

KIMBERLYN LEARY, Ph.D., MPA

Cambridge, MA • 617-899-4806 • kimberlyn.leary@gmail.com

Centering People. Structuring Change.

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS AND LEADERSHIP

Bloomberg Center for Cities at Harvard University • Harvard Kennedy School 2019 – present

Emma Bloomberg Lecturer in Public Policy and Management (2025 – present)

- **2019 – present. Faculty, Bloomberg Harvard City Leadership Initiative.** Have taught more than 230 mayors and more than 460 senior city officials across annual cohorts — cities spanning six continents, within an initiative serving 500+ cities — in data-informed governance and large-scale change.
- **2022 – present. Faculty Chair, Collaboration Program.** Chaired four cohorts — 43 global city teams (approximately 300 senior leaders) — through multi-month sprints on housing, climate adaptation, and public-private partnership; co-chaired the first two cohorts, chair for the most recent two.
- **2022 – present. Faculty Co-Chair, Program for New Mayors: First 100 Days.** Co-chair all four cohorts of the program preparing newly elected U.S. mayors for their transitions — approximately 100 mayors to date, with recent classes collectively representing some 20 million residents — delivered with the U.S. Conference of Mayors.
- **2022 – present. Faculty Co-Chair, Leading City Procurement Reform** (with the HKS Government Performance Lab). Co-led four cohorts of 12–16 city teams from across the U.S. and Canada in transforming municipal procurement, with documented city results including Baton Rouge's overhaul of a backlog that had cost the city over \$1M annually.
- **2022 – present. Faculty Chair, NeighborWorks America Achieving Excellence.** Chair the Harvard curriculum for NeighborWorks America's senior executive program, a Harvard Kennedy School partnership since 2002; have chaired two 16-month cohorts of 50 CEOs and senior executives in community development.
- **2025 – present. Faculty Director, Good Services Lab.** Direct this new \$2M Bloomberg Cities alumni offering providing custom in-city service-delivery support — launched with 2 cities, reaching 4 in 2026. Lab is also host to senior and student fellows stewarding initiatives on AI and small business, the healthcare workforce, inclusive resident impact, and climate change mitigation.

Associate Professor of Psychology in the Department of Psychiatry 2004 – present

Harvard Medical School

Associate Professor, Department of Health Policy and Management (Secondary) 2016 – present

Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health

- Served in two major leadership roles while holding an HMS faculty appointment: Chief Psychologist at the Cambridge Health Alliance (2004–2016) and Executive Director and Senior Advisor of the Center of Excellence in Women's Mental Health at McLean Hospital (2016–present).
 - As Chief Psychologist, led a \$4M clinical training enterprise and oversaw the professional development of over 150 psychology faculty, staff, and interns.
 - As Executive Director at McLean Hospital, designed policy initiatives and partnership engagement strategies elevating women's mental health in clinical, federal, and philanthropic contexts.
- At McLean, also serve as Senior Advisor to the Office of the Chief Academic Officer, leading mentoring initiatives that have served approximately 15 mid-career clinicians.
- At Harvard Chan, developed and directed the Enabling Change DrPH curriculum on systems and public innovation (2016–2020), teaching full doctoral cohort; chaired or advised 12 doctoral programs.

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

Executive Vice President, 2024 – 2025 (Senior Vice President, 2020 – 2024)

Urban Institute

Seconded by request to the Biden White House, 2021–2022, under a Gates Foundation–supported Intergovernmental Personnel Act assignment (see Federal Service).

- Led twelve research and policy centers through their vice presidents within a matrixed structure, overseeing enterprise-wide alignment of a research portfolio with annual operating revenues of \$112M–\$147M — including the Institute's historic revenue peak (2021); designed onboarding for a cohort of six new center VPs, coaching them through complex transitions and serving as key advisor to the VP leadership team.
- Co-led Elevate, the Institute's enterprise-wide strategic plan, from the Executive Office — designed and began implementing a modernized research structure of chartered Practice Areas within the centers, each anchored in an explicit theory of impact.
- Served as Principal Investigator or lead fundraiser on \$2.25M in institutional funding (Goldman Sachs, PolicyLink, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation); cultivated and stewarded major funder relationships in partnership with the development office.
- Launched the Office of Race and Equity Research and the \$2M board-funded Equity Scholars pipeline program (8 scholars supported, 5 retained into staff roles); designed Urban's first Chief Equity Officer role — since evolved into an institutional health function.
- Modernized research governance and capacity: initiated Urban's first benchmarking of IRB processes against peer institutions, recruited and developed new IRB leadership and a community-engaged approach to human subjects review, and sponsored a new Vice President of Research Practice and Excellence role.

Senior Advisor to the CEO

2016 – 2020

National Math and Science Initiative

- Designed key inputs to the organization's internal equity strategy, expanding program reach into underrepresented school districts.
- Provided developmental leadership programming to the senior executive team.

FEDERAL SERVICE / WHITE HOUSE

Senior Policy Advisor, Domestic Policy Council / Senior Equity Fellow, OMB

2021 – 2022

The White House • Biden Administration

Seconded by request from the Urban Institute under a Gates Foundation–supported Intergovernmental Personnel Act assignment. Served first as OMB's inaugural Senior Equity Fellow, then moved to the Domestic Policy Council as Senior Policy Advisor.

- Served on the core team coordinating implementation of Executive Order 13985 across equity teams at 90 federal agencies, including all Cabinet-level agencies, culminating in the release of the first-ever public-facing Agency Equity Action Plans — more than 300 concrete strategies across the federal government.
- Co-drafted the initiation text of what became Executive Order 14091 (2023), the successor equity order; among the advocates for the annual Equity Action Plan requirement it established, tying agency equity planning to the yearly federal budget and operational processes.
- Co-led the OMB Equity Learning Community, producing 20 modules for federal executives on data equity, procurement reform, and burden reduction, with sessions drawing 30 to 400 participants.
- Served as DPC co-lead for the North American Partnership for Equity and Racial Justice, launched by the U.S., Canadian, and Mexican heads of state at the 2021 North American Leaders' Summit and later formalized in a trilateral declaration signed by the three governments (January 2023).

Advisor, White House Council on Women and Girls / Health Division, OMB

2014 – 2016

The White House • Obama Administration

- Designed and staffed the White House initiative on equity for women and girls of color, convening the philanthropic and research partners whose combined \$118M in commitments was announced at the

November 2015 White House summit: a five-year, \$100M pledge from Prosperity Together, a coalition of public women's foundations, and research commitments of \$18M through the Collaborative to Advance Equity through Research, led by the Anna Julia Cooper Center at Wake Forest University.

- Both commitments ran their full five-year terms: Prosperity Together invested more than \$100M from 2015–2020 — the first two years alone supporting over 1,000 nonprofit organizations and reaching more than 137,000 women and girls — and the research Collaborative doubled, to over 50 member institutions, with additional financial commitments of \$67M.
- Conceived and stewarded Museum Day Live! (March 2016), a special Women's History Month edition delivered in partnership with the Smithsonian, in which 528 museums, cultural centers, zoos, and aquariums nationwide participated with programming designed to engage girls of color and their peers in the arts and sciences — with engagement from the Office of the First Lady.
- Supported OMB regulatory and implementation strategies on the opioid epidemic, the Zika response, and mental health policy.

PHILANTHROPY AND STRATEGIC ADVISORY

Founder and Principal

2025 – present

Kimberlyn Leary Group LLC

Independent advisory practice serving foundations, governments, and anchor institutions. Engagements span philanthropic strategy and field-building, government innovation and delivery, cross-sector consortia design, and adaptive leadership for executives and cabinets. Recent partners include the Boston Foundation, Delivery Associates, and the Bloomberg Center for Public Innovation.

Senior Advisor, Office of the CEO

2025 – present

New America

Advise executive and program leadership across the institution's portfolio: democracy and political reform initiatives, strengthening a body of work on women's health, civic engagement, and the positioning of New America's economic mobility work. Currently advising the design of an early-stage portfolio spanning New America and a university partner.

Term Consulting Advisor, Economic Mobility and Opportunity

Sept 2024 – June 2025

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

- Advised long-term Local Decisionmaker (LDM) strategy within the foundation's Economic Mobility and Opportunity commitment, identifying philanthropic and private sector co-funding partnerships.
- Assessed the Employer Body of Work — the strategy's job-quality portfolio serving the small and mid-sized businesses that employ roughly two-thirds of the foundation's focus population — on scaling levers, public procurement alignment, and durable employer-partnership models.
- Developed scenario planning and strategy options for both portfolios through the 2024–2025 federal political and economic transition.

DONOR SELECTION AND FIELD-BUILDING PANELS

Service on selection committees and judging panels that shape donor decision architecture and field-level strategy.

- **MacArthur Foundation, 100&Change** — selection judge for the foundation's \$100M award competition (2016 – 2020).
- **Lever for Change** — selection judge across affiliated competitions.
- **Robin Hood Foundation** — judge, AI and Poverty Challenge (2024).
- **Rockefeller Foundation** — judge, Bellagio Center Residency Program (2025 – present).
- **Pivotal Ventures** — selection judge, Women's Innovation Network (2026).

SELECTED BOARDS AND ADVISORY ROLES

- Member, Advisory Board, Partners for Public Good (2025 – present)
- Member, Advisory Board, Sillerman Center for the Advancement of Philanthropy, Heller School, Brandeis University (2025 – present)
- Member, Advisory Board, The Greenwood Trust (2026 – present)
- Member, Community Advisory Board, TD Bank (2024 – present)
- Trustee, Emma Willard School (2024 – present), Finance Committee
- Trustee, Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls (2020 – present), Strategy & Innovation, Special Executive Committee Task Force
- Governor, Folger Shakespeare Library (2023 – present), AI and Technology Initiatives
- Trustee, Amherst College (2016 – 2022), Buildings and Grounds, Student Life, and Finance Committees

SELECTED FUNDED PROJECTS (PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR)

Principal or Co-Principal Investigator on \$5M in funded work, including:

- Bloomberg Center for Cities, Harvard — Good Services Lab (\$2M)
- Harvard Kennedy School / NeighborWorks America — Achieving Excellence Program (\$1M)
- Goldman Sachs (Co-PI) — Closing the Gendered Racial Wealth Gap (\$1M)
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation — Equity-Focused Leadership field-building (\$250K)
- Bloomberg Center for Public Innovation — American Sustainable Cities (\$235K)
- Bloomberg Center for Cities, Harvard — Youth Climate Fund Evaluation (YCAF), with “How-to Guide” in use in all 300 YCAF 2.0 cities (\$165K)
- W.K. Kellogg Foundation (Co-PI) — Making Equity Work, philanthropic learning agenda (\$165K)
- Georgetown Law Center / Four Girls Foundation — School-Based Mental Health (\$80K)

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- **Book:** *The Consortia Century: Aligning for Impact* (Oxford University Press, 2025) — co-authored.
- **Article:** “Surprise by Design: The Risks for Social Innovation when Surprise is Imposed as a Governing Strategy,” *Negotiation Journal* (2026).
- **Article:** “Negotiating with Emotion,” *Harvard Business Review* (2013).
- **Podcast Series:** Co-host, *Agility at Work*, with Michael Wheeler, Harvard Business School (2019 – present).
- **Podcast Series:** Co-host, *Evidence in Action*, Urban Institute — Signal Awards Silver Winner (2024).
- **Speaking:** Plenary and invited talks include COP28 (Dubai), Aspen Community Solutions, ABA DEI Law Summit, Black Economic Alliance Solutions Summit, and Harvard Climate Week.

SELECTED HONORS AND RECOGNITION

- **2026:** 20th Robert S. Wallerstein Lecturer, University of California, San Francisco (invited).
- **2025:** Honorary Member, Sigma Gamma Rho; Arthur R. Kravitz Award for Community Action and Humanitarian Contributions.
- **2024:** Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Center Residency.
- **2023:** Distinguished Alumna Award, Emma Willard School.
- **2017 – 2020:** Hans W. Loewald Memorial Award for Career Excellence (2020); LEADS Alumni Award, Amherst College (2019); Honorary Doctor of Public Service, Widener University (2017).
- **2014 – 2016:** Robert Wood Johnson Health Policy Fellow.

EDUCATION

MPA, Harvard Kennedy School • Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology, University of Michigan • A.B. in Psychology, magna cum laude, Amherst College