the inaugural year of the program.

Following the application review, the LEED: LAAO Leadership team will pair LAAO and DEI Leaders and determine which DEI Leaders will be in the first vs second exchange cycle.

Successful applicants will be informed about the program committee's decision by the end of January 2025 and required to sign a Memorandum of Agreement officially accepting their fellowships and committing them to meeting the program's requirements.

Further Information

Sample Exchange Itinerary

Wednesday

5:00 PM	DEI Leader check-in to hotel
7:00 PM	LAAO Leader and DEI Leader Planning Dinner (sponsored)

Thursday

8:00 AM	DEI Leader Grand Rounds
9:00 AM - 5:00 PM	LAAO implants in the cath lab
6:30 PM	DEI Leader, LAAO Leader, host institution leadership, and DEI team dinner (sponsored)

Friday

7:00 AM	DEI Leader and fellows educational breakfast conference (sponsored)
8:00 AM - 5:00 PM	LAAO implants in the cath lab
6:00 PM	DEI Leader and LAAO Leader debrief

Saturday

Morning	DEI Leader departure
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Sample Timeline to Meet Program Requirements

	DEI Leader	LAAO Leader
Immediately on Acceptance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Register for WATCHMAN LAAC and, if applicable, transseptal training programs with Boston Scientific. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Boston Scientific’s HAV-HELP program to understand and document your local underserved populations' needs.
Phase I <i>Twelve Weeks Prior to Exchange</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete Phase 1 online modules provided by Boston Scientific. Complete LEED: LAAO baseline questionnaire. If necessary, complete unconscious bias training. Identify the four to eight cases to be performed by you following the exchange. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete LEED: LAAO baseline questionnaire. If necessary, complete unconscious bias training. Meet with your institution's DEI council, diversity or health equity chair, C-suite leaders (e.g., population health), and other key stakeholders, and agree on a date for medical Grand Rounds (or equivalent).
Phase II <i>Eight Weeks Prior to Exchange</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete WATCHMAN LAAC Phase 2 training (didactic, live virtual, or in-person program) provided by Boston Scientific. Complete WATCHMAN LAAC Phase 3 (hands-on training), provided by Boston Scientific (this may be performed at the time of exchange). Obtain additional transseptal experience, if needed, through Boston Scientific’s Access Solutions program. Finalize the four to eight cases that you will perform following exchange. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate completion of observership paperwork for DEI Leader. Identify a minimum of eight cases to be performed by you during the two-day exchange. Coordinate welcome dinner with your hospital, DEI, and LAAO leadership and staff. Coordinate breakfast educational events with fellows. Partner with your hospital's marketing team and other stakeholders to advertise all events.

<p>Phase III <i>Exchange</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel to your host institution. • Observe eight WATCHMAN LAAC cases over two days and undergo advanced training with your LAAO Leader. • Give medical Grand Rounds • Lead fellows' breakfast training focused on DEI research and community activities • Attend dinner with local leadership as the guest of honor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead eight WATCHMAN LAAC implants over two days with teaching to include pre- clinical evaluation, imaging assessment, procedural planning, device selection, training of clinical staff, procedure steps, inpatient care, medical therapy, post- implant imaging and follow-up. • Introduce DEI Leader at Grand Rounds and other dedicated events. • Facilitate networking opportunities.
<p>Phase IV <i>Four Weeks Following Exchange</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete virtual reviews of your initial cases with your LAAO Leader, and your LAAO Leader's DEI project. • Continue to use company-specific tools such as Therapy Awareness from Boston Scientific. • Complete the 30-day follow-up questionnaire and qualitative interview. • Develop DEI resources. • Share knowledge and your DEI resources with colleagues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete virtual reviews of your DEI Leaders' initial cases and your DEI project. • Complete the 30-day follow-up questionnaire and qualitative interview. • Develop DEI resources. • Share knowledge and your DEI resources with colleagues and during Grand Rounds. • Facilitate meetings that enable your DEI project to progress.
<p>Phase V <i>Six Months Following Exchange</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete six-month follow-up questionnaire • Continue to socialize shared DEI resources in collaboration with your LAAO Leader. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete six-month follow-up questionnaire. • Continue to socialize shared DEI resources in collaboration with your DEI Leader.

Stipend and Reimbursement Policy

LEED: LAAO will provide support for the following program components:

- DEI Leaders: \$5,000 stipend + reimbursement for travel and accommodations for the two-day exchange at LAAO Leader's host institution, per SCAI's faculty travel policy
- Educational activities in partnership with LAAO Leader's host institution:
 - Planning dinner for LAAO Leader and DEI Leader
 - Leadership dinner for DEI Leader, LAAO Leader, and host institution leadership (up to eight people)
 - Breakfast educational event led by the DEI Leader with invited fellows, cath lab staff, and/or research staff (up to 15 people)

Acknowledgements

SCAI gratefully acknowledges Boston Scientific as a founding supporter of the SCAI LEED: LAAO Fellowship Program.

Questions

If you have any questions about the LEED: LAAO program, please either call Justine Mascarenhas, at 202-347-4477, or email: jmascarenhas@scai.org