



VANGUARD RISING

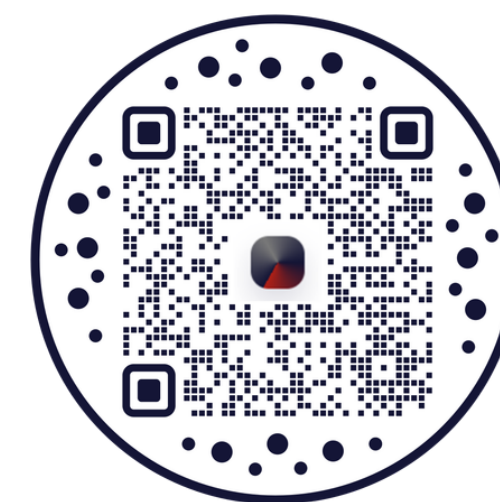
EXPERIENTIAL, APPLIED LEARNING PROGRAM

Cybersecurity: Governance, Risk and Compliance (GRC) Agile Workflow

The Cybersecurity Governance, Risk and Compliance pathway within Vanguard Rising provides participants with applied experience in the business, policy, risk, and compliance side of cybersecurity. Rather than simulating Security Operations Center monitoring or technical incident-response work, participants collaborate on real projects that help organizations better understand, document, and improve their cybersecurity posture. Working in cross-functional, self-organizing teams, participants may contribute to projects involving cybersecurity policies and procedures, risk assessments, security posture reviews, compliance requirements, control documentation, security awareness resources, governance frameworks, gap analysis, and cybersecurity playbooks. Participants learn how security requirements connect to business operations and how organizations identify risk, establish controls, document expectations, and prepare for assessments or compliance activities.

Through Vanguard Rising's Workflow and Nested Workflow framework, participants also gain experience managing work across teams, documenting decisions, communicating findings, prioritizing risk, managing dependencies, and translating cybersecurity requirements into actionable recommendations. Participants leave the lab with current applied experience, portfolio evidence, Agile workflow credentials, and demonstrated capability in cybersecurity governance, risk, compliance, documentation, and security program support.

This pathway is best suited for individuals interested in careers such as GRC Analyst, Cybersecurity Compliance Analyst, Security Risk Analyst, Information Security Governance, Cybersecurity Program Support, IT Risk, Security Policy, or related cybersecurity roles. Important: This pathway is not designed as a SOC analyst, penetration testing, threat hunting, or hands-on network monitoring lab.



theASCENDcollective.org/vanguard-rising



VANGUARD RISING

EXPERIENTIAL, APPLIED LEARNING PROGRAM

Software Engineering Agile Workflow

The Software Engineer Career Pathway within Vanguard Rising prepares participants to move beyond coding in isolation and into the realities of modern, team-based software development. Participants learn how software is designed, built, tested, and delivered within Agile, cross-functional environments, gaining experience with iterative development, backlog refinement, sprint planning, and continuous integration. The focus is not just on writing code, but on understanding how software solutions support business objectives, user needs, and system reliability. Participants develop the habits of effective engineers – clear communication, adaptability, and accountability – alongside technical execution.

Through hands-on projects and the Workflow and Nested Workflow framework, software engineering participants practice building solutions within interconnected systems, managing dependencies, and collaborating with product, operations, and security stakeholders. They learn how to break down complex requirements into actionable tasks, respond to feedback, and improve solutions incrementally – just as they would in a professional engineering team. By the end of the pathway, participants graduate with demonstrated experience, a portfolio of real-world work, and the confidence to contribute meaningfully in software engineering, development, or technical delivery roles from day one.



theASCENDcollective.org/vanguard-rising



VANGUARD RISING

EXPERIENTIAL, APPLIED LEARNING PROGRAM

Organizational Logistics and Operating Infrastructure Agile Workflow

The Organizational Logistics and Operating Infrastructure pathway within Vanguard Rising is designed to prepare participants to help organizations build the internal structure, systems, documentation, and operating discipline needed to grow sustainably. Rather than focusing on traditional supply chain or distribution logistics, this pathway examines how the moving parts of an organization fit together, how work flows across functions, and how critical knowledge can be transferred from individuals into repeatable systems. Participants work within cross-functional, self-organizing teams to help document current operations, map workflows, identify dependencies and gaps, clarify roles and responsibilities, establish handoffs, organize resources, and create the infrastructure needed for consistent execution. Projects may include developing operating models, process maps, standard operating procedures, decision frameworks, accountability structures, resource repositories, communication pathways, onboarding tools, and other documentation that reduces reliance on any single person. Through the Workflow and Nested Workflow framework, participants gain hands-on experience examining an organization from a systems perspective. They learn how to identify bottlenecks, single points of failure, undocumented knowledge, unclear ownership, and operational risks that can limit growth. They then help translate what currently lives in conversations, habits, or individual knowledge into practical structures that others can understand, manage, and carry forward. This applied learning experience helps participants develop demonstrated capability in organizational operations, process improvement, business analysis, documentation, operational readiness, knowledge management, and systems thinking. Participants leave with portfolio evidence showing how they helped turn organizational complexity into a clearer, more scalable operating model.

This pathway is best suited for individuals interested in careers such as Operations Analyst, Business Operations Specialist, Business Process Analyst, Program Operations Coordinator, Organizational Development Specialist, Project Coordinator, Process Improvement Specialist, Knowledge Management Specialist, or Operational Excellence roles. **Important: This pathway is not centered on traditional transportation, warehousing, distribution, or supply chain logistics. It focuses on the internal organizational logistics required to help a business or nonprofit operate, scale, and reduce dependency on individual people.**



theASCENDcollective.org/vanguard-rising



VANGUARD RISING

EXPERIENTIAL, APPLIED LEARNING PROGRAM

People Operations / Talent Optimization

The People Operations Career Training pathway within Vanguard Rising is designed to prepare participants for the realities of modern workforce environments by combining human-centered leadership foundations with real-world organizational execution. Participants learn to operate within cross-functional, self-organizing teams, applying structured workflows to support hiring, onboarding, performance management, engagement, and organizational health. Rather than focusing solely on HR theory or policy, this pathway emphasizes operational alignment, communication systems, workforce risk mitigation, documentation discipline, and continuous improvement – mirroring how high-performing People Operations professionals function inside complex organizations. Talent learns not just how to support employees, but how to design and sustain systems where culture, compliance, productivity, and business strategy intersect. Through the Workflow and Nested Workflow framework, People Operations participants gain hands-on experience operating at both the team and organizational level, strengthening their ability to translate business goals into people practices. They practice mapping role requirements to skills, designing onboarding touchpoints, building feedback loops, managing workforce data responsibly, and identifying early indicators of risk such as turnover, disengagement, or misalignment.

Participants work on real-world organizational scenarios – balancing empathy with operational discipline – and learn how structured communication, skills-based hiring, and transparent performance systems reduce workforce instability while strengthening retention and readiness. This applied learning approach ensures participants graduate with more than HR knowledge. They leave with demonstrated capability, a systems-level understanding of talent optimization, and the confidence to contribute meaningfully from day one in People Operations, Talent Acquisition, HR Generalist, or workforce strategy roles – particularly in organizations seeking practical, skills-first, risk-aware leadership.



theASCENDcollective.org/vanguard-rising



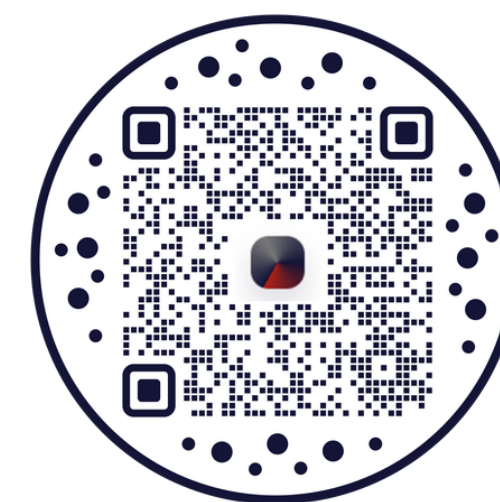
VANGUARD RISING

EXPERIENTIAL, APPLIED LEARNING PROGRAM

Finance / Accounting

The Finance, Accounting, and Estimating Career Training pathway within Vanguard Rising is designed to prepare participants for the realities of modern financial and operational environments by blending technical finance skills with the structured workflows, documentation practices, and business discipline required inside high-performing organizations. Participants learn to function within cross-functional, self-organizing teams, supporting essential processes such as reconciliation, accounts payable and receivable, budgeting support, reporting, financial recordkeeping, process documentation, estimate support, scope-to-cost alignment, and cost tracking. Rather than centering only on accounting concepts, this pathway emphasizes accuracy, internal controls, workflow consistency, financial risk awareness, documentation discipline, and the ability to translate day-to-day financial and estimating activity into meaningful business insight.

Through the Workflow and Nested Workflow framework, participants build hands-on experience operating within interconnected financial and operational systems, strengthening their ability to support both transactional precision and broader organizational performance. They practice managing documentation, identifying discrepancies, supporting reporting cycles, maintaining data integrity, tracking labor, material, and equipment costs, and recognizing early signs of operational or financial risk. By working through realistic business scenarios, participants learn how strong finance, accounting, and estimating practices create clarity, stability, cost awareness, and better decision-making across the organization. As a result, they leave with demonstrated capability, practical systems knowledge, and the confidence to contribute from day one in accounting, finance operations, bookkeeping, payroll, estimating support, cost analysis, and analyst support roles.



theASCENDcollective.org/vanguard-rising



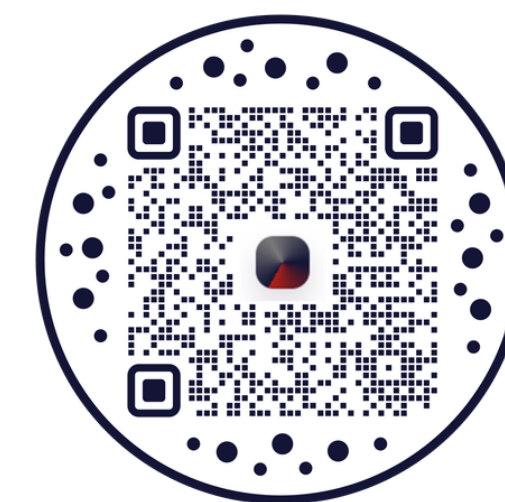
VANGUARD RISING

EXPERIENTIAL, APPLIED LEARNING PROGRAM

Data Analytics

The Data Analytics Career Training pathway within Vanguard Rising is designed to prepare participants for the demands of modern, data-driven organizations by blending analytical capability with the structured workflows, communication practices, and operational discipline required to transform information into action. Participants learn to function within cross-functional, self-organizing teams, supporting essential activities such as data preparation, validation, analysis, visualization, reporting, and performance tracking. Rather than centering only on tools or technical outputs, this pathway emphasizes data integrity, insight generation, business interpretation, and the ability to support stronger decisions across the organization.

Through the Workflow and Nested Workflow framework, participants build hands-on experience working within interconnected data systems, strengthening their ability to move from raw inputs to clear, decision-ready insights. They practice identifying trends, surfacing anomalies, supporting dashboards, documenting analysis, and communicating findings in ways that improve transparency, accountability, and performance. By working through realistic business scenarios, participants learn how analytics supports not just measurement, but strategy, efficiency, and continuous improvement. As a result, they leave with demonstrated capability, practical systems knowledge, and the confidence to contribute from day one in analytics, reporting, business intelligence, and operational insights roles.



theASCENDcollective.org/vanguard-rising



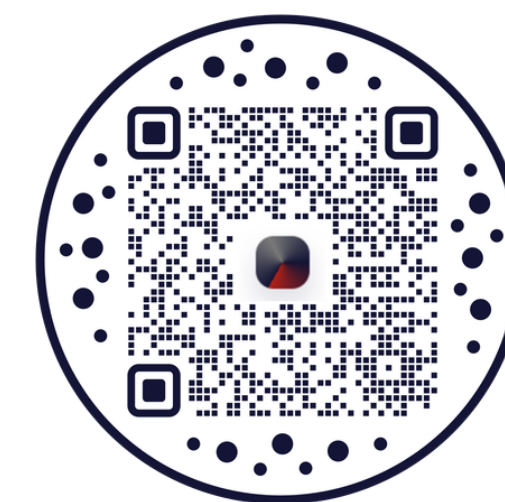
VANGUARD RISING

EXPERIENTIAL, APPLIED LEARNING PROGRAM

Grant Development

The Grant Writing Career Training pathway within Vanguard Rising is designed to prepare participants for the realities of mission-driven fundraising and resource development by blending persuasive writing, strategic research, and structured workflow discipline. Participants learn to operate within cross-functional, self-organizing teams while supporting core grant development activities such as funding research, prospect identification, proposal drafting, supporting narratives with data and outcomes, gathering attachments, organizing submission materials, and tracking deadlines. Rather than focusing only on writing skill, this pathway emphasizes alignment between mission, impact, compliance, and funder expectations, helping participants understand how strong grant writing supports both organizational sustainability and long-term growth.

Through the Workflow and Nested Workflow framework, participants build hands-on experience in the interconnected process of grant development, strengthening their ability to move from opportunity identification to proposal completion with clarity and consistency. They practice researching funders, analyzing grant guidelines, drafting compelling narratives, coordinating supporting documentation, tracking timelines, and communicating across stakeholders to keep submissions moving forward. By working through realistic grant development scenarios, participants learn how successful fundraising depends not only on strong storytelling, but also on organization, responsiveness, accuracy, and the ability to translate mission into measurable outcomes. As a result, they leave with demonstrated capability, practical systems knowledge, and the confidence to contribute from day one in grant writing, development support, fundraising coordination, nonprofit operations, and mission-driven communications roles.



theASCENDcollective.org/vanguard-rising



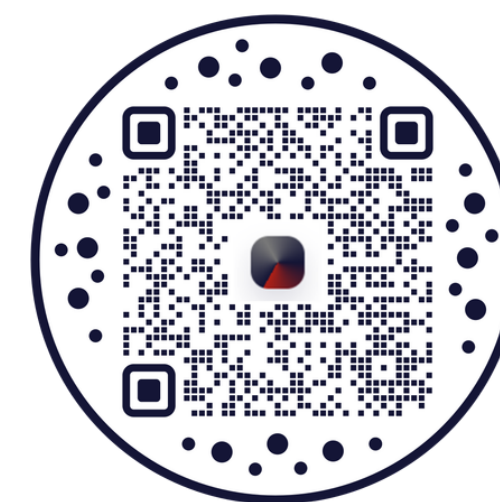
VANGUARD RISING

EXPERIENTIAL, APPLIED LEARNING PROGRAM

Community Outreach

The Community Outreach Career Training pathway within Vanguard Rising is designed to prepare participants for the realities of relationship-centered engagement, community partnership development, and candidate connection by blending communication, research, coordination, and structured workflow discipline. Participants learn to operate within cross-functional, self-organizing teams while supporting core outreach activities such as partner research, community mapping, prospect identification, referral pathway development, outreach messaging, event support, candidate engagement, follow-up coordination, and tracking engagement activity. Rather than focusing only on communication skill, this pathway emphasizes alignment between mission, trust-building, access, and measurable community impact, helping participants understand how strong outreach supports both program growth and long-term opportunity creation.

Through the Workflow and Nested Workflow framework, participants build hands-on experience in the interconnected process of community engagement, strengthening their ability to move from partner identification to meaningful relationship development with clarity and consistency. They practice researching organizations, identifying referral sources, drafting outreach messages, preparing for partner conversations, documenting engagement activity, coordinating next steps, and communicating across stakeholders to keep outreach efforts moving forward. By working through realistic community outreach scenarios, participants learn how successful engagement depends not only on strong interpersonal skills, but also on organization, responsiveness, cultural awareness, follow-through, and the ability to translate mission into clear value for partners and candidates. As a result, they leave with demonstrated capability, practical systems knowledge, and the confidence to contribute from day one in community outreach, partnership development, candidate engagement, program coordination, workforce development, nonprofit operations, and mission-driven communications roles.



theASCENDcollective.org/vanguard-rising



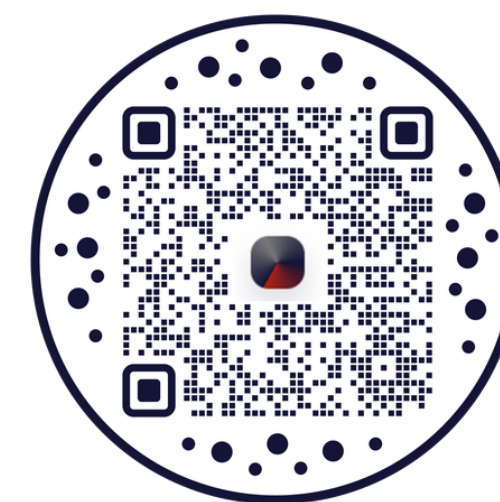
VANGUARD RISING

EXPERIENTIAL, APPLIED LEARNING PROGRAM

Marketing for Small Businesses

The Marketing for Small Businesses Career Training pathway within Vanguard Rising is designed to prepare participants for the realities of helping small businesses grow by blending practical marketing skills with structured workflows, communication discipline, and customer-focused execution. Participants learn to function within cross-functional, self-organizing teams while supporting essential marketing activities such as content planning, social media support, brand messaging, customer outreach, campaign coordination, basic market research, and performance tracking. Rather than centering only on promotion, this pathway emphasizes clarity, consistency, responsiveness, and the ability to connect business goals to meaningful customer engagement.

Through the Workflow and Nested Workflow framework, participants build hands-on experience working within interconnected marketing systems, strengthening their ability to move from ideas to repeatable execution. They practice organizing content calendars, refining messaging, supporting campaigns, tracking engagement, documenting workflows, and helping small businesses communicate their value more effectively. By working through realistic small business marketing scenarios, participants learn how strong marketing supports visibility, trust, customer growth, and business resilience. As a result, they leave with demonstrated capability, practical systems knowledge, and the confidence to contribute from day one in marketing coordination, content support, brand communications, social media support, small business growth initiatives, and customer engagement roles.



theASCENDcollective.org/vanguard-rising



VANGUARD RISING

EXPERIENTIAL, APPLIED LEARNING PROGRAM

Business Development

The Business Development Career pathway within Vanguard Rising is designed to prepare participants for the realities of modern growth-focused organizations by combining relationship-building, strategic outreach, and revenue-supporting execution with real-world business application. Participants learn to operate within cross-functional, self-organizing teams, using structured workflows to support lead generation, partnership development, market research, opportunity identification, client engagement, and pipeline movement. Rather than focusing only on sales language or networking theory, this pathway emphasizes communication discipline, value articulation, research, follow-through, stakeholder engagement, and the ability to connect business needs to growth opportunities. Talent learns not just how to promote an organization, but how to help build the systems and relationships that expand its reach, strengthen its network, and move opportunities forward.

Through the Workflow and Nested Workflow framework, Business Development participants gain hands-on experience operating at both the team and organizational level, strengthening their ability to translate strategic goals into practical business development activity. They practice researching target markets, identifying partnership and client opportunities, drafting outreach strategies, supporting relationship management, tracking pipeline activity, and helping organize the information and communication needed to move from interest to action. Participants work on real-world growth scenarios where business development is not treated as isolated selling, but as a coordinated function connected to strategy, operations, communication, and long-term value creation.

This applied learning approach ensures participants graduate with more than a basic understanding of outreach or sales. They leave with demonstrated capability, stronger professional communication skills, a systems-level understanding of how organizations grow, and the confidence to contribute meaningfully from day one in Business Development, Partnerships, Account Support, Sales Operations, Growth Strategy, or Client Engagement roles – particularly in organizations seeking practical, relationship-driven, execution-oriented talent.



theASCENDcollective.org/vanguard-rising



VANGUARD RISING

EXPERIENTIAL, APPLIED LEARNING PROGRAM

Recruiter

The Recruiter Career pathway within Vanguard Rising is designed to prepare participants for the realities of modern talent acquisition by combining candidate engagement, skills-based evaluation, sourcing, communication, and hiring-process execution with real-world business application. Participants learn to operate within cross-functional, self-organizing teams, using structured workflows to support talent sourcing, candidate outreach, screening, interview coordination, hiring-manager communication, pipeline management, and candidate experience. Rather than focusing only on résumé review or interview theory, this pathway emphasizes skills alignment, consistent evaluation, communication discipline, follow-through, relationship building, and the ability to connect organizational workforce needs with qualified talent.

Through the Workflow and Nested Workflow framework, Recruiter participants gain hands-on experience operating at both the team and organizational level, strengthening their ability to translate hiring goals into practical recruiting activity. They practice identifying role requirements, developing candidate profiles, sourcing and engaging talent, conducting structured screening conversations, supporting skills-first interview processes, tracking candidates through the hiring pipeline, documenting feedback, and helping coordinate the information and communication needed to move candidates from initial interest to hiring decisions. Participants work on real-world recruiting scenarios where talent acquisition is not treated as an isolated HR function, but as a coordinated process connected to workforce planning, employer branding, operations, candidate experience, and organizational growth.

This applied learning approach ensures participants graduate with more than a basic understanding of recruiting. They leave with demonstrated capability, stronger professional communication skills, experience evaluating talent beyond the résumé, a systems-level understanding of the hiring process, and the confidence to contribute meaningfully from day one in Recruiter, Talent Acquisition Specialist, Talent Sourcer, Recruiting Coordinator, Staffing Specialist, Candidate Experience, or Talent Operations roles, particularly in organizations seeking practical, relationship-driven, skills-first recruiting talent.



theASCENDcollective.org/vanguard-rising